



Bums, Balms and Bombs

I don't think much of any outfit that manufacturers tear bombs to be used on citizens—I think any layout that *does so* do is capable of broadcasting red pepper on a dance hall floor. Why not drop laughing-powder from the clouds and let them laugh themselves sick—God knows there is plenty to laugh at in the maneuvers of our "flunkies"—

Buggs Baer, who has retained a semblance of reason, insinuates sneeze powders would be the clear rig—he must be Scotch—what's the matter with calling it a day and choke them all up with Spanish-flea: The effect would be startling and, no doubt, mutually agreeable, *to all hands*.

Anyway the bare fact that they use tear-bombs instead of black-powder proves they do not in reality hate the people as much as they pretend . . . after all they do not want to maim or cripple any of the citizens too badly—they want them to be in shape to go to work tomorrow to support the 400,000 members of government; 400,000 lawyers; 400,000 bankers; 400,000 doctors; 400,000 preachers, etc. Two million retail merchants, etc. (by the way, I thought the Jewish population was more than that) yes, we have no bananas—or meat.

Scene II.—Quite a controversy in Chi. over the quotation: "*Every institution is the lengthened shadow of one man.*"

R. L. B. says Y. J. E. is wrong; and that Y. J. should read up; and that Emerson and not Elbert Hubbard "made the crack." Now comes my turn: I am satisfied that John McCullough, in one of his extemporaneous ravings, gashed the atmosphere with said remark.

Anyway it makes no difference who unburdened his soul of an idiotic thought. The quotation proves nothing since it is not founded on fact. No man can rightfully say "this is my shadow," for in the shadow I see the pale wan face of his mother; the knotted and gnarled hands of his father; his brothers; his sisters and his fellow men.

I see in that shadow the hopes and fears, the joys and tears of humanity since time began. In that shadow I see a composite portrait of all those who have sweated to make this world a fit place to live in—and failed . . .

Never was there a time when only one man made shadows, shadows—shadows, indeed! And the man who says our institutions are the lengthened shadow (each) of a single man, is a damn poor judge of distance. That shadow, with all our united effort, hasn't stretched very far . . . The boys are still sleeping in box cars.

Poverty makes rags; rags makes Paper; paper makes money; money makes Wall St.; wall street makes Bums; bums make rages; rags make money—money, rags, paper, bums . . . let's see—Where do we go from here?

After you have been eating kind o' heavy in town—in town, to be sure—you can ship out to an extra gang and work "a couple of days" on the strength of the chuck you ate in town—in town, of course . . .

The dollar a day you pay for board is a donation, a tribute, a sort of a compulsory kindness, or a voluntary free-will offering you give the commissary company so that they too may live. You must not expect anything in return for the dollar—a dollar tip these days is considered very reasonable, indeed.

If the commissary company sees fit to treat you to some oiled spuds, soiled pancakes and boiled dogs you should be duly grateful; get down on both knees and praise three gods. Show your appreciation, but don't tip the table.

They tell me in IOWAY that a traveling worker lost his hat on a freight train—not being wealthy he couldn't buy one; being slow of speech (like Moses) in a poor neighborhood, he couldn't beg or borrow one. In desperation he broke into a house and grabbed the first hat he came across, which happened to be a three-cornered one . . . as the train was passing an extra gang he absent mindedly stuck his head out of the side door—the first man that saw him dropt his tools and made for cornfield, "Come on fellows," he yelled, "the world is coming to an end—the pope is on the bum; riding a box car."

Both the timekeeper and "game-warden" speak highly as to the truth of this occurrence and say that it took the boss two hours and a quarter to coax the crew back on the track . . . for what's the use of tamping ties after a three-cornered hat has passed in a cloud of cinders?