

SEEN and HEARD around the NATIONAL CAPITAL By Carter Field FAMOUS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT



Washington—Time was when if an American President had admitted he had discussed affairs of state with the officials of the Canadian government everyone would have been sure that liquor and prohibition figured—guarding the border to keep liquor out—damages for sinking the "Tm Alone," etc.

But now if prohibition was whispered at all it would be the Canadians who would urge that the United States government do something to keep liquor from invading dry territory.

Believe it or not, the wise American tourist today carries his liquor with him into Canada, unless he is going into the Province of Quebec, or unless his first stop is Vancouver. If he makes one of those stops first, he can stock up at a government liquor store, after paying twenty-five cents for a permit. Incidentally he can get his liquor a little cheaper—not much—than he can anywhere in the United States, the saving depending on the state with which comparison is made.

Lewis' Big Drive

Very little is being said about that big drive that John L. Lewis is making to organize the steel industry with automobiles and a few others to follow. Most of the news is about the sympathy on the part of many unions for the Lewis side of the battle as against William Green and the American Federation of Labor. There have probably been twenty columns of newspaper space devoted to this internal labor battle to every one about the much more interesting fight now going on under cover.

Canada Dry

Several Washingtonians, just returned, were on a crack Chicago-to-Vancouver train enroute to Banff. As the train neared St. Paul they wandered back into the lounge car, and called for beer.

Marauder of the Sea

The common octopus is one of the most gruesome marauders of the sea. Hiding in rocky crevices on the bottom, or squatting in the midst of a nestlike lair of boulders, which it has dragged together, the repulsive creature lies in wait for its prey, the eight tapering arms sprawling in all directions, extending and contracting, clinging to the rocks with their powerful sucking disks, or undulating through the crevices as they explore everything within reach.

Steel Strike Coming

All this has been known for some time, but really has little bearing on the case. The secret wishes of these workers, reluctant to be organized, have been present probably in every unionization drive ever made. Ways and means are found by the union organizers to force their will on the men in many cases.

Life's Ways

There are some things that we had better not experience. The price is too great, the results too disastrous. If we wish to understand life we should avoid the ways that lead to the destruction of health, happiness, and inner peace, which make life worth while. What is the cause of an understanding of life that cuts under the very foundations of life itself?

A Life Preserver

The obvious life-preserver to this man is to buy a farm. He doesn't want to run the farm, for the present. As a matter of fact, he does not want ever to run it. But he figures that if he owns a farm no upset in the value of the dollar can affect

him. If the dollar should eventually be worth ten cents, then his farm on that day will be worth ten times as many dollars. It will not represent a profit. The farm will be no more valuable than it was before. But he will have escaped a loss. And if worst comes to worst, he figures, he can always retire to the farm and live there.

This man's name is legion. There are tens of thousands of him owning farms in this immediate section. He lives in Chicago, or in Des Moines, or in Detroit or New York. Some of him live even in faraway Boston. And lots of him live in Los Angeles.

But the men now living on these thousands of nice farms he has bought are tenants—or share-croppers. Observers agree that tenant and share-crop farming is bad for everybody involved, even for the landlords. But what to do about it? That's where the rub comes in. Assurance on the currency would drive the price of these farms down to where it would be easier for the tenants or share-croppers to buy them—on time. Sales would then be, so to speak, on the yield value.

The answer is simple. When a union meeting or convention endorses the Lewis side by a majority, that is news. Whereas there is only rumor and confidential report and conjectures as to the progress of Lewis' organizers in the steel mills.

The best information coming to this writer is that so far the Lewis drive to form one big union in the steel industry is not proceeding as rapidly as the ardent C. I. O. leaders had hoped. It is reported that many workers are reluctant to join up.

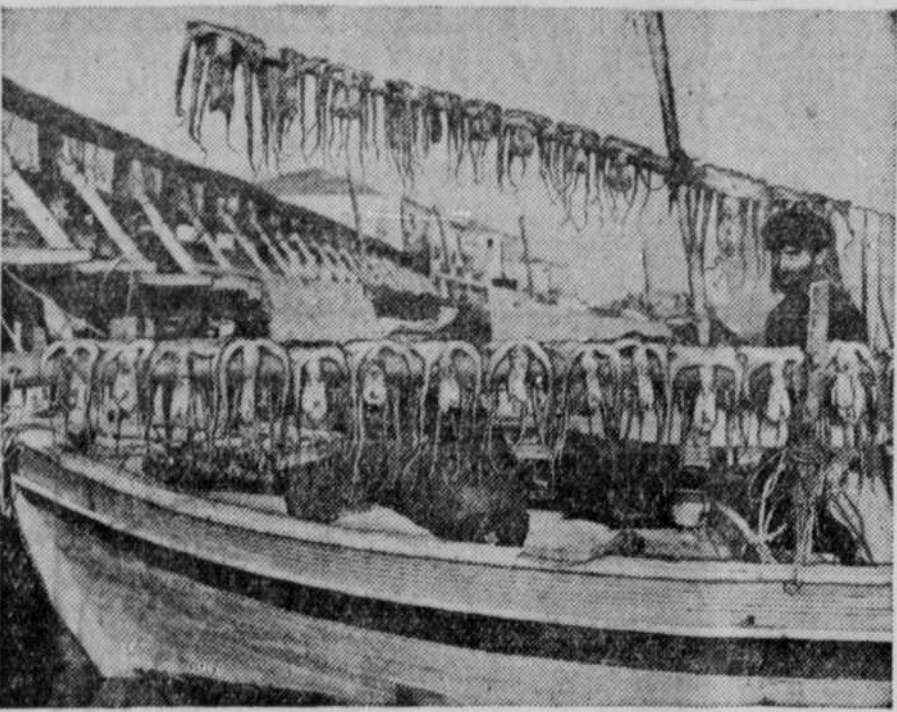
But there is really no news in that. Every one who knew anything about the situation knew that in advance. Many workers would prefer the present open shop arrangement. In the steel industry the pay is good, compared to many others, and, now that work is more plentiful, there are a good many men who are anxious to keep on working, rather than have a strike which would cut off their pay for however long it lasted. Moreover, there are many workers who do not have the evangelical urge to reform things—at least not to the extent of paying union dues to bring reform about. There are even a few who don't want union leaders ordering them about.

So that reports trickling out about the lack of success in the unionization drive are not important, for the moment. They may never be important. The real truth about the situation will not be known, in all probability, until the actual strike call comes. It may not be known even then. It does not take even a majority of employees in any mill or plant to close it down by a strike. That was abundantly proved in the strike of a small minority of the editorial employees of the Seattle Post Intelligencer. The mere fact that a large majority of the employees in the editorial department did not want to strike did not make any difference. Nor did the fact that the other departments of the newspaper did not want to shut down.

The steel strike is coming, whether Lewis' efforts are highly successful or not. And when it comes the steel mills will either close down, as did the Seattle newspaper, or there will be plenty of trouble.

The parrot's restless tongue is more than a mere instrument for counterfeiting human speech; it also plays the part of a hand. His large tongue, working with his mandibles, shells a nut, cuts it into pieces, and then tosses it down the throat.

About the Octopus



Greek Fisherman With His Octopus Catch

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

HERE is a fascination about sea creatures. Some, however, to the average layman, are fascinating only at a distance. Consider the octopus.

With its relatives, the squid, cuttlefish, the pearly nautilus, and argonaut, the octopus belongs to one of the most remarkable groups in the animal kingdom, the Cephalopoda, meaning the animals that have their heads united with their feet.

Some octopuses are relatively small animals with a centrally located bulb-shaped body about two inches in length, erected above a head with a pair of gleaming eyes, for the creatures actually stand on their heads! The mouths are pointed downward and are surrounded by eight radiating arms, which together correspond to the "feet" familiar in other mollusks.

As one examines 12-inch specimens it is hard to realize that their relatives, the common octopuses of European and West Indian waters, have arms five feet in length, giving their possessors a spread of ten feet or more, while the great Octopus apollon of the Pacific is known to attain the enormous diameter of twenty-eight feet! Their cousins, the giant squid, practically double these dimensions from the tip of their tail to the end of their great tentacular arms, and are the largest invertebrate animals known to man.

It seems impossible that these huge creatures, the submarinelike giant squid, with its efficient method of propulsion and aggressive habits, and the weird, soft-bodied octopus with its baleful eyes, protean changes of form and color, and repulsive manner of engulfing its prey—both among the most active and intelligent inhabitants of the sea—should belong to the same animal phylum as the lowly snail and clam. Yet science found that such is the case.

The large, coldly staring eyes are elevated on rounded protuberances, enabling it to see in all directions. Should an unwary fish or crustacean venture within reach, a long tapering tentacle darts forth, the slender tip encircles the prey, which struggles desperately to escape the adherent suckers, but without success, and the hapless creature is dragged down to the cruel jaws to be torn apart by the parrotlike beak.

This species of octopus is equipped with a double row of suckers, arranged alternately, along the underside of its arm, gradually diminishing in size toward the slender, tapering tips. At their base, the arms are united by a membrane forming a flexible funnel, which engulfs the captured victim and presses it against the jaws in the circular mouth-opening at the bottom.

Though the octopus appears sluggish as it creeps over the ocean floor, nevertheless, on occasion, it swims rapidly backward through the water, trailing its tentacles out around its head in a stream-lined bundle. It propels itself like a skyrocket by shooting a stream of water from its siphon in the direction opposite to its motion.

Occasionally two individuals meet in seemingly mortal combat, their tentacles twisted in a tangled mass as they strike at each other with their murderous, curved beaks. When excited, their color patterns, which normally are changing through various shades of brown, yellow, and tan, become more vivid, and the warty prominences of their bodies project rigidly. Waves of red, purple, violet, and blue successively suffuse the body, sometimes standing out in contrasting colors on different areas at the same time.

A black, inky fluid may be discharged from the siphon, in the murk of which the beak conceals its maneuvers. When the octopus creeps over a sandy stretch, its colors fade to pale tan or grayish

white, harmonizing with the surroundings so perfectly that the creature becomes practically invisible. Various tales are related of octopuses attacking persons who attempted to prevent them from returning to the sea. Occasionally, apparently authenticated cases are reported of encounters between divers and octopuses on the Pacific coast. Pearl divers in the Pacific islands tell of fights with octopuses, and such incidents have strayed into literature, from Pliny to Victor Hugo. These are often inaccurate or exaggerated. In "Toilers of the Sea" Hugo describes a fight between Gilliat and an octopus which, though thrilling, is erroneous, and even the spirited drawing of Gustave Dore depicts an octopus unlike any that ever existed.

Nevertheless, the 23-foot octopus of the Pacific, or even large examples of the common octopus of Europe and the West Indies, are formidable antagonists at bay.

The common octopus is one of about 200 species belonging to the order Octopoda. Most of them live in comparatively shallow water, about 100 fathoms or less, though deep-sea octopods are dredged from time to time. One of the weirdest of the deep-sea species is Baird's Octopus (Octopus bairdii), a pale, bluish-gray creature, with gleaming black eyes and elongate, tapering soft "horns" (or cirri) above them, ornamented with knobs on their sides. Its entire body is covered with minute, granular tubercles. As is usual among octopuses, the third tentacle on the left-hand side in the male is modified for sexual purposes. In this species, the tentacle terminates in a spoon-shaped structure with nine transverse ridges across it.

Some Strange Species

The fairylike Dancing Octopus (Octopus bermudensis) of Bermuda may be seen flitting about in the shallow, transparent water among the coral reefs. The brown body, spotted with white, is balanced gracefully upon long, slender tentacles. Some of these wave about like the arms of a tiny sprite; others pirouette upon the sandy bottom, barely touching it with their tips, for all the world like a ballet dancer.

In striking contrast to these species, the Umbrella Octopus (Onithoteuthis agassizi), flaps about through the water, alternately opening and closing a parasollike membrane, thus assisting the siphon, which propels the animal through the oceanic depths by shooting a stream of water from the mantle cavity. This peculiar membrane connects the eight arms almost to the tips and, when spread out, is an efficient animal trap, enfolding within its embrace any fish or crustacea with which it may come in contact.

One of the most remarkable of all the cephalopods is the Argonaut, or Paper Nautilus (Argonauta argo). This delicate creature is so fairylike and so beautiful that it seems impossible it should be classed with the Octopoda, yet the eight arms and other structural characters betray close relationship. Its most remarkable feature is the fragile paper "shell," or "boat," of the female argonaut, famed in song and story. In it she was supposed to sail over tropic seas, unfurling the expanded tips of two of her arms as sails.

The argonaut inserts herself within the shell, still holding to the outside with her embracing arms, and lays her eggs, suspending them in a grapelike cluster to the interior of the spire. She swims about at the surface of the sea, nearly submerged.

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