



Opportunity—A Chronic Knocker

The "south shore," Lake Superior, is crowded with unemployed men; lumberjacks. Such camps as are running, are crowded with men who are employed and, further crowded, with "camp inspectors," self-elected . . .

More camps will be running and more men will be employed after the first of October, say the 10th of the month—but these camps will be small affairs and occupied mainly in getting out tie-bolts, ties, pulpwood, poles, cordwood (tops) and some logging.

Organization is low and wages are low—strange to say these two travel hand-in-hand. Cost of living is high—highest in history:

It costs honor, pride and freedom—no matter what you do. That brings living into the class of luxuries, a thing we cannot well afford; in view of the quality of living.

The chief subjects of discussion are guns, night-work, shacking and drinking—as among workers. The middleclass discusses robbery, murder and bankruptcy and robbery to them seems the more severe affliction of the three, i. e.: the murder can be condoned if the body be not robbed—thus each class prays to its own god and, in their case, money is IT.

Their god should not be stolen.

Altho life to them is dear, their attitude on these three subjects (with emphasis on robbery) would seem to indicate a strange creed: "Take my life but spare my cash!"

These conversations are of course but innocent babblings of impetuous tongues, born of minds disturbed, do not and cannot mean anything, and can have no bearing on the modern "Babel's Tower" now once again under construction—yea Gods, in this age of reason and risibilities!

The tower rises apace, made up of theories, doctrines, cure-alls, hokum, soft-soap salve, sermons, salvation and what not—everything but organization—and, of course, the thing will "spill" like its noble predecessor or lean heavily like Italy's list-ing Pisa.

Indeed these terrible thoughts and the more terrible remarks can have no basis in good sense in view of the "ideal conditions of prosperity" under which we suffer.

Verily it is easy to succeed, as they say: No trick at all to get "way-up" in this world—the difficulty is all in the getting down without breaking your neck, God's honest fac-simile—sure enough.

Time and again we've been assured "opportunity knocks once on every man's door."—Sure does—not only one but whole flocks of opportunities and they not only knock but pound on the door "from the cradle to the grave" and a long time upon the tombstone after you've cashed in—damnedest rappings, knockings and poundings imaginable, a boilerworks compared to it is "stillness of a starry night," or a snubbed society sheba . . .

Did I say rap, knock and pound—why, opportunities actually attack the peace-loving citizens, assault and batter them and leave them dizzy on the highways; that's how thick the opportunities are in this fair land of ours.

Any man can get a handout anywhere and the crust of bread received is concrete evidence of the superiority of the republican form of prosperity—10 per cent of the odd 40,000,000 actual workers are now enjoying this simplified diet at the expense of those who are employed fully or partly and, no doubt, the odd 35,000,000 working are able to support the 5,000,000 unemployed—if not, they can very easily become as bloated plutes by joining an "up and coming" union and increasing the size of their pay envelopes (which have for years been dwarfed to such an extent that our benign government felt obliged to reduce the size of the bills in order that ye conscientious paymaster might be enabled to pack more of them into those cute and ingenious receptacles)—yes—that's one of those opportunities, right there; that union.

Still and all, among the employed workers, not so much among the wage-slaves as among the salaried—serfs and positional—peons, we find a type of "kid-brothermentality" that believes the five (7) million unemployed should strive to get a job of some kind; their professional spirit prevents them the realization that the job, "some kind," is abolished forever and that if they get a job of any kind it will be a job now used by another . . .

But opportunities abound.

Any man or woman can get to be president.

Opportunities lie in ambush on every road—you come along and if you have so much as a sliver of presidential timber you are grabbed and hauled off to the whitehouse. No use your protesting that you're "a protestant"—in you go.

A man can't be too careful these days and, if a man don't want to run the country for four years, he better stay off the beaten trails, get way out in the wilderness—it isn't safe to even sleep in a box-car—you might get caught and be slapped into the chair any minute.

I have it 21 trains shall be deleted from service on the North-Western R. R., "system."

This is getting real good!

Ageing "cons" and brakemen are worried and speculate as to who will replace them and what? how? where? when—failing utterly to see that this involuntary va-

cation is one of those opportunities we were speaking about—to rustle for another job.

Poorhouses will be filled early this year—about the middle of October—put your application in early.

Oh well, we did, make 50,000 millionaires, anyway!