

The People.

VOL. V, NO. 47

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1896

PRICE 3 CENTS

EDITORIAL

Coxeyism—Helotism

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The republic of Sparta consisted of warriors, together with their families, and the helots. The helots were the descendants of the original inhabitants who had gone down before the Spartan broad sword. In the struggle for existence, the Spartans had proved the fitter—the fitter in those qualities, mankilling qualities, then requisite for life. The conquered race was reduced to vassalage; its descendants were assigned to the condition of menials; and to them were allotted the disagreeable and degrading work of the State for scanty food, rags as clothing and hovels as homes. Coxeyism's solution of the Social Question is the reduction of a present and increasing majority of our population to the condition of helots.

Coxeyism admits the existence of a stupendous army of unemployed. Whence do these come? They do not drop down from the sky; nor will any but the very foolish claim they are foreigners; at every encounter with the tramps' division of the unemployed the unwelcome fact strikes the public that they are overwhelmingly native born. The tramp, the whole army of the unemployed, is born of capitalism: the privately owned machine does with one man more than before could be done with two or more; the consolidations of capitalist concerns, whereby economy is introduced by the dismantling of factories, renders laborers superfluous; these are the head fountains that feed the stream of the unemployed. Nor is the nature of the head fountain such as to justify the idea that it will be stationary, or may run dry. On the contrary. Machinery will be introduced in more and more new fields; the machines now in operation will be more and more perfected; and more and more consolidations of capitalist concerns will reduce ever more the quantity of labor that is needed, and thereby swell the flood of the unemployed.

To those, who now are unemployed, to the larger swarms of those who will presently be thrown out of work, Coxeyism offers the refuge of working on the roads at the pittance of \$1.50 a day! In other words, to those who have fallen in the battle with capitalism and who, unequipped with the cruel, brazen, criminal, characterless characteristics of

the capitalist, whose brains are not “clever” enough to steal, swindle and murder by law, who, accordingly, in the modern struggle for life, have gone and will go down before the bludgeon of capitalism, to all of these Coxeyism holds out complacently the fate of the helot!

Socialism repudiates Coxeyism with even greater scorn than it repudiates all other quack nostrums to solve the Social Problem. Socialism points out to the unemployed that they have assisted in producing the fabulous wealth of the nation, while its present possessors have stolen it; it warns the employed wage slaves that theirs will soon be the fate of the unemployed; and it demonstrates to them that, already to-day, they alone constitute more than one-half the whole population, and should avail themselves of their might to wrest the public power of the nation from the capitalist class, recover possession of their own, and establish the Co-operative Commonwealth. Socialism furthermore turns to those who still hold some property, to the middle class, and shows them that their struggle with their mammoth competitors can end only with their final ruin, their dropping into the class of the wage slaves and eventually and periodically sink even below that into the army of the unemployed, and it urges them to join the Socialist phalanx to overthrow the existing system of economic and political tyranny. To all of these, Socialism points the path to and holds up the positive hope of deliverance.

To the Protectionists we say: “No Humbug!”; to the Free Traders we say, “No Gulling!”; to the Goldbugs we say, “No Jockeyship!”; to the Free Coinagists a la 16 to 1 we say, “No Crocodile Tears!”; to the Single Taxers we say, “No Quackery!”; to the Referendumites we say, “NO HELOTISM!”

[Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.](#)

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