

ANTI - POVERTY

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And there are some other feelings that come up in my mind as I meet my old friend. When I first stood up for these principles I did not know another man in the world who held them. It was dark, and it was oft times bitter - the way that I was forced to tread. I know what ostracism means; I know what it is to turn one's back for the sake of principle on all the temptations of life; I know what it is to struggle on, utterly hopeless that in one's time he shall see any fruition of his work; and as I think of that, I feel most deeply grateful. More, I sometimes think, has been already given to me than is accorded to most men. Even when leaving California to come to the east I could have no hope that in a few years I should see this movement assuming such dimensions. After I shall be gone, I thought, some time the day will come when these truths will come forward in their strength; but when, I could not tell. I never counted upon success. It has always been enough to me that I was doing my duty. ("Hear, hear!") And to every one into whose heart the enthusiasm of this movement has entered there is a reward totally irrespective of what the world calls success. I know that it has been so in my own case; I know that it has been so in the case of hundreds, aye, even thousands, from whom I have heard. There is sufficient reward in the knowledge that comes to a man who thinks that this earth is really under the control of a beneficent providence. When one realizes that the poverty, the degradation, the bitter strife of which our civilization is full is not the fault of God; that it is solely the result of human injustice; that it comes from the fact that we have broken the laws of the Divine Law Giver,

then there comes to him a deeper and a higher faith. Then he can say, as without that knowledge he never could say before, "Our Father which art in heaven." And there comes to him a hope and a trust that, no matter how the fortunes of this brief life may go, there is another life, and that somewhere, at some time, the great Power that makes all good, will call upon those who have stood for what is good, call on those who have battled for the right; and that somewhere, some time, if he does his duty, he shall hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant." (Applause.)

This is no political movement in the ordinary acceptation of the term. This is a deeply religious movement. (Applause.) This audience - the way people have flocked to this hall - the way all over the state in which they crowd to hear the words of the priest of the people (great applause) prove that to-day, as eighteen centuries ago, when the real truths of Christianity are preached, the common people hear them gladly. In this is the strength of this great movement. This is the sign in which it goes on conquering and to conquer. One of the greatest of patriots, of philanthropists, one of the greatest of moral teachers, the great Italian, Mazzini, said in the last generation that all movements for social reform must be utterly hopeless so long as they do not take hold of the religious sentiment of men; that to fight power and wealth and organization, to break up a system founded on selfishness and appealing to selfishness, it is utterly idle to call upon men in the name of their own personal interests; that something deeper, something stronger, must be appealed to; and in the religious sentiment of men, in the sentiment of sympathy with their fellows, in their love for their God, lies the only power that can reform the world and rescue our civilization.

from what will otherwise prove its certain destruction. (Cheers.) Here to-day in the United States of America, in the city of New York, that world conquering power has been aroused. It is the same power that placed the cross above the temples of the Caesars. It is the great power that, sweeping out from a little province, preached through the whole earth, by the mouths of the poor and enslaved, the doctrine that revolutionized the world and made modern civilization possible. (Cheers.) And now it comes again, another and a greater crusade, the mightiest of revolutions, the movement that aims at nothing less than the abolishing of poverty; the movement that aims at nothing less than the placing of all men upon a footing of equality (cheers); the movement that aims at nothing less than the regeneration of the world. (Great cheering.) It is an honor, it is a privilege that I feel to the bottom of my heart that I am permitted to take part in it; and every man, and every woman, and every child who joins with us may feel the same joy and the same pride. (Great applause.)

Speech: Henry George,
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