

T-BONE SLIM

DISCUSSES

THE OFF-SET

Now, a case has been made against the Bum. It has been "proved" that he failed to work steady last summer—and all this publicity probably is intended to encourage him to try again next summer—but it is not shown what became of the work he left undone. Where is it now? How come—did it evaporate into thin air? You say he left it undone and yet, you say, it isn't here now. What kind of arithmetic is that, nothing from nothing leaves one (0-0 equals one.)? —Ah-h, you reason, the other fellow did the work. That's better—the wrong man is on the bum. If this fellow had performed his work and saved his pennies the other fellow would now be on the bum and the Tribune would have had a different story to tell the blushing world.

Michael Burke, a labor agent in the days when that business wasn't as raw as it is now, (and I can see he has a kind heart), says the reason for these men being in these circumstances is—and he puts it with one word—"Drink." For his benefit we will point out, drink is **The Circumstance**.—It's reason is something else—too deep for Mike and the Tribune.

Mike's barrel of empty bottles indicates the size, nature, but not the cause of circumstances, (or unemployment for that matter) and serves as an advertisement for his noteworthy hotel—the Workman's Home on Clinton St.

"Drink is the sole cause," he says, "there is no other reason why any man should be down and out this winter."

Alright, to be just as consistent, we will say Eats makes a man poor and Religion makes him honest.

But drink doesn't seem to faze the Gold Coast any. Inebriated Captains of Industry and pickled Colonels of Commerce are still good for a four bit tip in the loop—some of them, even wend their way as far west as Sam's Oyster House where the efficient officers of the law load them into taxicabs and ship them out to Sheridan Road or Wilson Ave., as the case may be. Drunk? I've seen some of them so drunk that if Mike's theory held good they would be in the poor-house right now.

I believe I am safe in saying that the upper-ups drink more booze than the down and outs, without showing any deterioration in their gate receipts.

Well then, if this be so, it splits an argument. The Tribune will now have to admit: It is only poor booze that makes a man poor—that the good booze makes for a steady income; the better the booze the the better the income?

Unfortunately, the Worlds Greatest would not be able to convince anybody along these lines. Consequently, I think it will have to take my theory that Eating makes a man poor. It is quite clear that if we didn't eat we could save about fifty cents three times a day, seven days a week, \$10.50 per week.

But it may be men are down and out because they Sleep—because they Flop, as the Tribune puts it? Hardly. A ten cent flop could hardly have such a tremendous effect on a flopper's financial standing—he could save only 70 cents per week by swearing off sleep.

Following along this illogical line of reasoning we come to the point where the beans will spill—showing where the argument is open on one end, at least—mebbe on both. We find that we do not grow poor by Breathing? How come—?

How comes it that drink, eats and sleep drives us "down and out"—How come? My Gods! (all of them) and then some) does the Tribune argue that a drinker, an eater, a sleeper and a dresser shall be penalized, while the desperate "breather" goes unchallenged? If so, what is our journalism

coming to?

How about the "Reader"?

Should he swear off reading?

If he does—the Tribune will soon be rubbing elbows with the bums and beggars, flops and floppers . . .

Otherwise the Tribune's argument is good.