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On a New Biography of Albert Parsons

Lucy E. Parsons

September 24, 1937

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I have read the manuscript of your forthcoming book on Albert R. Parsons and the early labor movement in Chicago. The manuscript shows painstaking care, and elucidation so much needed for the enlightenment of this generation.

Of course the part that interested me most was your description of the Haymarket meeting, the trial so-called, and the death of the martyrs, November 11, 1887.

You have dug beneath the mountain of lies that has been heaped upon my husband and his comrades these fifty fleeting years, and without any attempt at “over” writing, have given the bare, cold facts, taken from the record, and proving that they were innocent of any bomb-throwing, and were simply lynched!—to satisfy a howling mob of greedy capitalists, who would not be satisfied with less than their lives, who somehow thought by hanging those labor leaders they could crush the labor movement. “What fools these mortals be.”

They have always tried to crush the labor movement in this way, but in vain. Eugene Victor Debs was imprisoned because

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Foreword to Alan Calmer: *Labor Agitator*. (New York, 1937)
Excerpts from a letter to Alan Calmer

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he dared to raise his voice against the war craze of the capitalists in 1914. There was Big Bill Haywood, who had to flee the country of his birth and die in the land of promise—Soviet Russia. Then there is Tom Mooney, pining away his valuable life behind prison bars because the rich utility barons demand it. On “Memorial Day” of this year the bosses and police repeated what they had done fifty years ago—they killed four workers, and wounded many others, at the Republic Steel Corporation plant in south Chicago. . . .

I hope and believe your book will have a wide circulation; appearing as it will on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the martyrdom of the Chicago Labor leaders will lend great interest; besides, there is so much fine labor history in it that this generation should know.