
Carnegie

by Eugene V. Debs

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During the closing days of January, 1893, Mr. Andrew Carnegie, after an extended sojourn abroad, found himself again on American soil.

During his absence the Homestead horror, under the management of H. C. Frick, occurred. Andrew Carnegie having posed before the American public, and as much of the world outside as he could reach, as a sublimated millionaire, making money only for the purpose of conferring benefits upon the poor, would, it was believed, if appealed to, arrest and change the murderous and damnable policy of Frick, in the management of the Carnegie mills at Homestead. He was appealed to by his old, tried, and faithful employees to interpose in their behalf and see that simple justice was done them.

At the time these appeals were made, Carnegie was in his castle in Scotland, wallowing and rioting in the wealth which his Homestead employees had made it possible for him to secure. In his castle halls there was music, and dancing, and feasting. Carnegie was surrounded by British and Scotch nabobs whom he was entertaining in princely splendor, and when from out of his mills, once the center of peace, prosperity and contentment, but transformed into a hell by Frick, there came to him appeals for help, it was a supreme opportunity for Carnegie; one word from him, the principal owner of the property, would have sufficed. Frick, the bloodthirsty monster, would have cowered and slunk into quietude, like a wild beast, under the lash of its keeper. But Carnegie did not respond; silent as a brass dog, he saw the electric batteries erected around his mills and the scalding water machinery completed to kill workingmen because they demanded fair wages. He saw Pinkerton murderers, hired from the slums of cities and armed with deadly weapons to murder at the word of command, flocking to Homestead; or if he did not see these murderous schemes progressing, he knew of them, but said not a word; he made no sign,

or, if he did take notice of them, it was to approve of Frick's plans and urge him forward in his satanic work, and as a righteous result, the ineffable infamy earned by Frick, attaches, without a modifying circumstance, to Carnegie, and will remain upon his name, indelible stains, forever. Like the mark upon Cain, he will carry them to his grave.

When Carnegie arrived in Washington city, report had it that during his stay "startling developments" would occur upon his arrival at Pittsburgh. It was reported that

Carnegie was not at all pleased with the unpleasant prominence into which he was brought by the late Homestead riots. The fact that he has made millions of dollars out of his "protected" Industries argued rather badly for him when an attempt was made to reduce the wages of his men. Moreover, it is said that some of the indicted men are old employees of the company, between whom and Mr. Carnegie the most cordial relations exist. It is believed, therefore, that Mr. Carnegie will use what influence he possesses to have the Indictments quashed and the sentences of those men who may be convicted made as light as possible. Those who saw the Pittsburgh millionaire yesterday say that he has aged considerably in the last year, and that his appearance indicates the severe strain to which he has been subjected since the riots began.

This turns out to be the sheerest poppy-cock. His works have doubtless lost money by Frick's policy of robbery and murder, and have gained an infamous notoriety. These facts, doubtless, have caused the Scotchman unrest. He loves to make money, give a few thousands, now and then, just to advertise his purity and philanthropy and brace up his "Gospel of Wealth." He likes to strut and pose as an Abou Ben Adhem, one who loves his fellow man,¹ but his unqualified endorsement of Frick makes all of his pretension in that line just so much despicable duplicity. After a column of the most disgusting bosh about not hoarding money, and the assertion, "I shall never accumulate money," he says:

¹ Allusion to the poem "Abou Ben Adhem" by **James Henry Leigh Hunt** (1784-1859), a short work in which the eponymous subject's earnest profession to an angel of love for fellow man is rated the supreme value by God in spite of his lack of orthodox piety.

And now one word about Mr. Frick, whom I recommended to the Carnegie Steel Company (Limited), as its chairman, and my successor four years ago.

I am not mistaken in the man, as the future will show. Of his ability, fairness, and pluck, no one has now the slightest question. His four years' management stamps him as one of the foremost managers in the world. I would not exchange him for any manager I know. People generally are still 'to learn of those virtues which his partners and friends know well. If his health be spared, I predict that no man who ever lived in Pittsburgh and managed business there will be better liked or admired by his employees than my friend and partner, Henry Clay Frick. I do not believe any man will be more valuable for the city. His are the qualities that wear. He never disappoints. What he promises he more than fulfills. Good workmen or able men, who wish to do what is fair and right, will learn to appreciate Mr. Frick. Neither inefficient officials nor bad, unreasonable, violent workmen does he like, and these will not thrive with him.

The public will want to hear no more from Andrew Carnegie. He is hand-in-glove, heart and soul, body and brains, money and muscle, including electricity, hot water, and Pinkerton thugs, in alliance with Frick. What Frick has done is unequivocally endorsed, and he does not hesitate to outrage public opinion by beslobbering the monster with his fulsome eulogies. Had Carnegie concluded to bestow flatulent commendation upon any successful buccaneer, land pirate, or train wrecker, they would have been received by the American public, as quite as appropriate as his florid endorsement of H. C. Frick, who is accounted as the most detestable villain, whose money gives him power to rob and degrade workingmen.

The American public did feel a lively interest in the utterances of Carnegie relative to the Homestead horrors. He had for years posed before the public as a mortal of seraphic mould, a millionaire hog with improved snout, with grunt and greed eliminated, a man who by some miraculous power had had all the devils cut out of him and with eyes turned heavenward panted like a wind-broken horse for opportunities to do good and now, where do we find him? Sitting on Frick's knees with his arms around his neck, besliming him as an anaconda does a calf preparatory to swallowing him neck and heels — Carnegie and Frick wedded and welded together by the cohesive power of plunder.

After this the American public will not care a pinch of snuff what becomes of Andrew Carnegie. He is rich and can rest in luxuries purchased by his ill-gotten money, and like the rich man we read about, he may be heard from eventually bemoaning his thirst and willing to part with his vast wealth including his castle in the Highlands, for “a drop of cold water,” which Frick would doubtless give him if he were not baking in a coke oven close at hand and himself quite as thirsty as Carnegie.

Edited with a footnote by Tim Davenport

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