
Pictures

by Eugene V. Debs

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Professor [Daniel] DeLeon, of Columbia College, in an address before a stenographers' association, said:

At the time of the establishment of the Republic of America, it would have been a perfectly rational prophecy to have said that the Republic could not last. Madison said that a republic could not be a permanency when any large number of the people were simply cattle. But the Republic has not gone down. Neither did those of Greece and Rome go down at once. Today one man can produce as much as it took a hundred to produce 100 years ago. The same quantity of wealth can be produced in one-fifth of the time. This is through machinery. By steam power the necessary hours of labor have been reduced to one hour as compared with ten. Transportation, giving the means of exchange of commodities, has combined with these to increase the productivity of labor one thousand fold.

In view of this, wealth ought to be the most plentiful thing in the world. But if statistics are approximately true the average laborer does not earn nearly \$1 a day. Wealth may have increased in the hands of some, but has not in proportion among the others. There is not enough actual wealth in the United States to supply all its inhabitants for one month. Under the present system the non-productive army is enormous. The middlemen come in also in equal numbers to the producers. All the stores dealing in the same commodity in the same neighborhood are unnecessary and prejudicial to the general good. From this follows the misery of the many and the immorality of the few. This necessitates all the police and soldiers. The people of our Four Hundred, those of Fifth Avenue and Madison Avenue, do not trust one another. They smuggle detectives into their ballrooms to prevent their diamonds being stolen — by whom? By their own guests.

The Professor's subject was Bellamyism, and he spoke for the new party, known as "Nationalists." There is not a wrong of which Prof. DeLeon complains that could not be exterminated in five years by the fiat of the ballot, if all honest men could be marshaled under the banner of common sense reform — a reform free from vagary, crankism, and utopian follies. For instance, trusts and monopolies could be abolished. The water, upon which the people pay enormous dividends could be squeezed out of stocks and bonds; the hours constituting a day's work could be fixed beyond repeal or appeal. Honest men could be elected to make honest laws, and honest officials could be elected to execute them. Why not be practical? Why not use the means at hand to usher in an era of reform? If workingmen would organize and then federate their organizations — land piracy, trust piracy, monopoly piracy, and corporation privacy would cease.

Edited by Tim Davenport

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