

T-BONE SLIM DISCUSSES

SAFETY FIRST

During these preharvest depressions we literary folks have greater opportunities to see more of our beloved America, even with the lesser facilities at hand. Thus it was that our writer weary, gaunt and travel-worn (what wasn't worn was jolted) disengaged himself from a train and alighted gracefully with his ear close to the ground—in a listening attitude. Hearing nothing he spit the cinders from his mouth and proceeded to take his bearings and a chew of snuff, realizing that cinders are hard on teeth and compare only with bran as piece de resilience whereas snuss preserves the teeth. After brushing himself he discovered he was surrounded on all sides by the beautiful and virtuous city of Cleveland. Hastily wiping all evidence of travel from his face he vowed that hereafter he would boost for the electrification of all railroads, and the electrocution of all parasites, who put in full time working the workers—for he considers criminal-parasitism not a disease but a vicious habit. Just then two railroad bulls, deeply disguised as jobless workmen, approached and one of them casually inquired: "How's the crew to ride with" and did I "get off that train?"—Imagine these rising young Burns asking me, my hair grey at the temples, if I got off that train—must have thought that I was some kind of a walking Information Bureau—but I was polite. I told him that it was beyond my powers to know anything about the crew and that I was only a hardworking laborer returning home from work to the bosom of my family. "Where are you working?" he next inquired—(darn these bulls anyway for inquisitiveness). Well, — well sir — yessir, I said sir—You ought to know, you've seen me pass by here every day (pretty neat, eh!) I'm over here at Isaac Leisy's Brewery, we're changing it into a tabernacle they tell me, I countered. This seemed to satisfy him—I knew it would—and I felt it was my duty to satisfy him even if I had to lie to do it—I'm not drawing any pay for enlightening thick headed bulls and I'm not under oath, yet I imagine under oath I could do better.

Around the corner from Superior street is an entrance of a bank whose portals are guarded by a couple ladies done in 'rock.' Both are holding a box—a money box—in the akimbo of one arm; holding dagger, hilt end up, which makes it look like a cross, in the other hand. I was not prepared to enter the bank (with all that female militia standing guard) but, and I'll confess, I did stand quite awhile admiring (with mouth open) the gen-

erous proportions of the torso; compared to the size of the head. Then, suddenly coming back to earth, we meandered back to Superior St., and proceeded in our lawful pursuits, athwart the bow of the bank—and then it happened: There on the bank's front porch sat Labor, done in brass, and he had his hammer right along with him . . . Mighty KNOCKER! Not enough clothes on him to flag a hand car . . . and sitting down! Christ!! Who ever heard of such brazen effrontery? Under the figure behind a sliding panel is a machine gun, a one pounder which slides out whenever a debate commences as to the ownership of the "change" reposing in the vaults of this concern. This layout is burglar proof against all comers except a Tank Corps BUT—if some misguided individual ever attempts to "recruit" his fortunes the slaughter will be terrific! The robbers might not be shot but plenty of citizens will be coughing up machine gun bullets for months afterward. Oh well, it isn't my funeral, if Cleveland enjoys sitting on a keg of powder let her do so. Life insurance rates are going up.

P. S.—Tank of "Nitro" on Public Square would be a reassuring sedative compared to this "one pounder."

Note: Harmless "black powder" must be stored in isolated places yet this machine of destruction is brought in amongst the very people—by the very men who preach Safety First and practice it Last.