

The Princess of the Hither Isles

Her soul was beautiful, wherefore she kept it veiled in lightly-laced humility and fear, out of which peered anxiously and anon the white and blue and pale-gold of her face,—beautiful as daybreak or as the laughing of a child. She sat in the Hither Isles, well walled between the This and Now, upon a low and silver throne, and leaned upon its armposts, sadly looking upward toward the sun. Now the Hither Isles are flat and cold and swampy, with drear-drab light and all manner of slimy, creeping things, and piles of dirt and clouds of flying dust and sordid scraping and feeding and noise.

She hated them and ever as her hands and busy feet swept back the dust and slime her soul sat silver-throned, staring toward the great hill to the westward, which shone so brilliant-golden beneath the sunlight and above the sea.

The sea moaned and with it moaned the princess' soul, for she was lonely,—very, very lonely, and full weary of the monotone of life. So she was glad to see a moving in Yonder Kingdom on the mountainside, where the sun shone warm, and when the king of Yonder Kingdom, silken in robe and golden-crowned and warded by his hound, walked down along the restless waters and sat beside the armpost of her throne, she wondered why she could not love him and fly with him up the shining mountain's side, out of the dirt and dust that nested between the This and Now. She looked at him and tried to be glad, for he was bonny and good to look upon, this king of Yonder Kingdom,—tall and straight, thin-lipped and white and tawny. So, again, this last day, she strove to burn life into his singularly sodden clay,—to

put his icy soul aflame wherewith to warm her own, to set his senses singing. Vacantly he heard her winged words, staring and curling his long mustaches with vast thoughtfulness. Then he said:

"We've found more gold in Yonder Kingdom."

"Hell seize your gold!" blurted the princess.

"No,—it's mine," he maintained stolidly.

She raised her eyes. "It belongs," she said, "to the Empire of the Sun."

"Nay,—the Sun belongs to us," said the king calmly as he glanced to where Yonder Kingdom blushed above the sea. She glanced, too, and a softness crept into her eyes.

"No, no," she murmured as with hesitating pause she raised her eyes above the sea, above the hill, up into the sky where the sun hung silent and splendid. Its robes were heaven's blue, lined and brodered in living flame, and its crown was one vast jewel, glistening in glittering glory that made the sun's own face a blackness,—the blackness of utter light. With blinded, tear-filled eyes she peered into that formless black and burning face and sensed in its soft, sad gleam unfathomed understanding. With sudden, wild abandon she stretched her arms toward it appealing, beseeching, entreating, and lo!

"Niggers and dagoes," said the king of Yonder Kingdom, glancing carelessly backward and lighting in his lips a carefully rolled wisp of fragrant tobacco. She looked back, too, but in half-wondering terror, for it seemed—

A beggar man was creeping across the swamp, shuffling through the dirt and slime. He was little and bald and black, rough-clothed, sodden with dirt, and bent with toil. Yet withal something she sensed about him and it seemed,—

The king of Yonder Kingdom lounged more comfortably beside the silver throne and let curl a tiny trail of light-blue smoke.

"I hate beggars," he said, "especially brown and black ones." And he then pointed at the beggar's retinue and laughed,—an unpleasant laugh, welded of contempt and amusement. The princess looked and shrank on her throne. He, the beggar man, was—was what? But his retinue,—that squalid, sordid, parti-colored band of vacant, dull-faced filth and viciousness—was writhing over the land, and he and they seemed almost crouching underneath the scorpion lash of one tall skeleton, that looked like Death, and the twisted woman whom men called Pain. Yet they all walked as one.

The king of Yonder Kingdom laughed, but the princess shrank on her throne, and the king on seeing her thus took a gold-piece from out of his purse and tossed it carelessly to the passing throng. She watched it with fascinated eyes,—how it rose and sailed and whirled and struggled in the air, then seemed to burst, and upward flew its light and sheen and downward dropped its dross. She glanced at the king, but he was lighting a match. She watched the dross wallow in the slime, but the sunlight fell on the back of the beggar's neck, and he turned his head.

The beggar passing afar turned his head and the princess straightened on her throne; he turned his head and she shivered forward on her silver seat; he looked upon her full and slow and suddenly she saw within that formless black and burning face the same soft, glad gleam of utter understanding, seen so many times before. She saw the suffering of endless years and endless love that softened it. She saw the burning passion of the sun and with it the cold, unbending duty-deeds of upper air. All she had seen and dreamed of seeing in the rising, blazing sun she saw now again and with it myriads more of human tenderness, of longing, and of love. So, then, she knew. She rose as to a dream come true, with solemn face and waiting eyes.

With her rose the king of Yonder Kingdom, almost eagerly.

"You'll come?" he cried. "You'll come and see my gold?" And then in sudden generosity, he added: "You'll have a golden throne,—up there—when we marry."

But she, looking up and on with radiant face, answered softly: "I come."

So down and up and on they mounted,—the black beggar man and his cavalcade of Death and Pain, and then a space; and then a lone, black hound that nosed and whimpered as he ran, and then a space; and then the king of Yonder Kingdom in his robes, and then a space; and last the princess of the Hither Isles, with face set sunward and lovelight in her eyes.

And so they marched and struggled on and up through endless years and spaces and ever the black beggar looked back past death and pain toward the maid and ever the maid strove forward with lovelit eyes, but ever the great and silken shoulders of the king of Yonder Kingdom arose between the princess and the sun like a cloud of storms.

Now, finally, they neared unto the hillside's topmost shoulder and there most eagerly the king bent to the bowels of the earth and bared its golden entrails,—all green and gray and rusted—while the princess strained her pitiful eyes aloft to where the beggar, set 'twixt Death and Pain, whirled his slim back against the glory of the setting sun and stood somber in his grave majesty, enhaloed and transfigured, outstretching his long arms, and around all heaven glittered jewels in a cloth of gold.

A while the princess stood and moaned in mad amaze, then with one wilful wrench she bared the white flowers of her breast and snatching forth her own red heart held it with one hand aloft while with the other she gathered close her robe and poised herself.

The king of Yonder Kingdom looked upward quickly, curiously, still fingering the earth, and saw the offer of her bleeding heart.

"It's a Negro!" he growled darkly; "it may not be."

The woman quivered.

"It's a nigger!" he repeated fiercely. "It's neither God nor man, but a nigger!"

The princess stepped forward.

The king grasped his sword and looked north and east; he raised his sword and looked south and west.

"I seek the sun," the princess sang, and started into the west.

"Never!" cried the king of Yonder Kingdom, "for such were blasphemy and defilement and the making of all evil."

So, raising his great sword he struck with all his might, and more. Down hissed the blow and it bit that little, white, heart-holding hand until it flew armless and disbodied up through the sunlit air. Down hissed the blow and it clove the whimpering hound until his last shriek shook the stars. Down hissed the blow and it rent the earth. It trembled, fell apart, and yawned to a chasm wide as earth from heaven, deep as hell, and empty, cold, and silent.

On yonder distant shore blazed the mighty Empire of the Sun in warm and blissful radiance, while on this side, in shadows cold and dark, gloomed the Hither Isles and the hill that once was golden, but now was green and slimy dross; all below was the sad and moaning sea, while between the Here and There flew the severed hand and dripped the bleeding heart.

Then up from the soul of the princess welled a cry of dark despair,—such a cry as only babe-raped mothers know and murdered loves. Poised on the crumbling edge of that great nothingness the princess hung, hungering with her eyes and straining her fainting ears against the awful splendor of the sky.

Out from the slime and shadows groped the king,
thundering: "Back—don't be a fool!"

But down through the thin ether thrilled the still and
throbbing warmth of heaven's sun, whispering "Leap!"
And the princess leapt.

IV

OF WORK AND WEALTH

FOR fifteen years I was a teacher of youth. They were years out of the fullness and bloom of my younger manhood. They were years mingled of half breathless work, of anxious self-questionings, of planning and replanning, of disillusion, or mounting wonder.

The teacher's life is a double one. He stands in a certain fear. He tends to be stilted, almost dishonest, veiling himself before those awful eyes. Not the eyes of Almighty God are so straight, so penetrating, so all-seeing as the wonder-swept eyes of youth. You walk into a room: to the left is a tall window, bright with colors of crimson and gold and sunshine. Here are rows of books and there is a table. Somber blackboards clothe the walls to the right and beside your desk is the delicate ivory of a nobly cast head. But you see nothing of this: you see only a silence and eyes,—fringed, soft eyes; hard eyes; eyes great and small; eyes here so poignant with beauty that the sob struggles in your throat; eyes there so hard with sorrow that laughter wells up to meet and beat it back; eyes through which the mockery and ridicule of hell or some pulse of high heaven may suddenly flash. Ah! That mighty pause before the class,—that orison and benediction—how much of my life it has been and made.

I fought earnestly against posing before my class. I tried to be natural and honest and frank, but it was bitter hard. What would you say to a soft, brown face, aureoled in a thousand ripples of gray-black hair, which knells suddenly: "Do you trust white people?" You do not and you know that you do not, much as you want to; yet you rise and lie and say you do; you must say it for her salvation and the world's; you repeat that she must trust them, that most white folks are honest, and all the while you are lying and every level, silent eye there knows you are lying, and miserably you sit and lie on, to the greater glory of God.

I taught history and economics and something called "sociology" at Atlanta University, where, as our Mr. Webster used to say, we professors occupied settees and not mere chairs. I was fortunate with this teaching in having vivid in the minds of my pupils a concrete social problem of which we all were parts and which we desperately desired to solve. There was little danger, then, of my teaching or of their thinking becoming purely theoretical. Work and wage were thrilling realities to us all. What did we study? I can tell you best by taking a concrete human case, such as was continually leaping to our eyes and thought and demanding understanding and interpretation and what I could bring of prophecy.

St. Louis sprawls where mighty rivers meet,—as broad as Philadelphia, but three stories high instead of two, with wider streets and dirtier atmosphere,

over the dull-brown of wide, calm rivers. The city overflows into the valleys of Illinois and lies there, writhing under its grimy cloud. The other city is dusty and hot beyond all dream,—a feverish Pittsburg in the Mississippi Valley—a great, ruthless, terrible thing! It is the sort that crushes man and invokes some living super-man,—a giant of things done, a clang of awful accomplishment.

Three men came wandering across this place. They were neither kings nor wise men, but they came with every significance—perhaps even greater—than that which the kings bore in the days of old. There was one who came from the North,—brawny and riotous with energy, a man of concentrated power, who held all the thunderbolts of modern capital in his great fists and made flour and meat, iron and steel, cunning chemicals, wood, paint and paper, transforming to endless tools a disemboweled earth. He was one who saw nothing, knew nothing, sought nothing but the making and buying of that which sells; who out from the magic of his hand rolled over miles of iron road, ton upon ton of food and metal and wood, of coal and oil and lumber, until the thronging of knotted ways in East and real St. Louis was like the red, festering ganglia of some mighty heart.

Then from the East and called by the crash of thunderbolts and forked-flame came the Unwise Man,—unwise by the theft of endless ages, but as human as anything God ever made. He was the slave for the miracle maker. It was he that the thunderbolts struck and electrified into gasping energy. The rasp of his

hard breathing shook the midnights of all this endless valley and the pulse of his powerful arms set the great nation to trembling.

And then, at last, out of the South, like a still, small voice, came the third man,—black, with great eyes and greater memories; hesitantly eager and yet with the infinite softness and ancient calm which come from that eternal race whose history is not the history of a day, but of endless ages. Here, surely, was fit meeting-place for these curiously intent forces, for these epoch-making and age-twisting forces, for these human feet on their super-human errands.

Yesterday I rode in East St. Louis. It is the kind of place one quickly recognizes,—tireless and with no restful green of verdure; hard and uneven of street; crude, cold, and even hateful of aspect; conventional, of course, in its business quarter, but quickly beyond one sees the ruts and the hollows, the stench of ill-tamed sewerage, unguarded railroad crossings, saloons outnumbering churches and churches catering to saloons; homes impudently strait and new, prostitutes free and happy, gamblers in paradise, the town “wide open,” shameless and frank; great factories pouring out stench, filth, and flame—these and all other things so familiar in the world market places, where industry triumphs over thought and products overwhelm men. May I tell, too, how yesterday I rode in this city past flame-swept walls and over gray ashes; in streets almost wet with blood and beside ruins, where the bones of dead men new-bleached peered out at me in sullen wonder?

Across the river, in the greater city, where bronze St. Louis,—that just and austere king—looks with angry, fear-swept eyes down from the rolling heights of Forest Park, which knows him not nor heeds him, there is something of the same thing, but this city is larger and older and the forces of evil have had some curbing from those who have seen the vision and panted for life; but eastward from St. Louis there is a land of no taxes for great industries; there is a land where you may buy grafting politicians at far less rate than you would pay for franchises or privileges in a modern town. There, too, you may escape the buying of indulgences from the great terminal fist, which squeezes industry out of St. Louis. In fact, East St. Louis is a paradise for high and frequent dividends and for the piling up of wealth to be spent in St. Louis and Chicago and New York and when the world is sane again, across the seas.

So the Unwise Men pouring out of the East,—falling, scrambling, rushing into America at the rate of a million a year,—ran, walked, and crawled to this maelstrom of the workers. They garnered higher wage than ever they had before, but not all of it came in cash. A part, and an insidious part, was given to them transmuted into whiskey, prostitutes, and games of chance. They laughed and disported themselves. God! Had not their mothers wept enough? It was a good town. There was no veil of hypocrisy here, but a wickedness, frank, ungilded, and open. To be sure, there were things sometimes to re-

veal the basic savagery and thin veneer. Once, for instance, a man was lynched for brawling on the public square of the county seat; once a mayor who sought to "clean up" was publicly assassinated; always there was theft and rumors of theft, until St. Clair County was a hissing in good men's ears; but always, too, there were good wages and jolly hoodlums and unchecked wassail of Saturday nights. Gamblers, big and little, rioted in East St. Louis. The little gamblers used cards and roulette wheels and filched the weekly wage of the workers. The greater gamblers used meat and iron and undid the foundations of the world. All the gods of chance flaunted their wild raiment here, above the brown flood of the Mississippi.

Then the world changed; then civilization, built for culture, rebuilt itself for wilful murder in Europe, Asia, America, and the Southern Seas. Hands that made food made powder, and iron for railways was iron for guns. The wants of common men were forgotten before the groan of giants. Streams of gold, lost from the world's workers, filtered and trickled into the hands of gamblers and put new power into the thunderbolts of East St. Louis.

Wages had been growing before the World War. Slowly but remorselessly the skilled and intelligent, banding themselves, had threatened the coffers of the mighty, and slowly the mighty had disgorged. Even the common workers, the poor and unlettered, had again and again gripped the sills of the city walls and pulled themselves to their chins; but, alas! there were

so many hands and so many mouths and the feet of the Disinherited kept coming across the wet paths of the sea to this old El Dorado.

War brought subtle changes. Wages stood still while prices fattened. It was not that the white American worker was threatened with starvation, but it was what was, after all, a more important question,—whether or not he should lose his front-room and victrola and even the dream of a Ford car.

There came a whirling and scrambling among the workers,—they fought each other; they climbed on each others' backs. The skilled and intelligent, banding themselves even better than before, bargained with the men of might and held them by bitter threats; the less skilled and more ignorant seethed at the bottom and tried, as of old, to bring it about that the ignorant and unlettered should learn to stand together against both capital and skilled labor.

It was here that there came out of the East a beam of unearthly light,—a triumph of possible good in evil so strange that the workers hardly believed it. Slowly they saw the gates of Ellis Island closing, slowly the footsteps of the yearly million men became fainter and fainter, until the stream of immigrants overseas was stopped by the shadow of death at the very time when new murder opened new markets over all the world to American industry; and the giants with the thunderbolts stamped and raged and peered out across the world and called for men and evermore,—men!

The Unwise Men laughed and squeezed reluctant

dollars out of the fists of the mighty and saw in their dream the vision of a day when labor, as they knew it, should come into its own; saw this day and saw it with justice and with right, save for one thing, and that was the sound of the moan of the Disinherited, who still lay without the walls. When they heard this moan and saw that it came not across the seas, they were at first amazed and said it was not true; and then they were mad and said it should not be. Quickly they turned and looked into the red blackness of the South and in their hearts were fear and hate!

What did they see? They saw something at which they had been taught to laugh and make sport; they saw that which the heading of every newspaper column, the lie of every cub reporter, the exaggeration of every press dispatch, and the distortion of every speech and book had taught them was a mass of despicable men, inhuman; at best, laughable; at worst, the meat of mobs and fury.

What did they see? They saw nine and one-half millions of human beings. They saw the spawn of slavery, ignorant by law and by deviltry, crushed by insult and debauched by systematic and criminal injustice. They saw a people whose helpless women have been raped by thousands and whose men lynched by hundreds in the face of a sneering world. They saw a people with heads bloody, but unbowed, working faithfully at wages fifty per cent. lower than the wages of the nation and under conditions which shame civilization, saving homes, training children, hoping against hope. They saw the greatest industrial mir-

acle of modern days,—slaves transforming themselves to freemen and climbing out of perdition by their own efforts, despite the most contemptible opposition God ever saw,—they saw all this and what they saw the distraught employers of America saw, too.

The North called to the South. A scream of rage went up from the cotton monopolists and industrial barons of the new South. Who was this who dared to “interfere” with their labor? Who sought to own their black slaves but they? Who honored and loved “niggers” as they did?

They mobilized all the machinery of modern oppression: taxes, city ordinances, licenses, state laws, municipal regulations, wholesale police arrests and, of course, the peculiarly Southern method of the mob and the lyncher. They appealed frantically to the United States Government; they groveled on their knees and shed wild tears at the “suffering” of their poor, misguided black friends, and yet, despite this, the Northern employers simply had to offer two and three dollars a day and from one-quarter to one-half a million dark workers arose and poured themselves into the North. They went to the mines of West Virginia, because war needs coal; they went to the industries of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, because war needs ships and iron; they went to the automobiles of Detroit and the load-carrying of Chicago; and they went to East St. Louis.

Now there came fear in the hearts of the Unwise Men. It was not that their wages were lowered,—they went even higher. They received, not simply,

a living wage, but a wage that paid for some of the decencies, and, in East St. Louis, many of the indecencies of life. What they feared was not deprivation of the things they were used to and the shadow of poverty, but rather the definite death of their rising dreams. But if fear was new-born in the hearts of the Unwise Men, the black man was born in a house of fear; to him poverty of the ulgiest and straitest type was father, mother, and blood-brother. He was slipping stealthily northward to escape hunger and insult, the hand of oppression, and the shadow of death.

Here, then, in the wide valley which Father Marquette saw peaceful and golden, lazy with fruit and river, half-asleep beneath the nod of God,—here, then, was staged every element for human tragedy, every element of the modern economic paradox.

Ah! That hot, wide plain of East St. Louis is a gripping thing. The rivers are dirty with sweat and toil and lip, like lakes, along the low and burdened shores; flatboats ramble and thread among them, and above the steamers bridges swing on great arches of steel, striding with mighty grace from shore to shore. Everywhere are brick kennels,—tall, black and red chimneys, tongues of flame. The ground is littered with cars and iron, tracks and trucks, boxes and crates, metals and coal and rubber. Nature-defying cranes, grim elevators rise above pile on pile of black and grimy lumber. And ever below is the water,—wide and silent, gray-brown and yellow.

This is the stage for the tragedy: the armored might of the modern world urged by the bloody needs of the world wants, fevered today by a fabulous vision of gain and needing only hands, hands, hands! Fear of loss and greed of gain in the hearts of the giants; the clustered cunning of the modern workman, skilled as artificer and skilled in the rhythm of the habit of work, tasting the world's good and panting for more; fear of poverty and hate of "scabs" in the hearts of the workers; the dumb yearning in the hearts of the oppressed; the echo of laughter heard at the foot of the Pyramids; the faithful, plodding slouch of the laborers; fear of the Shadow of Death in the hearts of black men.

We ask, and perhaps there is no answer, how far may the captain of the world's industry do his deeds, despite the grinding tragedy of its doing? How far may men fight for the beginning of comfort, out beyond the horrid shadow of poverty, at the cost of starving other and what the world calls lesser men? How far may those who reach up out of the slime that fills the pits of the world's damned compel men with loaves to divide with men who starve?

The answers to these questions are hard, but yet one answer looms above all,—justice lies with the lowest; the plight of the lowest man,—the plight of the black man—deserves the first answer, and the plight of the giants of industry, the last.

Little cared East St. Louis for all this bandying of human problems, so long as its grocers and saloon-keepers flourished and its industries steamed and

screamed and smoked and its bankers grew rich. Stupidity, license, and graft sat enthroned in the City Hall. The new black folk were exploited as cheerfully as white Polacks and Italians; the rent of shacks mounted merrily, the street car lines counted gleeful gains, and the crimes of white men and black men flourished in the dark. The high and skilled and smart climbed on the bent backs of the ignorant; harder the mass of laborers strove to unionize their fellows and to bargain with employers.

Nor were the new blacks fools. They had no love for nothings in labor; they had no wish to make their fellows' wage envelopes smaller, but they were determined to make their own larger. They, too, were willing to join in the new union movement. But the unions did not want them. Just as employers monopolized meat and steel, so they sought to monopolize labor and beat a giant's bargain. In the higher trades they succeeded. The best electrician in the city was refused admittance to the union and driven from the town because he was black. No black builder, printer, or machinist could join a union or work in East St. Louis, no matter what his skill or character. But out of the stink of the stockyards and the dust of the aluminum works and the sweat of the lumber yards the willing blacks could not be kept.

They were invited to join unions of the laborers here and they joined. White workers and black workers struck at the aluminum works in the fall and won higher wages and better hours; then again in the spring they struck to make bargaining compulsory for

the employer, but this time they fronted new things. The conflagration of war had spread to America; government and court stepped in and ordered no hesitation, no strikes; the work must go on.

Deeper was the call for workers. Black men poured in and red anger flamed in the hearts of the white workers. The anger was against the wielders of the thunderbolts, but here it was impotent because employers stood with the hand of the government before their faces; it was against entrenched union labor, which had risen on the backs of the unskilled and unintelligent and on the backs of those whom for any reason of race or prejudice or chicane they could beat beyond the bars of competition; and finally the anger of the mass of white workers was turned toward these new black interlopers, who seemed to come to spoil their last dream of a great monopoly of common labor.

These angers flamed and the union leaders, fearing their fury and knowing their own guilt, not only in the larger and subtler matter of bidding their way to power across the weakness of their less fortunate fellows, but also conscious of their part in making East St. Louis a miserable town of liquor and lust, leaped quickly to ward the gathering thunder from their own heads. The thing they wanted was even at their hands: here were black men, guilty not only of bidding for jobs which white men could have held at war prices, even if they could not fill, but also guilty of being black! It was at this blackness that the unions pointed the accusing finger. It was here that

they committed the unpardonable crime. It was here that they entered the Shadow of Hell, where suddenly from a fight for wage and protection against industrial oppression East St. Louis became the center of the oldest and nastiest form of human oppression, —race hatred.

The whole situation lent itself to this terrible transformation. Everything in the history of the United States, from slavery to Sunday supplements, from disfranchisement to residence segregation, from "Jim-Crow" cars to a "Jim-Crow" army draft—all this history of discrimination and insult festered to make men think and willing to think that the venting of their unbridled anger against 12,000,000 humble, upstriving workers was a way of settling the industrial tangle of the ages. It was the logic of the broken plate, which, seared of old across its pattern, cracks never again, save along the old destruction.

So hell flamed in East St. Louis! The white men drove even black union men out of their unions and when the black men, beaten by night and assaulted, flew to arms and shot back at the marauders, five thousand rioters arose and surged like a crested storm-wave, from noonday until midnight; they killed and beat and murdered; they dashed out the brains of children and stripped off the clothes of women; they drove victims into the flames and hanged the helpless to the lighting poles. Fathers were killed before the faces of mothers; children were burned; heads were cut off with axes; pregnant women crawled and spawned in dark, wet fields; thieves went through

houses and firebrands followed; bodies were thrown from bridges; and rocks and bricks flew through the air.

The Negroes fought. They grappled with the mob like beasts at bay. They drove them back from the thickest cluster of their homes and piled the white dead on the street, but the cunning mob caught the black men between the factories and their homes, where they knew they were armed only with their dinner pails. Firemen, policemen, and militiamen stood with hanging hands or even joined eagerly with the mob.

It was the old world horror come to life again: all that Jews suffered in Spain and Poland; all that peasants suffered in France, and Indians in Calcutta; all that aroused human devilry had accomplished in ages past they did in East St. Louis, while the rags of six thousand half-naked black men and women fluttered across the bridges of the calm Mississippi.

The white South laughed,—it was infinitely funny—the “niggers” who had gone North to escape slavery and lynching had met the fury of the mob which they had fled. Delegations rushed North from Mississippi and Texas, with suspicious timeliness and with great-hearted offers to take these workers back to a lesser hell. The man from Greenville, Mississippi, who wanted a thousand got six, because, after all, the end was not so simple.

No, the end was not simple. On the contrary, the problem raised by East St. Louis was curiously complex. The ordinary American, tired of the persist-

ence of "the Negro problem," sees only another anti-Negro mob and wonders, not when we shall settle this problem, but when we shall be well rid of it. The student of social things sees another mile-post in the triumphant march of union labor; he is sorry that blood and rapine should mark its march,—but, what will you? War is life!

Despite these smug reasonings the bare facts were these: East St. Louis, a great industrial center, lost 5,000 laborers,—good, honest, hard-working laborers. It was not the criminals, either black or white, who were driven from East St. Louis. They are still there. They will stay there. But half the honest black laborers were gone. The crippled ranks of industrial organization in the mid-Mississippi Valley cannot be recruited from Ellis Island, because in Europe men are dead and maimed, and restoration, when restoration comes, will raise a European demand for labor such as this age has never seen. The vision of industrial supremacy has come to the giants who lead American industry and finance. But it can never be realized unless the laborers are here to do the work,—the skilled laborers, the common laborers, the willing laborers, the well-paid laborers. The present forces, organized however cunningly, are not large enough to do what America wants; but there is another group of laborers, 12,000,000 strong, the natural heirs, by every logic of justice, to the fruits of America's industrial advance. They will be used simply because they must be used,—but their using means East St. Louis!

Eastward from St. Louis lie great centers, like Chicago, Indianapolis, Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburg, Philadelphia, and New York; in every one of these and in lesser centers there is not only the industrial unrest of war and revolutionized work, but there is the call for workers, the coming of black folk, and the deliberate effort to divert the thoughts of men, and particularly of workingmen, into channels of race hatred against blacks. In every one of these centers what happened in East St. Louis has been attempted, with more or less success. Yet the American Negroes stand today as the greatest strategic group in the world. Their services are indispensable, their temper and character are fine, and their souls have seen a vision more beautiful than any other mass of workers. They may win back culture to the world if their strength can be used with the forces of the world that make for justice and not against the hidden hates that fight for barbarism. For fight they must and fight they will!

Rising on wings we cross again the rivers of St. Louis, winding and threading between the towers of industry that threaten and drown the towers of God. Far, far beyond, we sight the green of fields and hills; but ever below lies the river, blue,—brownish-gray, touched with the hint of hidden gold. Drifting through half-flooded lowlands, with shanties and crops and stunted trees, past struggling corn and straggling village, we rush toward the Battle of the Marne and the West, from this dread Battle of the East. Westward, dear God, the fire of Thy Mad World crimson

our Heaven. Our answering Hell rolls eastward from St. Louis.

Here, in microcosm, is the sort of economic snarl that arose continually for me and my pupils to solve. We could bring to its unraveling little of the scholarly aloofness and academic calm of most white universities. To us this thing was Life and Hope and Death!

How should we think such a problem through, not simply as Negroes, but as men and women of a new century, helping to build a new world? And first of all, here is no simple question of race antagonism. There are no races, in the sense of great, separate, pure breeds of men, differing in attainment, development, and capacity. There are great groups,—now with common history, now with common interests, now with common ancestry; more and more common experience and present interest drive back the common blood and the world today consists, not of races, but of the imperial commercial group of master capitalists, international and predominantly white; the national middle classes of the several nations, white, yellow, and brown, with strong blood bonds, common languages, and common history; the international laboring class of all colors; the backward, oppressed groups of nature-folk, predominantly yellow, brown, and black.

Two questions arise from the work and relations of these groups: how to furnish goods and services for the wants of men and how equitably and sufficiently to satisfy these wants. There can be no doubt that

we have passed in our day from a world that could hardly satisfy the physical wants of the mass of men, by the greatest effort, to a world whose technique supplies enough for all, if all can claim their right. Our great ethical question today is, therefore, how may we justly distribute the world's goods to satisfy the necessary wants of the mass of men.

What hinders the answer to this question? Dislikes, jealousies, hatreds,—undoubtedly like the race hatred in East St. Louis; the jealousy of English and German; the dislike of the Jew and the Gentile. But these are, after all, surface disturbances, sprung from ancient habit more than from present reason. They persist and are encouraged because of deeper, mightier currents. If the white workingmen of East St. Louis felt sure that Negro workers would not and could not take the bread and cake from their mouths, their race hatred would never have been translated into murder. If the black workingmen of the South could earn a decent living under decent circumstances at home, they would not be compelled to underbid their white fellows.

Thus the shadow of hunger, in a world which never needs to be hungry, drives us to war and murder and hate. But why does hunger shadow so vast a mass of men? Manifestly because in the great organizing of men for work a few of the participants come out with more wealth than they can possibly use, while a vast number emerge with less than can decently support life. In earlier economic stages we defended this as the reward of Thrift and Sacrifice, and as the

punishment of Ignorance and Crime. To this the answer is sharp: Sacrifice calls for no such reward and Ignorance deserves no such punishment. The chief meaning of our present thinking is that the disproportion between wealth and poverty today cannot be adequately accounted for by the thrift and ignorance of the rich and the poor.

Yesterday we righted one great mistake when we realized that the ownership of the laborer did not tend to increase production. The world at large had learned this long since, but black slavery arose again in America as an inexplicable anachronism, a wilful crime. The freeing of the black slaves freed America. To-day we are challenging another ownership,—the ownership of materials which go to make the goods we need. Private ownership of land, tools, and raw materials may at one stage of economic development be a method of stimulating production and one which does not greatly interfere with equitable distribution. When, however, the intricacy and length of technical production increased, the ownership of these things becomes a monopoly, which easily makes the rich richer and the poor poorer. Today, therefore, we are challenging this ownership; we are demanding general consent as to what materials shall be privately owned and as to how materials shall be used. We are rapidly approaching the day when we shall repudiate all private property in raw materials and tools and demand that distribution hinge, not on the power of those who monopolize the materials, but on the needs of the mass of men.

Can we do this and still make sufficient goods, justly gauge the needs of men, and rightly decide who are to be considered "men"? How do we arrange to accomplish these things today? Somebody decides whose wants should be satisfied. Somebody organizes industry so as to satisfy these wants. What is to hinder the same ability and foresight from being used in the future as in the past? **The amount and kind of human ability necessary need not be decreased,—it may even be vastly increased, with proper encouragement and rewards.** Are we today evoking the necessary ability? On the contrary, it is not the Inventor, the Manager, and the Thinker who today are reaping the great rewards of industry, but rather the Gambler and the Highwayman. Rightly-organized industry might easily save the Gambler's Profit and the Monopolist's Interest and by paying a more discriminating reward in wealth and honor bring to the service of the state more ability and sacrifice than we can today command. If we do away with interest and profit, consider the savings that could be made; but above all, think how great the revolution would be when we ask the mysterious Somebody to decide in the light of public opinion whose wants should be satisfied. This is the great and real revolution that is coming in future industry.

But this is not the end of the revolution nor indeed, perhaps, its real beginning. What we must decide sometime is who are to be considered "men." Today, at the beginning of this industrial change, we are admitting that economic classes must give way. The

laborers' hire must increase, the employers' profit must be curbed. But how far shall this change go? Must it apply to all human beings and to all work throughout the world?

Certainly not. We seek to apply it slowly and with some reluctance to white men and more slowly and with greater reserve to white women, but black folk and brown and for the most part yellow folk we have widely determined shall not be among those whose needs must justly be heard and whose wants must be ministered to in the great organization of world industry.

In the teaching of my classes I was not willing to stop with showing that this was unfair,—indeed I did not have to do this. They knew through bitter experience its rank injustice, because they were black. What I had to show was that no real reorganization of industry could be permanently made with the majority of mankind left out. **These disinherited darker peoples must either share in the future industrial democracy or overturn the world.**

Of course, the foundation of such a system must be a high, ethical ideal. We must really envisage the wants of humanity. We must want the wants of all men. We must get rid of the fascination for exclusiveness. Here, in a world full of folk, men are lonely. The rich are lonely. We are all frantic for fellow-souls, yet we shut souls out and bar the ways and bolster up the fiction of the Elect and the Superior when the great mass of men is capable of producing larger and larger numbers for every human height of

attainment. To be sure, there are differences between men and groups and there will ever be, but they will be differences of beauty and genius and of interest and not necessarily of ugliness, imbecility, and hatred.

The meaning of America is the beginning of the discovery of the Crowd. The crowd is not so well-trained as a Versailles garden party of Louis XIV, but it is far better trained than the Sans-culottes and it has infinite possibilities. What a world this will be when human possibilities are freed, when we discover each other, when the stranger is no longer the potential criminal and the certain inferior!

What hinders our approach to the ideals outlined above? Our profit from degradation, our colonial exploitation, our American attitude toward the Negro. Think again of East St. Louis! Think back of that to slavery and Reconstruction! Do we want the wants of American Negroes satisfied? Most certainly not, and that negative is the greatest hindrance today to the reorganization of work and redistribution of wealth, not only in America, but in the world. ✓

All humanity must share in the future industrial democracy of the world. For this it must be trained in intelligence and in appreciation of the good and the beautiful. Present Big Business,—that Science of Human Wants—must be perfected by eliminating the price paid for waste, which is Interest, and for Chance, which is Profit, and making all income a personal wage for service rendered by the recipient; by recognizing no possible human service as great enough to enable a person to designate another as an idler or

as a worker at work which he cannot do. Above all, industry must minister to the wants of the many and not to the few, and the Negro, the Indian, the Mongolian, and the South Sea Islander must be among the many as well as Germans, Frenchmen, and Englishmen.

In this coming socialization of industry we must guard against that same tyranny of the majority that has marked democracy in the making of laws. There must, for instance, persist in this future economics a certain minimum of machine-like work and prompt obedience and submission. This necessity is a simple corollary from the hard facts of the physical world. It must be accepted with the comforting thought that its routine need not demand twelve hours a day or even eight. With Work for All and All at Work probably from three to six hours would suffice, and leave abundant time for leisure, exercise, study, and avocations.

But what shall we say of work where spiritual values and social distinctions enter? Who shall be Artists and who shall be Servants in the world to come? Or shall we all be artists and all serve?

A Hymn to the Peoples

O Truce of God!
And primal meeting of the Sons of Man,
Foreshadowing the union of the World!
From all the ends of earth we come!
Old Night, the elder sister of the Day,
Mother of Dawn in the golden East,
Meets in the misty twilight with her brood,
Pale and black, tawny, red and brown,
The mighty human rainbow of the world,
Spanning its wilderness of storm.

Softly in sympathy the sunlight falls,
Rare is the radiance of the moon;
And on the darkest midnight blaze the stars—
The far-flown shadows of whose brilliance
Drop like a dream on the dim shores of Time,
Forecasting Days that are to these
As day to night.

So sit we all as one.
So, gloomed in tall and stone-swathed groves,
The Buddha walks with Christ!
And Al-Koran and Bible both be holy!

Almighty Word!
In this Thine awful sanctuary,
First and flame-haunted City of the Widened World,
Assoil us, Lord of Lands and Seas!

We are but weak and wayward men,
Distraught alike with hatred and vainglory;
Prone to despise the Soul that breathes within—
High visioned hordes that lie and steal and kill,
Sinning the sin each separate heart disclaims,
Clambering upon our riven, writhing selves,
Besieging Heaven by trampling men to Hell!
We be blood-guilty! Lo, our hands be red!
Not one may blame the other in this sin!
But here—here in the white Silence of the Dawn,
Before the Womb of Time,
With bowed hearts all flame and shame,
We face the birth-pangs of a world:
We hear the stifled cry of Nations all but born—
The wail of women ravished of their stunted brood!

We see the nakedness of Toil, the poverty of Wealth,
We know the Anarchy of Empire, and doleful Death of Life!
And hearing, seeing, knowing all, we cry:

Save us, World-Spirit, from our lesser selves!
Grant us that war and hatred cease,
Reveal our souls in every race and hue!
Help us, O Human God, in this Thy Truce,
To make Humanity divine!