
A Glimpse into the Future

by Eugene V. Debs

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In that new democracy, that real republic, there will be no labor of little children, no weary women wearing out their vitality in factory and in mill. The red roses of health will replace the pale lilies of death upon the cheek of childhood. Woman, who suffers under the capitalistic system and has no voice in making the laws, will be given liberty. The daughter of poverty will be no longer forced to marry for a shelter, to exchange her chastity for a pallet of straw. Nor will our new social system produce an army of 500,000 fallen women, the most melancholy phase of the present industrial order.

The workingman will have his home, his books, and his music. He will have time for recreation, time to develop his mind and let his soul expand. But to accomplish this he must use his great source of power, his vote. That is why the labor question is a political question. There are twelve times as many voting wage-workers as there are capitalists, but they annually elect the candidates of the capitalists and then wonder why their petitions to the legislators are not heeded. The workingman must rouse himself from his inertia. Ignorance alone can defeat the rising revolution.

I would not be a Moses to lead you into a promised land, for someone would lead you out again.¹ But I would have you each for himself determine to use your vote for the upbuilding of the new system. Go on, and on, and on, like the great admiral, and after the darkness of night, the dawn will surely come.

Edited by Tim Davenport

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¹ This is a permutation of one of the most oft-quoted lines uttered by Debs. It follows the Dec. 10, 1905 speech at Grand Central Palace in New York City, reprinted in the pamphlet "Industrial Unionism," in which Debs said, "Too long have the workers of the world waited for some Moses to lead them out of bondage. He has not come; he never will come. I would not lead you out if I could; for if you could be led out, you could be led back in again."