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### BREAD OR BULLETS.

Herbert Hoover, be it said to his credit, is trying his best to feed the starving millions of Europe. About last October he made a strong appeal to the American people for \$28,000,000 which he said was urgently needed to care for even the children who were starving.

The Literary Digest took up the cry and started a big campaign to help Hoover get the \$28,000,000. The whole country has been organized and assessed and each section is raising its "quota" in a good deal the same manner as the big war loans were raised. The Digest now announces that \$10,000,000 has been collected, and the prospects look good to get all that Mr. Hoover thinks he can use in his Joseph business.

That is all good commendable work. There is no doubt about the need of it, and I am mighty glad to see it going on.

But here is what gets my goat! You will notice that Hoover just asked for twenty-three million. The whole population of America has just been fearing its shirt and hasn't got half the amount yet. But in the same issue of the Literary Digest, on the first page, is an article headed, "Battleships and Bankruptcy," in which it is stated that the United States is now building or fixing to build SIX great battle-cruisers, each of which will cost twenty-three million dollars, or one hundred and thirty-eight million in all. Please notice carefully that the cost of ONE of these war-monsters is just equal to what Hoover wants to feed starving Europe. And we are going to build SIX of those things. And that is only a small part of our naval appropriation for this year. The whole thing will be about seven hundred million dollars.

All these millions for war are appropriated by Congress without a word said—without asking anybody's advice or consent. Fixing things to kill people is so much more important than fixing a way to keep people alive, don't you see? Everybody has to be called in to help raise a little mite for the starving, but when it is wanted for battleships seven hundred million dollars

can just be handed out with one flip of the finger, and nobody stops to think anything about it. I can't afford to cuss, but I do wish there was some good Christian way of saying "Damn such business!"

### THE CRIME WAVE.

Holy cat-fish!

Misery and meat-skins!

And seventy sorts of sin!

Just listen what an awful fuss they are making about the "wave of crime" that is said to be sweeping over this sin-soaked section of Satan's kingdom!

There seems to be a general "scare" over the increase of crime, especially in the cities. All the papers are full of murders, robberies, and various outrages, and it is said that human life is less secure in America right now than at any time in our history.

Well, what of it? Isn't that just exactly what we have been fixing for and leading up to by our blood-thirsty "patriotism" and our high-handed official persecution of peaceable folks? Didn't our government conscript four million men and send them off—against their wills—and train them in the fine art of murder? Didn't it put guns in their hands and compel them to kill people against whom they had not the slightest ill-feeling? Didn't it teach them to revel in butchery and bloodshed, to become calloused and hardened against the awful sights they had to witness? Of course they had to harden their hearts and make themselves as brutal as possible, else they could not have endured it at all.

And didn't our war-mad government take up peaceable men and women and put them in prison for the "crime" of being peaceable and lovers of peace? And isn't it keeping those people in prison yet, in defiance of every true principle of humanity?

And now if the tree of brutality, so carefully planted and tended by our government, is beginning to bear its natural fruit in the private life of the nation who is to blame?

You must remember that it was not just the four million soldiers alone who were hardened and brutalized—it was the en-

tire population of the country so far as the government's lying war-propaganda could influence it. We were fed exclusively on a diet of hate. We were taught that killing people and wrecking homes was the one and only job worth doing, and if we didn't join in the fun we were sent to jail and kept there.

No, I am not charging that the returned soldiers are responsible for the present crime-wave. Most of them got their bellyful of it and are willing enough to be quiet. But among so many millions there must have been a large number of the criminally inclined, and the war-training only made them expert criminals. Then the war psychology—the bloody atmosphere that we lived in so long—made millions of other criminals.

On top of all that came the awful disappointment and disillusionment of the people. The war was fought to "make the world safe for democracy." But we woke up to find that democracy was the deadest thing of all, and that autocracy and bull-headed brute force were still in the saddle. We saw that the peace conference was not a peace conference at all, but merely a knock-down-and-drag-out contest over the spoils. We saw that instead of giving us disarmament and peace it was going to breed bigger armament and bigger wars.

That discovery took the heart out of everything, and destroyed what little was left of the world's moral conscience. People have just come to the conclusion that everything is lost anyhow, and they don't care much what they do.

Now do you know?

The man who thinks it would be a disgrace for him to wear overalls is probably right—it would be a disgrace to the overalls to have such a sorry thing in them.

I don't know that anybody has made an official investigation to find out, but I just suppose the bad name a bed-bug has is due to his smell. Any fool knows that if a chinch smelt like violet, every family would raise 'em for the market.

### "RELEASE UNTO US BARABBAS."

When Jesus the agitator—the Debs of Jerusalem—was brought before Governor Pilate, charged with sedition, inciting to riot, blasphemy, and so forth, there was a great scene. You remember how it went. From the scripture accounts of the trial it seems that Governor Pilate must have been a pretty honest, well-meaning sort of a block-head, but he had a yarn ravelling in the place of a backbone. Every time I read the 23rd chapter of Luke I feel like I would love to go fishing if I just had Pilate for bait. He would have made a jim-dandy worm for a fish-hook.

Really, it was no trial at all. It was just a mob of the Jewish "Patriots" and "good citizens" demanding the life of Jesus and getting it. After Pilate had kept Jesus on the witness stand for a right smart while, he seemed to be convinced that Jesus was a good man who had not committed any crime, and he wanted to turn him loose. It was right at the time of the Passover feast, and there was a rule that one prisoner should be given his freedom on that occasion. So Pilate made up his mind that Jesus was certainly the one who ought to be released. But they had another prisoner in the name of Barabbas who was in for sedition and murder. The mob of Jewish patriots and good citizens decided they wanted Barabbas turned loose instead of Jesus. Pilate argued with them awhile in his weak way, pointing out that Jesus had done nothing to deserve punishment, and begging that they allow him to release Jesus. But at that the mob began to cut bigger shines than ever, stomping and yelling:

"Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas."

I guess an old hen with three biddies could have scared Pilate to death, and so he was good and scared about then. It's plum certain that he wanted to release Jesus, but he didn't have nerve enough to withstand the will of the mob. So he said, "Well, if nothing else will do, just have it your own way, but I

(Continued on page two.)