

# GAS-TRITIS



I've intended to say all along a few words of warning to the American motor public but have neglected to do so heretofore on account of having more important warnings to dish out:

Sometimes it so happens that the "power of the car" has all leaked out—through a hole in the right hand pocket of the Rumage Sale Balloon trousers. . . . Well and good, you approach a touring car and kindly ask the "tourer" for a pint of gas to carry you to the next "stationary filler."

"Certainly," says the motor-crusader, "certainly," and he escorts you around to his rear-tank (it is locked) he feels around in every pocket for the key. "Darn the luck!" says he, "I've lost the key—I can't help you out."

Then you "fish out" a two-foot chunk of gas hose and volunteer to syphon out a pint (into a five-gallon pail). "Certainly, certainly," says the helpful tourist (doubling up his fist over the lost key) "certainly, help yourself." That's where you make the mistake of your life!

Sucking on that hose (to get the syphon started) will afflict you with a new, terrible disease—a horrifying disease—gas-tritis they call it.

You should always ask the tourist to take a puff at the hose for you—the country could stand the losing of him.

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That brings us right up to physical examinations:

In many places of employment a man must pass an examination before he can get a job—take off his clothes and go through all kinds of contortions; including bending over and gazing respectfully, if not prayerfully, at the doctor from between one's legs. Can you imagine!

(Why its worse than sawing logs and using cow-bell wedges—those darn things that you almost have to undress before you can fish them from your hip pocket).

Now I've always been opposed to such examinations—until lately—and, as it happens, now I want to work in such places. . .

But, fellow workers, *I can't work in such places until the boss has been examined by my doctor.* How do I know that he is physically able to pay me—he might die before payday.

Therefore, fellow workers, let us so organize that we can persuade the boss to undergo an inspection at the hands of our mon of Medicine. *Wot's sass for the goose is gravy for the gander.*

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The Dayton flood of oratory would float Noah's ark—but at the same time, it raises the question: "Is there a God?" And who created Him? From what was He made? How? There is—there is a god:

A Sunday dinner (in an extra gang) is "the best" one of the week. . .

That proves it, doughnut?

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The resplendant cleanliness of the gandy dancers hanging around the village depot shall not be considered an average for the whole crew. *Full many a syiph may blush unglimped.*

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That delicious vealbone stew—the bones so tender and juicy—salubriously pink—shall not be construed as the base from which the "delectable" dining-car service and scenery was born.

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The cook may be no good. But let me point out the boss and his three "straws" are highly pleased with his cooking.

Mebbe the swill and the crew are no good? *Mebbe the "long, black-haired Wobblie" was right.*

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Speaking about cooking reminds me of chicken; chicken (because it flaps its wings) reminds me of flappers; flappers remind me of chicken—Inn—"Are you going to have chicken supper," gains meaning—and that, naturally, reminds me of science—how to hypnotize a hen: Draw a long chalkline on the floor. Place biddy's bill to the chalkline. That's all there is to it. The Hen will stand there and stare at the chalk mark, just like The Image of God trying to solve a crossword puzzle.

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Those new cheesecloth "work shirts" are the handiest thing yet—instead of making a bundle you can fold it nicely, and carry it in a snuff box.

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Conditions it is that command men. Orders their lives. It, the *compliance-with*, is left up to us more and more every day. How come?

Were I an inferior Wob, to tell 300,000 good Wobblies to strike and they struck—that would not indicate that I influenced them. It would indicate that conditions, pay, board or hours are out of date.

They would say "Holy Halifax, even 'Slim' is next to our condition!"

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Even on the "battlefield" the general's order "charge!" is a confidential whisper alongside the reasoned command of danger. The "threat across the way" has the last word—It is commander-in-chief!

The decision, as ever, lies with the commanded—they accept, they reject—and they temporize.

As on the field of battle, the "commanded" are there *because they have the power.* There can be no victories, industrial or military, without them.

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But—but conditions can be tampered with—thus conveying to you an insidious command. The bosses make conditions bad—thus, it is that *really they, the bosses order you to strike*—and if you have the guts, I'm innocent.