

Get Your Airmeter Here!

By MATTEO NATALE

WE are now working on a method of harnessing the atmosphere. Once that is accomplished, we will unit with the lawmakers and landlords and pass a law that everyone who breathes must rent a machine from the individuals who have harnessed the atmosphere (known as airdlords). This machine will be placed on your back with a hose connected to your nose. Air will be metered to your body at the rate of ten cents a day. Every day you will drop a dime in the little slot, one of the airdlords will send somebody around once a week to collect the money.

Airdlords and landlords will all be privileged characters and will not wear meters. A little fuss will be made over the use of air machines at first, but eventually everyone will get accustomed to the idea. In the future, the airdlords will probably be looked up to as benefactors of humanity. Those few who refuse to use an airmeter will be placed in special compounds similar to our jails of today. They will be the ones who will be considered "too lazy to work for their own air." If they try to escape they will be shot immediately. For those who find themselves unemployed and unable to pay for their air, we will increase social security and increase the number of our charities.

We now look into the future to the year 2055. Eighty per cent of the world's population have airmeters. The other twenty per cent (airlords, landlords, and their confederates), live on revenue from air and land.

The big question is "shall we nationalize the air industry." We will interview a few private citizens. Here comes the first one.

"Good afternoon, young lady. We would like your opinion on a question. Would you be in favor of nationalizing the air industry?"

"Of course not. I believe in free enterprise."

I'm very sorry. We can't talk to her any longer. I have an appointment with the air inspector. My meter needs adjustment. Here comes the next citizen.

"Good afternoon, young man. Do you feel the price of air is too high?"

"No, as long as I can work fourteen hours a day I'm satisfied, even though my wife and four kids breathe a little too much air for their own good. I can't understand how our grandfathers were able to live working only eight hours a day. Look what happened to my friend Joe. He got laid off—couldn't find a job—ran out of social security. So instead of resorting to charity for free air he shot himself. He was too proud to take the air free. Thank you very much."

We now give you the latest news. There will be a statue erected at City Hall of the famous Joe Blow, who invented the airmeter which enables the airless to breathe air from the moment they are born to the last minute of their lives. Ten men were sent to the electric chair for advocating overthrow of the air-istocrats.

You may by now be smiling at this pathetic bit of fiction, but I am quite sorrowful, for this story is likely to come true. We must have land to live, we must have air to live, we must have sun to live. If it is not right for men to own the air or sun depriving us who must depend on them for life, it is also not right for men to own land and rent it to us who must have it to live.