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Ford Hall Forum

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Ford Hall Folks

VOL. I. No. 4.

January 19, 1913.

Price Ten Cents.

ANOTHER IMPROVEMENT SUGGESTED.

Slowly, but surely, we are finding our constituency. Even now many of our friends have not discovered that we are issuing a publication. Frequently, in this place and that place, I have a subscription for the balance of the season handed to me by someone who cannot now come to the meetings very often but who wants to know all about them and is delighted to find that a bulletin is being issued every week.

Then there are other friends who have come to see that there is no better way of extending the influence of the Ford Hall meetings than to send copies of *Ford Hall Folks* far and wide. Some of these friends buy extra copies every Sunday night; another one, a member of the Baptist Social Union, has sent us a check for five dollars to enable us to send out free copies where they will do the most good.

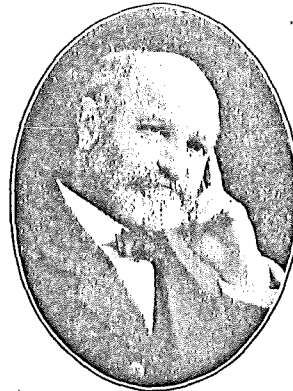
Our first two issues have just about paid expenses, a trifle over on the first issue and a trifle under on the second. We shall need to do better than that in order to provide against emergencies. One arose in connection with the printing of the third number that will cost two or three dollars extra very likely. We ought to make a surplus every week of five or ten dollars in order to provide for unexpected slumps in sales and unusual expenditures and also so that we can have a margin with which to do little stunts now and then that would improve the paper.

In our meeting of Ford Hall Folks Sunday afternoons, we have considered whether there is any satisfactory way of distributing tickets for admis-

sion to the Ford Hall Meetings on Sunday evenings and so do away with some of the disadvantages of standing in line for an hour, more or less, before the doors are opened. The objection is that such a method would involve additional expense. The difficulty is in distributing the tickets to the right people. And the danger is in interfering with the free and democratic method of admission. Tickets might be sold, especially preferred seats. You already know the disadvantage of standing in line. Can a ticket scheme be devised that will beat the present method? How would it do to print a coupon in every issue of the *Ford Hall Folks* which, when detached, could be presented as a ticket entitling the holder to a seat?

George W. Coleman

NEXT WEEK'S SPEAKER.



Joseph Fels, the ardent single taxer, will address us, next Sunday evening, on "Just Taxation the Hope of the World." Here's your chance to learn just what Lloyd George has and hasn't done in the way of adequately taxing the large English estates. For Mr. Fels is fresh from England and has especially studied this question there.

THE PRAYER.

(Preceding Miss Scudder's Address.)

We do not pray to be freed from all struggle. We ask for wisdom, strength and courage that out of our struggles may come development and progress. May we be cheered and upheld in the midst of conflict by the realization that all that we most cherish has come as the fruit of struggle. Help us to accept this fact for ourselves, for our class, for our race, for our nation, as the way which Thou hast ordained whereby mankind moves on to better things.

But we do pray with all our hearts for the hastening of the day when the struggle with our fellowman, individually and in groups and divisions, will be in mutual good will and for the welfare of all concerned, bringing in its train joy and satisfaction instead of fear and discontent.

We pray, O God, that in the great struggle of this day and hour, we may fight valiantly and endure heroically without malice and without bitterness. confident that truth and justice will prevail. Amen.

THE MORAL ASSETS OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE.

Address of Miss Vida D. Scudder at the Ford Hall Meetings, January 12, 1913.

I suppose there has been nothing more remarkable in the United States during the last 25 years than the general demand for social justice and the active movement toward a considerable degree of that justice which is to be seen in our philanthropic and legislative agencies. We are all glad and proud of it. We hail with amazement and thanksgiving the advent in politics of the programme of remedial action for which the social workers and the philanthropists of the United States have been working for over a quarter of a century. Many of us, myself included, read with enthusiasm and with

a deep interest the speeches of our president-elect; we notice the growth of the great conventions of churches and great assemblies of people such as we held in Boston at Christmas time for the discussion of economic justice and there is often a positive law passed to insure social welfare. Here in Massachusetts we can boast during the last year of a Minimum Wage law. Now, all that makes me very happy and all of you very happy—I think we are all full of elation and thanksgiving as we see the great general movement on the part of the big Republic of the United States to demand economic freedom and social justice as the first necessity to a just living. That thing is accomplished; but that vast movement which centers in the activity of the workers themselves—the effort of the working class to achieve their own salvation—to demand for themselves economic freedom and social welfare is still regarded with suspicion, hesitation, and fear in many quarters. Some people regard with great sympathy the general movement of amelioration on the part of churches and on the part of legislative assemblies, and find it easy to feel an intense sympathy with all that is being done for the working people, but as soon as the working people themselves begin to arise and say there are conditions they will not endure and to organize to protest against those conditions then the general public, and I am sorry to say, large sections of the religious public, begin to be a little alarmed and a little full of suspicion of the struggle of the organized workers for economic freedom and against social oppression.

There are new, alarming revolutionary forms of organization which are really holding all of New England in suspicion at present; the question, therefore, which I think it behooves us all to consider is how we can best give support to the workers in what we call the class struggle. That is a

question to which I invite you to think tonight.

I used to think that it was possible to indorse that movement, indeed, to be very much interested in it, for I began to regard the demand of American women to better their condition on the philanthropic side, to give enthusiastic allegiance to the settlement movement, to me on the whole the most noble form of philanthropy. But long ago I became dissatisfied with the settlement movement, I realized that I needed something more complete to satisfy my needs. I came interested in Socialism and very soon became a Socialist. Nevertheless I was unable to endorse the American Socialist movement on a doctrinal account of the class struggle. I was in me from my Christian conviction that the world must be bettered by voluntary sacrifice through meekness, through the pure privilege and not through the claiming of privilege on the part of the class. We Christians pray with intensity that the forces which are making for social justice be the forces that give command—that they must be voluntary self-abnegation on the part of the upper class that we are afraid of, afraid of greed, afraid of criticism. This makes me shrink from the Socialism I knew it and I think it is still deep-ingrained in the religious world and the chief reason why the world remains aloof from socialism. When the great labor war movement is so terrified—it sees picketed streets, abusive language, it

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 settlement movement, which seems to
 me on the whole the most democratic
 form of philanthropy. But before very
 long I became dissatisfied even with
 the settlement movement. I began to
 realize that I needed something more
 complete to satisfy my mind and I be-
 came interested in Socialistic books
 and very soon became a convinced
 Socialist. Nevertheless I remained
 unable to endorse the active political
 Socialist movement on account of the
 doctrine of the class struggle—on ac-
 count of the feeling, deeply ingrained
 in me from my Christian inheritance,
 that the world must after all be saved
 by voluntary sacrifice through mercy,
 through meekness, through obedience,
 through the pure power of love,
 through the magnanimous sharing or
 privilege and not through the clutch-
 ing of privilege on the part of any
 class. We Christian people all feel
 with intensity that the nobler forces
 which are making for salvation must
 be the forces that give and not de-
 mand—that they must be the forces of
 voluntary self-abnegation of privilege
 on the part of the upper classes and
 that we are afraid of self-assertion,
 afraid of greed, afraid of violence,
 afraid of criticism. This terror made
 me shrink from the Socialist party as
 I knew it and I think that this terror
 is still deep-ingrained in the heart of
 the religious world and I think it is
 the chief reason why the religious
 world remains aloof from organized
 socialism. When the public sees a
 great labor war movement on it is
 terrified—it sees picketing, it hears
 abusive language, it watches stub-

borness, it watches violence. Now, I
 am not going to attempt to defend
 violence either in speech or action—I
 am shocked at violence. I believe, as
 I fancy that all of us here tonight be-
 lieve, that destruction of either prop-
 erty or life is a hideous crime and
 when one sees such destruction
 brought to justice we must rejoice, as
 in the conviction of the dynamiters in
 the last month. The worst of any
 violence on the part of the workers is
 that, socially speaking, it retards the
 emancipation of the people. The dyna-
 miters have strengthened the hands
 of capitalism unspeakably—the blow
 that they have struck has rebounded
 to the cause which they sought to
 serve. All wild speeches do the same;
 but even when we discount all these
 things the very call of the class strug-
 gle is devotional to a great many peo-
 ple. When I got over my compunc-
 tions I discovered that, after all, the
 class struggle has in it a wholly re-
 ligious aspect; I then found myself to
 be unconsciously changing to the So-
 cialist Party, going over to the side of
 the class that is struggling for social
 freedom. So I now hold my red card!
 (Applause). I thank you for clapping
 that red card. (Applause). I am go-
 ing to ask you to clap once more be-
 cause we doubled our vote in the last
 election. (Applause).

But I don't change my old position
 as much as you might suppose be-
 cause I hold my red card and love it.
 I have, however, come to be reconciled
 to the class struggle. In the first
 place I discovered that I didn't invent
 it. (Applause). Struggle is the es-
 sence of life everywhere. The asser-
 tion of the right to live is a holy and
 a sacred thing. It is manifest every-
 where, it is manifest in the struggle
 for existence all the way up. It is
 sacred, the desire for more life. Life
 is in itself a dim desire on the part of
 man to be more filled with Diety—to
 reach a fuller measure of likeness to
 the Infinite, and wherever one finds a

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than he who is simply fighting for him-
self and his immediate family. What
I see in the Labor War movement
generally is an incentive to wage-
earners for the growth of the feeling
of love and solicitude for one another.
Any especial distress or type of in-
justice makes them feel the great ar-
dent glow of fighting for others in
this land—fighting for the future.
They are not fighting just for the
present. They know perfectly well
they make fearful sacrifices, but they
know they are fighting for a better
condition in a remote future. For
that reason industrial unionism seems
to me better than the old craft union-
ism, and I think the time is coming
when the older unions while retaining
all their sober qualities are going to
be permeated with the social unionism
and its lofty ideal of schooling the
unskilled. The A. F. of L. is a good
working body where the Knights of
Labor dwelt a great deal on organiza-
tion and initiation; but after all I love
sentiment and the one great senti-
ment of the Knights of Labor was
the chivalric spirit of training the un-
skilled by the skilled and the unity of
all for the sake of progress. There
are some people who say that this
labor movement is so materialistic it
is shocking to them, but these are the
delicately-nurtured people who stand
aloof from the world thinking very
beautiful things and looking at charm-
ing pictures. They think it is fear-
fully materialistic for the workers to
be engaged in struggle for freedom—
these people who never have to pay
any attention to the material! Well,
I always try to bring home to them
the absolute spirituality of the things
for which the class-conscious move-
ment is struggling. It is a question of
wages and hours to be sure. But that
means more chance for health, and
hence a chance to be more religious.
For you cannot be religious, I believe,
except under great difficulty unless
you have well-nourished bodies. The
body needs to be well-nurtured that
the soul may have a chance and that
the body may be a truly religious
abode.

The question for shorter hours is a de-
sire for more time, and time is a spiri-
tual thing; the one thing that is distrib-
uted on a perfectly socialistic basis
(applause). It is a spiritual possession
and was meant to be free to all and
equally divided among all. Nature has
done all she can to establish not only
socialism but communism in regard to

time—we all have to live the same
kind of a day; we all have the same
number of hours and whether or not
we are all in the same social condition
we all have to depend upon the same
average length of life. One of the
greatest sins of Capitalism is that it
has established a "corner" on time and
said that only a few privileged people
shall have time and that the working
people shall not have time. In de-
manding more leisure time for the en-
joyment of life and in seeking to gain
it I think the workers are fighting for
a purely spiritual victory.

What about the advantage of the
class struggle to the workers and what
does it give? Discipline in obedience,
discipline in self-abnegation and sub-
ordination. The development of solid-
arity among the workers means that
they must obtain a more disinterested
passion for the common cause. They
must also learn to obey the laws; they
must learn the great mysterious art of
social and collective action.

The best discipline that can be found
today is found through the solidarity
of labor in the great social movement.
The people always come out of a strike
better men and women than they went
in—they have learned that in order to
succeed they have got to obey laws,
make concessions, and they have had a
good object lesson in an important
public affair—they have had that dis-
cipline they could not get in any other
way. So we must reckon with the class
struggle as a thing of value; I believe
class consciousness is a tremendously
important step in modern American
democracy.

Once before, in the French Revolu-
tion, the workers rose to submerge and
overthrow civilization. Even then I
believe that among them were to be
found a number of the world's leaders
who held the key to the future, but
they had at that time gained no self-
control—there had been no long, defi-
nite class-conscious movement preced-
ing that revolutionary upheaval and
when the power passed into their hands
they proved themselves incoherent, in-
capable. Today we are being prepared
for the time when the balance of power
in the United States shall pass into the
hands of the working people. I believe
they shall some day have the full pro-
duct of their labor and I believe that
the time is coming yet in a co-oper-
ative system of government when they
will be called upon to take the lead in
the socializing of industry.

I know there are a great many of you here who are members of the Christian Church, and I know there are a great many here who are entirely unchurched; but I also know that if there had not been a Christian Church there would not have been any Ford Hall meetings and I think we are all glad that there are such meetings and I know I can expect from all of you courtesy while I speak as a church woman and to church people. It is a paradoxical and lamentable fact that the church today is largely made up of the members of the governing class. Now I consider that to be the great paradox of modern times—I consider it to be the most lamentable phenomenon in religion. But it shows an extraordinary transformation of Christianity. Once it was the religion of the slaves—of the working people—and it spread its way from all that great underworld of the Roman Empire appealing to the disinherited, to the dispossessed, to the servile population.

Now it is a religion no longer of slaves but of masters; a religion of the upper classes who get together to discuss how to win back again the working classes!

Christianity first spread to the disinherited and oppressed and it had no trouble in commending itself to them for the virtues which it taught were the virtues with which they were obliged to be familiar. When it preached meekness, submission, non-resistance and humility it was preaching virtues natural to a servile population—virtues of the slaves and working people and the oppressed and disinherited of the earth and, of course, the people were pleased to listen to the assertion of the supreme worth of these qualities; for they were their qualities and to be told that they meant salvation was to them extremely gratifying. Pretty soon Christianity was adopted by the rulers and they proceeded to subdue the nations under them and baptise them wholesale and then fight other nations and baptise them at the point of the sword.

Jesus believed that riches imperil the soul and preached the importance of meekness. Yet his religion became the religion of the ruling class! Those who profess today, the religion of meekness and poverty are, generally speaking, neither poor nor meek—a very curious fact (laughter).

I think there is great opportunity now for the members of the governing classes to prove the reality of their re-

ligion. How? In this way: By identifying themselves with the workers in the class struggle. Already we are beginning to do it. It is said that in England the Socialist party depends very largely upon the church vote and that it is that which is rapidly putting power into their hands. If we can demonstrate the spirituality of the aims of the Socialist party I believe that the members of the Christian churches will join us almost in a body and so put power into the hands of the worker.

Jesus, you will notice, very rarely told us to be good to the poor. He had very little to say about charity—extraordinarily little. He told us to identify ourselves with the poor. I hunger to see a true disinterestedness, I hunger to see a voluntary abnegation of privilege. That would indeed be a revelation of religion as a supernatural power and this is the chance in my opinion that the class struggle offers us. If we refuse it—we religious people—I believe that we will be refusing the only chance that modern life gives.

To the workers the class struggle brings a widening devotion, disinterestedness and allegiance; to the privileged it offers the greatest chance they ever had to prove the reality of their religion. And from this industrial struggle is destined to come forth a more perfect understanding than we have ever had before of the great purposes of God.

A FEW OF THE QUESTIONS.

Q. You speak in strong criticism of the dynamiters and their effect upon the Labor Unions; should you not also condemn the conditions that drove these men to such desperation as was exhibited in their dynamiting?

A. I certainly should. The dynamiters were under great provocation and provocation incites crime; but it does not excuse crime.

Q. Is not violence an essential element in all struggle and does it not better the condition of the oppressed. The questioner refers especially to the violence of the dynamiters and of John Brown of Osawatomie.

A. I do think that violence above board is at times necessary, but I think that a fight is one thing and conspiracy another and that dynamite affair was a conspiracy. Now, my answer to the second part of your

way: By identifying the workers in ready we are being said that in party depends church vote and rapidly putting ds. If we can actuality of the party I believe of the Christian almost in a body to the hands of

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t violence above necessary, but I s one thing and d that dynamite racy. Now, my d part of your

question is that I wish I were more intimately acquainted with the story of John Brown's raid, but as far as I remember it I do not see any possible point of connection.

Q. You hold up self-sacrifice as an ideal and then you condemn the dynamiters for putting themselves in a position where they sacrificed their all.

A. I think so far as there was an element of disinterested self-sacrifice in the work of the McNamaras there is a call for sympathy and respect; but I recognize the fact that while they ran a certain risk themselves they also sacrificed the property and lives of others and I never understood that the sacrifice of others was an ideal to be applauded.

Q. Can the working people trust the capitalists who come over from their sides into the ranks of labor to help?

A. Well, after all, we are all human and I think it depends upon the individual.

Q. How could a strike of the dimensions of the Lawrence Textile strike have been won without any violence?

A. I don't know that I said it could have been and I don't know that I said all violence was wrong. I think I was pretty careful not to say that all violence was wrong.

Q. Do you not think that the trite saying that the ruling class will do anything for the working class except get off their backs holds good—in spite of the labor legislation we are getting?

A. Of course, that is Tolstoi's great phrase! I am watching to see labor legislation by the privileged class touching the question of the distribution of property. When it does that I will believe it is becoming disinterested and I am hoping and praying to see it.

Q. Was the dynamite trial one of misguided leaders or a trial of Organized Labor?

A. Misguided leaders in organized labor; organized labor I think, is not responsible for the dynamiters.

Q. What is the Socialist definition of the Privileged Class to a man who believes in following the Golden Rule?

A. I think that the privileged class of people are those who are living on money that they have not directly earned. (Applause.)



Miss ANGELA MORGAN

IN MANY WAYS.

"God fulfills Himself in many ways
Lest one good custom should corrupt
the world."

Those of us who believe very heartily in the Ford Hall Meetings' way of quickening the social conscience of our time sometimes fail to realize that the leaven is working lustily in other bodies, also. The Woman's Clubs, for instance! Week before last the Massachusetts Federation of Women's Club held a conference of its Literature Committee in the Lecture Hall of the Boston Public Library and, acting on the motion of the Secretary of these meetings—who chanced to be a member of the Committee-in-charge—the subject discussed was "The Relation of Contemporary Literature to Contemporary Life." To illustrate this Mrs. Lionel Marks (Josephine Preston Peabody) read her poem "The Singing Man," and Miss Angela Morgan gave "Today," which the audience here has already heard and enjoyed. Mrs. Marks promised, after that meeting, to come to us at an early date with her poignant celebration of that joyous day when man sang of his work and her prophetic visioning of a time when happily he will sing again. Miss Morgan's poem (copyrighted) we are herewith reprinting through the kind permission of the Cosmopolitan Magazine.

What we started out to say, however, was that those clubwomen applauded these stirring social poems just as vigorously as if they had one and all been Ford Hall Folks. Two years ago, even, this wouldn't have happened. For then Shakespeare or Browning would have been given on

the Literature afternoon and it would never have occurred to anybody to relate the truths they might hear with their ears to life as it is being lived today.

TO-DAY.

By Angela Morgan.

To be alive in such an age!
With every year a lightning page
Turned in the world's great wonder-
book

Whereon the leaning nations look,
When men speak strong for brother-
hood,

For peace and universal good;
When miracles are everywhere,
And every inch of common air
Throbs a tremendous prophecy
Of greater marvels yet to be.

Oh, thrilling age!

Oh, willing age!

When steel and stone and rail and rod
Become the avenue of God—
A trump to shout his thunder through
To crown the work that man may do.

To be alive in such an age!

When man, impatient of his cage,
Thrills to the soul's immortal rage
For conquest—reaches goal on goal,
Travels the earth from pole to pole,
Garners the tempests and the tides,
And on a dream triumphant rides.

When, hid within a lump of clay,
A light more terrible than day
Proclaims the presence of that Force
Which hurls the planets on their
course.

Oh, age with wings!

Oh, age that flings

A challenge to the very sky
Where endless realms of conquest lie!
When earth, on tiptoe, strives to hear
The message of a sister sphere,
Yearning to reach the cosmic wires
That flash Infinity's desires.

To be alive in such an age!

That thunders forth its discontent
With futile creed and sacrament,
Yet craves to utter God's intent,
Seeing beneath the world's unrest
Creation's huge, untiring quest,

And through Tradition's broken crust
The flame of Truth's triumphant
thrust;

Below the seething thought of man
The push of a stupendous plan.

Oh, age of strife!

Oh, age of life!

When Progress rides her chariot high
And on the borders of the sky
The signals of the century
Proclaim the things that are to be—
The rise of woman to her place,
The coming of a nobler race.

To be alive in such an age!

To live to it!

To give to it!

Rise, soul, from thy despairing knees.
What if thy lips have drunk the lees?
The passion of a larger claim
Will put thy puny grief to shame.
Fling forth thy sorrow to the wind
And link thy hope with humankind;
Breathe the world-thought, do the
world-deed,

Think hugely of thy brother's need.

And what thy woe, and what thy
weal?

Look to the work the times reveal!

Give thanks with all thy flaming
heart—

Crave but to have in it a part.

Give thanks and clasp thy heritage.

To be alive in such an age!

OVERHEARD IN THE LINES.

"Just the thing Ford Hall needed
to spread its wings."

"A neat-looking magazine."

"I wouldn't help to enrich other peo-
ple by buying it."

"Please let me have five copies. I
want to send them to my friends."

"Here is a subscription for a friend
of mine who attended a Ford Hall
Meeting a short time ago and who is
now residing in Washington."

* * * * *

That's the idea. Keep talking
about *Ford Hall Folks*.

Did you buy a copy last Sunday?

Have you subscribed or received
any subscriptions as yet?

SUBSCRIPTION BLANK

Name

Address

Amount Enclosed

(Sums of \$1.00 or more; the paper costs ten cents per issue.)

[Remit to J. S. London, Room 707, Ford Building, Boston.]

