

[Interview with Vito Cacciola #30]

Paper No. 30

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Interview with

Vito Cacciola

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by

Merton B. Lovett

“As well as remembered.”

INTERVIEW WITH VITO CACCIOIA

by Morton R. Lovett

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(from memory)

“I hava do new music scholar from Salem. He taka lessons on de guitar. He had a several teachers and in gotta de foundation of music. But those peoples can teachs him no more.

“Me? I am the advanc-ed teacher. When he taka lesson from me, it's lika study in de Harvard college. He learna so mucha de first night, he saya he will brings me two more pupils. If he does I will maka for him de discount.”

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“Did you know de painter Delenandro what was hurta? He falla off ladder and smashes de leg. For long time he has been in de hospital.

“Now they getta a sirscription for him. Every week they paya to his wife enough for hospital bills and to runna de house.

“Yes, I donata each week fifty cents. He is gooda man. The money. I can spara it. I must be the most economical. But de generosity maka de heart lighter. And de Bible say; ‘More blessed it is to give than to receive.

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I would cut this entire page [SBH?]

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“Good day to you, mr. Toomey. Mr. Lovett, I wanta to traduce to you Mr. Toomey. He has gotta two twins; girls de most beautiful. How is they, Mr. Toomey?

“Yes, de shoes is complete. Look, is it all righta?

“Of course, it is de shoe for left foot. I mean is it not fixed good? You is mucha joker, Mr. Toomey.

“So you is just comma from doctor? I hope he maka you better.

“I ama glad be finda no ulcer. I am glad de ticker is so mucha strong. Whata de matter?

“So you is runna down? Sometimes I getta run down too. I taka de tonic.

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"Oh, but Mr. Lovett, you must not believe him. I live a good life. I am in bed early. Never did he see me drunk at two o'clock in the morning. Never do I run after the bad women. Mr. Toomey makes jokes. My soul is pure.

"Sure, I have a soul, Mr. Toomey. Everybody has a soul. It gives them a desire to do the good deed. It makes them have sorrow when they do sin. 20 [???] " Sure, I know where the soul is. It is the blood. " You do not believe me, but I read it in the Bible. " So you have got a pure soul, hah! The doctor examines your blood. It is 99 per cent pure? Perhaps he says it was 99 per cent alcohol? " No, it is no Bolshevik. The soul is the blood. The blood is the soul. I know it. " I would not live in Russia. But I would enjoy more to live in Russia than in Ireland. The nuts are in your belfry. " Suppose I get a leg cut off? Suppose I lose all the blood? Would I then have a soul? You talk crazy. " Suppose I get the blood transfusion at hospital. Suppose I get your blood, would I have your soul? If I have your soul I would bark like a dog. Say no more! You make me angry. " So you was joking me, hah? Well I don't like such jokes. They are the bad manners and disrespect to the Bible. " The shoes will cost you one dollar forty cents. You pay me when you get the check? All right. See now you owe us two dollars seventy five cents. Please remember me to the twins. " O. K. Mr. Lovett, we will talk it no more. But the soul is the blood. The blood is the soul. Some day I prove it to you."

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"In the paper I read, Mr. Lovett, that you made a speech at Boy Scout banquet.

"So you were the first Scoutmaster in Essex County. That's good. I think the Boy Scouts is good for boys.

"Tony, my helper, he's going to join a Boy Scouts. Next year he will be twelve years. Eh, Tony?"

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"Tony known mucha already about de Boy Scouts. He maka de many knots with string, he fighta de compass. That's right, — he boxa de compasse. Showa to Mr. Lovett how you maka knots.

"See, that's de square knot. That knot I do not know. What is he, Tony?

"Sheepshank? That's a harda knot to make. Can you do him, Mr. Lovett.

"And now, Tony, if I pointa my hand so, it is North. When it is so whata direction is it? East. That's it right. And de stove it is what. South east. See, he knowds de compass.

"Yes, Mr. Lovett, de Italian boys maka good Boy Scouts. They is many of them.

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"I thinka de idea in good. It maka de boys strong. It maka them acquainted with nature. Some Italian boys does not know de flowers and de trees. The wilds animals and birds they does not recogniza.

"Yes, it is better than playa on de street. And I thinka they learna some good lessons, what?

"That Scout oath what you call it, is fine for de Boys. I thinks it is better than de soldier play that de boy's maka now in Italy. By jingo, if de boys is a soldiers, someday they maka war and gotta killed. Peoples who maka monkey business with guns gets shoot-ed.

"No, I was never de boy scout. They hava them not long time ago. But I knowa de nature. I seea de wild duck, de rabbit and de skunk. He smells most evil. I also recognisa de oak tree, de maple tree, de pine and de cedar. In this country the trees they are different.

"What's that, Tony? You laugh, why? You says I does not recogniza de poison ivy. But by gracious, that is bads things Mr. Lovett.

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"I think he was a different kind of de grape vine. He was mucha pretty. De leaves was reds and yellow and of great beauty. What happend? I picks some for to make de boquet with flowers. I bringa then here. Bye and bye my hands getta hot like de fire.

They swella big. They maka such itch I could not sleep. For a week I could not works. It was de big price to paya for de knowledge. But now I do not picka de poison ivy.

"So you geta sick with poison ivy too. Did you not knowa de danger?"

"No, so you was not de Boy Scout then? I bet you my life it teacha you de lesson.

"Sure, you is righta. And now I thinks what looka most beautified may be worsen than what is not pretty. Does you not thinks so too, Mr. Lovett?"

"Whata you say? So de beauty is only skin deep. Hah! Hah! If you seea some of de girls what coma in de store, you woulda say it was not so deep as de skin."