

# POEMS OF



## ✿ JUSTICE, ✿

INSCRIBED TO

EUGENE V. DEBS

AND THE

Social Democrats of the World,

BY

H. S. GENEVRA LAKE.

Price 10 Cents.

1900.



CHAS. LEZIU'S, 103 CHAMPLAIN ST., CLEVELAND, O.









“Mr. Debs was the first leader in the labor movement in America to offer his liberty as a protest against the rule of corporations, and his unfaltering courage and devotion to the labor movement mark him as the man destined to lead the struggling millions to the final act in the great social drama in which the civilized world is the stage.”—*Appeal to Reason.*



“Thou art Freedom’s now, and Fame’s,  
One of the few, the immortal names  
That were not born to die.”

F. G. HALBECK



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## PREFACE.

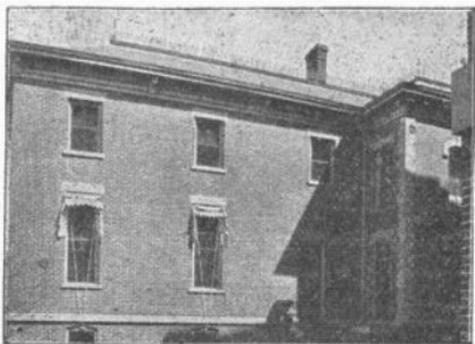
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I have no apology to offer for the appearance of these poems.

The time, the circumstances, and the subject legitimately call them forth. They will mark one of the most memorable epochs in the history of our country. May they inspire and ensphere the millions of men and women who, to-day, are casting their lot with the superb Army of Industry keeping step with the distinguished revolutionists of the world, among whom Eugene V. Debs (Presidential candidate of the Social Democratic Party of America) must ever remain a striking and brilliant figure.

THE AUTHOR.

SEPTEMBER, 1900.  
OLYMPIA, WASH., U. S. A.



EXTERIOR VIEW OF WOODSTOCK JAIL.

## ON RELEASE FROM JAIL.

---

Brave champion of the toiling masses!  
 Defier of the ruling classes!  
 Proud "convict"! thou art once more free  
 To wage the war for liberty.

God's blessing on thee and the cause  
 For which thou didst confront the laws!—  
 Base counterfeit of "equal right,"—  
 On Freedom's page the foulest blight.

Thou hast done well the part assigned  
 In this great warfare for mankind.  
 The tyrants laughed to see thee caught;  
 They wot not of the power of thought;  
 Thy words have sped the world around,  
 To despots' ears a direful sound.

Strike on with "strikes," howe'er they end,  
 'Till labor can itself defend;  
 Teach all to stand erect for right  
 Amid this dark industrial night.

God's beacons shine upon the cloud  
 Whence issues forth, in thunders loud,  
 A voice that caught thy listening ear:  
 "The dawn of liberty is near."

Hurrah for toiling serf and slave!  
 Hurrah for him who nobly gave  
 His life in prison cell for those  
 Who could not well proclaim their woes!

We greet thee, comrade, tried and true,—  
 And those about allied with you!  
 All labor yet shall be made free,—  
*Defeat be crowned with victory.*  
 November, 1895.

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#### GOD'S ANGELS GUIDE.

---

God's angels guide thee through the gathering gloom,  
 And hold thee steadfast though the way seem dark!  
 The crumbling fabrics feel the day of doom,  
 And thy proud name is as a shining mark.

God's angels guide thee though the fight be long!  
 Thy purpose true all loyal hearts must feel;  
 The millions yet shall sing a grander song,  
 And Right her noble presence full reveal.

Send forth the words warmed at thy throbbing heart;  
 We watch and wait where life and hope seem dead;  
 Of all of us thou art, indeed, a flaming part,  
 And to the Purpose we, like thee, are wed.  
 May, 1896.

## WELCOMED TO CLEVELAND, O.

---

Welcome, labor's chosen leader!  
 True, and bravest of the brave!  
 He who faced the tyrants calmly  
 For the sake of toiling slave.

Slave in mill, and mine, and workshop,  
 Slave in factory and den;  
 Those who gain a wretched "living,"  
 And who know not they are men.

Tagged like cattle, hunger daunted,  
 Oh, ye toilers, foul and gaunt,  
 There are those who look beyond ye,  
 And defy the ghost of want.

Calm-eyed, fearless, friends to justice,  
 Knowing what her mandates mean,  
 We are standing, watching, praying  
 For the light that we have seen.

East and West it flames up grandly,  
 And the peans that we sing  
 Mean rejoicing for the ages,  
 When we know nor lord nor king.

None save they who do their duty,  
 Standing, compact, for the good:  
 Not competing, but united  
 In one world-wide brotherhood.

October, 1896.

**ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ESPOUSAL  
OF SOCIALISM.**

---

So you have consented to be one of the rabble,  
The rowdies, those who roust about?  
Have cast your lot with the lubbers, and low-down  
folks, have you?  
Do you know that these fellows are rough, and rough-  
shod?  
That their speech is a blarney, a blasphemy, when  
roiled?  
And they often are so.

For what have you thus identified yourself? Do they  
want you?  
Do they crave to be led from bondage to liberty?  
Who knows?  
They tell us tales, it is true, of their roughing it—  
But then you know toughs must rough it:  
But I'll bet you a dice, Gene, if we were toughened by  
heat,  
And by cold, by rain and by sleet,  
By hunger and rags and God knows what,  
We, too, would be one of them—  
The wanderers, who have not where to lay head.  
I can't tell how it is, but I'm mighty dead sure  
That earth, and the fullness thereof,  
Is for all of us. God knows no kings, queens,  
No royalty, no nonsense—not a bit of it.  
We are all "laborers," hired by high heaven to live  
right.  
To be sure, some preach to be patient, and docile—  
I guess that's right, too, if all would join in the march.  
I know, by my soul, I can travel that road

If prelates, and czars, and Flora McFlimsies will train  
 all together;  
 But to be grand up in heaven, and goaded on earth—  
 Why! the thing isn't any way reasonable!

*This is God's world as much as are any,*

*So let the waves of the new order roll on.*

A Socialist, eh? Yes, so must we all be;  
 Let us take turns at the wheel that evolves the Great  
 Era.

Come, white-handed chap, and you, ruffled and  
 puffed—

Let us help along some way. If we can't dig the coal,  
 Nor drain the canal, nor be a 'longshoreman,

Let us "raise the wages," and Hades, and all that sort  
 of thing,

'Till mankind are at-one-ment.

February, 1897.

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**HIGH O'ER THE STRIFE.**

---

High o'er the strife that lowers around,  
 Secure as God and sure as fate,  
 The era of a better time  
 Is dawning on the hearts that wait.

No evil thought, no selfish deed  
 Shall mar the brightness of that hour;  
 The might of justice, and the need  
 Shall nerve thy heart with added power.

May, 1897.

## THE VAMPIRE.

---

(A la Rudyard Kipling, on the Queen's Jubilee.)

A swell there was, and he made a prayer  
 (Even as you and I)  
 To Rag, Tag and Bob Tail, in his lair—  
 (We call him "the people," for so we dare),  
 And we laugh and squint at his load of care,  
 While he must work or die.

Oh, the wasted years, and the years of waste,  
 And the work in the sun and rain,  
 They all belong, of course, to the swell,  
 Who "lives for heaven," but who makes a hell  
 For Tag, with his tallow brain.

A swell there was, and he swelled with pride,  
 (Even as you and I,  
 With silk and linen he decked his hide,  
 His "sacred person," with swinging stride,  
 His poisoned blood with the weed he tried,  
 Even as you and I.

Oh, he does not toil, this handsome swell,  
 (Even as you and I,  
 His nails are long, and he will not tell  
 What 'tis on earth he has to sell,  
 This long-haired fellow who "looks so well,"  
 Even as you and I.

Oh, the wage of sin is the wage of death,  
 And to squeeze a man till he has no breath,

The Bible knows, and the Bible saith—  
 (At least I've heard it so,)  
 Is a sin and crime of the deepest dye,  
 Though the man is squeezed with a legal lie,  
 Which stupid Tag don't know.

\* \* \* \* \*

Oh, swell's sweet face has a velvet skin;  
 She looks so fair, she is foul within;  
 Her hands are soft, and have ever been  
 (This drone in the human hive);  
 But I'll bet my dime her days are past—  
 The kings and queens they shall never last—  
 Just'tack that up on the tallest mast—  
 Old Tag, more dead than alive.

For I tell you what, the judgment day  
 Has dawned, at last, in a curious way;  
 The vampire crowd they shall pass away,  
 (Even as you and I,)  
 Laces and tinsel, and crown, and trail,  
 Wrought out of the lives that work and fail,  
 Are surely passing by.

Yes, a swell there was, and she looked on so,  
 Her feet they were shod with old Tag's woe.  
 Her flowers tossed up on a furlbelow.—  
 (It might be you or I,)  
 But God swooped down and a new way tried,  
 The sheep from the goats He did divide,  
 And said that the swell must die.

May, 1897.

### SAIL ON.

---

Sail on, sail on, where skies are blue,  
 And soft winds waft you o'er the sea,  
 Where love and living may be true,  
 In Labor's real democracy.

Sail on, sail on, no storms shall mar  
 The prospect of the perfect day;  
 Upon the sky one brilliant star—  
 The Star of Faith shall light the way.

Sail on, brave Captain of a crew  
 Of anxious hearts and weary lives,  
 Of dreamers of an Earth made new,—  
 A goodly State that e'er survives.

Survives while "systems" rise and fall.  
 Survives while men and women die,—  
 Good for the poor, the weak, for all,  
 Peace for mankind—*democracy*.

Yes, thou who are illum'ed to see  
 That savagery in social life  
 Must yield to better states to be,  
 That Peace must supersede the strife,—

Sail on no wars shall mar thy course,  
 No cannon belch their deadly flame,  
 No darkness of a grim remorse  
 Shall rest, a pall, upon thy name.

Lead on the hosts, their footsteps guide  
 With counsel calm, with fervor deep,  
 The brave ones battle at thy side,  
 And Justice shall not always sleep.

Above thee floats a flag unfurled,  
 As white as drifted snow its face,  
 'Tis hope for all the waiting world,  
 'Tis life for all the dying race.  
 August, 1897.

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### THEY CALL THEE DISTURBER.

---

They call thee disturber, destroyer of the peace:  
 They put thee before us as one who betrays:  
     But it is not so.  
 Thou hast the fibre of martyrs and heroes:  
 Thy tongue is a two-edged sword,  
     And thou wieldest it well.  
 And what is thy crime, pray?  
 That thou say'st others commit such:  
 That they wrong the lorn and the lone ones,  
     The degraded and sad.  
 They strut, and they talk as if wrong were a legal en-  
     actment.  
 God knows what is right, and He guards it:  
 Avaunt, praters! and take up thy "cross."  
     Wear the signet of shame,  
 Thou who preachest of Christ,  
 Yet callest thy brother a "digger."  
 Why should he dig coal for thee,  
 Since thou returnest but stories?

Ah, me! this is the judgment of Earth.  
 'Tis the time which was prophesied  
 By the aliens and freebooters,  
 Who bore their tasks and then vanished.

\* \* \* \* \*

Swing to, thou sawyer with the shining ax.  
 Cut low the tree of rotting time,  
 Receive the crown, impose the tax,  
 Unearth the earthly crime,  
 Grind fine the grist of death and life,  
 Establish good, destroy the ill,  
 Dispel the gloom, allay the strife,  
 And teach the truth that laws may kill;  
 So round ye out the things of sense,  
 And flash the light o'er darkened ways,  
 God giveth all a recompense,  
 And vengeance sure He ne'er delays.  
 September, 1897.

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### DEBS, THE DEMOCRAT.

---

*"Debs is all right."*—*Citizen.*

"Debs is all right?" Well, I guess so!  
 A man who will madden men by showing them their  
 villainy,  
 Is right, up to date.  
 Gods! to be right now, to some, means to squint and to  
 squirm  
 About "law" and "religion," and all that sort of thing:  
 It means to deck the hide with feathers and folderol,  
 And play "goodie" to the "poor devils."  
 Why poor? Oh, there are many reasons:

Some won't work, some can't, and some don't know  
how.

But what is work, anyhow?

P'raps 'tis to saunter 'round lookin' lots

And gettin' lots for lookin' ;

Who knows?

Work may be to trace marks on a "margin,"

Thus waterin' somethin' called "stock";—

What's work, anyhow?

Blackin' boots, is it? or preachin' "the will of the  
Lord"?

Be it what it may, by the hilt of my father's sword,

(And he was a revolutionist—he fought in '76.)

"Debs is all right," and if you don't believe it,—

Why, wait till the crack of doom

(God's will, not mine,) sets our sham Republic

A spinnin'—the Lord knows where.

\* \* \* \*

Some of us have eyes and we see, ears and we hear.

And the roar of a mighty change is soundin' out clear:

November, 1897.

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### WHERE'S DEBS.

---

"Where's Debs these days?"—*Western Journal*.

Where's Debs? "Worn out" fighting the monster of  
Capitalism;

Sitting alone with some shadows of sadness,

But surrendered? No, never!

Surrender to what? The loud-mouthed mountebanks

Who rule the land with the rifles of workingmen?  
 Fight? and for what? The thought of another,  
 A hypocrite, who says the man who works has a coun-  
 try;

No, the idlers have this, the drones, and the foul ones.  
 But the great hearts, like Debs, they say the true things  
 and suffer.

He is a brave man who can say the true things to-day,  
 Can say that evil is evil,  
 And wrong is the same in rich as in poor.

July, 1898.

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#### DELMONICO'S.

---

(March 21st Eugene V. Debs addressed the Nineteenth Century Club on "Prison Labor." The audience was a brilliant one, so far as jewelry and showy raiment go, and the address was listened to, on the whole, in silence, and greeted, at the close, with subdued applause.—*Social Democratic Herald*.)

They sat around him, all the delicate and proud,  
 Whose wants had made the world a snare;  
 They smiled in princely ease and grace,  
 And grew to eyeing each the other with an envious  
 stare;

They sighed and fluttered, as they waited for their  
 guest;

They gave a well-bred silence when he came,  
 And gazed, full-eyed, as on a lion caught,  
 For sure these dames and courtly gentlemen  
 Were longing just to pull his savage claws.  
 And wherefore? Oh, because they grasped and tore.

Without regard for sacred "vested right."  
 The fine-spun fabrics and the finer theories.  
 This Western man, of robust lineage,  
 Of temper firm, yet spiritual,  
 He tore with glee, superb, indeed,  
 The lie that labor lives on idleness,  
 That they who spin not should forever wear the purple  
 linen.

Swift, and cool, and clear fell the Damascus blade,  
 And crouched and tore, like savage beast,  
 Upon the vitals of their dead humanity.  
 And, Heaven be praised! they did not know  
 How well and swift the surgeon knife descended.  
 They only felt, in some purblinded way,  
 That God was speaking through a better clay.

Strike yet again, bold champion of truth,  
 Defender of the damned, in "hells" of earth,  
 From those, the damned, in "heavens."  
 These warring states must needs commingle,  
 Till a better fruit is born,—  
 The fruit of a wide sympathy,  
 Wherein no greed shall grind to dust  
 The souls of those who struggle to be free,  
 "God's will be done" means more than mouthing,  
 And the besom blows of our brave Debs  
 Shall clear the air for the wide commonwealth,  
 Where rich are they who make their needs,  
 And poor the present plunderers.  
 Amen! God's will be done.

March, 1899.

## WE ARE COMING, GREAT JEHOVAH.

A LABOR ANTHEM.

---

We are coming, great Jehovah, thou who makest stars  
and years ;  
We are coming from the lowlands of the Earth with  
all its tears ;  
We are coming with our cypress for the sins that we  
have done ;  
We are coming, great Jehovah, with our faces towards  
the sun.

We are coming from the darkness, we are moving  
toward the light ;  
We have toiled too long for nothing, we have strayed  
away from right ;  
We have lain in meek submission, we have crouched,  
and cried, and prayed ;  
We are coming now from darkness, with our spirits  
undismayed.

We are coming, great Jehovah, as the slime comes  
from the sea ;  
We shall toil no more for tyrants, who pretend 'tis toil  
for thee ;  
For the God of all the planets needs no sacrifice from  
man ;  
We can see with clearer vision in the great eternal plan.

We are banner bearers only, of the truth that all are  
free,  
For the toil of loving service in "the bonds of liberty" :

And the one who would have comfort must of comfort  
 ever give;  
 We are coming, great Jehovah, and declare our right  
 to live.

We shall live as freemen, truly, with our passions  
 curbed to peace;  
 We shall scatter and shall gather, and shall share the  
 earth's increase;  
 Oh, we shout with solemn gladness as the squadrons  
 march and form:  
 "We can see the sun is rising through the blinding mist  
 and storm."

We are coming, great Jehovah, as the shipwrecked  
 from the sea;  
 We will climb the rigging Progress, and survey the life  
 to be;  
 We are coming, oh, we're coming, with our leader true  
 and tried,  
 In the Commonwealth of Justice to forevermore abide.

Chorus:—

We are coming, oh, we're coming, with our leader true  
 and tried,  
 In the Commonwealth of Justice to forevermore abide.  
 October, 1899.

FOR SALE AT  
193 CHAMPLAIN STREET,  
CLEVELAND, O.







