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FORD HALL NOON LECTURES

THE LABOR MOVEMENT



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THE LABOR MOVEMENT

*FROM THE STANDPOINT OF
RELIGIOUS VALUES*

BY

HARRY F. WARD

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Secretary, The Methodist Federation for Social Service

The verbatim stenographic report of a series of
noon day lectures
delivered at
Ford Hall, Boston, 1915,
together with the questions and answers of the
Forum period following each lecture

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PREFACE

A School of Theology and the I. W. W. sitting together to discuss the labour problem! Can any conference more strange to our modern thinking be imagined! But could any conference more essentially logical be conceived! The bringing together, however, of these various groups into one harmonious student body was the function of a third idea in action, the Ford Hall Open Forum.

Ford Hall stands for free discussion of questions carrying a distinctive ethical message. It is in a large way a church for community religion. Within its walls every religious, racial and political element in the community have come together seeking for a faith common to all. Therefore, when the Boston University School of Theology sought for a place fit and proper for the exercise of the hospitality it contemplated, the platform of Ford Hall with its associations of the Open Forum was the natural place to seek.

The lectures here reproduced were originally presented by Dr. Ward to his students in the University. They attracted so much attention that a group of ministers asked to have them

repeated. Thereupon the School of Theology issued a general invitation to all to attend the course. It stated the aim of the course to be to present the broad, essential facts concerning the constituent groups of the labour movement in the United States, and discuss its main demands from the standpoint of religious values.

The Boston Baptist Social Union gladly opened Ford Hall to the meetings, and men of all classes and creeds, of all ranks, standards and opinions, gathered to listen to an official representative of a School of Theology expound the labour movement. Ministers and laymen, employers and employees sat together and asked questions at the close of the addresses. The lectures met with a warm reception. The resolutions presented by the I. W. W. at their close may be taken as fairly illustrative of the feeling of the thinking public toward the addresses. It is in response to a very general request for their publication that this volume is presented to the public. The text is from a verbatim stenographic report, with no changes whatever.

I was privileged to preside at these lectures and to conduct the question period. I feel that this task was indeed an honour, and I regard it as an equal privilege as editor to present this volume to the larger public.

WILLIAM HORTON FOSTER.

INTRODUCTION

Can an interpreter of modern industry come out of a theological seminary? An intelligent twentieth century citizen would no more expect it than did the average man of Jesus' time suppose that any good thing could come out of Nazareth. But I ought to have taken it for granted after my long acquaintance with such seminary professors as Rauschenbusch, Fagnani, Mathews, Hall, Vedder, Ryan and Rowe. Still I was amazed when I witnessed the work of Prof. Harry Ward in this remarkable course of lectures. His range of knowledge, breadth of vision, depth of sympathy, unruffled equanimity, splendid poise, and remarkable powers of ready and accurate speech simply overwhelm me. That I myself was not bewitched nor hypnotised was attested by the extraordinary response of the entire audience that filled Ford Hall, day after day. It was a conglomerate crowd of ministers, business and professional men, Socialists, Labor Unionists and I. W. W.'s that made up that audience. They all seemed to feel very much as I did, and yet the labour problem was

handled from A to Z without hesitation, no side-stepping and unequivocally.

And this extraordinarily unique situation was intensified by the fact that the lecturer was not essaying an adventure on his own hook and at his own risk, but was speaking as the representative of the Theological School of Boston University in a hall freely given for the purpose by a great lay organisation, the Boston Baptist Social Union. And, to cap the climax, the National Industrial Union of Textile Workers of the I. W. W. fraternity drafted resolutions expressing their appreciation of the whole enterprise and especially of Professor Ward. I doubt if the like of this has ever been known before. And remember that the audience had the right to ask questions after each address and no vague, uncertain or unsatisfactory statement could pass unchallenged.

No small measure of the success of this immensely significant enterprise was due to Mr. William Horton Foster, who not only presided throughout with great skill, but who also had much to do with initiating and carrying forward the whole idea. In fact, it was an outgrowth, in some ways, of his work as Secretary of the Ford Hall Foundation, an organisation given up to promoting the Open Forum Movement.

GEORGE W. COLEMAN.

Feb. 25, 1915.

In behalf of the I. W. W. Propaganda League of Boston we wish to express our sincere thanks to the Baptist Social Union, also to the Boston University School of Theology and particularly to Prof. Ward for making it possible to present to the people of Boston the most vital social problem of the day, namely, the Labor Movement.

We wish to compliment Prof. Ward for the unbiased, unprejudiced, and able manner in which he presented the controversy between capital and labor and its causes.

The viewpoint taken by Prof. Ward coupled with his remarkable exposition of the case of labor, we feel will meet with the general approval of the organization and its members.

It has ever been the policy of the I. W. W. and its members to regard the conflict between the classes in society from the viewpoint of the worker, and we believe that Prof. Ward in his course of lectures on the labor movement has presented labor's Cause in such a clear and analytical manner, that one would be led to believe that he had acquired his extensive knowledge of the Labor Movement from actual experience in Industry.

We sincerely hope that the course of lectures just completed will be published and given as wide a circulation as possible.

Committee:

Signed { ADOLPH LESSIG,
NATHAN HERMAN,
GUY CURTIS,
JOHN J. FRASER.