

solely by the intellectual standards of their political leadership, our estimate of their intelligence would be a humiliating one. At a time when the country faces an industrial depression, when all signs point to hard times coming for the wage earner and business man, they accepted the leadership of two candidates, neither of whom showed the faintest comprehension of what underlies the industrial problem.

## Economic Origin of Race Prejudice

IT may lead us into a profitable train of thought to reflect that much of race prejudice has for its basis the economic condition that separates men into classes and groups. That this prejudice is often unconscious or sub-conscious, does not affect the matter. The prejudice against the Jew entertained by many, and shared often by men whom we would little suspect of harboring feelings against the race, is not distinctively a religious prejudice, since it was manifested by some of the most enlightened Romans—as, for example, Seneca and Tacitus, years before the death of Christ. In the Jewish people the Romans found themselves confronted, not with a different religious faith, for of this they were tolerant enough, but by a different body of economic teaching and different economic habits.

In more modern times the exclusion of the Jews from certain trades and professions, the ostracism which may have had its origin in the first instance in religious prejudice, was extended and strengthened by the economic division that made the Jews traders and money lenders, thus establishing classes dependent upon them. Their very unusual ability in this direction, due not at all to any affinity with these vocations, for the Jew is by tradition and taste an agriculturist, but rather to a greater natural quickness of intellect, operated to strengthen the original religious prejudice and unconsciously to assimilate it with the later-born economic group antagonism. It was now, if we may so speak, a property prejudice rather than a religious or racial one.

We are disposed to regard the antagonism of the South to the negro's exercise of political power with tolerance because of certain aspects which the economic problem has for the people of that section. The fear that the Southerner entertains in States where the blacks greatly outnumber the whites that if the negroes are allowed to exercise political power they may be despoiled of their property, seems reason enough for disfranchising the illiterate colored voter. (We need not touch upon the desire of the South to keep the races socially apart.) We cannot but believe that this fear is exaggerated, since the effect of almost all our land laws and tax laws is to despoil all our people of their property, but the fear has rational grounds nevertheless. In a country where the rights of property are meaningless terms, where the unnatural division of the landed and landless distort the perceptions, what can be expected

but unreasoning prejudices based upon property distinctions, which in this case take the form of racial distinctions?

With the recognition of the equal rights of all men, black and white, to the soil on which and from which they must live, it is not a violent or groundless hope that most of the feeling against the negro would disappear. There would be no longer the fear of invasion of any real property rights by black majorities that form the excuse, if not the justification, of negro disfranchisement in the Southern States.

## The Vote and Some Reflections Thereon

AMONG the reflections suggested by this election is that the so-called Farmer-Labor Party, which inherited the votes garnered by the Committee of 48 in a campaign of more than a year preceding the Chicago conference, cannot hope to win votes from the Socialists who will continue their adherence to the party that more nearly represents them.

Another fact that stands out is that the Socialists can never hope to become formidable rivals of the two old parties. For this there is a reason. America does not furnish an indigenous soil for the growth of Socialism. The party representing this doctrine has probably attained the apex of its achievement, and will now steadily decline. It rallied a large portion of its support in this election because of the lovable personality of Eugene V. Debs. It could not hope to do as well with a less attractive personality.

The fundamental division in economic thought, as far as men reason on the subject at all, is between those who incline to Socialism and those who incline to Individualism. Of course, the rational ground is between the extremes that meet in what for a better term we may call social individualism. The rational economic thinker is a social individualist, for the State has functions that are of its own by right. But the division between the Socialist and Individualist is convenient, for it is a sufficiently real distinction. Men will incline to one or other of these doctrines in their conviction, and the point we wish to make is that these men can be made to divide *politically* as they divide *economically*. There is no possibility of a reconciliation between them in a single political party to oppose or reform the existing order. This experiment was tried at Chicago and resulted disastrously to the experimenters.

The natural political division is the same as the economic division. The two great parties do not so divide, because each is a political anachronism, or an economic anachronism, and does not depend on the reasoning but the unreasoning prejudices of the voters—in other words, upon their delusions. It is a mark of intellectual distinction not to belong to either, for the men and women who do not so affiliate have begun to think, at least. Then there are vaster numbers only loosely affiliated. The economic convictions of the latter are latent, and when successfully appealed to they will divide politically as they divide economically—into the socialistic or individualistic camps.