

# Are We As Citizens on Guard?

**Amazing Story to be Revealed In Italian Trial In Massachusetts This Month; Human Rights Said to be the Issue**

By ELIZABETH GLENDOWER EVANS

**A** TRIAL for highway robbery and murder which is scheduled for the latter part of May in Massachusetts is attracting more than usual attention. The accused are Italians, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti by name, the former a skilled shoe worker, 30 years of age, married, with a little home in Stoughton, not far from Boston; the latter, aged 33, and unmarried, is a fish peddler in Plymouth. Both these men are Socialists, and both are aggressive in the struggle of the workers to secure a better chance on God's earth. In other words, they are "reds."

It was to one of these men that Andres Salsedo, imprisoned without a warrant for more than two months in the quarters of the U. S. Department of Justice in Park Row, New York City, smuggled out word of his plight. At once they set out to raise money, and Vanzetti went on to New York to see what could be done. Then on May 3rd came the plunge of Salsedo from the 14th story of the Park Row Building. The protest meeting which Sacco and Vanzetti were arranging in Brockton was never held; for upon May 5th, four days before it should have come off, they were taken into custody by the police.

The compatriots of these Italians are immensely aroused over the whole affair. It was natural that they should be alarmed when the men who were attempting to give publicity to Salsedo's illegal incarceration and tragical death, were arrested. And when these men were charged with two payroll holdups, one involving murder, which had been baffling the police, their fellow countrymen were quick to suspect a frame-up, and to set out upon raising a defense fund. It was for help in raising this fund that the Italian Defense Committee appealed to the New England Civil Liberties Committee, making claim that if a big sum of money was not available, there would be no chance for the accused to escape the electric chair.

## Struggle Not Local

**F**URTHER, circumstances were alleged to exist which gave at least a possibility of substance to the claim that the two men were victims of a frame-up. Such things do happen. It is now admitted that Mooney and Billings were the victims of a frame-up in California. There is nothing local about the industrial struggle. "Where the carrion is, there the eagles will be gathered together." (Hence, to the degree of consenting to help raise a defense fund and of planning to follow the trial closely when it comes off, the New England Civil Liberties Committee has made the Sacco-Vanzetti case its own.)

The defense is being handled by F. H. Moore, a Western lawyer with experience in cases of this character. He makes an unanswerable argument for the need of a substantial defense fund. "Cases are won, or lost," says Mr. Moore, "not by eloquence but by evidence." Before going to trial every possible fact should be sifted and every clue should be run down. Investigations of this kind cost much money.

In illustrating this point, Mr. Moore cites the Krieger case in Oklahoma. There had been a bomb explosion, and the guilt of the accused hinged upon testimony that he and a man named Hall had been on a train together upon a given date. Krieger could not disprove the allegation, and Hall seemed to have vanished off the face of the earth. Finally, after running down endless clues, he was located in the penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, where he had been serving time upon the critical date. This broke down the case for the Government, and Krieger was acquitted. The perjured witness was later discovered to be a Pinkerton detective.

## How Aid Is Secured

**M**EANWHILE working class Italians, in these days of bitter unemployment, are taxing themselves for the defense fund with a generosity beyond the understanding of those who belong to the more protected class. One man quit a job at which he earned \$55.00 a week, and puts in his whole time helping on the case. Another mortgaged his little house for \$1,500 and gave the money to the defense fund without a hope of ever getting back one cent. Others draw out every dollar from the savings bank. It is not decent that such as these should carry the whole burden.

The crimes for which Sacco and Vanzetti were arrested were an unsuccessful attempt to capture a payroll at Bridgewater on Dec. 24, 1919, and a holdup at Braintree on April 15, 1920, in which

the bandits got away with some \$18,000, and the paymaster and one of the guards were killed. Both Sacco and Vanzetti were held for both of these crimes, but only Vanzetti was put on trial for the first of them, that of Bridgewater. His trial took place last July. He was found guilty and was sentenced to fifteen years in the States Prison. It is for the second of the crimes, that of highway robbery and murder at Braintree that both he and Sacco are about to go to trial.

Having interested myself in the case of these men to the extent of helping to raise the defense fund, I sought occasion to visit them in prison and got my own impression as to the manner of men they may be.

## Cannot Be Idle

**S**ACCO is confined in the County Jail at Dedham; it is considered a well-run institution of its kind. He has been a model prisoner. It is his one complaint that during his year of practically solitary confinement he has been denied all chance to work,—this because he is being held for trial and has not been "sentenced to hard labor." But Sacco finds idleness the one thing that is hard to bear. He is a skilled craftsman, and claims that in the shoeshop he used to "edge trim" 40 and 45 dozen pairs of shoes a day, where 25 and 30 dozen was the usual output. "I used to do it so," he explained with a swift sweep of his hand.

In prison he has maintained his physique by undergoing severe exercises in his cell. He takes a pride in muscles that are hard as steel.

"I love work," he exclaimed, "I cannot be idle; I am strong; I am never tired. My little boy used to come to the shop for me after school,—(You see I love my boy,)—and we would run races going home. If I would beat him, he would cry. Then I would help in the house. I cannot do nothing. And afterwards I would go to meetings, always meetings." And his eyes lighted with a flashing sort of smile.

I had heard that his little boy was called Dante, and I asked him why he had chosen that name. "Oh, in my country Dante is a great man," he answered. Then with a note of apology, "Not that I expect my boy to be a great man."

## Is a Socialist

**I**HAD heard that his brother is a city councillor in Torre Maggiore, a little town where both of them were born. "Yes, Socialist," he answered. And again that flashing smile.

Radiant is the only word I can use to describe this prisoner. He has vivacity, and intelligence, and charm. His forehead is finely modelled, his nose sensitive. Every fibre is alert and expressive. And he pours himself out in conversation with a sort of upwelling joy.

His talk was about his wife and their little home, and the baby born to them while he has been in prison, and the various jobs he has filled in the United States since he first got work as a water boy at a wage of \$1.15 a day. He paid \$50.00 and gave three months' time to learn the shoe trade, and he has earned, he says, as high as \$26.00 in a day. During the war he sent money home to his people in Italy. He held a job in one shop for seven years. His employer is said to have called him the fastest worker of some 3,000 who had passed through his factory doors. He was discharged from one shop, so I am told, because his output was too large.

I have read a Biographical Sketch which Sacco wrote from his prison as a message to his comrades, and which his counsel discovered accidentally in some Italian newspaper. It has real literary merit, and the more so from its untutored quality and the quaintness of its expressions. The passages describing his parents and his boyhood home, and those describing his first love for "my good companion" and the perfect happiness of their marriage, are exquisite word pictures. It would be worth reprinting the article at length. But space allows a quotation only of its closing passage which declares that, if death is to be his portion, "I shall die satisfied to add my obscure name to the glorious list of martyrs, believing in the Social renewal and in the human redemption."

## Vanzetti Powerful Man

**V**ANZETTI is a determined looking man, big and powerful, and somewhat stern of expression. His features are shapely, and he has a very winning smile. His command of English is limited, but he is making good use of his time in prison to study English and spelling and "arith-

metics." He made no effort to converse, but responded with simplicity to my various leads. When I asked him about his home in Italy, if he thought of it often, his face lighted. "Oh, I think of it all the time. I can see my father's house and the pear tree near the door. I can see it all as if it were here." I had heard that he was much esteemed by his fellows as a thinker, and as one who has his ideals much at heart. And of this his conversation gave abundant proof.

Since I saw him in prison, I have read a little article of his which had been published in an Italian newspaper, to which he has been a frequent contributor. In this article, which is entitled, Glimpses of my Intellectual Life, he tells how in his youth he read St. Augustine and the Divine Comedy. "At Turin I associated with fellow-workers, clerks, and laborers—Humanity and Equality of Rights began to afflict my heart. Later I realized that the worst evil that torments Humanity is Ignorance, and Degeneration of Natural Susceptibility. My religion no longer needed an altar or a temple or formal prayers; God, to me, was the Universe, of which I felt to be an insignificant particle; the spiritual spoils of every human attribute. In this state of mind I crossed the ocean."

Vanzetti's experiences as an emigrant laborer are graphically told in an article in the New Republic of Dec. 29, 1920, entitled Eels and the Electric Chair.

## Little Evidence Offered

**T**HE transcript of the evidence in the preliminary hearings upon which Sacco and Vanzetti were arraigned, and the transcript of Vanzetti's trial, are a matter of record of which the counsel for the defense secured a copy for use in preparing for the pending trial. (Incidentally, this made a drain upon the defense fund of some \$700 to obtain evidence which it would seem the Government should have supplied gratuitously). My interviews with the accused so quickened my interest that I determined to read this record for myself. A more astonishing document never met my eyes.

No evidence is given showing why either Sacco or Vanzetti should have been held for the Braintree crime. If further evidence exists, the accused were given no chance to meet it, while the evidence in the Bridgewater affair for which Vanzetti was tried and found guilty, was so vague and so indirect as in my judgment to raise scarcely a reasonable suspicion.

The only evidence presented which afforded ground for more than a surmise was that of persons who had witnessed the holdup and who claimed to recognize one of the men who had done the shooting, a man, be it remembered, they had never seen before, and of whom they got but a momentary glance upon an occasion of intense action. An interval of four months had elapsed between this occasion and the first attempt at identification; and between two and three more months before the attempted identification was repeated at the trial. All but two of the witnesses, while they were fairly positive in their identification, admitted that there was room for doubt. "I think he is the man"; "I feel so,—but I may be mistaken."

## Two Witnesses Positive

**T**WO witnesses, to be sure, were positive in their identification. One of these, about fifteen minutes before the holdup occurred, had noticed a covered motor with the windshield up, standing some distance up the street, and she claimed to have particularly noticed the man at the wheel, whom she was sure was Vanzetti. But this witness was equally sure that she had seen the shooting, had seen the fire from the gun. And this she certainly did not see, as cross-examina-

\*The translation is by an Italian-American of the second generation.

At his trial in Plymouth, Vanzetti had been asked by the prosecuting officer, "Are you an Anarchist?" and his answer suggested his life story: "Well, I don't know what you call it, I am a little different—I like things a little different—." Low wages and long hours and unemployment and rough toil have been his portion, in this land where he had sought to realize his boyhood's dreams. No wonder he "likes things a little different."



tion developed the fact that a two-story building obstructed the line of vision between the scene of action and her point of observation from a window in the railroad station. Another witness, a school boy, who was equally positive that the man who fired the gun was the man before him in the dock, admitted he got but a "fleeting glance," and the only description he could give was that "by the way he ran, I could tell he was a foreigner."

Not one witness who described the gunman made note of the unusually big mustache which is the striking feature of Vanzetti's physiognomy. The mustache of the bandit is variously described as "short," "croppy," "trimmed," "neither big nor small," not a Charlie Chaplin mustache, "a mustache that had been cropped off at the end,—not long and flowing." As I looked at Vanzetti in prison, I could discern not one single point in his appearance which had been suggested by any one of the identifications.

To meet testimony which it is difficult to regard as serious, the defense produced a long line of witnesses who swore that Vanzetti had been on his accustomed fish route at Plymouth from early morning into the afternoon of the day that the holdup occurred in a city 28 miles distant. The landlady who had aroused him at 6:00 o'clock when a neighbor called with an order for fish, the man who keeps a delicatessen shop nearby, the boy who helped peddle fish from the cart and thereby earned his Christmas money, nine different housewives who had bought their day-before-Christmas dinner from Vanzetti,—all offered testimony which had in it no element of discrepancy.

How could all these people be mistaken? The day before Christmas is a Catholic day of fast, and working-class Italians the world over, so it is asserted, celebrate that day by eating eels. It was evidence of the credibility of these witnesses that without exception they all of them speak of Vanzetti that day as selling eels. What else would an Italian fish monger have sold on that particular day of the year? And upon what day in all the year,—this day of his biggest trade,—would a fish peddler's absence from his accustomed route be more sure to be remembered?

#### Sentence of 15 Years

SUCH was the more important evidence both for the prosecution and for the defense, as recorded in the official transcript of Vanzetti's trial. When in the face of this evidence the jury brought in a verdict of "guilty," one had a confused sense of non sequiter, such as one feels when a prestidigitator produces a rabbit out of a hat.

That "twelve good men and true" should have brought in so amazing a verdict, and that a presumably upright judge should follow this with a sentence of fifteen years in States Prison, is almost incredible. Other factors must have been present (so it will be argued) which are not here set down. And to some degree this is true. For, however intangible and discrepant the evidence presented by the prosecution was in most respects, upon one point all were agreed: The man who committed the crime was "some kind of a foreigner"; he was "dark complected"; he was "swathy—like an Italian"; "he was a foreigner of some kind"; he could even be recognized as a foreigner by "the way he ran." Similarly, there was the fact that "foreigners" were the only witnesses produced in behalf of the accused.

With this clue, what sounds at first so inexplicable becomes plain. For be it remembered that all this took place in the months when the anti-alien hysteria which had been gathering head since the war, came to a climax. In the "red raids" of Jan. 2, 1920, some 5,000 foreign-born people were rounded up and herded in police stations and jails, almost all of whom were found later to be innocent of any crime whatsoever, except that of having radical opinions and of having been born under some "foreign" flag. Not a weapon or a bomb or a receipt for making bombs, was discovered in the possession of any one of the victims of these raids.

William James, with his sure instinct, put his finger years ago upon the infected spot which today is poisoning the life of the Nation. In a letter to H. G. Wells in 1906, referring to some outrage upon human rights, he wrote: "Exactly that callousness to abstract justice is the sinister feature, and to me as to you the incomprehensible feature of our U. S. civilization. When the ordinary American hears of these (cases), instead of the idealist within him beginning to 'see red' with the higher indignation, instead of English history growing alive in his breast, he begins to pooh-pooh and minimize and tone down the thing, and breed excuses from his general fund of optimism and respect for experience,

## Work of Children's Bureau

### Welfare of Child is First Responsibility and Peace of Civilization Depends Upon Discharge of Duty

BY JULIA LATHROP

In making up a model cabinet for President Harding, "The Nation" selected Julia Lathrop for Secretary of Labor. And she was, perhaps, more generally mentioned than any other woman as a possible cabinet appointment. This sentiment was based more especially upon her remarkably successful administration of the Children's Bureau. Back of this is her record of service at Hull House and as member of the Illinois State Board of Control.

Julia Lathrop is a very able woman. She has vision and common sense, sympathy and understanding together with rare tact and political wisdom—all the best qualities of statesmanship, which she has brought to bear in the building up of the Children's Bureau.

She is in great demand as a public speaker and is much beloved socially. Her unfailing poise, sense of humor, wide experience, and conversational gift make her rare good company. She has an attractive personality, a very expressive countenance, a pleasing, youthful figure, always well gowned. She has magnetism and holds the attention and interest of any audience which she addresses and of any group in which she mingles.

In the address which follows, Miss Lathrop briefly outlines the general scope of the Children's Bureau and its present plans.—Editorial Note.

"TO investigate and report upon all matters pertaining to the welfare of children" is the sweeping clause in which the law defines the scope of the Children's Bureau. Plainly the task can never be completed. As long as the human race survives the welfare of the young will be its first responsibility, and the pace of civilization will depend upon the intelligence with which that responsibility is discharged. From such large considerations it is necessary to descend to facts as to the work which the Bureau attempts to accomplish.

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One word as to its method. It is by law a bureau of scientific research in the social field. It exercises no authority. It can enter no house over the objector of the householder. It can ask questions, but you may decline to answer them. All this is as it should be. Science and compulsion do not go together. If the Bureau cannot justify its proposed inquiries to mothers and employers and employees and the public it is not proceeding in the right way. If the results of its studies do not serve the public they should not be made.

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Those of us who work in the Bureau find encouragement in the fact that 24,000 mothers received our agents and heartily aided the Bureau in its series of infant mortality studies, against 14 who declined, and that the Bureau's reports, both scientific and popular, are demanded by the public far beyond the Bureau's power to furnish.

The positions in the Bureau are in the classified service, and it has always been possible to secure persons of first-rate scientific equipment through the Civil Service Commission.

The Bureau began with a staff of 15 persons and an annual appropriation of \$25,640, and has gradually developed to a staff of approximately 100 and an annual expenditure of \$268,160.

The money spent annually by the Bureau is less than one-half of one per cent of the total sum spent for the educational, development and research functions of the Government, a little less than 5-1000 of 1 per cent of the total Government budget, and just 5-1000 of 1 per cent of the expenditures for past, present and anticipated war—the war item, as you know, requires 92.8% of the present budget. This is not stated as a complaint. We are faced with facts. Expenditures already incurred must be met. That is not open to question. And I, for one, have little complaint as to the allotment to this Bureau out of the balance left. On the other hand, we must reckon with the growing sense of social justice. It is costly—the realization

that a country is not safe when it breeds ignorance and illiteracy; that every child born in the Republic is entitled to a fair chance in life—a vigorous physical start; reasonable education; a home of decent comfort and the care of good parents. Some of these things cannot be bought directly with money, but the standards of life which they imply require not only intelligent parents and a decent income; they require also a constant centralized effort to place the discoveries of science at the service of a whole people for their use in betterment of life and conduct. Undoubtedly, as war recedes and the country advances in constructive ways, the cost of government will be enormously lessened, while expenditures for research for the conservation of life and resources and for educational functions of many kinds can be increased.

In the meantime you have asked for the plans of the Bureau. They are to continue its studies, to make them sound and practical and to popularize them by such methods of reporting as it can devise. Thus the standards of child welfare carefully developed through series of regional conferences and expert committees during Children's Year are gradually gaining acceptance as a fair basis for the life of children in our country.

The work of the Bureau is carried on by divisions, which often interchange and always co-ordinate, but which in general do the work which is suggested by their titles: Industrial, Social Service, Child Hygiene, Statistical, Publications.

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Child labor standards require physical examinations before entering employment, and by invitation of the Bureau a committee of experts are formulating a record for the use of State and local medical examiners which will aid in securing uniformly effective health protection for children. Such use is purely voluntary, however.

The Federal Tax Law protects children in industry but does not affect the rural child workers who are, according to the census, more numerous than those in industry. Doubtless a reasonable amount of wholesome outdoor work is desirable for children, but when we find that the areas of greatest rural child labor and of greatest adult illiteracy are identical, it becomes plain that the public interest is against rural labor which keeps children out of school. Hence the Bureau intends to continue the studies of rural child labor begun last year.

It will develop further its studies of mothers' pensions, of homeless children and as soon as practicable will doubtless undertake studies of institutions for children. It will continue its juvenile court studies, and as opportunity allows, will proceed in helping to standardize the care of all children who lack natural parental protection, or who, for any reason, are in need of special care.

The Child Hygiene Division will continue its experimental use of a traveling motor child welfare conference sent into the remote regions. Careful physical examinations of the children, talks with individual parents, exhibits and conferences teach the practical ways of avoiding illness, by improving the vigor and resistance of all children.

The Statistical Division is responsible for the Bureau's statistical findings.

The Publication Division edits and sees through press the Bureau's reports, and prepares special material for publication in various forms.

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The final value of these plans depends upon the growing interest of the public in developing just standards for all the children of this country,—32,000,000 or more under 16 years of age; 2,500,000 born yearly, of whom about 200,000 die in the year,—12,000,000 at home with their mothers, and doctors and nurses are fond of saying this is "the neglected age." If that be true, it is not because mothers willingly neglect, but because ignorance and poverty are too much for even mothers. 20,000,000 should be in school. None should be at work in school time. Those who work in school years are the ignorant and poor of their adult generation