

kind for effective cooperation. We do not even know whether it is good for man to be happy. Libraries of books have been written denying even this hope. The only thing we do know is that some of our children, and our children's children, will go on working for a more tolerable social life. Nothing but a comet can stop an energetic minority of men and women from speculating about human behavior.

And here is the crux of the whole matter. Does the fact that all such speculation hitherto has proved to be well-nigh worthless necessitate a mounting junk pile in the future? Has our invincible ignorance been due entirely to the difficulty of the problem, or has it been due in part at least to the method of attack? Why is it that we can work out a theory of relativity, or soar in the air for eight hours in a motorless plane, and not know whether an economic socialism or an economic capitalism is psychologically the sounder? And not know anything about incentives to produce in a cooperative society; or what machinery is doing to human nature; or why we are over-sexed; or how it is possible for different races to get on together; or how far individual freedom of action is conditioned by habits; or what is the relative effect of heredity and environment; or whether work is a psychological necessity; or how widespread is the will to create; or whether there are any sound historical analogies; or if there is such a thing as public opinion; or what are men's economic wants; or whether there is any biological sanction for monogamic marriage; or how to abolish war?

My guess is that we have adopted an objective, trial-and-error method in the case of the airplane, and a subjective, dogmatic method in the case of human behavior. For the latter we have gone to words about things instead of to the things themselves. We have cited dead soothsayers, and dealt in second-hand prejudices, instead of examining the original documents. We have developed a celestial game of pure ideology.

There is a man named Watson who is patiently trying to analyze human behavior in something the same fashion as the Wright brothers analyzed the currents of the air. I am hoping that he may some day found a conclusion on data adequate enough for me to give it to my son. He is only a symbol for a widening group which is undertaking to junk the wisdom of the ages. Conduct based on divine guidance and internal light and sheer intellectualization has brought the world where it finds itself today. And at least conduct based on trained observation and scientific analysis can do no worse.

## John Brown's Grave

By DON C. SEITZ

Near Lake Placid  
Where the pointed hills  
Marked with gray granite,  
Like that which form'd his soul,  
Touch tenderly  
The mists from cloudland,  
John Brown  
Sleeps in his grave  
Beside a path  
Worn by unshackled feet  
Of black pilgrims—  
Freed only of chains!

## In the Driftway

THE Drifter has produced radishes. They are not very big radishes, but they are very red; and somehow they have come to crisp maturity amid the bits of broken bottles and decomposing bricks which make up the soil of a typical New York back yard. The literary editor of *The Nation*, having heard the Drifter boast of his vegetables, asked the Drifter's advice about reviewing Mrs. Duryea's volume "Gardens In and About Town," which Mr. Dutton has just published in a binding reminiscent of a bed of gray-green sedum bordered by scarlet salvia.

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SO the Drifter took the book home with him and, seating himself beside his radishes, began to read. He was tired of fat books about gardens in the country, where the soil is rich and deep, the woods full of ferns, and gardens a matter of course. Here at last was a book upon the back-yard garden. So he thought. He read a few pages with growing anticipation, and then he met a phrase that ruined his pleasure. The book was designed to tell people who were "considering the remodeling of a city house how to complete their remodeling by making a town garden, beautiful to look upon and pleasant to live in." Another book for rich folk! The woman had pleasant ideas about the desirability of flagged walks in a garden, and she understood that lime was the god of the city gardener; she suggested a way of baking home-made flagstones in ten-cent-store tins which the Drifter might try if he did not find it more fascinating to bribe the neighborhood small boys to help him steal flagstones from a construction project just around the corner; and she had some useful thoughts upon the subject of what might and what might not be grown under the city's perpetual rain of soot. But she ruined her book for the Drifter by talk of concrete-lined pools, of expensive brick walls, and of pedestals for garden statuary; she even suggested that there were times when artificial plants might solve difficult problems of decoration!

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WHAT the Drifter wants is a book upon the hard-baked back-yard garden for the man who does all his own gardening, and doesn't do very much of that, with a few closing chapters upon the tragic mystery of the window-box. Something that will explain why the Drifter's nasturtiums have been ruined by black aphids, and will console him for the utter failure of the seedman's tobacco spray to replace blight with bloom; something that will dwell lovingly upon the complaisance of the California privet, which graces corners where all else dies; which will tell what, if any, vine would grow against the fence where the Drifter can make nothing survive; which will suggest effective remedies for hungry, prowling cats; which will encourage the Drifter to repeat his faint successes with chrysanthemum and marigold; which will tell what fertilizer to use where the broken bottles outnumber the fragments of bricks, and what where the bricks have things their way; something which, instead of describing gardens on the Thames and at Versailles, will linger fondly upon the glory of a lordly dandelion and the delicacy of a spray of yarrow when they flourish where a benighted city gardener fancied he had planted cosmos and portulacas. Something, too, which would give a philosophical justification

for the fact that almost all the trees which flourish in New York back yards—the ailanthus, the horse chestnut, the gingko, and the paper mulberry—come from Asia. (Perhaps they learned passive resistance there.) Then the Drifter would like a few suggestions for the desperate city dweller who knows that the soil in his window-boxes is sour but can persuade neither grocer, butcher, plumber, nor electrician to help find new earth; and advice upon geranium culture in tomato-cans. There is a genius in the desolate Gashouse District of New York City who grows magnificent sunflowers and morning-glories in that cindered waste. The Drifter would prefer pictures of his achievements to the photographs of minion-tended gardens in Sutton Place that adorn Mrs. Duryea's pages. That man, the Drifter feels, would appreciate the poetry of his struggle for radishes.

THE DRIFTER

## Correspondence

### Laws for Working Women

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In your May 23 issue I wrote that the National Woman's Party was not in the "company" of Mrs. Sidney Webb and quoted her letter of April 9 to me, which said in part:

I am very sorry that I have been so misinterpreted in the U. S. A. I have always supported the regulation of women's work as a good thing in itself. . . . So that you are quite at liberty to say that I am in favor of regulating women's work whether or not the men agree to having similar regulations.

The acting chairman for New York, Mrs. Jane Norman Smith, "assumed" in your issue of June 6 that I had not quoted the whole of Mrs. Webb's letter. The only words left out were: "I hope this will answer your question." She calls for my letter in full. I wrote Mrs. Webb on March 29:

Great capital is being made in the United States by the National Woman's Party of the fact that you favor protective legislation for men as well as women. But the real question is would you *work to prevent women from getting protective legislation for themselves alone* in the United States, because the men prefer to protect themselves by unions and will not go out for protective legislation for men. In short should the program of the women be made subservient to that of men? Personally I have gathered from your writings that you welcome any advance, but always put forward at the same time your complete program. In the United States our Supreme Court is a serious stumbling block. We have just spent \$9,538 in defending the constitutionality of minimum-wage legislation for women. We fear the outcome. If men were included under the laws there would be no hope for a favorable decision. After all we must meet the practical situation. I am sending you under separate cover a copy of the brief. An early answer will be greatly appreciated.

Mr. J. J. Mallon, head of Toynbee Hall, who recently visited America as guest of the National Conference of Social Work, deplored the misinterpretation of Mrs. Webb, his coworker for years. Mr. Mallon said that the feeling in Great Britain ever since the factory acts were first passed nearly one hundred years ago is that, because of their labor organizations, men do not need protection in the same degree as women. The factory acts have been built up from year to year on that basis. They are filled with clauses giving specific protection for women. For example, making ten hours inclusive of meal hours the maximum day's work for women in the non-textiles, and eleven hours inclusive of meal hours in the textiles, whereas men's hours are not restricted.

Minimum-wage boards were first agitated on account of the oppressive wages paid women. The Board of Trade, however, took the view that it was desirable to treat each trade as a whole, and therefore gave wage boards power to deal with men as well as women if they chose to do so. The early wage boards,

like the shirtmaking wage board, did not set minimum rates for men. Men did not wish to have the rates applied to them until by experience they learned the value of wage negotiations based on a minimum which the most unscrupulous employer could not undercut.

The second misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the National Woman's Party concerns the position of the delegates to the International Congress of Working Women on the subject of labor laws for women. The congress stands for equal standards for men and women, but equality in standards is not to be interpreted as identity in method of reaching those standards. References to the eight-hour day are not necessarily to be read *eight-hour law*—for the reason that men and women both sometimes have the eight-hour day by agreement with employers, and sometimes by law. It is the eight-hour day in either case, and the point to recognize is that the goal is more important than uniformity of method in reaching the goal.

The great majority of the delegates to the International Congress of Working Women, contrary to Mrs. Smith's statement, were in favor of laws for women independent of whether the same laws apply to men. The only exceptions were the delegates from Norway and Sweden, and Mrs. Kjelsberg of Norway eventually yielded her position because, as she stated, she recognized that conditions in other countries were not the same as in Norway. If any doubt as to the attitude of the International Federation of Working Women exists, it is disposed of by the fact that the fraternal delegate from the working women to the last two congresses of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance—continental women in both instances—argued this question from the floor and prevented the adoption, by women not representative of the working women, of resolutions calling for *identity in method* of labor regulation for women and men. Supported by the American delegation and the majority of the Europeans, the working women's argument prevailed, and the International Woman Suffrage Alliance adopted resolutions declaring in effect for *self-determination for the working women of the respective countries as to the laws affecting the working women of those countries*.

The third misunderstanding is that the National Consumers' League has not always favored a reasonable work day for both men and women. Could the National Consumers' League define its position more clearly than by successfully defending before the Supreme Court of the United States the Oregon ten-hour law applying to "persons"?

New York, June 7

MARY W. DEWSON,

Research Secretary, National Consumers' League

## The Turkish Myth

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: It is always disappointing when so admirable a journal as yours gives place and apparent weight to arguments in support of indubitable tyranny, but it is especially so when such arguments are palpably irrelevant and illogical. The article on The Turkish Myth, sponsored by Arthur Moss and Florence Gillian, is the case in point.

Conceive of attempting to speak upon so grave a matter without even the most elementary knowledge of the historic background! *Islamic civilization and the Turk!* Is it possible that anyone who has given thought to this question at all does not know that this great civilization was Arabic or Saracenic; and that on the historic day of Poitiers, 732, to which allusion is made, when "the science, the art, and the civilization of Arabia fell back before the barbarism of the Franks," the Turks were still, as they were for some five or more centuries to come, in the heart of Tartary or Turkestan; and that when they arrived it was not to save or to add to but first to destroy and then to imitate such remnant of this civilization as was left? An impartial and a thorough reading of Mr. Wells, to whom these writers allude, would at least have made this fact