Memorial Lecture

ON

Eugene Victor Debs

PRICE TEN CENTS

—BY—

REV. SAMUEL S. CONDO
Marion, Indiana

SCOTT'S PRESBYTERY—MARION, INDIANA
Memorial Lecture

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Rev. Samuel S. Condo
EXPLANATORY

This Memorial Lecture is published for two reasons,—first, because I find so many people who know so little, or nothing, about this magnificent human character, and I most earnestly desire to put this little contribution of facts within the reach of all who wish to know this divine soul. Secondly, I wish to publish abroad my personal contribution of love, and honor, and bring my alabaster box and floral offerings of consolation to him in his lonely hours of this earth life, that he may be cheered, and strengthened in his declining years, and not wait until his precious life has passed out from my mortal vision. Let us all learn to anoint our friends before their burial.

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MEMORIAL LECTURE

ON

EUGENE VICTOR DEBS

By Rev. Samuel S. Condo

My text words are from the creed of Robert G. Ingersoll, reading as follows:—

"There are persons so radiant, so genial, so kind, so pleasure-bearing, that you instinctively feel in their presence that they do you good, whose coming into a room is like the bringing of a lamp there."

"Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead. Fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approvingly, cheering words while their ears can hear them, and while their hearts can be thrilled and made happier. The kind things you mean to say when they are gone, say before they go. The flowers you mean to send for their coffin, send to brighten and sweeten their homes before they leave them. If my friends have alabaster boxes laid away, full of fragrant perfumes of sympathy and affection, which they intend to break over my body, I would much rather they would bring them out in my wearied and troubled hours, and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered while I need them. I
would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without a eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand for their burial. Postmorten kindness does not cheer the burdened spirit. Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward over the weary way.”

It is customary, under the capitalist system, to wait until great and good men die before giving lectures about them; but in the case of the great and good man of my subject, I am intent on speaking my words of kindness and appreciation of his sterling worth and splendid character while he lives, and bringing my loving tribute of praise and floral offerings, not to his funeral, but to his living, warm hand-clasp and great sympathetic heart that beats true to every pulsation of our common humanity in the industrial struggle of the working class today.

This man, “Gene” Debs, was born into this world November 5, 1855, at Terre Haute, Indiana. There were ten children in the family. His mother died April 29, 1906, and the following November 27, 1906, the father also passed away.

These parents were known in that happy French home as “Dandy” and “Daisy.” In this ideal home, love reigned supreme and service and sacrifice were given cheerfully by each member for the joy and good of each and all. The stories of his childhood and few years of schooling are replete with family interest. The law of his life was work, yet he was equally enthusiastic in all the joys and sports of childhood. His school days ended with honorable graduation from the Old Seminary School in Terre Haute, where the Indiana State Normal School now stands. In May, 1870, he began at the age of fifteen years to work for the Terre Haute & Indianapolis Railroad Company; first in the shops and later as a locomotive fireman. Here he worked for four years and often when, with lantern in hand, he kissed his dear mother good-by, she could not hide her tears of fear for his life when out on the unballasted prairie railroad. Afterward when he was offered a position in the Hulman & Cox
grocery house at Terre Haute, he accepted it to the great joy of his mother.

In 1879 he was elected City Clerk of Terre Haute, where he served with honor to himself and the City for four years.

He had previously joined the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen when first organized in Terre Haute. He had organized the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen and helped to organize the Switchmen’s Mutual Aid Association, the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen, the Order of Railway Telegraphers, and other labor unions, and at the Buffalo Convention in 1878, he was made associate editor of the Firemen’s Magazine and in July, 1880, was appointed Grand Secretary and Treasurer, and Editor and Manager of the magazine.

When he took charge of the affairs of the office of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, the order had but sixty lodges and a $6,000.00 debt. In a short time he added two hundred and twenty-six lodges and wiped out the debt. At the Cincinnati Convention, he tendered his resignation in 1892, which was unanimously rejected, and he was unanimously re-elected to all the offices previously held. The Convention unanimously voted him two thousand dollars for a trip of rest to Europe; this he modestly rejected.

With the help of a few others, he organized, at Chicago, in 1893, The American Railway Union, and his salary was fixed at seventy-five dollars per month. During the last two years of the existence of the organization, he drew no salary at all. His motive for resigning from the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen is best told in his own words: “I do this because it pleases me and there is nothing I would not do, so far as human effort goes, to advance any movement designed to reach and rescue suffering humanity. I have a heart for others, and that is why I am in this work. When I see suffering about me, I, myself, suffer; and so when I put forth my efforts to relieve others, I am simply working for myself. I do not consider that I have made any sacrifice whatever; no man does, unless he violates his
conscience.' Here is the secret and power of this great labor hero's life—"a heart for others," and "When I see suffering, I, myself, suffer." This is Christly. This is the spirit that suffering and dying humanity is in need of today; the spirit of the Christ, and of the "good Samaritan." Such is the heart and soul of the greatest friend of labor in America today—Eugene V. Debs.

In April, 1894, on the Great Northern Railway, the great fight was on between Mr. J. J. Hill, the Railroad magnate, and Mr. Debs, the labor hero. Mr. Debs and his men won the greatest victory on record, and after the victory, May 3, 1894, Mr. Debs returned to his home at Terre Haute and was met and greeted by four thousand of his enthusiastic townsmen with cheers and unbounded rejoicing over the great victory achieved. In June, 1894, the Pullman strike was fought and won, but this victory was turned into defeat by the Federal administration using the courts and soldiers to imprison the labor leaders and crush the strike. The railroad corporations then resolved to annihilate the A. R. U. Debs was indicted for various crimes by the railroad corporations demanding that he be prosecuted for conspiracy, treason and murder. Reminding us of the Son of God (Jesus) and His twelve disciples; Christ being crucified; and ten of His followers were murdered; one, St. John, only, died a natural death and Judas, the capitalist, bearing the bag, committed suicide. This is what the capitalist system is doing today,—committing suicide exploiting, prosecuting and imprisoning laboring men, for fighting for their inalienable and constitutional rights. In this great strike many predicted that Debs would be hanged. He was imprisoned several times, and finally served six months in Woodstock jail for contempt of court. When the prosecution learned that Debs and his attorneys were in possession of the secret proceedings of the Railroad General Managers' Association and had witnesses to testify as to who had really committed the crimes charged to the strikers, the trial was abruptly ended on the plea that a juror had suddenly taken sick; and no effort, to the present time, has
been made to impanel another jury, although Mr. Debs has hundreds of times demanded it, and challenged the Railroad Corporations and Court, but no response, and so far as the Court records show, that sick juror is still sick. While in Woodstock jail, it was when my first acquaintance was made with Brother Debs through correspondence.

In my morning paper, I read that Debs and his three associates were to be taken to Woodstock jail. My heart was moved and inspired to go to my secretary desk and write him a letter of love and sympathy, being the first Minister of the Gospel of the Carpenter of Nazareth, to write him a letter in Woodstock jail. You can imagine how it impressed him from the following reply written with lead pencil on yellow scratch tablet paper, being the stationery of the jail. This is a copy of his letter that is prophetic, that I value so highly:

Rev. S. S. Condo.
My Dear Sir:

Your good letter of the 12th is received. A thousand thanks for your brave and cheering words. By even mail I send you some printed matter. If you will get the "Arena" for January which you can obtain from your booksellers and read the article by Richard Hinton, you will find some data that will probably be serviceable to you.

I have written my wife at Terre Haute to send you a printed biographical sketch as requested. We are not cast down. We believe, we know we are right and in the end, the right prevails. We are doing the best we can while in jail, and if the night seems dark, we know the dawn is near.

Thanking you again and again, I am,
Yours faithfully,

EUGENE V. DEBS.

Since these eventful days, we have continued in correspondence. While in jail, he thought as never before, and there it was that the rising Sun of Socialism shone through the iron bars into his great mind and soul. Hear him in his own words:

"At this juncture there were delivered from wholly unexpected
quarters, a swift succession of blows that blinded me for an instant and then opened wide my eyes—and in the gleam of every bayonet and the flash of every rifle the class struggle was revealed. This was my first lesson in Socialism, tho wholly unaware that it was called by that name.

Like St. John, the revelator, banished to the Isle of Patmos, who saw in his vision the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven to this earth, so Eugene V. Debs saw and sees the new coming co-operative commonwealth—the Kingdom of Heaven coming to this world. May it come soon.

In the A. R. U. Chicago strike, the strikers were not responsible for the burning of railroad property. It was not done until the arrival of U. S. troops, and it was then done at the instance of the railroads, because the railroad corporations knew that without violence they would lose the strike. Any persons who doubt these facts are referred to the reports of Chief Brennan of the Chicago police, Carrol D. Wright, head of the Labor Bureau, Governor Altgeld’s reports, and to Grover Cleveland’s Special United States Commission that heard witnesses of all kinds in their investigation of the A. R. U. strike. The law breakers were not Eugene V. Debs and his associates but were the Rich Railroad Corporations. The day when there is no law for both rich and poor must never be tolerated by the American people. But the day must soon come when Justice will rip the bandage from her eyes and see the lawlessness of the Havemeyers, Morgans, Harrimans and Rockefellers as well as the toiling Debses. Just now, the famous decision imposing a $29,240,000 fine on the Standard Oil Company for violating the laws of the United States is reversed by the same Judge Grosscup, who handed the lemons to the striking workers and their leaders in 1894. Capitalist Judges and Courts never have done much and never will do much for the working class. The man or men who have the money are those who in our courts generally win out. The poor working man receives but little justice in our courts today. Cash counts for more than character in court. At least ninety per cent. of our laws are made in the interest of capitalists and corporations. One hundred and fifty thousand
railroad employes in the A. R. U. whose hearts were touched with the poverty and suffering of the poor strikers of Pullman, sympathized with them, shared their earnings with them and after trying in every possible way they could conceive of to touch the flinty heart of the rich Pullman Company—every overture being rejected, every suggestion denied, every proposition spurned with devilish contempt—they at last determined not to pollute their hands and dishonor their honest manhood by handling Pullman cars and contributing to the suffering and sorrow of their brethren and wives and babes. And rather than do this they laid down their tools in a body, sacrificed their situations and submitted to persecution, exile and the blacklist, to idleness, poverty, crusts and rags, and every honest man should love and honor them to his latest breath. There was more human sympathy, more of the real spirit of brotherhood, and the real spirit of Christianity in this act than in all the sham pretense and heartless prayers of those disciples of Mammon and gold who cried out against it, and this act will shine forth in increasing splendor long after the dollar worshipers have mingled with the dust of oblivion. Mr. Pullman is dead and rotten and almost forgotten, but Eugene V. Debs still lives, and is honored, loved and revered as no other man in America today, and by the toiling millions of men, women and children of the whole world.

Had Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth, been in Chicago at the time, He would have been on the side of the poor working people and would have denounced the rich oppressors who “oppress the hireling in his wages” as He so often did in his time.

It was a great day when Debs emerged from Woodstick jail. See and read report as given in Chicago Chronicle, November 23, 1895.
Let us look at Eugene V. Debs.

I. In His Physical Appearance

The man who loves his fellowman,
And winds a willing arm about
His brother, when the storms are out,
And lends him all the help he can—
No matter what may be his creed,
A kind God knights him for the deed.
So many gods, so many creeds,
So many paths that wind and wind,
When just the art of being kind
Is all this sad world needs.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

He is tall, six feet two inches high; is slim, powerfully built; a fine head, manly set upon broad shoulders; a long full neck; face clear and a fine physiognomy, handsome and smoothly shaven; blue, deep searching, frank open eyes, penetrating and looking forward into the future; a smile childlike and sweet is usually upon his face; sometimes a sad, melancholy look:

Abraham Lincoln’s. He is common, dresses plainly, always neatly; is intellectual, logical, epigrammatic, a seer prophetic, with quick words that fit and express his thoughts; incisive and unambiguous, they flow like a river of divine human inspiration and deluge his hearers. He quotes from the great writers and poets, and is intimate with them all. Speaks fluently, never hesitates, gestures mostly with his right hand, steps quickly, leans forward toward his audience as if he would take hold of every one of them, embracing all their interests, divine and human, for time and eternity. As Henry Ward Beecher and Dr. Talmage first met in Brooklyn, Talmage said to Beecher: ‘‘How is it Mr. Beecher, I see your church is called the ‘Plymouth Brethren,’ have you no women in your church?’’ Said Beecher: ‘‘Oh, yes, you see the brethren embrace the sisters.’’ So, Mr. Debs is all inclusive and embraces in his great heart and mind all the interests and happiness of the whole human race—he preaches and believes in the brotherhood of man.
from top to bottom. His home library is large and the books it contains are on all phases of human history, politics, government, philosophy, religion, poetry and the arts; and they all bear the marks of having been intimately used. He is a great reader and he has a wonderful and orderly collection of magazine articles which he has had bound in volumes; newspaper clippings arranged in scrap books of ready reference and letters carefully filed and indexed.

II. Debs As An Orator

Show me the man you honor. I know by this symptom, better than any other, what kind of a man you yourself are. For you show me there what your ideal of manhood is, what kind of a man you long inexpressibly to be.—Carlyle.

He made his first political speech for the Democratic party in 1878. He was offered the nomination for Congress by that party but declined it. In 1885 he was elected to the Indiana State Legislature as a Democratic representative with the avowed purpose of securing needed laws in the interests of the working class and railway employes in particular. It was in this year, 1885, that he was married to Katherine Metzel—"Kate" as he lovingly calls her. She is one of the noblest of women, and works with him heartily in this great movement of Socialism. No children have blessed their lives, which is the saddest disappointment of their married life as they are both lovers of children. Their home life is most pure and lovable. Frederic Auguste Bartholdi, the great sculptor who modeled the colossal statue—Liberty Enlightening the World, in New York harbor, wrote of Debs: "He is endowed with the most precious faculty to which one can aspire—the gift of language, and he uses it for the proclamation of the most beautiful and generous thoughts. His beautiful language is that of an apostle." Debs entered Woodstock Jail a thinker and came out an orator.

The Railroad Corporations thought to crush him, but they helped to make him, and turned him from craft-consciousness
to class-consciousness. When capitalism sentenced him to jail, it signed its own death warrant. He has been before thousands of people at Chautauquas, Colleges, Opera Houses, Labor Halls, Churches, etc. At Ann Arbor, the Professor of Elocution told his classes that they had never heard a more eloquent and accomplished orator and the demonstration that followed his address to the students of the University will never be forgotten by those who heard him. Occasionally history gives us a Hugo, an O'Connell, a Phillips, a Lincoln and a Debs. The power of his oratory is in the living truth of his message, which he believes with all his heart and proclaims with the burning love of his great soul and burns into the hearts of his hearers. His enemies say he is a dangerous man. This is the one-half truth they tell about him. He is a dangerous man to private capitalistic interests.

No man in America is more hated and feared by plutocracy than is Eugene V. Debs and no man is more honored and loved than he by the toiling millions of men, women and children. He is the friend of all good, the hater of all evil. His is a new and different kind of oratory from that of the partisan political orators.

His are the "Thoughts that breathe and words that burn" into the minds and hearts of men. He resorts to no tricks of rhetoric, no stage effects, no empty emotions; he stands honestly before the people and opens the doorways of his great mind and heart and pours out the sweet living waters of God's eternal truth to the thirsty human soul. He is a second Abraham Lincoln. The immortal Lincoln and the living Debs, side by side are comrades and counterparts. Mr. John Swinton wrote in September, 1895, as follows:

“When Eugene Victor Debs came to New York from Chicago last year, he made a speech in Cooper Union which I heard. I sat near the spot at which I had sat at another meeting held in the same place thirty-four years previously, which was addressed by another speaker, who came from Chicago to New York. Lincoln of 1860 and Debs of 1894 here seemed to come together and stand on the same floor. Both
men were tall and spare in figure, there was something intense about and in the message of both men, and it seemed to me that both men were imbued with the same spirit and love for the oppressed poor laboring people. I "took" to Lincoln in my early life as I took to Debs in my declining years. Lincoln spoke for men, women and children, for right and progress, for the freedom of labor, and so spoke Debs. Lincoln was the foe of human slavery, so was Debs. Lincoln was called the "Illinois baboon," the "nigger lover," and Debs is called the "anarchist," the "undesirable citizen." Lincoln declared: 'Liberty before property; the man before the dollar,' and Debs repeated it, and re-echoes it to this hour."

### III. Debs As a Writer

God was feeling mighty good when he made 'Gene Debs and he didn't have anything else to do all day.—James Whitcomb Riley.

He writes as well as he speaks. He is equal to the best. He combines the happy faculty of speaking and writing fluently his great thoughts. He is a lover of poetry as well as prose and is himself a poet, but don't know it. Read his poem, —"Where Daisy Sleeps."

To Mother!

Sweetest to us of all the earth,

We called her "Daisy."

Terre Haute, Ind., May, 1906.

The grass grows green
Where Daisy sleeps;
The Mulberry tree its vigil keeps
Where daisy sleeps.

The wind blows soft
Where Daisy sleeps;
The modest, blue-eyed violet peeps
Where daisy sleeps.

The birds sing sweet
Where Daisy sleeps;
The mournful willow bends and weeps
Where daisy sleeps.
The sun shines bright
Where Daisy sleeps;
Each changing season sows
    and reaps
Where daisy sleeps.

The flowers bloom fair
Where Daisy sleeps;
The evening shadow softly
    creeps
Where daisy sleeps.

Our hearts beat true
Where Daisy sleeps;
And Love its watch forever
    keeps
Where daisy sleeps.

Eugene Field, the noted poet, said of him; "Debs is the most lovable man I ever knew, he is sincere, his heart is as gentle as a woman's and as fresh as a mountain brook. If Debs were a priest, the world would listen to his eloquence and that gentle, musical voice and sad, sweet smile of his would soften the hardest heart."

IV. Look At Him As a Man Among Men

Every action is measured by the depth of sentiment from which it proceeds.—Emerson.

Of every great movement it is said that this man or that is its "brains" or its "soul." Of none has it been said that he is the heart of any movement. Debs is the heart of the Social Revolution. There are many big brains and great souls in the movement—but Debs is its heart. It is a matter of proportion. Not that Debs' heart is disproportionate. It is simply that it is adequate. Which is almost to say that it is nearly infinite.

Debs is the heart. He thinks emotionally and feels intellectually.

Others reason. Debs loves. But there is reason in his love. You can win a man's heart quicker than you can convince his mind. Once you have his heart you hold the key that will open the doors of his intelligence.
Affection is more potent than argument. Too often argument begets antagonism. But naught can prevail against the logic of love. Debs is loving the world into liberty.

—Walter Hurt.

Pilate said of Jesus, when on trial: "Behold the man;" so I say of Debs, behold the manly man. No man has ever been hated more by the few rich men than Debs, since Jesus of Nazareth first raised the communist flag on the shores of Galilee; and no man today in this country is more loved and honored by millions of working men, women and children than Eugene Victor Debs. The man who will tell the truth about the dead is a good man and for one, with all the powers of my being, I intend to tell the truth, and "nothing but the truth, so help me God," about this living man, as nearly as I can. Much of the biography of the dead is flattery and falsehood. Poverty has been his brother in life's struggle, necessity his master. He has more brains than books, more courage than politeness, more strength than polish, more reality than style, and policy. "He has no veneration for old mistakes, no admiration for old falsehoods. He loves the truth for truth's sake, and for man's sake. He sees oppression on every hand, injustice everywhere, hypocrisy at the altar and in the pulpit, venality on the bench, tyranny on the throne, corruption in politics and office, and with holy courage, he espouses the cause of the weak and ignorant against the strong and the enslaved many against the titled few." He that rebels against science and reason, is a real rebel; but he that in defense of reason rebels against tyranny and wrong is the real "defender of the faith once delivered;" and this truth should be a motto on the walls behind every orthodox pulpit in the world. Like one of old, Debs' motto is: "The world is my country, to do good, my religion." We once worshiped the golden calf, but now we worship the gold of the calves, and even the calves and Henry Dubb are beginning to see this distinction. He does not believe in religion and science, but in the religion of science,—that is to say,—in wisdom glorified by love. Truth and facts are the foundation of his faith; history his prophet; reason his
guide; happiness the end; intelligence the means; the Book of Nature his bible, the schoolhouse his cathedral, and experience his teacher—reason, observation and experience his holy trinity of human life. In the sand banks of superstition, he finds the gems of truth, and in superstitious night, he sees the stars of hope. He writes lines of truth that leap with joy and gladness, and words that are wet with tears, and saturated with love. God, the good in the human being, is his Supreme Being. He does not like a religious creed, but loves the man who is its victim. He believes emphatically that every man must bear the consequences of his own acts; that he must reap what he sows, and that he cannot be justified by the goodness of another nor be damned for the wickedness of another, that we are punished by our sins not for them—that to do right brings good and to do wrong brings misery. I do not worship this man, but just love him with my whole heart. Jesus Christ said: 'Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend;' this love, I have for my dearest comrade on earth,—‘Gene’ Debs. I do not know whether he has any church affiliations or not, and I do not care, but I do know that to the cause of the helpless, the poor and unfortunate, the suffering and the oppressed everywhere, he is devoting his whole life and splendid talents with a pure heart fervently as did Jesus the carpenter of Nazareth. I know that on a cold winter's day, he has taken off his own coat and given it to a shivering old man on the street, and giving himself with his gift, said: ‘Brother, you need this more than I do.’ I know that he gave his own good gold watch to a trainman who had been discharged for unpunctuality, which was unavoidable because the man's old watch was utterly unreliable. I know that on his lecture tours, he has gone into mining towns among the mountains of the West where a strike was on, and the women and children were in a state of destitution—has gone in among them with $200.00 in his pocket; and when he came out, he had to borrow money enough to take him to the next place where he was to lecture. No wonder that James Whitcomb Riley wrote of him:
"And there's 'Gene Debs, a man 'at stands
And holds right out in his two hands
As big a heart as ever beat
Betwixt here and the judgment seat."

The Christian Endeavor World, not long ago, said of him: "There are many Socialists but only one Eugene V. Debs. Many believe in Socialism, but Debs is a Socialist. Many believe in Christianity, but Debs is (a practical) Christian. There is no room in his great heart for any selfishness or uncharitableness or unworthiness. His whole being is aflame with the white passion for humanity, for justice to the humblest as well as to the greatest of the children of men, for a world swayed by the living forces of love, truth and justice. And this man, to whom 25,000 people listened in Madison Square Garden, New York City, and 10,000 more were turned away from the doors, disappointed, is as simple-hearted as a child." He lives toils and walks among writers, poets, among verbal varnishers, literary milliners and tailors, with the unconscious majesty of the Savior of Mankind. Debs has just enough of human frailties to make him humanly lovable by all who know him.

He knows men and loves them because he is human and knows human nature from top to bottom. He has enemies, but he loves them. He glories in giving more than in getting. The capitalist gets all he can and "cans" all he gets. Debs is a transmitter, rather than a receiver. Instead of spending so much time trying to go to heaven, Debs is ever busy working and preaching to bring heaven to this world, and answer the Lord's prayer: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth." He is a big "elder brother" to the human race. When Debs stoops down, it is not to pick up a dollar, but to lift up a fallen brother. Debs will go down in history as "Gene the Genuine." He is not merely honest because he is a socialist but is a socialist because he is absolutely honest. As Secretary-Treasurer of the A. R. U. after it was broken up by the Pullman strike in 1894, with a debt of nearly $40,000.00, he personally paid the last dollar only a few years ago. He
was under no legal or moral obligation personally to pay that debt but his conscience was so tender that he paid it in full. Not another man of one million men would have done what he did. And while he was doing this for years, he was falsely accused by his enemies of hoarding up money for his own benefit. "Great abundance of riches" says the great thinker Erasmus, "cannot of any man be gathered and kept without sin." "Among all the speakers I have ever heard there has not been one who came nearer to my idea of Abraham Lincoln than Eugene V. Debs," said Rev. Frank De Witt Talmage.

"Debs is a great man. With a few more such to teach and organize the people the cause of justice must prevail."—Alfred Russell Wallace, England's Greatest Scientist.

Debs is doing the work of God, with many good men and women, as much as did Jesus the carpenter of Nazareth. He tells us what he thinks of many false religionists of Christianity in the "Christian Socialist" of December issue of 1915, as follows:

It may be set down as a rule that the gentry who constitute the self-appointed protectorate over the souls of the working-class and who charge Socialists with being infidels and Socialism with attacking religion are themselves hypocrites who are profiting by the ignorance and superstition of their victims and who use the cloak of religion to conceal their own evil practices. Their pretended solicitude for religion is a sham. What they really fear is not that religion will be destroyed, but that hypocrisy and false pretence will be discovered.

These pious misfits who do not know what real religion is are one in raising the cry against Socialism in the name of religion. Most of them have never read a chapter of Socialist economics and are utterly ignorant of what Socialism really means, or else, knowing what it means, deliberately misrepresent it to receive the "well done" and the stipend from their masters.

It is safer for the average clergyman to speak against Socialism than for it, so far as his charge is concerned, his income, and his position in society. Some are by reflex so imbued with the hostility of the capitalists who pay their salaries that they deem it their special duty to denounce Socialism as an attack upon the church and conspiracy against religion. Of course they speak in the name of religion,
the religion of Jesus Christ, the homeless wanderer who sympathized and associated with the poor and lowly, and whose ministrations were among the despised sinners and outcasts.

These pious pickets of capitalism prostitute religion in the service of mammon. Of all men on earth they are the least fit to speak in the name of religion. They are utterly destitute of religion or they would not serve in such a degenerate role.

They are full of cant and glibly parrot their creed, but of real religion, the spiritual influence which exalts man and consecrates him to the loving service of his fellow man, they are as barren as the arctic region is of sunflowers. Christ knew them perfectly and denounced them as hypocrites.

It is false and slanderous to charge that Socialism aims to destroy religion. The truth is that Socialism proposes to destroy the conditions which make religion impossible.

It is the veriest sarcasm to talk about religion in the cannibalism of the present system in which men devour each other like hyenas and the millions who are robbed of what they produce sink into hopeless poverty while their sons are driven to crime and their daughters to prostitution.

Never until this brute struggle for existence is ended and our industrial life is organized on a basis of democratic mutualism will religion come to abide with men, not the religion of creeds written in books, but the religion of deeds written in the hearts of men whose brethren are all mankind.

SOME OF DEBS' SAYINGS.

“Books are better than beer.”
“Selfishness is moral suicide.”
“Character should count for more than cash.”
“If you are not well dressed society is against you.”
“Excessive wealth is as demoralizing as extreme poverty.”
“John Brown is aptly called the percussion cap of the civil war.”
“The demagogues of the past are the demi-gods of the present.”
“The millionaire has as much too much as the tramp has too little.”
“Capitalism makes criminals of men. I would make men even of criminals.”
"I would rather be right with the minority than wrong with the majority."

"The present day rule of business is might against right—cunning against conscience."

"Government ownership of railroads is better than railroad ownership of government."

"Under present conditions it doesn't pay to work. It pays better to work those who do."

He believes that human love and good deeds are immortal. That immortality like a sea has ebbed and flowed in the human heart, with its countless waves of hope and fear, beating against the shores and rocks of ignorance, time and fate, was not born in any book nor of any creed, nor of any religion. It was born of human love and hope and will continue to ebb and flow beneath the mists and clouds of doubt and darkness as long as love kisses the lips of death. It is the rainbow of human hope ever shining upon the tears of grief. When James Whitcomb Riley saw the announcement of Ingersoll's lecture on "Lincoln," he mused, "Ingersoll on Lincoln—that's great, equally great, infinitely great at both ends;" just so is the life of Debs from the cradle to the grave—infinitely great and immortal. He lives today and forever, with Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, Abraham Lincoln, Karl Marx and Engels, Robert Ingersoll, Wendell Phillips, Garrison Lovejoy, Henry Ward Beecher and hundreds of other great souls of the past, present and future.

In this hour of bloody butchery, this day when Christians are tearing at each other's throats with fang and claw of human beasts, this hour when superstitious and servile slaves are madly obeying the murderous call of "God-ordained" brutes on thrones, when the "divinely inspired" injunction, "Servants, obey your masters"—"The powers that be are ordained of God," have made a slaughter house of humanity, in this infamous "Year of our Lord," comes the mighty message of Liberty and Love, of Rationalism and Righteousness, from the loving, eloquent soul and lips of the immortal Debs. Never in
the world's history was his divine message needed more than now. He cries aloud from the watch-towers of eternal truth, against the inhuman unholy trinity of industrial, political, religious despotism; of which the immortal Lincoln "feared and trembled," and warned the American people when he said: "Monarchy itself is sometimes hinted at as a refuge from the power of the people." He has been nominated four times in succession for President of the United States by the Socialist Party; and would have been triumphantly nominated the fifth time by a referendum vote of the party had he not absolutely refused to permit his name to go on the ballot. At the time of this writing he has been nominated for Congress in the Fifth Congressional District of Indiana. It is earnestly hoped that he will be triumphantly elected. *Long live Eugene V. Debs.*

This is my short memorial tribute of love and honor to my loyal and dearest comrade, Eugene V. Debs.

Goodnight, dear "Gene," until we meet again in the morning of the new day.

**Benediction**

Thou hast drawn my heart within thy own,
   And my soul is one with thine,
While the thought that fills me with delight
   Is the one that thou art mine:
And my soul will thrill with ecstasy,
   And the world grow wondrous fair,
When I think of all my endless love
   That my heart, with thee, shall share.
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