

THE ISSUE

By

EUGENE V. DEBS

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THE ISSUE.

By Eugene V. Debs.

[NOTE—Girard, Kansas, is a quiet little city built about a capacious plaza or square. This plaza is carpeted with Nature's emerald and roofed with the protecting branches of the catalpa and the elm tree. When the news came that Debs had again been chosen as the candidate of the Socialists for that station in our public affairs of most comprehensive service to the people, the citizens, without reference to political faiths, gathered upon this green out of compliment to their fellow-townsmen who had been thus honored for the third time by such signal confidence on the part of so many earnest people of the nation at large. These good people of Girard had seen beavies of children following this arch "undesirable citizen" to and from his work, and about the town in his resting hours, for almost the entire period of his residence here, and now it had come to pass that he was loved by every man, woman and child here. They sent for him. Eli Richardson, the "Hot Cinders" Socialist, affectionately known for so long a time as "Baldy," explained in a few dramatic words the occasion of the gathering, and presented Debs with the remark, "You can pin your faith to a man loved by children." The address which follows, wholly impromptu, is perhaps the most remarkable ever delivered, and came hot from the foundry of his mighty genius and fresh from the loom of his kindly, loyal, loving soul.]

Comrades, Ladies and Gentlemen: When I made some inquiry a few moments ago as to

the cause of this assembling I was told that it was the beginning of another street fair. I am quite surprised, and agreeably so, to find myself the central attraction. Allow me in the very beginning to express my heartiest appreciation of the more than kind and generous words which have been spoken here for me this afternoon. There are times when words—mere words—no matter how fitly chosen or eloquently expressed—are almost meaningless. As the rosebud under the influence of sunshine and shower opens, so does my heart to receive your benediction this afternoon.

I am a new resident of Girard; have been here but a comparatively short time, and yet I feel myself as completely at home among you, most of whom disagree with me upon vital public questions, as I do in the town in which I was born and reared and have lived all the days of my life. Since the day I first came here I have been treated with uniform kindness. I could not have been treated more hospitably anywhere. I have met practically all of your people, and all of them have taken me by the hand and treated me as cordially as if I had been neighbor and friend with them, and to say that I appreciate this is but to express myself in trite and unsatisfactory terms.

As to the Presidency.

The honor to which reference has been made has come to me through no fault of my own. It has been said that some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them. It is even so with what are called honors. Some have honors thrust upon them. I find myself in that class. I did what I could to prevent myself from being nominated by the convention now in session at Chicago, but the nomination sought me out, and in spite of myself I stand in your presence this afternoon the nominee of the Socialist party for the presidency of the United States. Long, long ago I made up my mind never again to be a candidate for any political office within the gift of the people. But I have had to violate that vow, because when I joined the Socialist party I was taught that the wish of the individual was subordinate to the party will, and that when the party commanded it was my duty to obey.

There was a time in my life when I had all the vanities of youth, when I sought the bauble called fame. I have outlived all that. I have at last reached that point when I am capable of placing the right estimate upon my own relative insignificance. I have come to realize that there is no honor in any real

sense to any man unless he is capable of consecrating himself to the service of his fellowmen. To the extent that I am able to help others to help themselves, to that extent, and to that extent alone, do I honor myself and the party to which I belong. So far as the presidency of the United States is concerned, I would spurn it were it not that it conferred the power to serve the working class, and he who enters that office with any other conception of its functions prostitutes and does not honor that office.

The Bounty of Nature.

Now, my friends, I am opposed to the system of society in which we live today, not because I lack the natural equipment to do for myself, but because I am not satisfied to make myself comfortable knowing that there are thousands upon thousands of my fellow men who suffer for the barest necessities of life. We were taught under the old ethic that man's business upon this earth was to look out for himself. That was the ethic of the jungle; the ethic of the wild beast. Take care of yourself, no matter what may become of your fellowman. Thousands of years ago the question was asked: "Am I my brother's keeper?" That question has never yet been answered in a way that is satisfactory to civilized society. Yes, I am my brother's

keeper. I am under a moral obligation to him, inspired, not by any maudlin sentimentality, but by the higher duty I owe to myself. What would you think of me if I were capable of seating myself at a table and gorging myself with food and saw about me the children of my fellow beings starving to death?

Allow me to say to you, my fellowmen, that Nature has spread a great table bounteously for all of the children of men. There is room for all and there is a plate and a place and food for all, and any system of society that denies a single one the right and the opportunity to freely help himself to Nature's bounties is an iniquitous system that ought to be abolished in the interest of a higher humanity and a civilization worthy of the name. And here let me observe, my fellow men, that while the general impression is that human society is stationary—a finality as it were—it is not so for a single instant. Underlying society there are great material forces that are in operation all of the circling hours of the day and night, and at certain points in the social development these forces outgrow the forms that hold them and these forms spring apart and then a new social system comes into existence and a new era dawns for the human race. The great majority of mankind have always been in darkness. The overwhelming majority of

the children of men have always been their own worst enemies. In every age of this world's history, the kings and emperors and czars and potentates, in alliance with the priests have sought by all the means at their command to keep the people in darkness that they might perpetuate the system in which they riot and revel in luxury while the great mass are in a state of slavery and degradation, and he who has spoken out courageously against the existing order, he who has dared to voice the protest of the oppressed and down-trodden, has had to pay the penalty, all the way from Jesus Christ to Fred Warren.

Coronation and Crucifixion.

Do you know, my friends, it is so easy to agree with the ignorant majority? It is so easy to make the people applaud an empty platitude. It takes some courage to face that beast called the Majority, and tell him the truth to his teeth! Some men do so, and accept the consequences of their acts as becomes men, and they live in history—every one of them. I have said often, and I wish to repeat it on this occasion, that mankind have always crowned their oppressors, and they have as uniformly crucified their saviors, and this has been true all along the highway of the centuries. But it will not always be so. When the great majority have become

enlightened; when the great mass know the truth, they will treat an honest man decently while he lives and not crucify him, and a century afterward rear a monument above the dust of the murdered hero.

I am in revolt against capitalism because I love my fellow men, and if I am opposing you it is for what I believe to be your good, and though you spat upon me with contempt I would still oppose you to the extent of my power.

New System Needed.

I don't hate the workingman because he has turned against me. I know the poor fellow is too ignorant to understand his own interest, and I know that as a rule the workingman is the friend of his enemy and the enemy of his friend. He votes for men who represent a system in which labor is simply merchandise; in which the man who works the hardest and longest has the least to show for it. If there is a man on earth who is entitled to all the comforts and luxuries of life in abundance it is the man whose labor produces them. If he is not, who is? Does he get them in the present system?

I appreciate the fact that you have come here as republicans and democrats as well as Socialists to do me personal honor, and I would be ungrateful, indeed, if I took ad-

vantage of such an occasion to speak to you in any offensive sense. I wish to say in the broadest possible way that I am opposing the system under which we live today because I believe it is subversive of the best interests of the people. I am not satisfied with things as they are, and I know that no matter what administration is in power, even were it a Socialist administration, there will be no material change in the condition of the people until we have a new social system based upon the mutual economic interests of the people: until you and I and all of us collectively own those things that we collectively need and use.

As long as a relatively few men own the railroads, the telegraph, the telephone, the oil fields and the gas fields and the steel mills and the sugar refineries and the leather tanneries—own, in short, the sources and means of life—they will corrupt our politics, they will enslave the working class, they will impoverish and debase society, they will do all things that are needful to perpetuate their power as the economic masters and the political rulers of the people. Not until these great agencies are owned and operated by the people can the people hope for any material improvement in their social condition.

Is the condition fair today, and satisfactory to any thinking man?

The Unemployed.

According to the most reliable reports at our command, as I speak here this afternoon there are at least four millions of working-men vainly searching for employment. Have you ever found yourself in that unspeakably sad predicament? Have you ever had to go city surging with humanity—and, by the way, my friends, people are never quite so strange to each other as when they are forced into the artificial, crowded and stifled relationship imposed upon them in the large cities.

I would rather be friendless out on the American desert than to be friendless in New York or Chicago. Have you ever walked up one side of the street and come back on the other side, while your wife, Mary, was waiting at home with three or four children for you to report that you had found work? Quite fortunately for me I had an experience of that nature quite early in life. Quite fortunately I say, because, had I not known from my own experience just what it is to have to beg for work, just what it is to be shown the door as if I were a very offensive intruder, had I not known what it is to suffer for food, had I not seen every door closed and barred in my face, had I not found myself friendless and alone as a boy looking for work, and in vain, perhaps I would not be

here this afternoon. I might have grown up, as some others have, who have been, as they regard themselves, fortunate. I might have waved aside my fellowmen and said: "Do as I have done. If you are without work it is your own fault. Look at me; I am self-made. No man is under the necessity of looking for work if he is willing to work."

Nothing is more humiliating than to have to beg for work, and any system in which any man has to beg for work stands condemned. No man can defend it. The rights of one are as sacred as the rights of a million. Suppose you happen to be that one! up the street, begging for work, in a great This republic is a failure so far as you are concerned. Every man has the inalienable right to work.

Evolution of Industry.

Here I stand, just as I was created. I have two hands that represent my labor power. I have some bone and muscle, some sinew and some energy. I want to exchange it for food and clothing and shelter. But between me and the tools with which work is done stands a man who says, "No, no!" Why not? "Because you cannot first make a profit for me."

Now, there has been a revolution in industry during the last fifty years, but the trouble with most people is that they haven't

kept pace with it. They don't know anything about it and they are especially innocent in regard to it in the small western cities and states where the same old conditions of a century ago still largely prevail. Your grandfather could help himself anywhere. All he needed was some cheap, simple, primitive tools and he could then apply his labor to the resources of nature and produce what he needed. That era in our history produced some of our greatest men. Lincoln himself sprang from this primitive state of society. People have said, "Why, he had no chance. See how great he became." Yes, but Lincoln had for his comrades great green-plumed forest monarchs. He could put his arms about them and hear their heart-throbs, as they said: "Go on, Abe, a great destiny awaits you." He was in partnership with nature. He mingled with the birds and bees and flowers in the green fields and he heard the rippling music of the laughing brooks and streams. Nature took him to her bosom. Nature nourished him and from his unpolluted heart there sprang his noble aspirations.

Had Lincoln been born in a sweatshop he would never have been heard of.

How is it with the babe that is born in Mott street, or in the lower Bowery, in the east side of New York City? That is where thousands, tens of thousands and hundreds of

thousands of babes are born who are to constitute our future generations.

I have seen children in New York City who had never seen a live chicken. They don't know what it is to put their tiny feet on a blade of grass. It is the most densely populated spot on earth.

You have seen your bee-hive—just fancy a human bee-hive of which yours is the miniature and you have the social hive under capitalism. If you have never seen this condition you are perhaps excusable for not being a Socialist. Come to New York, Chicago, San Francisco with me; remain with me just twenty-four hours, and then look into my face as I shall look into yours when I ask: "What about Socialism now?" These children by hundreds and thousands are born in sub-cellars where a whole grown family is crowded together in one room, where modesty between the sexes is absolutely impossible. They are surrounded by filth and vermin. From their birth they see nothing but immorality and vice and crime. They are tainted in the cradle. They are inoculated by their surroundings and they are doomed from the beginning. This system takes their lives just as certainly as if a dagger were thrust into their quivering little hearts, and let me say to you that it were better for many thousands of them if they had never seen the light of day.

Now I submit, my friends, that such a condition as this is indefensible in the twentieth century. Time was when everything had to be done in a very primitive way, and most men had to work all their days, all their lives, to feed and shelter themselves. They had no time, they had no opportunity for a higher development, and so they were what the world calls "illiterate." They had little chance. It took all their time and energy to feed the animal; but how is it today? Upon the average twenty men can today, with the aid of modern machinery, produce as much wealth as a thousand did a half century ago. Can you think of a single thing that enters into our daily existence that cannot be easily produced in abundance for all? If you can I wish you would do me the kindness to name it.

Why Suffer Amid Abundance.

I don't know it all. I am simply a student of this great question. I am serving as best I can and my eyes are ready for the light, and I thank that man, no matter who he be, who can add to the flame of the torch I bear. If there is a single thing you can think of that cannot be produced in abundance, name it. Bread, clothing, fuel—everything.

Nature's storehouse is full to the surface of the earth. All of the raw materials are deposited here in abundance. We have the most

marvelous machinery the world has ever known. Man has long since become master of the natural forces and made them work for him. Now he has but to touch a button and the wheels begin to spin and the machinery to whirl, and wealth is produced on every hand in increasing abundance. Why should any man, woman or child suffer for food, clothing or shelter? Why? The question cannot be answered. Don't tell me that some men are too lazy to work. Suppose they are too lazy to work, what do you think of a social system that produces men too lazy to work? If a man is too lazy to work don't treat him with contempt. Don't look down upon him with scorn as if you were a superior being. If there is a man too lazy to work there is something the matter with him. He wasn't born right or he was perverted in this system. You could not, if you tried, keep a normal man inactive, and if you did he would go stark mad. Go to any penitentiary and you will find the men there begging for the privilege of doing work.

I know by very close study of the question exactly how men become idle. I don't repel them when I meet them. I have never yet seen the tramp I was not able to receive with open arms. He is less fortunate than I. He is made the same as I am made. He is the child of the same Father. Had I been born in his environment, had I been subjected to

the same things he was I should be where he is.

Tools and Tramps.

Can you tell me why there wasn't a tramp in the United States in 1860? In that day, if some one had said "tramp," no one would have known what was meant by it. If human nature is innately depraved and men would rather ride on brake-beams and sleep in holes and caves instead of comfortable beds, if they would do that from pure choice and from natural depravity, why were they not built that way fifty years ago? Fifty years ago capitalism was in its earlier stages. Fifty years ago work was still mainly done by hand, and every boy could learn a trade and master the tools and go to work. That is why there were no tramps. In fifty years that simple tool has become a mammoth machine. It grows larger and costlier all the time. It has crowded the hand tool out of production. With the machine came the capitalist. There were no capitalists nor was there such a thing as capital before the beginning of the present system. Capitalists came with machinery. Up to the time that machinery supplanted the hand tool the little employer was himself a workingman. No matter what the shop or factory, you would find the employer side by side with his men. He was a

superior workman who got more orders than he could fill and employed others to help him, but he had to pay them about the equivalent of what they produced because if he did not they could pack up their tools and go into business for themselves.

Now, the individual tool has become a mammoth social machine. It has multiplied production many times. The old tool was individually owned and used. The modern tool, in the form of a great machine, is social in every conception of it. Look at one of these giant machines. Come to the Appeal office and look at the press in operation. Here the progressive conception of the ages is crystalized. What individual shall put his hand on this social machine and say, "This is mine! He who would apply labor here must first pay tribute to me."

The hand tool has been largely supplanted by this machine. Not many individual tools are left. You are still producing in a very small way here in Girard, but your production is flickering out gradually. It is but a question of time until it will expire entirely. In spite of all that can be said or done to the contrary production is organizing upon a larger and larger scale and becoming entirely co-operative. This has crowded out the smaller competitor and gradually opened the way for a new social order.

Will Make Home Possible.

Your material interest and mine in the society of the future will be the same. Instead of having to fight each other like animals, as we do today, and seeking to glorify the brute struggle for existence—of which every civilized human being ought to be ashamed—instead of this, our material interests are going to be mutual. We are going to jointly own these mammoth machines, and we are going to operate them as joint partners and we are going to divide the products among ourselves.

We are not going to send our surplus to the Jim Hills, Goulds and Vanderbilts of New York. We are not going to pile up a billion of dollars in John D. Rockefeller's hands—a vast pyramid from the height of which he can look down with scorn and contempt upon the "common herd." John D. Rockefeller's great fortune is built upon your ignorance. When you know enough to know what your interest is you will support the party that is organized upon the basis of the collective ownership of the means of life. This party will sweep into power upon the issue of wage-slavery just as republicanism swept into power upon the issue of chattel slavery half a century ago.

In the meantime, don't have any fear of us Socialists. We don't mean any harm! Many

of you have been taught to look upon us as dangerous people. It is amazing to what extent this prejudice has struck root. The capitalist press tells you of a good many things that we Socialists are going to do that we do not intend to do. They tell you we are going to break up the home. Great heavens! What about the homes of the four million tramps that are looking for work today? How about the thousands and thousands of miserable shacks in New York and every great city where humanity festers? It would be a good thing if they were torn down and obliterated completely, for they are not fit for human habitation. No, we are not going to destroy the home, but we are going to make the home possible for all for the first time in history.

Progress Born of Agitation.

You may think you are very comfortable. You may not agree with me. I don't expect you to and don't ask you to. I am going to ask you to remember what I say this afternoon and perhaps before I am elected president of the United States you will know it is true. Now there are those of you who are fairly comfortable under the present standard. Isn't it amazing to you how little the average man is satisfied with? You go out here to the edge of town and you will find a small farmer who has a cabin with just room enough to

keep himself and wife and two or three children, which has a mortgage on it, and he works early and late and gets just enough in net returns to keep him in working order, and he will enthuse about the wonderful prosperity of the country.

He is satisfied, and that is his calamity.

Now the majority of you would say that is his good fortune. "It is a blessing that he is satisfied." As a matter of fact it is a curse to him and to society that he is satisfied.

If it had not been for the discontent of the few fellows who have not been satisfied with their condition you would still be living in caves. You never would have emerged from the jungle. Intelligent discontent is the main-spring of civilization.

Progress is born of agitation. It is agitation or stagnation. I have taken my choice.

This farmer works all day long, works hard enough to produce enough to live the life of a man; not of an animal, but of a man. Now there is an essential difference between a man and an animal. I admire a magnificent animal in any form except in the human form. Suppose you had everything that you could possibly desire, so far as your physical wants are concerned. Suppose you had a million to your credit in bank, a palatial home and relations to suit yourself, but no soul capacity for real enjoyment. If you were denied knowing what sorrow is, what real joy

is, what music is, and literature and sculpture, and all of those subtle influences that touch the heart and quicken the pulses and fire the senses, and so lift and ennoble a man that he can feel his head among the stars and in high communion with God himself—if you are denied these, no matter how sleek or fat or contented you may be, you are still as base and sordid and repulsive a being as walks God's green earth.

The Farmer's Needs.

You may have plenty of money. The poorest people on this earth are those who have most money. A man is said to be poor when he has none, but he is a pauper who has nothing else. Now this farmer, what does he know about literature? After his hard day's work he sits in his little shack. He is fed and his animal wants are satisfied. It is at this time that a man ought to begin to live. It is not while you work and slave that you live. It is when you have done your work honestly, when you have contributed your share to the common fund, that you begin to live. Then, as Whitman said, you take out your soul; you can commune with yourself; you can take a comrade by the hand and you can look into his eyes and down into his soul, and in that communion you live. And if you don't know what that is, or if you are not at least on the

edge of it, it is denied you to even look into the promised land.

Now this farmer knows nothing about the literature of the world. All its libraries are sealed to him. So far as he is concerned, Homer and Dante and Dickens might as well not have lived; Beethoven, Liszt and Wagner, and all those musicians whose art makes the common atmosphere rich with melody, never have been for this farmer. He knows nothing about literature or art. Never rises above the animal plane. Within fifteen minutes after he has ceased to live he is forgotten; the next generation doesn't know his name, and the world doesn't know he ever lived. This is life under the present standard.

You tell me this is all the farmer is fit for? What do I propose to do for that farmer. Nothing. I simply want to awaken that farmer to the fact that he is robbed every day in the week and if I can do that he will fall into line with the Socialist movement, and will march to the polls on election day, and, instead of casting his vote to fasten the shackles upon his limbs more firmly, he will vote for his emancipation. All I have to do is to show that farmer, that day laborer, that tramp, that they are victims of this system, that their interests are identical, that they constitute the millions and that the millions have the votes. The Rockefellers have the dollars, but we have the votes; and when we

have sense enough to know how to use the votes we will have not only the votes but the dollars for all the children of men.

Who Will Save Us From Congress?

This seems quite visionary to some of you, and especially to those of you who know absolutely nothing about economics. I could not begin to tell you the story of social evolution this afternoon; of how these things are doing day by day, of how the world is being pushed into Socialism, and how it is bound to arrive, no matter whether you are for it or against it. It is the next inevitable phase of civilization. It isn't a scheme; it isn't a contrivance. It isn't anything that is made to order. The day is coming when you will be pushed into it by unseen hands whether you will or not.

I venture the prophecy that within the next few years you will be almost completely dispossessed. You are howling against the trusts, and the trusts are laughing at you. You keep on voting in the same old way, and the trusts will keep on getting what you produce. You say congress will give you relief. Good heavens! Who will save us from congress? Don't you know that congress is made up almost wholly of trust lawyers and corporation attorneys? I don't happen to have the roll of this one, but with few exceptions they are all

lawyers. Now, in the competitive system the lawyer sells himself to the highest bidder, the same as the workingman does. Who is the highest bidder? The corporation, of course. So the trust buys the best lawyer and the common herd gets the worst one.

Politics Reflex of Economics.

Now it is a fact that politics is simply the reflex of economics. The material foundation of society determines the character of all social institutions—political, educational, ethical and spiritual. In proportion as the economic foundation of society changes the character of social institutions changes to correspond. Half of this country was in favor of chattel slavery, and half was opposed to it, geographically speaking. Why was the church of the south in favor of chattel slavery? Why was the church of the north opposed to chattel slavery? The northern capitalist wasn't a bit more opposed to chattel slavery **from any moral sense** than was the southern plantation owner. The south produced cotton for the market by the hand labor of negro slaves. On the other hand, the north wasn't dependent upon cotton—could raise no cotton. In the north it was the small capitalist at the beginning of capitalism, who, with the machine, had begun to manufacture, and wanted cheap labor; and the sharper the competition the

cheaper he could buy his labor. Now, chattel slavery to the southern plantation owner was the source of his wealth. He had to have slaves, and what the plantation owner had to have in economics the preacher had to justify in religion. As long as chattel slavery was necessary to the southern plantation owner, as long as that stage of the economic condition lasted, the preachers stood up in the pulpits of the south and said that slavery was ordained of God, and proved it by the Bible. I don't know of any crime that the oppressors and their hirelings have not proven by the Bible.

Analogies From History.

Then competition between workers began as machines took the place of hand labor. Manufacturers wanted larger and larger bodies of labor and the competition spread out here to Kansas, and I have always felt when in Kansas that I stood on sacred soil. When I hear the name of Kansas I doff my hat. The free soilers came here, despised, hated and were persecuted. They were the enemies of the human race. Why? Because they had hearts throbbing in their breasts. Because they looked with pity upon the negro slave who received his wages in lashes applied to his naked back; who saw his crying wife torn from him and his children, pleading, snatched from his side and sold into slavery, while the

great mass looked on just as the great mass is looking on today, and the preachers stood up in their pulpits and said: "It is all right. God knows best." And whenever an abolitionist raised his head he was hounded as if he had been a wild beast.

I heard the story from Wendell Phillips one evening. I never can forget it. How I wish he was here this afternoon! We sat together and he said: "Debs, the world will never know with what bitter and relentless persecution the early abolitionists had to contend." Wendell Phillips was a perfect aristocrat; a royal man, who instantly challenged respect and admiration. Wendell Phillips was treated as if he had been the worst felon on earth. They went to his house to mob him, and why? Because he protested against sending a fugitive negro back into the hell of slavery. The whole commonwealth of Massachusetts said, "Take him back! Obey the law!" That is what they are everlastingly saying to us—"Obey the law!" Just above the door of the state house there was an inscription: "God Bless the Commonwealth of Massachusetts." Wendell Phillips said: "If Massachusetts has become a slave hunter, if Massachusetts is in alliance with the slave catchers of the south, that inscription should be changed, and in place of 'God Bless the Commonwealth of Massachusetts,' it should be: 'God Damn the Commonwealth of Massachusetts!'" God smiled in that same instant.

Growth of Socialism.

All of the slave catchers and holders, all of the oppressors of man, all of the enemies of the human race, all of the rulers of Siberia, where a large part of the earth's surface has been transformed into a hell—all have spoken in the name of the Great God and the Holy Bible.

There will be a change one of these days. The world is just beginning to awaken, and is soon to sing its first anthem of freedom. All the signs of the times are cheering. Twenty-five years ago there was but a handful of Socialists; today there are a half million. When the polls are closed next fall you will be astonished. The Socialist movement is in alliance with the forces of progress. We are today where the abolitionists were in 1858. Lincoln made the great speeches in that year that gave him the nomination and afterward made him president of the United States.

If you had said to the people in 1858, "In two years from now the republican party is going to sweep the country and seat the president," you would have been laughed to scorn. The Socialist party stands today where the republican party stood fifty years ago. It is in alliance with the forces of evolution; the one party that has a clear-cut, overshadowing issue; the one party that stands for all the people.

In this system we have one set called capitalists, and another set called workers; and they are at war with each other over a division of the product.

Will Establish Private Property.

Now, we Socialists propose that society in its collective capacity shall produce, not for profit, but in abundance to satisfy all human wants; that every man shall have the inalienable right to work, and receive the full equivalent of what he produces; that every man may stand fearlessly erect in the pride and majesty of his own manhood; that every man and every woman shall be economically free.

We are not going to destroy private property. We are going to so establish private property that every worker may have all the private property necessary to house and keep him in comfort and satisfy all his physical wants. Eighty per cent of the people in the United States have little or no property of any kind today. A few have got it all. They have dispossessed the people, and when we get into power we will dispossess them. We will reduce the work day and give every man a chance. We will go to the parks and we will have music because we will have time for music and inclination to enjoy it. Is it not sad to think that not one in a thousand knows what music is? Is it not pitiable to

see the poor, ignorant, dumb human, utterly dead to the divine influence of music? If humanity could only respond to the higher influences! And it would if it had time. Emancipate the slave, throw off his burden; give him a chance and he rises, as if by magic, to the plane of a man. Man has all of these divine attributes. They are in a latent state. They are not yet developed. It does not pay now to love music. Keep your eye on the almighty dollar and your fellow man. Get the dollar and keep him down. Make him produce for you. You are not your brother's keeper in this system. Suppose he is poor! Suppose his wife is forced into prostitution! Suppose his child is deformed! And suppose he shuffles off by destroying himself! What is that to you? But you ought to be ashamed. Take the thing home and look it in the face. If you know what it means, and you are a success, God help the failure?

Our conduct is determined largely by our economic relations. If you and I must fight each other to exist, we will not love each other very hard. We can go to the same church and hear the minister tell us in good conscience that we ought to love each other, and the next day we approach the edge of some business transaction. Do we remember what the minister told us? No, it is forgotten until the next Sunday. Six days in the week we are following the Golden Rule reversed. Now, when we

engage in a business transaction in competition, what is more natural than that we should try to get the better of our fellow-man?—cheat him if we can?

And if you succeed that fixes you as a successful business man. You have all the necessary qualifications. Don't let your conscience disturb you—that would interfere with business.

Humanity and the Future.

Competition was natural and constructive once, but do you think you are competing today? Many of you think you are. Against whom? Against Rockefeller? About as I would if I had a wheelbarrow and competed with the Santa Fe from here to Kansas City. That is about the way you are competing, but your boys will not have even that chance—if capitalism lives. You hear of the "late" panic. It is very late. It is going to be very late. This panic will be with us five years from now, and will continue from now till then.

When we have stopped clutching each others' throats, when we have stopped enslaving each other, we will stand together, hands clasped, and be friends. We will be comrades, we will be brothers, and we will begin the march to the grandest civilization the human race has ever known.

I did not mean to keep you so long this afternoon. I am sure I appreciate the patience with which you have listened to me. From

the very depths of my heart I thank you, each of you—every man, woman and child, for this splendid testimonial, this beautiful tribute which I shall remember with gratitude until memory empties its urn into forgetfulness.

HERE COMES A MAN.

By **George Bicknell.**

Here comes a man with one free call;

He shouts aloud nor does he fear

The foolish threat of deafened ear;

Nor does he heed who would enthrall.

Here comes a man with love for men

As pure and broad as boundless space;

He gathers light from every race,

And sheds it on the world again.

His joy is not alone for self;

His life makes glad some whom he meets

By turning bitter galls to sweets

And shaming every show of self.

Here comes a man whose like is rare;

A kindred heart for hearts that bleed;

A refuge in dark hours of need;

A burdened world his greatest care;

His call the call to Love and Faith,

To Love and Faith and Liberty;

But some decry, and some there be

Who say: "A Dream;" "A soulless wraith."

Yet, though his call be but a dream,

The love he sheds in spreading this

Will give the world much lasting bliss

And purify a Hate-filled stream.

Then hail to him who loves so well!

The Brother of the Poor; the Friend

Of them that labor without end.

And hail the dawn he dares foretell!