

# THE WAGEWORKER



VOL. 5

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, NOVEMBER 7, 1908

NO. 32

## AN OPEN LETTER

TO WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN: Greater in defeat than your detractors ever were, are, or ever can be, in victory, you are today, as you have been for twelve years, the leader of a host of devoted followers. You have today, as you have had for twelve years, a host of followers who would rather go down to defeat with their banners flying than to win a victory purchased at the sacrifice of principle or won by coercion and intimidation. Last Tuesday you received more intelligent, thinking, patriotic votes than were ever before cast for any candidate for the presidency. No man voted for you because he was afraid of losing his job by opposing you. No man voted for you because an employer played upon his fears. No man voted for you because he expected by so doing to secure a special privilege to rob his fellows. No man voted for you because he wanted to protect a special privilege or strengthen his hold upon dishonest dollars wrung from honest toil and sweat. No servile, slinking voters were driven to the polls by arrogant taskmasters and ordered to vote for you.

The men who voted for you, Mr. Bryan—the great masses of them—voted for you because they believe in your principles, rely upon your statesmanship and trust implicitly in your honesty and integrity of purpose. The votes you received were votes cast by men who think above their belt lines. You have every reason to be proud of the great following you have—millions of men who prefer defeat under your leadership to victory under the leadership of some man whose platform is expediency and whose principles are weather-vanes set to every passing breeze.

The Wageworker is not prepared to say that organized labor failed to measure up fully to its opportunity. But it seems that organized labor did not do as it should have done. Perhaps the threat of idleness had its effect. Perhaps men who would loudly declaim their willingness to die for their country were afraid to assert their manhood because they feared that in so doing they might miss a meal or two. Perhaps, fear ruled where reason should have held sway. Whatever the cause, you did not receive from organized labor the solid support that you should have had. The result of Tuesday's election simply means that there is no "organized labor vote," and that the "organized labor vote" need not longer be considered a factor in the national political equation.

But The Wageworker does believe that the organized labor vote in Nebraska is something that must be reckoned with hereafter. It stood loyally by you almost to a man. Here, in the state where you are best known and most loved, you received a vote of which any man might be proud. Your state, your congressional district, your county, your city and your precinct—heretofore overwhelmingly against you—have all registered an expression of the love and esteem in which you are held, now that the people among whom you live have learned to know you.

So far as your personal fortunes were concerned, The Wageworker did not care whether you were elected or defeated. An election to the presidency would have added nothing whatever to your

future fame, or made more conspicuous your name in history. The Wageworker supported you because of the things for which you stood. It followed your flag because it was the flag of industrial independence, the flag of social reform, the flag of justice, the flag of equal rights. Today, the defeated candidate for the presidency, you have unequalled opportunities for continuing a work that no other living man is better fitted than you to perform. With voice and pen you can go ahead with your work and continue to be in the future what you have been for the past twelve years—the greatest moral and political force in the world.

The Wageworker is not as one without hope, though it confesses that the future looks dark. Greed sits enthroned in high places, and special interests have made handmaidens of those who should be servants of the people. Conscienceless dollars are of more moment than human rights, and human equality is a hissing and byword in the mouths of self-constituted trustees of divine providence.

The man who led the children of Egypt out of bondage was not permitted to lead them into the promised land. Napoleon, who swept Europe with fire and sword, died an exile before the code of laws which he promulgated forced every nation but one in Europe to grant constitutional government to the people. Lincoln died before the dream of a house no longer divided against itself became a reality.

Under the inspiration of your voice and pen the conscience of this nation has been awakened, but it may be that the fates decree that before that conscience is made manifest in the ousting of the money changers from the temple you shall have passed from the scene of action. But the future historian who writes of that epoch in which the people refused longer to be coerced, bullied, flattered and robbed, will devote his most stirring pages to recounting how you blazed the pathway to the reform. Three years did the Carpenter of Nazareth walk and talk, and He rallied about him but twelve—one of whom proved false. When He went down, reviled and condemned, even the faithful eleven gave up hope and disbanded. And yet the reforms which He taught, the principles which He enunciated, sprang up from what seemed to be eternal death, and today those principles hold sway in the hearts of untold millions. It may be that after a while, after the faithful have scattered, hopeless and heartsick, that the great principles for which you have contended, and which have been rejected, will spring up from the ashes of defeat and grow in the hearts of men until they shall rule the world. If this be not so, then why continue the struggle.

Mr. Bryan, The Wageworker has followed you to defeat, and it is willing to do so again and again. It feels today that the war is lost, but may have been only a battle. You have but to raise the rallying cry if it was a battle lost, and The Wageworker will again come to the front. And with it, as its comrades, will come thousands of earnest, thinking patriotic men who can neither be driven by threat of hunger nor purchased by promise of full dinner pails, to fight under your flag.

THE WAGEWORKER.