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# Nationalism

by Eugene V. Debs

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Boston, the Athens of America and the Hub of the Universe, has gone all to pieces over what is called "Nationalism." It is interesting to read the Yankee Doodleisms of the Boston savants on the new fangled theory. Fortunately for the baked bean enthusiasts, it is claimed that many distinguished literary men are taking stock in the discovery: such men for instance as Edward Everett Hale, Lawrence Gronlund, Col. T.W. Higginson, Edward Bellamy, and others of note in the literary world. It is interesting to know that the plan of the Nationalists is to nationalize all industries and solve industrial problems. They say that "the increasing labor strikes and lockouts, the clamor for higher wages and shorter hours, the mighty organizations of laborers for mutual protection, the hue and cry raised against monopolies and trusts, the abuses of capital and the legislation seeking to destroy them, the misery and wretchedness of the poor, and the increasing numbers of the unemployed all go to prove to the Nationalists that the times are ripe for a change in the industrial world. It is only a question of time, they say, when, unless anticipated by wise measures, this change must come and with a suddenness which may engulf the nation into a bloody revolution."

The Nationalists propose to down brakes in time to avoid such a calamity, and they should be praised for their good intentions. The Nationalists propose to make the people "their own rulers, producers, and employers, to abolish money, interest, wages, rent, and taxes, and confiscate, by popular vote and peaceful means, all the lands, public works, railroads, telegraphs, telephones, electric and gas lights, and all other branches of industry now conducted by private enterprise, and operate them all for the people and by the people." They would form a gigantic industrial army from service in which no able-bodied man or woman should be exempt. Every workers should have free play in the choosing of that particular line of work he may wish to engage in,

with the sanction of government, of course. If a man wanted to be a farmer, and if the state demanded his services on the railroad as being more valuable to the welfare of his fellow-men, he could not appeal; or if a man thought himself fitted to be a musician, and the state decided he could do better work as a clerk in a dry goods store, the state would have its way. Likewise if a woman chose to be a seamstress, and the state decided that she was competent to be a professional nurse, she would have to acquiesce. Physicians, statesmen, engineers, editors, artists, authors, historians, all should be chosen upon the same general plan, and as this would result in the choosing of only the very best men for those particular vocations, the public would never, or at least rarely, be imposed upon as it is now.

The schemes of the Boston Nationalists may not be vagaries of the most pronounced type, but if they are not, it will puzzle the most astute Philadelphia lawyer to tell what they are. If the only chance to protect the country from dire calamities is found in the hallucinations of the Nationalists, then Gabriel might as well blow his horn now as to postpone the interesting ceremony to a later date.

*Edited by Tim Davenport*

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