

Equality, Fraternity -- and CHARITY

By T-BONE SLIM

So many breadwinners are now displaced by machines that the people might profitably turn their attention to the displacement of "a few" legislators — dislodge about three-quarters of them and put them on bread and water; if you have bread — if not, just water 'em. . . .

We can not dispense with all, but we can work them part time in alternate years — use the "stagger plan" and then get their opinion as to whether or no by mischance a part of their schooling had suffered a neglect.

Be it not construed that I am spiteful or vindictive; that I would turn those legislators out into the cruel world to perish — nothing is farther from my mind — yes, I have a mind, but no bananas — my idea is to give those legislators an opportunity (blessed word) to study unemployment from the personal contact point of view and get first hand information as to adopting it as a national peccadillo — what a word! And after they have absorbed all they observed I would slap them back into the legislatures and put them back on the a more solid diet, gradually. — It wouldn't do to give them a full meal, right off the bat, on top of all that mission soup.

Think ye not, o ye learnt editor, that a little caution in such a case proper course to pursue; that is, keep them away from pork chops and porterhouse steaks as much as possible the first few weeks and prevent them from having a relapse — accustom their stomachs to the fats of the land gradually, as I said before, and give them every opportunity to pass a few laws while their head is still clear?

You can see, yourself, editor, a vindictive person would grab those lawgivers, rush them straight to a chophouse and telephone for a priest and coroner — not giving the delicate digestive organs of those great men the slightest chance to recuperate and befit themselves to do battle with these heavy foods.

Not me!

Other shallow minded citizens would stand by calmly with an ironical grin on their faces and watch those great men stagger into chop-houses without lifting a finger to stop them; knowing full well they would never, never stagger out again and the county would be put to an expense of fifty dollars for a cloth-covered box.

Not me! Nosirree, I'm not that kind of a man — not me!

I would stand at the chophouse door and prevent them making that misconceived death march — only over my dead body could they get in to bid goodbye to the worldly goods — and, let me tell you, editor, not one single, blessed, starved-out lawgiver could get past me for, you must know, I'm not dallying over a soup that's thin and a religion that's thinner (I'm not that kind sinner).

All along the lines in Michigan and Wisconsin, Manitowac at present, I find men waiting at the mill gates for a job. Two and three here, dozen there and one hundred elsewhere. Nobody ever is hired, everybody knows it, but men must make that daily pilgrimage as a concession to the women folks — at home.

What mockery!

Here in nature's lap I look over my spees and behold the impatient carp jumping in the river wondering what is delaying the bait. A fisherman appears and discovers a snarl of rusted hooks — it is 7:30 A. M.

I suggest to him: "You're late; the fish have gone back home, to bed — they generally bite between 5 and 8 morning and night." — "Yes, I had to wait for another

man," he moans, but I have half an hour yet and only six 'minnies' — they died on me last night."

Truly the man was in terrible straits — minnies dead and fish gone to bed — he had all my sympathies. But (perish the thought), mebbe the old gent was making the excursion only as a concession to the women folks at home or to seek solitude to still the tumult of his soul. Couldn't the job-seekers do the same and appear as rational; instead of swapping lies at the mill gates, and running the chance of having a lunatic-commission sit on them? Who knows? Who can say? — I refuse to pass judgment — it's up to the women-folks. O, what mockery!

— T-bs.