

T-BONE SLIM DISCUSSES

HOW TO FAIL

A lumberjack when fully dressed in his manly garb (not skirts), is a beautiful thing to see—and fully prepared to attend any "gathering" that may be, social entertainment, spree, dance or prayer meeting—full or half full. . . There you go again, jumping at conclusions—you think that the "rig" you see him wearing is a multi-duty outfit and that it is the only suit of clothes he has.

Even so, if it is, he would be in proper form to attend every reception and hold his own. But it isn't:

Take off the Mackinaw, Jumper and Alpena "Stags" and he still is fully dressed—suitable for senate, spooning or poker—anything. Go on further.

Take off his Presbyterian "serge" and 'Soo shirt and lo—hush—now you're getting down to the real man—he is now dressed for walking and by the Internal Lynx-eyed Gods, I believe we could peel off another layer of cothes and still remain within the limits of law—all of 'em clean; none of 'em lousey—the best dressed man in starving America. Hurrah!

I'm led to make these tearful remarks because when in a restaurant at Chatham, Mich., I inquired for a cup of coffee the proprietor assured me "I'm sorry, lad, but there isn't a restaurant in town."

"Well," says I politely, "I don't see how in hell they can do any logging without coffee."

"Logging!" he screamed. "They don't do any logging out of here—there hasn't been a lumberjack around here for twenty years."

(Cleveland Cliffs Iron—Clothes Pin and Wooden Wash Basin—Company camps are 4, 5, and 6 miles out)—and so, with tears in his eyes he pointed through the blizzard towards a red barn back of which I found a well. . . . That's why Jack is so well dressed!

He is too tame to fight for his board. Too tame to build up his system so that he could get along with one shirt (and that open at the throat showing a mat of hair on his breast). He covers his quivering frame with wool, camel-hair and what you may call it—still he shivers.

He neglects to organize—neglect it a little longer, oh, by-product of the timber belt, you'll quit shivering—and breathing.

Fellow workers, I may seem a trifle severe in my language—I do that to make my point clear. I feel sorry for you and for myself. I know the grief is great. I know the misery is much.

But of all the agony, trials and weariness, the most pitiful thing is that you refuse (fail) to organize. FAIL! FAILURE! You won't join the wobblies because they have hair on their breast. Well and good. Suit yourself. But watch out. Some morning you'll wake up and find pin feathers on yours—you'll be a regular chicken, a most delightful and winsome he-hen, a turkey, a goose. . . . (without further delay I'd advise you to get a handful of buck hair, and plaster it on your chest).

P. S. Editor: Witness the old logger 20 years ago didn't get much—he got eggs by "four-horse loads," fresh fish twice a week, meat on hoof etc. Today he gets canned salmon, bull beef, oleo, imitation milk, coffee, (hump) tea "Sweepings from Japan" . . . ye Lords! Does that mean war? Making us eat off their floor!—We're lucky, lumberjacks; we're lucky that the Japs don't take a notion to wash their lavatories, bottle the juice, and sell it to our importers as "Tea Extract," "Mopped in Japan."

I don't blame Japan. I'm talking to you. You don't have to drink it. Didn't you know that? And you can get tea—by organizing. By organizing you can induce the lumber companies to melt oleomargarine and run it into old catsup bottles—'twill keep better and give you more room at the table. One set of sealed oleo bottles would last forever and forever and forever more.

Beech is only stubborn basswood—the restaurant "keep" probably mistook me for a lumberjack.

—T-b S.