

**WHILLIKINS: A
STUDY IN SOCIAL
HYSTERIA. PP.17-129**

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Whillikins: A Study in Social Hysteria. pp.17-129 by Elmer Willis Serl

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WHILLIKINS

First published in December, 1913.

WHILLIKINS

∴ A STUDY IN ∴
SOCIAL HYSTERIA

BY

ELMER WILLIS SERL

*Author of "Swaying Tree Tops," "The Laughter
of Jesus," and "The Fraternity of the Fields,"
books published by this house.*



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II

WHILLIKINS,—THE SOCIALITE



CHAPTER I

SARCASM? MAYBE

Let us estimate our social resources. Are we wise, or are we foolish? Are we fortunate, or are we unfortunate?

We have health in spite of unwillingness to exercise, which is good. We have clothing and food and an opportunity to overstock the market with these things, and,—with a little care not to distribute them properly,—we can charge more for them than they are worth and so make money, which causes satisfaction. There is work for every man who wants to work, there are good wages, and a chance to spend them foolishly, which is rightly named personal liberty,—a liberty that no one may safely curtail.

We live in a Christian land which tolerates the scamp as well as the saint. We live in a day of reform. It is popular to reform something, and if the supply of muck does not peter out, it looks as though we might en-

joy the blessings of reformation for some time yet.

We still have political parties to which we may belong, which give us opportunity to lambaste each other and to say slanderous things under the mantle of party spirit, which means safety for the libeler. Again, our parties afford us opportunity for dissension and furnish problems. Thus it appears that we shall not be without a jumping-jingo's equipment for some time.

We have so many applicants for every political office that we do not have to exert ourselves looking for them. We toss the offices out into the highway, letting the applicants scramble for them, knowing well that after the scramble no office will be lying unpossessed.

Altogether, as you may readily see, our resources for this business of life are varied and many. But I wonder if the devil keeps the books!

CHAPTER II

THE BIG FIGHT

The big fight is not between Jeffries and Johnson. No! No! It is between a white and a black principle. The big fight to-day is for freedom of utterance on social questions.

The man who, without fear, speaks out on social questions is likely to be chased if he will run.

The liberty of utterance needed to-day is not on theological themes. There are people who will grant you freedom to express yourself on miracles done in Palestine nineteen hundred years ago, but when you talk about the miracle of the growing brotherhood of to-day they will remove your epidermis if you do not have a tendency to carefulness. Most churches to-day will grant to their ministers liberty to follow St. Paul about Asia Minor and even to talk back at Paul, but when the minister comes home and says a word or two about present-day social un-