



HORSES AND SLAVES

A dissertation on self service:

For a long time, it was customary, after a hard day's hurry, to curry and brush the horses, massage and care for their bruises and otherwise look to their comfort. It was human nature then, to give this recognition for the labors performed by dumb beasts. Alas, no more.

We have gotten ourselves away from "all that sentimentalism" and tenderness, (if we may use the word as a substitute for consideration). Yes, the poor horses no longer get the attention they got 12 years ago, and 20 years ago—and my heart goes out to these hard working four-legged slaves of man. . . . In them days the owners of four-legged slaves took into consideration the service rendered and tried, in a crude way, to repay faithful old Dobbin with a good supper, a thorough rub down, etc.; for it was then "reason" that after all a horse is a *labor saving device* whereby man, the masterpiece, could dodge a lot of pulling and hauling—naturally man was duly grateful and did, (for awhile) everything in his power to please Dobbin. But now, Dobbin has become an institution and the work it does is its own, as understood apart from the work done by man. The regard, in which old Dobbin was held, has dissipated no less than the favor with which wage-slaves were regarded a generation back. Wage-slaves then were regarded well worth a king's ransom (as a labor saving device) and a certain care was exercised in guarding their well being. They were permitted to marry and raise families of their own and the "good wife" sure was useful in rubbing the kinks out of aching muscles—mebbe some of the old timers still remember the old witch-hazel bottle their mothers used to sling. . . . The argument here should be plainly stated so that there will be no misunderstanding:

The mothers then were an auxiliary to man and kept him in shape to work year in and year out—in fact these two were the first to form a cooperative society for the purpose of supporting their "so-called masters;" incidentally, getting a living for themselves. But the mothers' duties then were manifold, such as cooking meals scientifically with a view of generating the maximum amount of pep in their *inferior half*; darning sox and mending clothes; cutting kindling wood (so's hubby wouldn't run chances of chopping his foot off) general sanita-

tion, too general to be recorded, etc., many times over stepping the bounds of law and propriety—shoplifting and stealing coal, etc., that her lord and master could look the whole world in the face and say, "I owe no man." And true it is that she found plenty to do and was very useful—it is beside the point that frequently she was found wallowing around in filth up to her neck for various reasons apart from her ability to take care of such work when so disposed, not anyway indisposed—proof for this must lean on fact that she has been eliminated at a certain loss of sanitation and comfort, in the various camps where labor puts up and puts up with.

Her services have been dispensed with in all its manifestations. Labor now makes his own bed; rubs his own joints with "Sloans" when not too tired; washes his own clothes, such as he has; eats unscientifically fabricated foods and finds no small joy in the many intricate contrivances he calls into being as *substitute* for the motherly care and attention of a good woman (there being no other kind). She who used to look after the well being of one man (with a degree of success) has been superceded by a bull cook, crumb boss or game warden (as he is called) and one such bull cook takes care of eighty slaves.

So you can imagine how much attention said *substitute* contributes to the comfort of the worker. Where, at times, one woman housekeeping for one man was up to her neck in filth, now one bull cook doing the "handsome" for eighty men is continually in a state of filth, lice and disease that would stagger a barbarian and his "charges," the companies' slaves, are trying in a crude way to do the things women formerly did so well. They are doing this work free of charge, after hours and on Sundays; to all intents and purposes scabbing on the women.

As I was saying, man no longer gets the loving care of a woman. He is being placed in the same category with the horse we read about in the first part of this article. Dobbin is no longer given his rub down and no bedding of straw graces his stall. Man and the witch-hazel bottle are perfect strangers. Dobbin, alas, (and I shed tears for him) is coated and caked with filth for the want of a full and free "ping ponging." . . .

Are we slipping? How far will we slide before we unload capitalism? We're near the jumping off place now.—You wouldn't take your watch to a Ford mechanic for repairs, why let a tie tamper cook your meals?

Start in by putting butter on the table—it may encourage you to know that Canada will not tolerate oleomargarine. I am given to understand that it is forbidden by law. Our law is not so particular.

P. S.—Our law doesn't protect the horse against the nosebag, and, when it is remembered, the said bag was the forerunner of

the OWN YOUR OWN and ROLL YOUR OWN MOVEMENT that prevailed among the bindle stiffs of the COAST years ago, it becomes evident that LABOR from time to time must brace itself and kick like Hell—else, go from bad to worse.