



DRAWING BY ART YOUNG

BEGGARS

RETURN of the NATIVE by SCOTT NEARING

AFTER two months in Moscow, Kharkov, Rostov, Tiflis, Baku and other cities and villages of Soviet Russia, I have just plunged back into Boston, Providence, New York, New Haven, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Cincinnati, Chicago. I am a little dazed. The difference between the two civilizations is profound; a brief taste of life in Soviet Russia has made it necessary for me to re-learn the art of living in my native land, "democratic" America.

Gradually I have been getting my bearings, partly assisted by the press, partly through contacts in various parts of the country. The stench of the Rhinelander case lingers here and there; the Stillmans sail for Europe, photographed, interviewed, described, quoted, and followed by a landslide of scandalous conjecture; the Salm baby sleeps at Palm Beach one day; on the morrow it obliges the tabloid press by crying a little; an enterprising reporter actually sees the tears in its semi-noble, 50 per-cent American eyes, and writes a whole column to commemorate the historic event. The entire country sits in judgment on Countess Cathcart's moral turpitude, waiting avidly for "close-up" details.

There's no place like home. I see that the Bernard Gimbels, American merchant princes with a sense of humor, give a private ball at the Miami Biltmore Country Club to nearly 500 people. The immense ball-room is turned into a Treasure Island, recalling Stevenson's novel in detail. On one side a pirate hut is erected, concealing the treasure chest; the room is decorated with tropical foliage and Spanish festoons; the buccaneers of American commerce, industry and finance indulge

in the luxury of wearing appropriate buccaneer costumes.

Home, home, sweet, sweet home!

Here are the Prince and Princess Oblensky sailing for Europe on the Aquitania, announcing plans to return next fall and build a palatial residence at Rhinebeck, Dutchess County, New York; their estate will extend over 99 acres. This Princess Oblensky was formerly Alice Muriel Astor, the daughter of the late John Jacob Astor and the present Lady Ribblesdale. Three years ago, on coming of age, Alice Muriel Astor Princess Oblensky secured complete possession of the five-million-dollar trust fund set aside for her by her father. This fund, by the normal processes of our wage-slave civilization has "greatly increased in value since his death." Mr. Alice Muriel Astor (to wit: the Prince Serge Platonovitch Oblensky Neledinsky Melensky) is a descendant of one of the oldest families in Czarist Russia. His

first wife, whom he divorced in 1923, was a daughter of Czar Alexander III.

Descendants of New York real-estate sharks and Czarist landlords will build a summer palace on the Hudson. Why not on the Volga, the Dneiper, the Don? Impossible. That isn't done in Red Russia. I am more than home; I am home from the first workers' republic.

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The contrast persists. After a strike of six months, 158,000 miners are beaten back to work under an agreement giving the operators the "right" to reduce wages once a year, while the miners give up the right to strike. This agreement runs to 1930. Passaic policemen beat up textile strikers; New York policemen arrest striking furriers; a Massachusetts court sentences a Lithuanian editor for criticising the capitalist system. I am getting used to the fact that I am back in America;

not my America, but certainly the America of Prince and Princess Oblensky, of the anthracite operators, of the Passaic mill owners and the fur manufacturers of New York.

The legislature at Albany won't let me forget where I am. Democratic and Republican politicians view with alarm the 219 labor bills pending in the senate and assembly. The manufacturers of the state have been protesting against the proposed bills; they see "grave peril in the 48 hour law" for women and children in industry. If that bill is passed, the manufacturers (so they threaten) will move their business to the "free" state of Pennsylvania.

Meantime the American labor aristocracy dances behind the coat-tails of capital. It acquiesces in labor banks, labor housing, labor insurance, the B. & O. plan; it still believes in capitalist legislatures, and spends time and money lobbying at Albany and at other state capitals.

My country 'tis of thee; sweet land of a leisure class running treasure-island balls and throwing bathtub parties; of thee I sing, and thy skilled, organized, comfortable labor aristocracy defending the wage-slave system with all its might, while 6/7 of the workers—unorganized, underpaid, defenseless—are toiling in dirty factories, or pounding the streets looking for work, or striking for the right to exist among thy rocks and rills.

This is Judge Gary's America; Standard Oil America; Wall Street America; Florida-boom America; the land that Henry Ford would convert

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ADVICE TO HAMLETS

Do not answer, today or any day
Hamlet's indecent stirring of that pool
Of sense whereon we float and play.
"To be or not to be?"—let any fool
Who wishes chew these absolutes
Which do not tempt the cleaner brutes.
When I was young I greatly sinned
By such-like swallowing of wind;
Now I am simple as a rabbit,
A creature of sagacious habit
Who eats his cabbage leaf and doesn't bother
Explaining why, but eats another.

James Rorty