

In Full Swing:
Excerpt from a Speech in Waterloo, Iowa
(February 27, 1906)

To have lived to see the modern social revolution in full swing is to have achieved a measure of success. To *see* it, I say, for, alas, there are many millions of blind beings unable or unwilling to see it, and the sun of their lives, if any there be, must set in failure and gloom.

They who *see* the social revolution in full sweep, who have conscious comprehension of its cosmic scope and significance, are living life at its fullest tide and their souls are attuned to, and their hearts are keeping time with, the symphonies of the universe.

In full swing is the latest and greatest revolution in history, and each passing day speeds it along the highway of destiny.

A thousand times have all of us already been paid for all we have done to pave the way for the revolution and keep it on the main track.

A moment's survey of the present and an imaginative one of the future is sufficient compensation for all that has been and all that may yet have to be done to strike the age-old fetters from the children of toil and emancipate the race.

Thirty-one years ago this day I joined the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and was swept into the current of agitation.¹ It all comes back to me like a dream. Every incident of the day is revived and passes in review. The years are gone — have rushed by on wings of lightning — and here I am on the summit, looking toward the west.

Only the other day I was a boy!

But all is well, for I am still a boy and shall remain one. The wrinkles are in my features only; they can never reach my soul, for I am a socialist, and can see the revolution in full swing.

Thirty-one years have passed like a flash — the rest will soon follow, but not before the revolution has swung around the planet, and shoulder to shoulder with my comrades we march triumphantly into the Socialist Republic.

¹ Debs previously marked February 27, 1875 as the date he joined the B of LF in the article "Reminiscent," *Locomotive Firemen's Magazine*, vol. 18, no. 7 (July 1894), p. 681.