

A Word With You

They sought it with thimbles, they sought it with care;
They pursued it with forks and hope;
They threatened its life with a railway-share
They charmed it with smiles and soap.

So Lewis Carroll described the Hunting of the Snark. As you know, the Snark is a boojumious creature (as well as an Air Force plane). But "Snark" is also a code word for the Good Society—the Society of Naturalness, Affluence, Renascence and Know-how. And Carroll was really describing our quest for the Good Society.

They sought it with thimbles, they sought it with care;

Naturally, when you seek something with care, you use thimbles so as not to hurt yourself. We have donned the thimbles of social security and welfare legislation in our quest for the Snark. But thimbles keep you from feeling the thing you're looking for and you're apt to pass it by. We have substituted *Niggardliness* for *Naturalness*, ignoring the vistas that would open up with opportunity and freedom.

They pursued it with forks and hope;

Perhaps (we hope) if we get our forks ready, a good meal will materialize at the end of them. And so we pursue a policy of monetary inflation. But instead of a state of *Affluence* we get a state of *Awfulness*. The other day I heard on television a learned and influential professor, an advocate of welfare-statism, public spending, etc., boast about the wonderful economic growth of America. Someone asked him, "What about inflation?" And he

replied, "That is the one serious problem that bothers me." Which reminds me of the farmer who was teaching his horse to live without food—and just as he succeeded, the horse died.

They threatened its life with a railway-share;

In Lewis Carroll's day, railways and railway-shares were much more important than they are today. If we generalize so as to include all stock-market shares, we will get the picture. The stock market is the thing that is watched as an indicator of prosperity. We threaten prosperity into appearing, but instead of *Renascence* we get *Recession*.

They charmed it with smiles and soap.

This shows Carroll's genius for forecasting. Clearly, in this line, he was talking about Madison Avenue, soap hucksters and hidden persuaders. They think the Snark will come with an advertising campaign. Buy now, buy more, don't sell America short. With the increase of population, just think of all the new television sets and automobiles—how wonderful. (How terrible—no new houses for the TV and no new roads for the cars. The government should do something.) This is not *Know-how*, it is *Know-nothingness*, if not downright *Knavery*.

What about the Snark, then? Yes, it can be tracked down—

The method employed I would gladly explain,
While I have it so clear in my head,
If I had but the time and you had the brain—
But much yet remains to be said.

—Robert Clancy

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The Henry George News, published monthly by the Henry George School of Social Science, 50 E. 69th Street, New York 21, N.Y., supports the following principle:

The community, by its presence and activity, gives value to land, therefore the income from land values (rent of land) belongs to the community and not to the landowners. Labor and capital, by their combined efforts, produce the goods of the community—known as wealth. This wealth belongs to the producers. Justice requires that the government, representing the community, collect the rent of land for community purposes and abolish the taxation of wealth.

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