



EXCESS BAGGAGE

Today, three days ago, I saw a pigeon in the park picking cooties from behind the ears of another one and I thought what a blessing it is to have a friend—when you're lousy.

The poor bird had no doubt acquired the lice from those senators and assembly-men that have a habit of sitting in the park and feeding 'em a great share of their lunch—peanuts—which further goes to show that helpfulness is eternal and not a passion of pigeons only.

Obviously, the pigeon could not himself get at the vermin that had gathered around his chops and backs of his neck for self-protection, so another pigeon steps up and no doubt, says, "hold still—le's have a look at 'em"—and proceeded to delouse the pardner in distress.

I imagine he did a good job—good deed, I mean to say—and ferreted out every last pernicious parasite and, like a person who had done his full duty the louser gave one last vicious peck at the now unloused head, as much as to say: "after this, keep away from those legislators."

What's the matter, I don't see you crying?

Can it be possible that after all I've done, and sharpened my pencil twice, you are unaware of what happened to those parasites—what terrible fate overtook 'em—tossed to one side into the cold, cruel world not knowing where the next meal is coming from—you know how parasites like foul, too, dammit—and I can't get you to spill a tear.

There's absolutely no use, editor, to write on such serious matters and expect to break the reserve of our hard-boiled readers—they'd stand there picking their teeth if a million parasites were perishing for the want of a little tender meat.

They'll laugh when I laugh but they will not weep when I weep—mebbe their weeping days are over—a good sign—after the storm the calm—"LOVELY!"—After the calm the hurricane—"ROTTEN!"

(Spontaneous Apple-sauce).

"Rous mit him! Ride him on a rail! "Run him ragged!" "Ruin the rummy!"—Do I hear any more pre-requiem? I guess not—my hearing it not so good anymore.

Never-the-less, these things shall come to pass: there shall be leaky citizens and snarling taxpayers pulling their hairs and tearing their shirts . . . (Applause) "Rush the roquel!" "Roll the rascal!" "Raz the reprobate!" "Raid the radical!" "Roast the renegade!" "Rap the reptile!" "Raw! Raw! Raw! Rat!" "Ruffian!" "Republican!" (Ah, a democrat in the bunch!) Not much wisdom in all those great words.

• • •

We were speaking about parasites, the vermin the pigeon sprinkled all over the capitol lawn. Well, sir and sister, I am now in a position to inform you a noticeable shortage of parasites exists in the country and cities. Whether caused by such tactics as used by the pigeon or lack of breeding, self-control, birth-control or job-control I haven't been able to find out as yet but I notice prices are going up all the while—why even common blood suckers (leaches) bring four bits a half a dozen and then they ain't much good, being unused to handling blood reeking with hair-oil and other Volsteadian stimulants. Such are the sorry facts—you can hardly find a parasite in a days travel. But up here in New England we are trying O so hard to remedy that condition.

We have invented a system of production we call "simultation," a lovely word, it goes something like this: You toss an old shoe into a machine and when it comes out the other end its a raincoat or an automobile-top, whatever the machine is set for. This system far surpasses the puny efforts of the weavers in the textile, who have been unable to operate more than twenty-four looms apiece—owing to distance of travel; but, I understand, they have rigged up a kind of a shuttle for the weaver to ride back and forth—that ought to put a few more parasites on easy street.

As I was saying the weavers (beavers), being thus handicapped, "causes common broadcloth (that sells for a buck per yard) to bring his highness, the weaver, an exorbitant wage of better than a cent a yard—\$144 per 120 yards. God! I hope I'm wrong—and I hope some weaver will take exceptions to my ignorance and spill the whole sack of beans so we can count 'em—get his publicity in NOW, and—in our papers.

But that "simultation" when they get it working properly will starve out many workers and leave just that much chuck for good and willing parasites—and eventually solve the problem of parasite shortage.

Stick around boys, you will yet be emancipated by special dispensation of the parasites themselves—if you sing sweetly enough—but if you want none of this back door emancipation,—YOU BETTER NOT LOITER.