

Jobless on Auction Block

A Boston dispatch, dated Sept. 8, says: Human flesh, in the shape of jobless and dissipated men, was auctioned off today on Boston Common.

And a dog on the same auction block brought more than any of nine men who, stripped to the waist, as was customary when slaves were bartered for in the days before the Civil war, were offered for sale.

In one of the strangest and most dramatic scenes ever witnessed on the historic Common hungry, shelterless and jobless men voluntarily offered themselves 'for sale' in return for a week's food and lodging.

A huge throng of curious men and women packed themselves around the auction block—the park bandstand—and gazed with varying emotions as the auctioneer recounted the histories and abilities of the men he was trying to "sell."

The auctioneer was Urbain J. Ledoux, who called himself "Mr. Zero," grand high priest of the "shorn lambs of employment," who has established a home, eating place and employment agency for Boston's down-and-outers, and is attempting to wake up Boston's "civic consciousness."

Ledoux led a band of more than 150 of his "shorn lambs" to the common, and all partook of a luncheon given by a suburban country club. A large crowd had gathered by the finish of the meal, and Ledoux and nine men went to the band stand. He introduced his tattered proteges as "nine men, pillars of our industrial system and forced to the auction block." Three of them, he said, were overseas veterans.

Jim Ferris, 20-year-old overseas veteran, was the first "slave" to go on the block. A murmur swept through the crowd as "Mr. Zero" ordered him to strip to the waist. He was turned around slowly and posed in every position to show the play of his splendid muscles.

"You used this in the war; what will you do with it now? What price am I offered for this man?" Ledoux shouted to the crowd.

But the crowd was silent.

"Shall it go starving now that you have no further use for it?" taunted the auctioneer.

And still there was no bid.

"Get down," he order Ferris. "They won't have you; perhaps they'll take your dog."

Bidding went up to \$20 for "Sergeant" Ferris's frightened little fox terrier which had served with him through the war, but when the time came to pay the \$20 bidder could not be found. It appeared that \$5 was the highest real bid. The bidder gave Ferris \$5 and told him to keep the dog.

Only two of the nine men were taken and assured of a place to eat and sleep regularly—for a week, at least. They were Joe Mitchell, a 39-year-old negro from the Virgin Islands, who said he had been out of work six months and averaged two meals a week, and Willie Davis, a homeless 18-year-old boy "from the farm."

The remaining seven, and many more like them, Ledoux said tonight, still are "for sale."

BOARD OF TRADE TO END DEALS IN PUTS AND CALLS

Trading in "indemnities"—"puts" and "calls" as they were once and better known—will cease on the Chicago Board of Trade Oct. 1.

This was decided yesterday following adoption by both houses of congress of the conference report upon the the Capper-Tincher bill regulating the grain exchanges of the country. The passage of the bill, which only awaits the signature of President Harding, would have had the effect of doing away with the "indemnities" anyway.

The Board of Trade did not wait for the President to act, however. During the day the board of directors posted for a referendum vote a proposition to eliminate trading in indemnities entirely. While the membership has still to express itself on the proposal this is a mere matter of form and an affirmative verdict it regarded as certain.

In taking the action they did the Board of Trade directors went a step further than congress. The Capper-Tincher bill did not forbid trading in "indemnities." It did, however, effectually prevent such trading by fixing a tax of 20 cents a bushel upon such trading. The tax was intended to be prohibitive and regard-

less of the action of the board of directors would have meant the last of the old "puts" and "calls."

These also known as "bids" and "offers" were defended by the Board of Trade originally as being an "insurance." Through them it had been possible for dealers who felt they were on the wrong side of the market to limit their losses. They also were dealt in by speculators and were one of the principal points upon which the grain exchange was assailed by its enemies. —Chicago Tribune, Aug. 24.

"LET BOOZE PAY WAR DEBT," SAY GERMAN DRYS

(By George Seldes, in Chicago Tribune Foreign News Service).

Berlin.—"Let booze help pay the reparations," has become the slogan of the German prohibition organizations. Almost coincident with the announcement, advertised by all German breweries in large display type, that peace time beer containing 8 per cent alcohol was again being brewed, the German pussyfooters began an active campaign for a dry Germany.

Throughout Prussia and Bavaria doctors' testimony is being collected to show the salutary effects upon German health of the war time restrictions as to the use of alcoholic liquors.

Statistics have been presented showing the reduction in the number of cases of nervous disorders growing out of the use of alcohol, in the city of Munich alone the number of such cases having been reduced from 285 in 1911 to 43 cases in the year 1919, at the time all the war time restrictions were still in force.

In Bavaria before the war approximately one-eighth of all criminal drinking, whereas at present the police report practically no cases arising from this cause.

The most popular of the prohibitionists' arguments, however, rest upon fifteen billion marks is spent every year in Germany for alcoholic drinks. This sum is almost one-third of the annual payments that Germany must make to the allies, and the German Society for the Fight of Alcoholism has just issued a proclamation to the German people appealing to them to refrain from the purchase of any alcoholic drinks, wine, beer, cognac, etc., and to divert the money that would have been so spent to purposes that will enable Germany to meet her reparations obligations.

PROHIBITION IN ENGLAND

The people of the United States of America, at least some of them, may think they are suffering under prohibition more than the inhabitants of any other nation. They ought to go to London.

While no such high and dry prohibition of alcoholic beverages exists as America has, yet Englishmen are howling just as lustily as we over "the loss of their liberties."

"During the last two years," complains the London Express, "fetter after fetter has been added to the war-forged chains on freedom in the country. The ordinary citizen is groaning under the unjustifiable restriction imposed on him by the bureaucrats and faddists."

Here are some of the interferences with private rights complained of:

No person insured under the insurance act is free to choose his own doctor.

Any one may be arrested or searched on suspicion without a warrant.

You must not buy or sell matches after 3 p. m.

You must not buy or sell cigarets, cigars or tobacco after 8 p. m.

You must not buy or sell ice cream after 8 p. m.

You must not buy a box of chocolates after 8 p. m.

A woman who decides to go to Paris to buy a hat finds herself plunged into a laborious turmoil of passports, photographs and visas, all of which vexations should have been ended after the war.

While beer, whisky and the like may be freely procured, this can only be done at certain hours of the day. The sale of liquor is severely restricted.

Clubs must shut at a certain hour although they do not sell intoxicating liquor.

The language used by Col. Gretton the other day in introducing a private licensing bill in the House of Commons sounds very much like an echo from the United States.

"The argument for shorter hours for liquor selling," he said, "has been heavily discounted by the latest reports, which demonstrate that rapid drinking in a short time has produced a new form of drunkenness."

Lands, buildings and foods are still subject to requisition, ports may be closed and the ex-

port of goods prohibited, and all this not by an act of legislation, but by the arbitrary decree of a minister.

"The average citizen," cries one paper, "has lost his constitutional safeguards. The fiat of a minister is sufficient to deprive him of his liberty and his possessions. 'No taxation without representation' is as dead as a door nail."

So we see that, tight as things are in America, they might be tighter.—Chicago Herald-Examiner.

SHOULD LANDIS BE CONDEMNED?

The American Bar Association by resolution has condemned Judge Landis for "engaging in private employment" while holding the position of federal judge. The Bar Association has thus accepted and declared the conventional view of judicial ethics.

Action "unworthy the office of judge, derogatory to the dignity of the bench, undermining public confidence" and meeting "unqualified condemnation"—these are strong words. What are the facts?

Judge Landis has, in his years on the bench, built up a remarkable reputation as an arbiter. Those who have appeared in his court, and the general public, have come to believe entirely in his honesty, his impartiality, his intelligence and his vigor. On account of his reputation he was asked by semi-public interests, the managers of professional baseball in America, to extend his function as judge to baseball affairs. For this he was paid.

Later he was asked by those concerned in the building-trade disagreements to extend his function again to the affairs of the building trades. For this he was not paid. But it is important to note that the two cases are in their most important respects identical.

Confusion and crookedness were apparent in baseball. Confusion and crookedness were apparent in the building trades. In both the need was for an arbiter who possessed public confidence. In both Judge Landis was selected, and for the one reason—he did have the public confidence.

If it be an offense for a federal judge to establish such a reputation that in times of confusion the people turn instinctively to him for counsel, Judge Landis has offended—not otherwise. Judge Landis' action was unconventional. But an unconventional thing may be entirely justifiable by circumstances. In ignoring the circumstances and hastily condemning on a general principle the American Bar Association can hardly be said to have endeared its judgment to the country.

Meanwhile Judge Landis seems to be straightening out the situation in the building trades. If he finally succeeds, any professional "condemnation" of him will have to be extraordinarily eloquent to get a hearing in Chicago.—Chicago Herald and Examiner.

Senator Smoot says he would simplify the levying and collection of national revenues by limiting taxation to a half dozen lines. Anybody who claims to be able to simplify the methods of levying and collecting national taxes has an excellent claim for instant attention. But when it develops that the first item is a reduction of income taxes of the very rich and the second is a renaming of the discarded sales taxes which consumers are to pay, one may justify passing up the reading of the others.

The price of a seat on the Chicago board of trade is showing a decided tendency to take to the same toboggan slide that the price of wheat used. Of course, the fact that the farmers are organizing to market their own grain has nothing to do with this; it is just another of those "voluntary acts on the part of large business enterprises to bear their share of the burden of readjustment" that we read so much about.

The tariff bill that the Senate committee is considering is expected to add 400 millions a year to the revenues of the nation. That's all right, but we could better understand how many hours a day we must put in earning the tax money if it were also made plain how many millions it will add to the revenues of the steel trust and the dye trust and all the rest of the trusts.

Business men are complaining because the farmer, now that he has sold his 1920 wheat crop, does not call off his buyers' strike. One Nebraska farmer says that the answer may be found in the fact that while he got less than half what wheat brought in war times, the implement manufacturers are selling binders for five dollars more.