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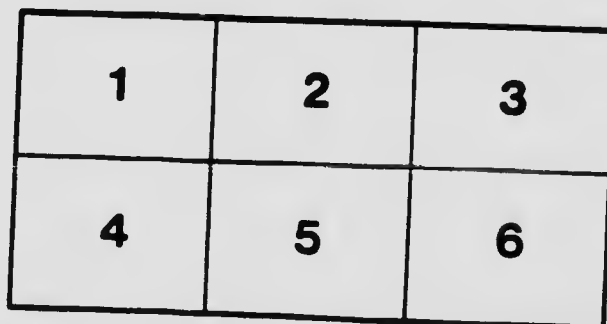
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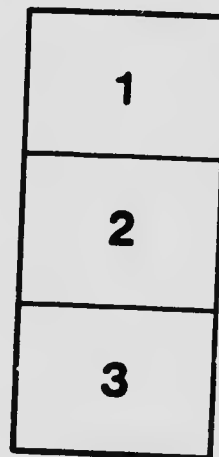
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The
RUBAIYAT
of a
REBEL



THE RUBAIYAT OF A REBEL

By BILL BLUNT.

Wake ! 'Tis th' alarm clock's loud, insistent ring,
From off your bed right light and cheerful spring
And for your daily round of toil prepare,
Do not repine and murmur "Damn the thing."

While frugal fare partaking, contemplate
Your happy lot—the worker's blissful state ;
And on the "dignity of labour" muse,
But do not muse too long or you'll be late.

If too long o'er your breakfast you should stay
You surely will be losing half a day,
Your master's whistle calls, oh haste, oh haste,
Or suffer shrinkage of your meagre pay.

Your master's whistle—'tis your master's voice,
Think on the fact, my friend, and then rejoice
That he should deign to bless you with a job,
Do not forget it's his and not your choice.

He owns your means of livelihood, and so,
Because he says you may, you have a show,
But when he has no further use for you
He's but to say the word and you must go.

Appeal against that word you'd find was vain,
You'd find it quite as useless to complain,
Oh, when you talk about your "right to work"
My stock of patience you severely strain.

You say you have the right to work—to sell
Something that no one wants to buy? Oh well,
I'll not discuss the point with you just now,
But talk of other matters for a spell.

In short, you're owned by those who own your
job,
Their ownership gives power and right to rob,
They use that power on you and all who work,
And will, while they're a tame, submissive mob.

For those who own have ever ruled—must rule,
'Tis not for us to say they're heartless, cruel,
For they but play the game that suits them well,
We also play to suit them—play the Fool.

We're full of Human Nature—they're the same ;
They've a 'Good Thing they stick to—who can
Blame ?

They play a game they never fail to win,
And we to lose, so we must CHANGE THE
GAME.

Nay, do not prate to me of " right " and " good,"
That they DO rule is proof enough they should,
They have the power, and power is ever right ;
They rob, as those have ever robbed, who could.

And now you haste away, to work you trudge,
And all day long consistently you drudge,
Wearing yourself away for profit's sake,
And why ?—you want to hold your job, I judge.

But, then again, the job's not yours to hold ;
Aye, let the Heavens fall but Truth be told,
And let it be repeated till you know
Your job and life by others are controlled.

To-morrow still you'll heed the whistle's hail,
If you of labour-power can make a sale ;
Or p'raps to-morrow you will hunt a job,
And like, hunt long and hard to no avail.

To-morrow's morrow still the same old round,
Next day again you'll heed the whistle's sound,
Week after week, month after month the same,
Year after year, till you are underground.

A "honest workingman" all life you strive,
Yet have all you can do to keep alive,
You "try your best, yet never get ahead,"
And never will, for all you can contrive.

Hard is your toil, yet nothing can you store,
Your father worked and fared the same before;
He loved you well, yet he bequeathed you
nought,
You love your children—will you leave them
more?

So it has been through many a weary age,
'Tis written so in hist'ry's ev'ry page,
'Twill be so writ until the workers
And for themselves shall set the Social Stage.

"You have incentive," it is said. Indeed,
You have One strong incentive, that of Need,
A living bare the motive for your toil,
Perhaps a trifle more, for you must breed.

You are the goose that lays the golden egg
For those who sweat you, those who "pull your
leg,"

Who, when you're worn out, scrap you heed-
lessly

By turning you adrift to starve or beg.

"Charity's bitter drops they may bestow
To cool the hell of poverty you know ;

Humbly you will accept the bitter drops
If you should reach that utmost depth of woe.

THEIR charity—a dirty bone they throw,

Their charity—a bitter fate to know,

Their charity—a dry and meagre crust,

Their charity—NO charity they show.

For charity is not to throw a bone

Unto a dog, but sharing of your own

When you are just as hungry as the dog,

'Tis by the poor that charity is shown.

When you have been worn out and been
turned loose,

To fill your place they need another goose,

So strongly are you wished to breed your kind—

To raise new live stock for your master's use.

It may be you are thinking, "He is coarse,
He puts it with unnecessary force"—

While you endure the FACTS you surely can
Bear my blunt way of pointing you their source.

Some wrap things up so that it gives me chills
To hear them speak of curing social ills,

Sweet'ning their med'cine till all virtue's gone ;
From me you'll get no sugar-coated pills.

You are asleep, some would a feather take
And gent'ly tickle you till you awake,

Likely to smile—or scowl—and sleep again ;
I'm treating you to quite a vig'rous shake.

You may be quite annoyed when you arise,
Rubbing your long-closed, dazzled mental eyes,
But when you get accustomed to the Light
You'll thank me for the shake is my surmise.

But to my story, 'tis for me to show
The reason why I shake and jar you so ;

The reason is a simple one to tell—
While you are victimised I share your woe.

When you are free I shall be free as well,
For we both in the slave condition dwell,
Both of the working-class, both of "the mob,"
Both damned within the same industrial hell.

I dose you strongly : p'raps I'd best explain
How once I had a good stiff draught to drain ;
'Twas a wry face with which I took the dose,
I try to prove I took it not in vain.

A fellow slave and I, on food intent,
Together on a job of work were sent,
Both glad to get the job, for times were hard,
And nearly all our scanty dollars spent.

We worked our best that whole long, long day
through—
We long had hunted jobs, and jobs were few ;
But still we talked somewhat, and it turned out
We were a thoroughly rebellious two.

I a blind rebel, he had learned to see,
'Twas quite apparent I knew less than he,
But still I had my say, such as it was,
It was about as foolish as could be.

For " Liberalism " then I used to plead,
With all " reforms " on earth I then agreed,
At last I made this sapient remark ;
" Drastic reforms are what the people need."

" Reforms ! " He hotly said, " at crumbs you
snatch,
Reforms ! What do they mean but just to patch
A rotten system up ? Oh, can't you think ?
Oh, have you any brains beneath your thatch ?

" It makes me sad to see a man like you,
If you have any brains, they're all askew,
You do not think, you do but blindly guess,
It pains my eyes when you obstruct the view !

" You're stupified with Capitalistic dope,
Mentally blinded, mentally you grope,
If you have anything to think with, learn
That Social Revolution is your hope."

His language I'll admit was not quite nice,
But though not choice, 'twas certainly concise,
(I've made it somewhat milder than it was)
He stirred my mind, then gave some good advice.

He knew he was a slave, he felt "the shame
That makes the coward brave, the sluggard flame,"
As he had learnt the way to Liberty,
Knowing the road, he put me on the same.

So day by day he taught me what he knew,
Truths new to me he taught and proved them
true,

An earnest and an able teacher he,
I try to pass the lessons on to you.

(Old comrade, thanks for those harsh words of
thine,
You spoke long years ago: right to the line
I've hewed since first you taught me how to
hew;
Because you did your best, I'm doing mine).

Friend, you know well you've a hard life to-day;
Well, WHY is your lot so? You cannot say?
Then if you know not WHY your life is hard,
WHAT can you do to alter it, I pray?

By wishes, hopes, naught can be ever done;
Belief—a broken reed to rest upon;
ACTION, based on sound KNOWLEDGE, is your
hope,
No other way can Liberty be won.

Knowledge will turn your darkness into Light,
Knowledge will change your weakness into
Might,

Real hope, real mental life will Knowledge give,
And free your mind of superstition's blight.

A hope for "here and now" you'll surely find
When you cast off the fetters of your mind,
And strive to find the cure for social ills
With a mentality no longer blind.

Then you will learn the mission of your Class
Is to bring Human Liberty to pass,
When Scientific Truth shall permeate
And knowledge of POWER thrill throughout the
Mass.

When once the Workers learn that this is true :
The Power of the Rich and Mighty Few
Is but the ignorance of the Thoughtless Mass,
Then they will "shake their chains to earth like
dew."

The Working Class shall yet cast off its chains,
The Workers yet enjoy what Labour gains ;
The wealth the world contains their hands have
wrought,
They'll take the world and all that it contains.

Yes, it SHALL be, there's nought our power can
stay,
Though hoary lies and ignorance block the way,
Historic forces fight upon our side,
Behind us is the science of our day.

"But surely wealthy folks can help?" you plead;
Well, yes, they can, if they but learn the need
To fight the battle side by side with us,
Presuming not to patronise or "lead."

There are some who desert our foes, no doubt,
And fight our battle in a manner stout,
With knowledge as their guide, freedom their
aim,
But there are spurious ones, *they'll be found out.*

A comrade's hand, a comrade's love and cheer
To such as join our ranks with hearts sincere,
Willing to serve as they are *fit* to serve,
Wishing no preference, seeking no "career."

But scorn for those who, mouthing "Labour,"
try
To save some ancient myth, some modern lie;
To further some ambition, gain some end,
'The freak, the fraud, the schemer and the spy.

(Oh, there are some, the wiliest of our foes,
Who, as the Labour movement thrives and grows
Will offer us their "help and leadership"—
If we accept, they'll lead us "by the nose."

Mayhap, the Wizard with the compound name,
That arch-expert in the nose-leading game,
Will pull one more from out his bag of tricks,
And as a "Labour Leader" bid for fame).

Some of the rich may take our side, but still,
It's safe to say not many of them will,
'Tis such as us who must the battle win,
'Tis ours to call the tune and pay the bill.

'Tis ours to build the Social World anew,
True to ourselves and to each other true,
'Tis ours to think and organise and train,
To vision and to plan, to dare and do.

"There is a World to Come where you shall share
An endless bliss if patiently you bear
Your ills below," has long been preached to us,
"Oh, look Above, in faith and hope and prayer."

Well, I'll not wait—until some PROOF they show ;
They ask me to *believe*—I want to KNOW.

Patience to *wait* for good things *in the Sky* !
When we can *fight* for good things Here Below.

We KNOW there is a World of Plenty here,
That World is far away, *this* World is near,
Here's the *real world*, with all things that are
good,
Good food, good homes, good clothing and good
cheer.

Heaven ? Yea, there's one in which our masters
dwell,
'Tis on this Earth—on Earth we have our Hell ;
While we're content to wait for Heaven Beyond
Our masters smugly smile and say, " 'Tis well ! "

Oh, many a mental drug is used to keep
Slaves in submissive, apathetic sleep,
While others fleece them of the wealth they
make,
They yielding it like tame and silly sheep.

The Guess of puzzled, primitive mankind,
The Superstition of the savage mind,
Has been adapted each successive age
To keep the slaves to their own int'rest blind.

We have the worst, yet we provide the best,
We shower blessings, yet are never blest,
From birth to death poor, meagre fare is ours,
Those who "toil not nor spin" take all the rest.

They OWN—that is the secret of their bliss ;
The Other World for Us, They stick to This ;
Their judgment's good—I have no fault to
find,

But ours? But ours? Oh, the GOOD THING
we miss !

"We'll leave all to the good and great," some say,
"They'll make all right for us, they know the way,
We'll put our trust in them, we'll hope and
wait,"

They'll wait quite long—for ever and a day.

But what say you? Are you content to wait
The time and pleasure of the "good and great"?

If so, you'll find, as all who've waited found,
Dammed Pleasure's fountain and barred Plenty's
gate.

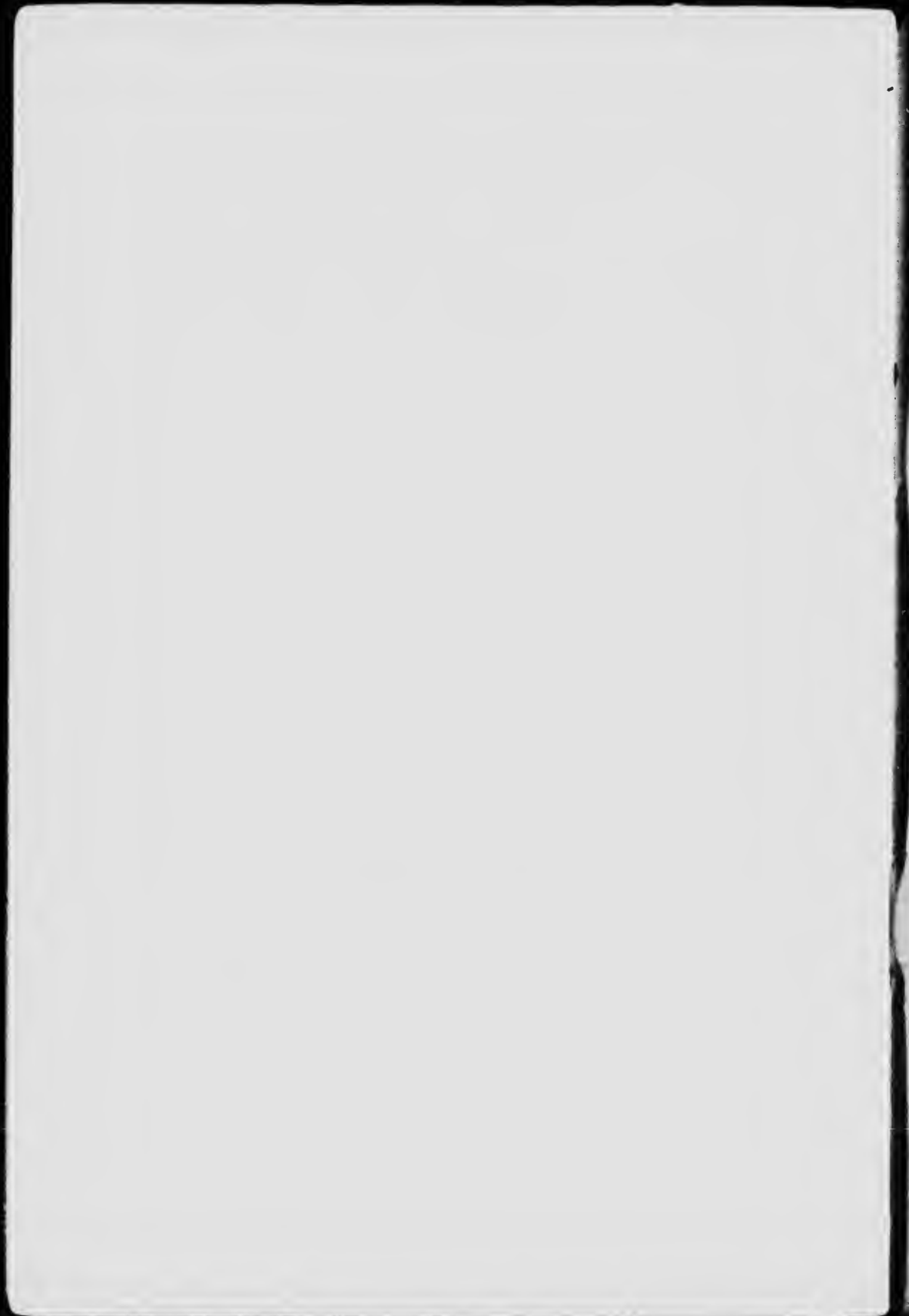
Wipe from your eyes the politician's dust,
Neither in master, king or "statesman" trust,
Wait not for some "great man" to "take the
lead,"

Would *you* be free? Then strike the blow *you*
must !

But mental drill comes first—*equip your brain,*
For all blind action is but action vain,
We need *trained* fighters in the Workers'
Cause—
Those who're already trained will help you train.

By Socialism you must educate
Your mind—'tis Social Science up-to-date,
By it alone can workers understand
Their present, help to shape their future fate.

A COMRADE then you'll be in Freedom's Fight,
And cry with us "Oh, slaves, put forth your
might
A World to Gain, your chains alone to lose,
Oh, Workers of All Lands, Unite! UNITE!"



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