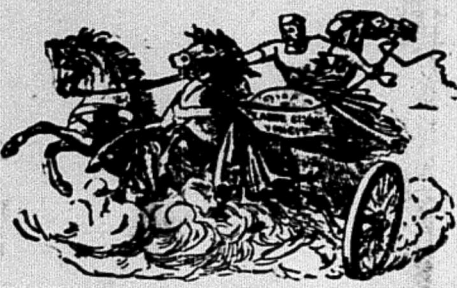


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MISSION

Of the Socialist Labor Party.

Address Delivered in Buffalo by Philip Jackson.

Mr. Chairman and Fellow Workingmen:—There is nothing more incumbent upon the wage workers of this country to-day, than that they should fully appreciate and understand the magnitude and importance of "the mission of the S. L. P." That Party has come into existence as a direct result of the rapidly changing conditions of our industrial methods and the mission that it seeks to fulfill is to reorganize those conditions upon a just and equitable basis by the abolition of wage slavery and the inauguration of the Socialist Commonwealth.

Any newspaper or periodical, any partisan or old-time politician, any idealistic reformer or brotherly love potato patch Mayor will tell you that existing society is all wrong, corrupt and unhappy. But the S. L. P. alone is capable of telling you the scientific causes and the scientific remedies for the injustice and iniquity from which the working class is suffering so intensely at the present time. When you understand those causes and appreciate those remedies you will find no difficulty in comprehending the importance and justice of the mission of the S. L. P.

Just as in the old time, prior to the time of Galileo it was maintained that the sun ran around the earth every twenty-four hours and some in the name of God dared to kill those who attempted to prove the truth—that the earth turned on its own axis; so the modern capitalist class, in the name of their capitalist Christianity, dares to ostracize those who attempt to prove the truth, that it is not individual piety that makes a just system of industry, but that the exact opposite is the truth—a just system of industry will make individual goodness possible.

THE CLASS STRUGGLE.

The system of industry under which we now live is known as the capitalist system. And out of its "free" competition, its concentration of wealth in the hands of a few; its development of labor-saving machinery and the consequent impoverishment of the working class that has been co-existent with this capitalist system; we now see, more plainly than ever before, the intense class struggle that is going on in society between the owners of capital and their wage slave dependents. It has recently been stated that now that Mr. Carnegie has retired from business and quit bossing labor, his income will continue to be \$20,000 a day. That means that workingmen must still be deceived, in some way or other, to pay this \$20,000. It has also been stated that Mr. Rockefeller has a larger income than all the 9,000,000 colored people in this country put together, and that means that nine millions of people must go hungry, cold, ignorant and wretched. In every instance the accomplishment of one rich man is a large army of workingmen with their helpless and suffering wives and children.

In the face of this intense class struggle and all its accompanying crime and debauchery, the capitalist parson has the impudence to tell you that it is the will of God; that you must be individually good and wait till you die for your wages. But Karl Marx, like the illustrious Galileo, has proved that this reasoning proceeds from the wrong end of the combination of individuality and industrial methods. He has shown that industrial methods determine your individual morality and happiness and that your intellect should be used to perform its legitimate functions of understanding and guiding your economic methods of production and exchange.

THE PRESENT SYSTEM.

Under the present system, what has happened? Within the memory of men still living the people of these United States were living in a near approximation to economic equality. Any man could own a farm or get possession of the requisite tools of his trade to start in business on his own account. But the free competition of capitalism got in its little work and there throughout the country one family jumped up to be millionaires and millions of people slid down to be paupers. And where is the so-called middle class to-day? Ask the clerks of the bankruptcy courts, the sheriffs and the auctioneers. One million families own eighty per cent. of the nation's wealth and fourteen million families either own nothing now or will soon be fore-closed. What are you going to do about it?

The first thing to do is to understand the causes of this splitting up of society into plutocrats and paupers. Then organize into the political party of your class. And then inaugurate the Co-operative Commonwealth.

PHASES OF THE MISSION.

These are the three phases of the mission of the S. L. P.—to educate the working class in scientific economics, to organize them into a class-conscious political party and to exercise their political power to establish the Co-operative Commonwealth. And by that we mean, that the land and machinery that is required by those who expend their labor-power in the production and distribution of socially useful things shall be public property and be operated under the direction



A USELESS OFFER OF WINGS.

of the whole people for their proper purpose of supplying human wants instead of, as now, for the distorted purpose of grinding out private profits.

Let us briefly examine this private ownership, capitalist business, and we shall soon see what it inevitably leads to. Capitalists go into business and produce commodities, not because they want those commodities nor because they want to feed the hungry, clothe the naked or warm the shivering; but because they want to exchange those commodities for money and then use that money to increase their capital on the one hand, or buy more labor-power to produce more commodities on the other hand. But the laborer, the man who owns no capital and has nothing to sell but his labor-power, has to sell that labor-power on the labor market just like the manufacturer sells his

picture books or his whiskey on the picture market or the whiskey market—for what it will fetch in competition with others in the same line.

SURPLUS VALUE.

When the manufacturer secures his plant and raw materials he has invested a certain amount of constant capital; but this constant capital has no power in itself to produce anything; he must now employ human beings to expend their labor-power in the transformation of these raw materials into commodities. When this transformation has taken place, our capitalist finds that he still has his buildings and machinery, minus the wear and tear of the operation; the raw materials that he bought also reappear in some form or other in the finished commodities. The labor-power that he bought is the force that has caused the whole transformation

and has given to those raw materials a greater value than they had before such labor-power was expended upon them.

For this labor-power he has spent a certain amount of money or variable capital—and just watch how it varies—and now he adds together the different expenses of producing his commodities. His constant capital, as we said before, is all represented, or reappears, at the end of the manufacturing process. The labor-power that his variable capital bought, and which is the only thing that adds value to the products, is also found crystallized into those products. Now, suppose he has paid out altogether \$10,000, and that after he has exchanged his commodities for money on the market he finds that on again figuring up the total, he has \$11,000, the question arises, Whence came the extra \$1,000?

It is quite evident that he got this value out of labor-power that he did not pay for. If \$1,000 represented his variable capital at the start and it has now "varied" into \$2,000 it is again quite evident that his workingmen have created \$2,000 worth of value for which they were paid only \$1,000. In other words, they have worked one-half of each day for themselves as necessary labor to keep themselves alive and the other half of each day for the capitalist to keep him in clover.

It is this beautiful operation of this beautiful capitalist system that divides society into two hostile classes out of which the class struggle and all the class antagonisms arise.

ELIMINATION OF CLASSES.

Now let us briefly trace the workings of this capitalist class and then

(Continued on page 2.)

SLATERSVILLE.

A Great Historic Event.

Facts Brought Out by the Strike Now Going on.

Slatersville, beautifully situated as it is, in the very heart of the high hills of Rhode Island has been suffering from the iron power of capitalism, even more than the average mill-town of the country. The mill owned by a corporation composed of the Slater family has been left in the hands of a Superintendent, while the family lived in Europe; one member only visiting Slatersville occasionally to put the screws on a little tighter.

One of our good comrades there told me that many times during the winter he had but \$4.00 in his pay-envelope on Saturday night to take home to his wife and three children. As he was one of the most skillful weavers of the suitings manufactured by this mill the conditions can better be imagined than described.

The pressure of such degradation has driven the weavers to desperation. There has been an exodus from the village of all who could obtain money enough to go away, or any hope of getting work in other towns. Those who remain are determined to win in the battle now on between the Alliance and the Superintendent of the mill.

During my visit to Slatersville I realized as never before the educational force of the Alliance, its power as a maker of Socialists. Providence comrades had helped them in their selection of literature and here they had a veritable University of Socialism at their headquarters. Not a home in the village, perhaps, contained more than one or two books, and here they could read undisturbed, here they held many discussions. One after another, the young men gave me such testimony as this: "I have been made a Socialist by the Alliance"; "the Alliance has convinced me that the Socialist Labor Party is the only party for the workingman"; and so on.

This reading and thinking has developed a body of men and women, holding firmly together, determined to "fight it out" along Socialist lines even in the very face of starvation. As I talked with the women in their homes, I found that they were upholding their husbands and fathers; that they, too, realized the importance of this STRIKE FOR PRINCIPLES.

At the open air meeting in the evening there was an attendance of nearly four hundred people. Men and women stood for two hours listening eagerly to the Gospel of Socialism, and words of encouragement from comrades of Providence, Woonsocket and New York.

The political effect of this economic struggle is already in evidence. The voters of the town of North Smithfield, which includes Slatersville, held their annual town meeting for the election of officers at a hall in Slatersville the Monday following the open air meeting of the strikers at which I was present. The Socialist Labor Party had candidates for Town Assessor and Town Sergeant. William F. Taylor, candidate for Assessor, was the Slatersville comrade who was discharged by Supt. Holt as "working against the interests of the corporation," meaning his work in the previous strike, his article to THE PEOPLE explaining conditions in Slatersville, and his determined stand for the increase of pay and recognition of the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance. Immediately after his discharge, after a meeting of the Alliance, the one hundred and thirty men and women, who are now striking, left the mill in a body.

He received 59 votes; the Republican 139, and the Democrat 104. This shows an increase of the vote in this district.

Timothy Manning, the S. L. P. candidate for Sergeant, received 60 votes.

The Socialists also exerted a moral influence on the election. The papers from Woonsocket say that the Socialists were responsible for the politicians of the old parties "putting out their tickets in a more reserved manner."

One paper says: "During the day there were a great many clashes between the leaders of the old parties and the Socialists. The latter were determined to stop any attempt which might be made to purchase votes, but in spite of the vigilance it is said that there were a number who cashed their checks as soon as the result was announced."

We have in this strike at Slatersville a union of French, English, Irish, Scotch and American workingmen and women demanding better economic conditions with a recognized political force backing them in their struggle. Is it not imperative that the Socialists in every corner of our land should see to it that they have the financial support necessary to complete the victory? It is a matter of vital importance, the money must reach them at once. Mill workers are watching their struggle in every town and village in Rhode Island and many are contributing from their own meagre wages, notably the workers of one large rubber trust factory, themselves suffering under bad conditions, contributed in one afternoon the sum of twenty dollars.

If we win, as we expect, it will be a victory not alone for Slatersville, but a triumph for the whole working class organized as a political body against the capitalists.

ELLA REEVE COHEN.

