

JOHN SHERMAN'S PROGRESS

By ROBERT DUNN

CHAPTER I

The hero of this story is John Francis Sherman, king of American labor spies. He was born in Russia, with some other name; now he is a pillar of society in Brookline, Mass., and Metropolitan Extraordinary to Big Business. His career is one of the numerous examples of how a poor young foreigner may rise from a shoestring, a log cabin or some other convenient liability, to fame and fortune in this great country.

Our hero started his career with a debt of \$300. In 1910 he organized the Sherman Detective Agency, which furnished spies and strikebreakers to various corporations. As a result of this hard work, self-denial and patriotism, Mr. Sherman's income tax in 1918 was \$258,000.

His great fortune seemed to turn John's head. The Sherman Detective Agency became the Sherman Service, Incorporated, and from plain, ordinary labor-spying, our hero turned to prophecy, hypnotism, bombast and religiosity.

Several years of strikebreaking increased our hero's self-esteem. The Sherman Service, Incorporated, now calls itself the Sherman Corporation, Engineers. It has offices at 2 Rector Street, New York, and in the ten leading industrial centers of the United States and Canada. It has X-ray operatives (labor spies) in thirty-three states. The agency advertises that it renders service in man engineering, production engineering, and industrial counsel. It boasts in its advertisements and in its circulars that it has a million-dollar engineering staff. It calls itself the largest engineering organization of its kind in the world, although the advertisements do not specify the kind of engineering organization it really is. Despite the change in phraseology, it remains the same old labor-spy detective agency.

CHAPTER II

Among other things, Sherman's operatives acted as strikebreakers during the 1919 steel strike; in Chicago the State's Attorney charged them with "the use of sluggers, breaking of windows, cutting of auto tires, burning of buildings and stirring up racial hatred and prejudice."

Such minor matters, however, are not mentioned in the agency's literature. Sherman's claim to the gratitude of his country lies in his gift for bringing about harmony between employers and workers through a species of mental healing. His great aim is to achieve "employee acceptance." Perhaps you are a little puzzled by this phrase. But do not despair. Mr. Sherman will explain to you that this mystic essence "pivots on individual desires, minds, wills, motives and ambitions of individual workers hired one at a time, paid one at a time and producing one at a time." To handle this thing "calls for vastly more than an adroit manipulation of printed matter; whatever method is

Being the adventures of a great constructivist, instructivist, educativist, and mental re-sanitacionist in humanizing the component parts of the mutual relationships of the man element in industry; showing among other things that quantity and quality production come from within human beings, or, in plain words, how labor spying has been raised to the same heights as New Thought, Christian Science and the Gurjieff system.

adopted to build it, adequate provision should be made for the human adjustments to minds, feelings and attitudes."

Yet one must not judge from this that Mr. Sherman is a gross materialist. He is interested in the souls of the workers. He is all for the gospel of love and for crying out loud. He aims to "analyze and rebuild employee attitudes." To achieve "mental re-sanitacion;" the human factor, he says, should first be examined and inventoried for its psychological elements; "the dispassionate engineering point of view," he says, "is hard for an executive to gain in respect to his human element; a complete and accurate diagram of employee attitudes, viewpoints and states of mind is difficult to achieve," and since the employer lacks this necessary psychological insight, "there is a place in modern industry for a specialized science of man engineering—the analysis and measurement of the attitude and motive factor and the rebuilding of it along constructive lines." Thus a labor spy is promoted to the rank of labor hypnotist.

CHAPTER III

Our hero's spy agency has issued a little booklet to business men for the purpose of drumming up trade. It bears one of those three-decked titles characteristic of mid-Victorian novels:

AN IMMENSE INSTITUTION
THAT INSTILLS
INDUSTRIAL COMMON SENSE
IN
EMPLOYERS, EMPLOYEES
AND THE PUBLIC,
ACCELERATING AND STABILIZING
PLANT PRODUCTION THROUGH
PERSONAL CONTACT AND THE
POWER OF SUGGESTION

In this and other booklets, our hero, turned Messiah to Big Business, issues the following Sermon on the Mount:

1. The most effective way to give employees any such instrument (as the company union) is to bring it about that they will think of it first and then ask for it. It will thus be partly their child and not the management's alone.

2. If we find your ideas are wrong we correct you; we get into the plant and do the very same thing with your employees. We get you right and then sell you to your workers.

3. Invisibly we are opening the workers' eyes to reason and bringing them to realize that their future can only be improved through their own individual efforts.

4. We enter the environment and lay the constructive germ which catches and remains a fixture before the minds and in the actions of the workers therein for a long period after we have gone.

5. If you could, you would quickly divide yourself into as many pieces as there are departments in your plant. You would go to work in each one of these environments, go home with your employees each night; you would set the example, tell the truth and know every one of them. You'd show them the facts: Well, that's what the Sherman Service does—that's exactly what we are doing, every day and every night, in hundreds upon hundreds of plants and homes (the worker is spied upon not only at work but even at home).

6. Invisibly, through personal contact and suggestion, we sell one to the other in such a manner that there is no cause for complaint, disputes or strikes on the part of either, and satisfaction comes to stay (happiness in every box).

7. If the employer desires us, we will prove our value and remove the load of the labor problem from his shoulders. Our creed is as follows: Always give all that your work requires and then add a little to that. A smile to every demand. Show complete willingness to obey and unflinching courtesy under all conditions. Try to make money to live, not live merely to make money.

8. We try to show in as simple a manner as can be imagined that the foreign born came to a new field for the purpose of gaining a better livelihood than they formerly were privileged to enjoy; and through gaining their confidence convince them that such is an absolute fact, that they are getting more money than they used to for a lesser amount of energy expended, and we make them realize that their living conditions are much more to their liking than formerly.

9. We have for ten years been closely associated with the working people; we have lived with them, played with them and have done the same things that they have done. We know and have known what they think should be a just amount of earnings for your institution. We know what they think is a proper length of a working day—we know what they can stand.

10. Facts are assimilated by us, diagnosed by our Advisory Staff. Under our Director of Personnel is assembled information of an industrial nature or of a political type which is



DRAWING BY ART YOUNG

WHERE DO WE EAT?