

Greeting to You All

By [The Agitator](#)

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THE AGITATOR, long hoped for by many and never expected by some, makes its entrance into the world on this memorable date — Nov. 11 — a date that will go down in the labor history of America as recording the most important event in the nineteenth century.

The publishers are glad to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Chicago martyrdom by the publication of a paper that stands for the freedom throttled by Gary and his co-conspirators Nov. 11, 1887.

THE AGITATOR will stand for freedom first, last, and all the time. It will insist upon the right of every person to express his or her opinion. Whether it will approve of what is said or written shall have nothing to do with the matter. A man's ideas may be absurd, he may be a blatherskite, but his rights, by the natural law of equality, are equal to those of the philosopher. Roosevelt has as much right to speak as the smartest man in the country.

THE AGITATOR contends that the greatest need of the world today is men and women who can popularize the knowledge that is laid away in musty tombs in the libraries. How many working people know anything about Darwin's theory of evolution? What is known of Spencer, who built a philosophy of the universe without a god and would leave it without a government? What is known about Proudhon, Marx, and [Kropotkin](#), whose ideas would free the masses from the economic and political bondage that enslaves them?

How many workers know about man in his relation to the other animals? How many know anything about the origin and development of man, about the social organization, the religious and economic systems he has lived through during his history?

In this age of printing every man should know something real about himself. But to every man has not been given the mind that can follow the weighty philosophers and scientists with any great success after serving his capitalistic master eight to sixteen hours a day.

The system saps the vitality out of the modern worker as much as the systems of old did his ancestors, and what little energy he has left after his day's labor must not be used in attempts to unravel obtuse problems. The problems must be reduced to simplicity. Science must be expressed in common words.

Education, like leisure and travel, has always been the luxury of the rich and privileged class. The toilers have toiled that the loafers might loaf. Knowledge is the most dangerous thing in the world. Theodore Parker, a Boston preacher of fifty years ago, said: "Did a mass of men know the actual selfishness and injustice of their rulers, not a government would stand a year; the world would ferment with revolution."

The catholic church knows well the danger of education. It killed the greatest educator the world has produced. Francisco Ferrer possessed one great faculty coupled with one grand desire. He had the faculty for assimilating great quantities of the most abstract learning and reducing it to the language of the simplest child, and he had the over-mastering desire to plant that learning in the minds of his fellow-countrymen. The catholic church marked Ferrer from the start and put a volley into him at its first opportunity.

THE AGITATOR will do its best to develop simplifiers of science in this country where they are as badly needed as in Spain. It is not the children alone that come under the banner of the modern school. THE AGITATOR is dedicated to the modern school for grown-ups.

THE AGITATOR will advocate the industrial form of organization among the toilers, because experience has shown that the various trades acting singly can not cope with the modern capitalists, who have learned the lesson of industrialism. The coming struggle will be industrial capitalism vs. industrial labor. The capitalists are already organized and beginning to reap the fruits of their foresight. It is now up to the workers to swing into line and present an unbroken front to the enemy.

The **I.W.W.** is a vigorous young organization. The **A.F. of L.** is slow to move, like all large bodies, but it is advancing towards industrialism. The building trades department and the metal trades department are duly chartered by the parent body. The building trades have been the most successful of all the unions because they have used the industrial method more often; and they were the first to apply for recognition as a separate industrial entity.

THE AGITATOR will urge upon the rank and file of the trades the dire necessity of quickly adopting the industrial form before their unions are disrupted by the ravages of industrial capitalism, and the result of their fifty years of effort be entirely lost. Some think the old unions will have to be broken up before we can have the industrial union; but this is not the place to discuss that or any other subject. We will have ample opportunity for discussion as we go along. We invite discussion and urge the workers to express freely their views for the benefit of us all.

THE AGITATOR will not attack any set of workers groping towards the light. It will advise with them and appeal to their reason and experience when it thinks they are going in the wrong direction. Its object is to help create that unity of effort and solidarity among the workers necessary to their emancipation; necessary even to the preservation of the present conditions, bad as they are. For the aim of organized, industrial capitalism, plainly to be seen, is the reduction of the toilers to a state of helpless non-unionism, where the individual will be completely at its mercy, and the open shop ideal have full sway.

THE AGITATOR is very well aware that labor has a common enemy living off its weary toil, and against that common enemy it will direct such harsh words as it may choose to make use of; but it is too well grounded in its knowledge of life, too deeply impressed with the ideal of labor solidarity to turn its tongue upon its own kind.

THE AGITATOR will help to banish all of the many varied superstitions handed down from the mystic past as much as its space will permit; but its main object of assault will be the errors surrounding the economic and political life of the people. It will use plain language. It will call a political mountebank by his right name, and an economic vampire will be accorded the same politeness.

THE AGITATOR is convinced that so sure as the tendency in modern industry is toward one great combination of capital and one grand union of labor, the inevitable outcome will be a great struggle for mastery, and that great struggle, organized on the economic field, will be fought out there. So it is not going to ally itself with any political movement. It would be glad indeed to espouse the utopian dream of politics, for it has a leaning toward poetry, but its knowledge of evolution, its experience of the past, its observations of the present, are all against it.

How do we propose to change the system? We have no scheme for that purpose. The world does not work according to schemes. It follows well defined natural phenomena. The scheme idea has been tried by the Roman church and failed. Humanity will not fit itself into a mould, nor will it be forced into one. The duty of every student of the labor question is to study the law of social growth. It will be part of THE AGITATOR'S work to present its readers with articles and pamphlets on this question; and we have no hesitancy in predicting that our studies will lead us to the conclusion that this big industrial union, now in its infancy, will attend to the change without us bothering about it now. Unions usually strike when they want something. So the inference is strong that the industrial union will strike its way into freedom.

With this partial outline of its purpose, THE AGITATOR presents itself to the students of toil and the comrades of freedom for their approval or indifference. We will be glad to hear from all who have an opinion and the interest to pen it.

Additional Information

Taken from Marxists.org.