

Hunter's Monotone

By J. J. SMERTENKO

The lake is dead.
And through the haze around and overhead
Peers the pale yellow circle of a sun,
Making tri-colored beams upon the grey-green scum,
Shaped in interminable stripes by unseen currents.

The lake is dead.
And not the slightest breath breaks through the mist
To form a single ripple,
Or shake the yellow drooping leaves
Upon the trees that seem but shadows of themselves.

The lake is dead.
The heavy haze that rests upon it
Makes water, sky, and shore one with itself;
Though sometimes golden heat-waves shimmer through the
gray,
And white-backed wrens make for the trees and wet, black
rocks.

The lake is dead.
And motionless lie the decoys upon its surface,
The solitary diving duck they lure near shore,
Whence the reports of the rock-hidden gun
Boom like the belching of the waters.

In the Driftway

OF all the hard-hitting fighters, ex-Secretary Lindley M. Garrison stands in the front rank. He has, therefore, been in his element as the head of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company in its fight last week against the strikers. Whether one agrees with him as to his attitude in this matter or not, the Drifter can vouch not only for Mr. Garrison's ability, but for his absolute fearlessness in standing by any position which he takes up in the belief that it is the right one. He is almost the only man who gave Theodore Roosevelt as good and better than he got in a controversy. This was when Mr. Garrison was Secretary of War. He not only hit harder blows in direct and forcible language than Mr. Roosevelt, but he ridiculed him, and that was an unforgivable offence. He resigned from the Cabinet because of what President Wilson called a misunderstanding, but what Mr. Garrison charged was a deliberate breach of faith with him on the question of military preparedness. Mr. Garrison also had the distinction of being almost the only man in the original Wilson Cabinet who dared to talk back to Mr. Wilson and to question the wisdom of his positions. Everybody else might be a mere echo, but not Mr. Garrison. Withal, he is an ideal executive and a most entertaining and charming companion. But the Drifter feels very strongly that the last public man he should like to get into a controversy with is the receiver of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company.

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THE Drifter cannot refrain from sharing with his readers the following amusing letter just received from Mr. Ernest L. Meyer, of Madison, Wis.:

SIR: In setting up a solid wall of opposition to the school

of political buncomb headed by Mr. Wilson, *The Nation* has been guilty of the most infamous of crimes: ego-lynching. Think of the shattered equanimity of spirit, the intellectual turmoil, of the shoals of "Old Readers," who, under the delicate persuasion of our President, acquired a certain momentum of liberal opinion, only to be brought to a dreadful standstill by the heresies of an old and valuable journal. You may differ with me as to the good taste of rhyming lightly about anything so tragic as a lost subscriber, but surely your mailing-list ought to present optimistic proof that the phenomenon, though perhaps widespread in your old stronghold, the academic circle, has resulted in the shifting, and not the loss of *The Nation's* influence.

SIR: PLEASE DISCONTINUE

Hiding well his agitation
Deep beneath his calm exterior,
Mr. Drydust stopped *The Nation*,
Took a journal much inferior,
But which holds to sane opinions
And gives moral consolation.

Consistency, no more a jewel,
Is as common as an oyster;
When old journals play the fool—
Lose their heads and reel and roister—
Buy another! Keep your notions
Taintless as a nun in cloister.

Pity! Mr. Drydust driven
To a weekly, dull and new.
Will it, ere the months are seven,
Change its notions, too?
Will he then read something safer:
Squidge's Needlework Review?

THE DRIFTER.

Contributors to This Issue

- GLENN E. PLUMB is counsel for the Railway Brotherhoods, and the author of the plan for the reorganization of the railways which bears his name.
- WALKER D. HINES is Director-General of Railways for the United States Government, and the author of many articles on government regulation.
- JOSEPH B. EASTMAN was formerly a member of the Massachusetts Public Service Commission and is now a member of the Interstate Commerce Commission.
- PAUL M. WARBURG was a member of the Federal Reserve Board 1914-18, and is an eminent banker.
- LOUIS W. RAPEER is Director of the National School of Social Research.
- EDWARD HUNGERFORD has published several books and many magazine articles on subjects connected with transportation.
- F. LINCOLN HUTCHINS is a resident of Baltimore and a writer on economic questions.
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- ROBERT S. LOVETT is President of the Union Pacific Railway System.
- L. F. LOREE is President of the Delaware and Hudson Railway Company.
- NATHAN L. AMSTER is a Boston capitalist who was chairman of the executive committee of the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railway at the time of its reorganization in 1917. He is the President of the Citizens' National Railroad League.

Correspondence

The Senate and Ancient History

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Why flay Mr. Ford for his acknowledged ignorance of history, as many of your esteemed contemporaries are doing? Was it not so celebrated a statesman as Sir Robert Walpole who remarked that "history could not be true"? On this ground, several New York newspapers have taken occasion to point gleefully to Mr. Ford's unfitness to fill the office of United States Senator. However, I feel sure that Mr. Ford would not lack for company in that august body. There is no member of either House who, judging from his writings and speeches, appears to have sufficient knowledge of the laws of history to be able to apply them to the conditions by which we are confronted today. Yet that is all that makes the study of history valuable. And when I say history I mean not the history of the United States, nor the history of England, nor the history of France only, but the history of Europe and her colonies from the earliest times. One must know his Thucydides and his Polybius, as well as his Macaulay and his MacMaster. In fact the former are the more important, because we see in them laid bare, divested of all disguise, the forces that are at work in our own time. Listen to this from Thucydides: "The real cause I consider to be the one which was formerly most kept out of sight. The growth of the power of Athens, and the alarm which this inspired in Lacedæmon, made war inevitable." Or this: "In a single battle the Peloponnesians and their allies may be able to defy all Hellas, but they are incapacitated from carrying on a war with a power different in character from their own, by want of the single council-chamber requisite to prompt and vigorous action, and the substitution of a diet composed of various races, in which each state possesses an equal vote, and each presses its own ends, a condition of things which generally results in no action at all." This is the brand of historical knowledge that is of value to the man in public life, not a few isolated and unrelated facts of modern history.

North White Plains, N. Y., July 26

J. L. ELDREDGE

The Negro Problem

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: A public service of unusual value was performed by *The Nation* in printing Mr. Seligmann's article entitled "Protecting Southern Womanhood" in its issue of June 14. Coupled with your editorial on the same general subject, "The Negro at Bay," it represents with unusual clearness and frankness a situation which this country must deal with some day, and which delay can only render more difficult. Whether one is interested in the Negro or not, interest in the country demands that the thinking people of the nation turn their attention to the most serious domestic problem now confronting them. I say "most serious" with a full realization of the meaning of the words. I am old-fashioned enough to believe that moral questions transcend in importance questions of economics or politics, and that anything which blunts the moral sensibilities of a people, and permits them to regard any group of human beings as outside the Ten Commandments or the Golden Rule, lays the axe at the foot of the tree of national life.

Washington, July 23

S. M. KENDRICK

Wanted, a More Excellent Way

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Because I feel that *The Nation* champions the Negro's cause from a high moral, and not from a sentimental or political viewpoint, because I believe its ideals of truth and justice

are higher than those of any other journal printed in America, I am deeply interested in knowing what reasonable course it would advocate for the American Negro to adopt in helping to destroy the national pastime of lynching. You term Mr. DuBois's manly and courageous editorial in the May *Crisis* "dangerous and mistaken," and again, in your latest issue, you speak of "the mistaken teachings of some [Negro] leaders." They may be wrong, but what better way would you suggest?

I am a stranger in your midst—indeed, in the world—a poor follower of the truth. I have lived in the South, in the West, and in the East, not without remarking that Negroes are surrounded everywhere by mad dogs in human form. When a mad dog breaks loose, we call a policeman, and if one is not in sight, we kill the dog if we can. To me a lynching-mob bears a great resemblance to a pack of mad mongrels; but I may be wrong. Being black, I may see the hideous thing only through the eyes of prejudice, and not so clearly as you do from your pedestal of pure pity.

But what would you advise Negroes to do when the Federal or State Government withholds from them its protection, as it invariably does? Should they stand by with folded arms and see a member of their race tortured and burned? Should a Negro let himself be taken and tormented without show of resistance? Should Negroes remain supinely inactive while the womanhood of their race is outraged (and, incidentally, that of their tormentors cheapened)? In short, should not a Negro defend himself when attacked by the chivalrous Caucasian?

Have the blacks no soul of honor, no sense of racial pride? The fire of race hatred has burnt into our vitals. For America this is the greatest aftermath of the war. It is more than Mexico and Haiti, Shantung and Fiume, the Treaty and the League; yet all the little politicians, from the President down, ignore it.

You may have noticed that *The New York World*, the organ of political democracy, applauds the Negro spirit of resistance that you deplore. But you may know of a saner, a more excellent way of practical righteousness in the present circumstances. If you will only set it forth, perhaps many discerning Negro leaders will listen to you.

New York, July 24

CLAUDE MCKAY

["Thou shalt not kill" remains the only sound precept for races, nations, and individuals. It is the meek alone who shall inherit the earth. The Negro has, of course, the right to defend his home.—EDITOR of *The Nation*.]

An Ante-Bellum Voice on the Negro

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In your recent wails over the race riots, you seek to throw the blame on the whites, especially on editors who "encourage lawlessness." They are far less guilty than you, for they at least stand up for white civilization against the forces of savagery and brutishness represented by the Negro, while you would fill his head with a lot of incendiary rubbish about his rights and his place in life. If you would come to Washington and be robbed and insulted and elbowed for a while by this malodorous third of the population, who seem to think that they are better than their betters, you might be cured of your ante-bellum sentimentalism about your "poor downtrodden black brother." The only thing to be done with the Negro is to keep him in the subordinate place for which Nature has adapted him, and this can be done if leaders like you will face the facts.

Washington, August 1

B.

Emigré's New and Old

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: How beautifully history repeats herself! Just as the French *émigrés*, fleeing from the Revolution, tried to induce the