

## The Climax of Capitalism (April 27, 1901)

At the present rate of industrial and commercial concentration it will not be long before competition in the realm of production will practically be a thing of the past. The great capitalists of the world, through their agents and promoters, are engineering gigantic deals and schemes to absorb or crush out all competition, thus giving them substantial and undisputed control of the situation, and enabling them to exploit the people at their own sweet will and exercise despotic authority over their countless victims. So completely are these capitalists absorbed in their manipulations that it is doubtful if a single one of them realizes that they are working with might and main for their own financial undoing and that at the climax of capitalism they will be "hoist by their own petard," and socialism, which they affect to despise and dread, will relieve them of their crowns and scepters, abolish their despotic functions, and give them equal opportunities with others to earn an honest living and enjoy "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

When the glorious day dawns the capitalists will work for what they get and the workers will get what they work for. The hideous inequalities which now mock civilization and deform society will be known no more forever, except in the historic annals of the "dark ages" of capitalism.

In this terrific rush toward the climax, which may be spelled cataclysm, Andrew Carnegie, whose income is a million a month, is having a desperate time resisting the surplus value that is forced upon and threatens to engulf him. The other day he made a give of \$4 million in charities for the benefit of his disabled and superannuated employees. He scatters libraries as the wind scatters leaves in autumn. It may be that the Scotch-American multimillionaire sees some writing on the wall, or that in his advancing years, as the horrors of Homestead come back to his memory, and he sees the streets slippery with the blood of workingmen he robbed and then hired Pinkerton thugs to murder, his conscience festers with accusation and he hopes to blot out the awful tragedy by tapping the vast reservoir of blood which his cupidity prompted him to drain by force and crime from the veins of his helpless wage-slaves.

The tragedy of Homestead is fresh in our memory. The wound in the body of labor, "poor dumb mouth," is mutely crying for vengeance. Carnegie the philanthropist, who went to Europe and left Frick, the monster, in charge, cannot escape responsibility for the infamous crime of the 300 Pinkerton thugs who murdered workingmen in 1892. He was deaf to every appeal, and upon his soul the bloodstains are as ineffaceable as the spots on the skin of a leopard, and though he build ten thousand libraries, the ghosts of his victims will surmount them all and point their fleshless fingers of guilt at the rankest Pharisee in Christendom.

The days in which we live are indeed pregnant with great possibilities. The working class is charged with the gravest responsibility of the ages, and the day of action draweth nigh. What a privilege to have a part in the closing acts of this stupendous drama! The slavery of all the centuries is to be blotted from the earth forever, and it is for this sublimest of achievements that the socialists of all lands are marshaling their hosts to do and to dare until capitalism is overthrown and the working class seizes the scepter of authority and rules the world.

Workingmen of America, do not forget for an instant that the great struggle in which you are engaged is a class conflict, and that the lines must be sharply drawn in every battle, whether on the economic or the political field. The slavery of your class is responsible for your chains, rags, and crusts, and never until your entire class is emancipated can you escape from the iron grasp of your capitalistic masters.

So far as this struggle is concerned, there is no good capitalist and no bad workingman. Every capitalist is your enemy and every workingman is your friend. You have got to stand and act as one. Solidarity is your salvation, and socialism points unerringly the way.

Day by day the class-conscious socialist movement increases in power. It scorns all compromise. It firmly holds every inch it conquers. It cannot be intimidated by frowns nor frightened by threats. It is pursuing its historic course and come what may, it will press on and on until the goal is reached and labor rules the world.