



Thin Air

By T-BONE SLIM

Sunday isn't quite so hard on the back, even with much washing to do (in the name of the Lord, and the glory of the country—tut, tut). Contrary to the general belief, it is not the "krums" that drive "us" to the boiling springs. Indeed not! It is "we" who take the offensive on account of our natural desire for cleanliness.

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Americanization is progressing on apace.

A Polander tells me February 22 was Birthington's wash day—as to that guen no sabe—but we do know that we fell off on the count that day—must have been a holiday. As Henry Ford would say: "I don't know."

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Poverty finds its best critics in lumber camps. Consensus of opinion has it that 'tis an outrage the way prices of hay and spuds drop on the farmer. They should remain suspended, high, like the hanging gardens of Hurley Wise, without any visible means of support—without any tangible cribbing, such as organization, etc. Yes, the prices should float at a high level, on thin air.

Why not save the "gas" and hitch a balloon to the prices? How unreasonable it all seems when it is considered what a terrific "pull" is wielded by Newton's gravity! How are prices going to stay put without any cribbing in under to check its downward flight. Hope isn't going to keep them up. Can it be that wages, too, need a little cribbing—ah, that's another matter.

Hay sells for \$14 per ton, by the farmer; \$28 per ton (later) when sold by the dealer. The dealer is organized. His price is on props.

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Let us not make the farmer's mistake—wages won't stay up, they must be held up; must be pushed up; must be propped up—speeding, praying and hoping make but damn poor props—might as well put a toothpick (for a dutchman) under a 1,000 feet of March hemlock—she'll split.

It takes organization to back up wages. The "good man stuff" is played out.

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In the meantime we are in poverty, economizing here and there—eating poor substitutes, etc., wearing substitutes, etc., but we will say it could be worse probably will. In fact, I am surprised at the amateurishness of the adulterations in our rations, etc. Not only am I surprised, but I will here offer a formula that has not been as yet tried upon the trusting public.

Take tan bark after the tanneries get through with it; it can be bought in large quantities for a song—why waste it in building walks? Grind it up. Once in powder form and mixed with cornstarch it will make an inexpensive substitute for chocolate (N. B. Be sure tanneries have first extracted all poison out of it before you try it on the public). Give us something cheap and at the same time harmless.

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That ought to bring the cost of living down—but won't. If not, further economics can be practiced in the "homes"—that is if you do not intend to organize to make economics unnecessary. I wish to point out a saving that can be made in the 10,000,000 odd homes in this country—and which can be copied by Great Britain and Asia. It occurs to me that people do not eat breakfast in bed, therefore the bed sheet is so much idle capital (?) in the day time—why not use it for a table cloth?

Conversely, a table cloth serves no useful purpose at night, hence why not use the table cloth for a bed sheet—put it on a 24-hour shift.

As I was saying, it can and will get worse without any effort from us. We don't need to organize to make it worse. But if you want to make it better, you'll organize—you'll organize with us.