

In Memoriam



John Peter Altgeld

BORN DECEMBER 30, 1847

DIED MARCH 12, 1902

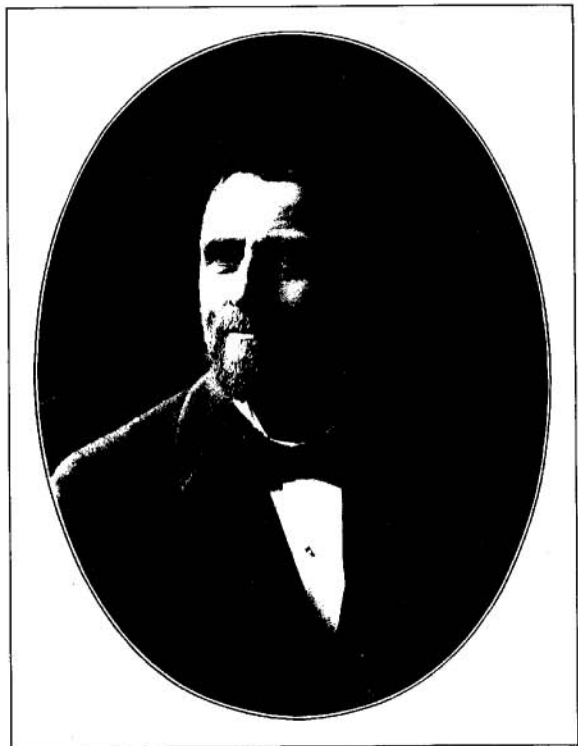
"Young men, life is before you. Two voices are calling you—one coming from the swamps of selfishness and force, where success means death; and the other from the hilltops of justice and progress, where even failure brings glory. Two lights are seen in your horizon—one the fast fading marsh light of power, and the other the slowly rising sun of human brotherhood. Two ways lie open for you—one leading to an ever lower and lower plain, where are heard the cries of despair and the curses of the poor, where manhood shrivels and possession rots down the possessor; and the other leading off to the highlands of the morning, where are heard the glad shouts of humanity and where honest effort is rewarded with immortality."

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*There was a tableau! Liberty's clear light
Shone never on a braver scene than that.
Here was a prison, there a Man who sat
High in the halls of State! Beyond the night
Of ignorance and mobs whose hireling Press
Yells at their bidding like the slaver's hounds,
Ready with coarse caprice to curse or bless,
To make or unmake rulers! Lo, there sounds
A grating of the doors, and three poor men,
Helpless and hated, having naught to give,
Come from their long-scaled tombs, look up and live,
And thank this Man that they are free again!
And he—to all the world this man dares say,
"Curse as you will! I have been just this day."*

—Voltaireine DeCleyre.

July, 1893.



JOHN PETER ALTGELD

Memorial

AT THE AUDITORIUM

SUNDAY, APRIL 20, 1902

GEORGE A. SCHILLING, CHAIRMAN

Programme

ORGANIST, A. ALFRED HOLMES

CHORUS—"At the Altar of Truth," *Mohr*

German Singing Societies of Chicago
PROF. OTTO W. RICHTER, . Conductor

Address, WILLIAM P. BLACK

Address, BISHOP JOHN LANCASTER SPALDING

Address, CLARENCE S. DARROW

SOLO—"Within This Sacred Dwelling," *Mozart*

MR. OLOF VALLEY
MISS ENGBERG, Accompanist

Address, JOHN J. LENTZ

CHORUS—"The Bard in Silence Sleeps," *Silcher*

German Singing Societies of Chicago
PROF. LUDWIG RAUCH, . Conductor

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Theodore J. Amberg
E. A. Kimball

PALLBEARERS CHOSEN

ACTIVE PALL BEARERS, SATURDAY MORNING, MARCH 10

Judge William Prentiss
William F. Black
Joseph Mahoney

Samuel A. Calhoun
Louis F. Post
Edward T. Noonan

William Thompson
Samuel Alschuler

SATURDAY NIGHT

William F. Grower
George A. Schilling
M. F. Bingham
Nober Gottlieb
Joseph Finn
Joseph A. O'Donnell

Daniel Cruice
Joseph Laughlin
Leos Horastein
I. M. Kuebler
Charles A. Lark
Jacob C. Lebosky

Albert H. Tyrrell
F. D. P. Snelling
Oscar E. Leisen
Philip Angsten
Thomas G. McElligott
Chas. J. Trauer

SUNDAY

Clarence S. Darrow
Elmer Allen Kimball
Joseph S. Martin

Martin Becker
Charles A. Williams
Edward O. Brown

Joseph W. Errant
W. H. P. Weston
James Miller

HONORARY PALLBEARERS SUNDAY

Judge Henry M. Shepard
Judge Marcus Kavanaugh
Judge Edward F. Dauec
Judge Murray F. Tuley
Judge Thomas Windes
Judge Jonas Hutchinson
Ex-Judge Wm. H. Barason
Ex-Judge Thomas A. Moran
Judge Tarrin
Milton Oliver
Colonel John L. Martin

H. W. Clendenis
Thomas Yantes
Adolph Kraus
S. S. Gregory
John J. Lentz
R. L. Allen
J. W. Orr
Dennis J. Hogan
Charles A. Towne
Alfred L. Orendorf
R. Michaelis

Charles Mitchell
John P. Hopkins
Walter S. Hogle
James C. Russell
John J. Feeley
Roger C. Sullivan
J. J. Townsend
John E. Traeger
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R. M. Ridgely

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BY LOUIS F. POST IN "THE PUBLIC" OF MARCH 22, 1902

I.

A bleak landscape stretching away from his open grave, fierce March winds bearing down the bitter cold of a northern blizzard as they howled through the leafless trees, tumbling waves beating on the near-by shore of the angry lake, and a lowering but not altogether sunless sky overhanging the scene—this was the emblematic tribute which external Nature paid to the memory of John P. Altgeld, while his friends returned his mortal part to the absorbing elements of the earth from which it came.

It was a grand and fitting tribute.

No other could so well have symbolized the man. The bleakness was the bleakness of March and not of December, of life renewing and not of life at an end; and the signs and sounds of stress and storm, in the midst of which the dead body lay—composed, silent, indifferent, and as cold as the furious blast itself—pictured forth with graphic fidelity the story of a devoted life lived out to the mortal end in unflinching loyalty to principle and with cold indifference to the malignant clamorings and their inane echoes which had assailed it on every hand.

Nor was the picture wholly harsh.

Perfect artist that she is, Nature was faithful to the whole truth. She had cast a thin veil over the sky, and through the fleecy meshes of that token of grief, the bright sun thrust its softened rays to symbolize at once the hope which lies "beyond our mortal ken," and the tender love that had vitalized this brave man's nobly strenuous career.

Altgeld's transcendent love was known to all and felt by all who understood his ideals. What if it were true, as one of his political contemporaries writes of him, that "he had but few friends"? What matters that, if it be also true, as the same writer says, not admiringly but critically, that "he loved the whole human race"?

Can anyman have greater love than that? Is not he of whom this can be said one of those radiant souls whose memory is most sacredly cherished by mankind? Surely we may say of Altgeld, then, in only slight paraphrase of the eloquent language of Henry George, whose career is now recognized to have been guided by

the same comprehensive love, that in his breast there arose a desire, higher yet than the desire to "know how the globe was forged and the stars were hung and to trace to their sources the springs of life," that there arose in him that desire which is—

the passion of passions, the hope of hopes—the desire that he, even he, might somehow aid in making life better and brighter, in destroying want and sin, sorrow and shame. That in obedience to this desire he mastered and curbed the animal; that he turned his back upon the feast and renounced the place of power; that he sacrificed wealth and left it to men of narrower affections to gratify pleasant tastes and bask themselves in the warm sunshine of the brief day. That he worked for those he never saw and never could see; for a fame, or maybe but for a scant justice, that could only come long after the clods had rattled upon his coffin lid. That he toiled in the advance, where it was cold and there was little cheer from men, and the stones were sharp and the brambles thick. That amid the scoffs of the present and the sneers that stab like knives, he built for the future; and that he cut a trail which progressive humanity may hereafter broaden into a high road.

This career, so righteously inspired and so suddenly and splendidly closed to mortal comprehension, cannot have ended. Like the everlasting forces which we observe in material nature, it cannot but go on forever in the direction in which it has set out. To question this is to doubt purpose in the universe; and to doubt universal purpose is to ignore the testimony offered even by physical law.

Though we excluded wholly from consideration the significance of the moral sense in man, to doubt universal purpose would be to disregard the significance of all that is rational in the theory of evolution itself. If moral character ended with physical disintegration, if it were a mere fleeting expression of chemical action and reaction, if the soul were analogous to the fruit instead of the seed of

the tree, if the physical body generated and maintained life instead of having derived its original impulse from life and being continually dependent upon the source of that impulse, if man were a material body with an ephemeral soul instead of an immortal soul with an ephemeral body, if the moral sense were only a crystallization of matter—if this conception of humanity were true, then, indeed, might the ideals of noble men be barren and all their service under righteous standards but a hopeless struggle. The universe would be utterly without beneficence and manifestly without purpose—a self-manufactured, self-perpetuating, self-operating, inconsequent and gigantic Frankenstein.

The imagination abhors and the reflecting intellect recoils from a monstrosity so hideous and irrational.



But the question of Altgeld's personal and conscious immortality need cause no dissension between those who believe in it and those who do not. He has entered into an immortality which all his admirers perceive more or less clearly, however much they may disagree about its significance as a representation of spiritual immortality. For his dramatic death has served to cleanse his name and character of the evil reputation which sordid rascals manufactured for him and the thoughtless mob acknowledged; and in consequence the world will now see Altgeld as he was, and not as the "law and order" enemies of just law and true order painted him. With his real character thus revealed, his writings and speeches and other public acts will be appreciated by the many as only a few could appreciate them during his maligned career. Though his body lies mouldering in the grave, and even though the man himself had perished with his body, yet his works will go marching on, and with longer strides and infinitely greater effect than ever before.

II.

In considering the true character of this unique man, in connection with the vicious reputation which social parasites gave him and the swell mob adopted, it is worthy of special mention that the qualities they now agree in attributing to him are the very qualities which in his lifetime they denied him. Then they said that he had neither ability nor honesty. But now they agree that ability and honesty were his distinguishing characteristics. Those who still speak of him as dangerous explain that it was his ability and honesty that made him so.

This encomium, so eminently just and known so to be by all who were familiar with the man's character, must come as a

surprise to thousands who had learned through the same newspapers which now praise him for these distinguishing qualities, that he was an illiterate and brainless demagogue. But the motive for the slanders of Altgeld is not far to seek. While he lived it was necessary to discredit him in order to keep open the channels for respectable and legal plunder; and a hint was taken from the method of house-breakers who poison the watch dog in the yard before venturing to climb into the dwelling at the window. But now that he is dead, and supposedly no longer dangerous to the beneficiaries of vested wrongs, the truth about him is allowed to come out.

The pity of it all is, not that Altgeld was slandered by those whose villainies he fought. That was part of the fight. The pity of it is that the slanders of those he fought were believed and repeated by so many for whom he fought. Of him it was sadly true as of all the heroes of whom Lowell thought when he wrote—

*they were souls that stood alone,
While the men they agonized for hurled
the contumelious stone.*



Two of these slanders upon Altgeld stand out in bold relief. One relates to his pardoning of the anarchists, and the other to his course in the Debs railroad strike of 1894. With reference to them there could be no more appropriate occasion than this for again setting forth the truth.

III.

The anarchist pardon was the culmination of a labor-meeting tragedy on Haymarket square, Chicago, on the 4th of May, 1886. A labor strike was in progress and a meeting of the workmen had gathered at that point, early in the evening, to protest against the recent disturbance by policemen of a peaceable labor meeting and the killing of workmen in attendance. The mayor had been present at the meeting of protest and had remained until it was about to break up, whereupon he returned to the station house of the police precinct, and, after assuring the police captain that the meeting was orderly, went home. No sooner had he gone than the police captain, without further information, led a detachment of police to the meeting place and ordered the remnant of the meeting, there being still no disorder, to disperse. As the police approached, a bomb was thrown from an alley. It exploded and killed several policemen. No one knows or suspects to this day who it was that threw the bomb. Yet certain persons who have never been proved to have had any connection with

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the crime were convicted as co-conspirators of the discovered murderer. Some of them were hanged and some were sentenced to imprisonment. As these convicts had taught the doctrine that government by force is a moral crime, and that the abolition of coercive government would tend to foster order and peace in society, they were called "anarchists."

When Altgeld came into the office of governor of Illinois he was petitioned to pardon the still living and imprisoned anarchists. Had he done so as matter of official mercy, there would have been no criticism. Thousands of Chicago citizens, including the wealthiest and most influential business men of the city, had signed the pardon petitions. The recent secretary of the treasury, Lyman J. Gage, was one of the active men in the pardon movement. There could, therefore, have been no condemnation of Gov. Altgeld had he simply pardoned the men. Indeed, the Chicago papers have said as much. A leading daily paper of the city, always hostile to Altgeld, has declared editorially within the past three years, referring to Altgeld's action in this matter, that—

Had he freed the so-called anarchists and assigned no reason therefor, the incident would speedily have been forgotten—even applauded as a wise exercise of executive clemency.

But Altgeld was not the man to bow before manifest injustice. Two kinds of petition were before him. One kind assumed the guilt of the prisoners and asked for clemency on the ground that they had suffered enough. The other asserted that guilt on the part of the prisoners and of their associates who had been hanged was never proved, but that the convictions had been secured by infamous methods of procedure. Having compared these two grounds of appeal, Gov. Altgeld said in the outset in his memorandum:

Upon the question of having been punished enough, I will simply say that if the defendants had a fair trial, and nothing has developed since to show that they were not guilty of the crime charged in the indictment, then there ought to be no executive interference, for no punishment under our laws could then be too severe. Government must defend itself; life and property must be protected, and law and order must be maintained. Murder must be punished, and if the defendants are guilty of murder, either committed by their own hands or by some one else acting on their advice, then, if they have had a fair trial, there should be in this case no executive interference. The soil of America is not adapted to

the growth of anarchy. While our institutions are not free from injustice, they are still the best that have yet been devised, and therefore must be maintained.

Let history decide which was right—Gov. Altgeld, who refused to pardon a crime so heinous, merely because the convicts had suffered a few years' imprisonment in expiation, or the leading citizens of Chicago, who asked a pardon for the men for that reason, but denounced the governor when he granted one because the convictions had been procured by unlawful methods.

When he had decided that no pardon could be properly granted if the men had been fairly convicted and still appeared to have been guilty, Gov. Altgeld turned his attention to the plea that the prisoners had been convicted fraudulently and were suffering unjustly. With extreme care this admittedly able and honest jurist personally examined the record of the trial; and there he found evidence of such gross distortions of the law and frauds upon it as to leave him no alternative, as a sincere man and upright magistrate, but to pardon the prisoners, not as an act of mercy to unfortunate criminals, but in simple justice to innocent and outraged men.

Instead of drawing the jury in the usual manner, from the body of the county, the trial judge had appointed a special officer, selected by the prosecuting attorney, to summon such jurors as he pleased.

This officer boasted in advance of the trial and while selecting jurors, that he was managing the case and that the prisoners would hang as certain as death, because he was calling such men as the prisoners would have to challenge peremptorily, thereby wasting their challenges, and that when these had been exhausted they would have to take such jurors as the prosecution wanted. And it all came out in that way. The prisoners did exhaust their challenges, and consequently did have thrust into the jury box to try them for their lives a body of men almost every one of whom had confessed in open court, upon entering the jury box, that he was prejudiced against the prisoners.

The attention of the trial judge being called to this proceeding and its manifest injustice, he nevertheless declined to interfere, but, on the contrary, was strangely persistent in questioning confessedly hostile jurors, even those who said in terms they did not believe they could render a fair and impartial verdict, until, under the pressure of leading questions, they were led on to answer categorically that notwithstanding their hostile opinion already

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formed they believed they could try the case fairly on the evidence to be produced in court.

In the jury so selected there was at least one man who had not only formed and often expressed the opinion that the defendants were guilty, but who thought it "a pretty hard question to answer whether or not he would feel bound as a juror by these former expressions of his opinion." At least one other had an opinion in his "own mind that the defendants encouraged the throwing of that bomb," and also thought it "a pretty hard question to answer" whether or not he believed that his prejudice would influence his verdict.

By such jurors were the so-called anarchists convicted.

After the verdict of guilty, the prisoners moved for a new trial, and in connection with the motion they argued that the jury had been packed. Besides the circumstantial evidence on this point, they filed a formal charge that Otis S. Favor, one of the most reputable business men of Chicago, had been approached by the special bailiff already mentioned in a manner which furnished direct and positive proof of this crime against justice; but that Mr. Favor would not make an affidavit voluntarily, though he was willing to come into court and submit to interrogation. The trial judge refused, nevertheless, to call Favor and examine him, and also to consider his damning revelation unless his affidavit were produced.

On these facts alone, Gov. Altgeld was of opinion that justice demanded a pardon. But he went further.

Examining the decision of the Supreme Court of the state in the famous Cronin case, decided after the same Supreme Court had sustained the conviction of the anarchists, the governor found that in this case the court had declared the Illinois rule as to the impartiality of jurors to be the very reverse of what had been accepted as correct procedure in the anarchist case. Said the court on this point in reversing the Cronin case conviction:

The holding of this and other courts is substantially uniform, that when it is once clearly shown that there exists in the mind of the juror, at the time he is called to the jury box, a fixed and positive opinion as to the merits of the case, or as to the guilt or innocence of the defendant he is called to try, his statement that, notwithstanding such opinion, he can render a fair and impartial verdict according to the law and evidence has little if any tendency to establish his impartiality.

To compel a person accused of

a crime to be tried by a juror who has prejudged his case is not a fair trial. Nor should a defendant be compelled to rely, as his security for the impartiality of the jurors by whom he is to be tried, upon the restraining and controlling influence upon the juror's mind of his oath to render a true verdict according to the law and the evidence. His impartiality should appear before he is permitted to take the oath.

Had the principle of this decision in the Cronin case been applied to the anarchist case, a new trial would have been granted on the ground that the defendants were denied the benefit of an impartial jury. But public sentiment had been so strongly swayed by a local press bent on convicting these men, that its baneful influence reached even into the sanctuaries of the law, and found no resistance until it dashed against the unyielding cliffs of Governor John P. Altgeld's sturdy character.

The governor went even further than that. He inquired into the merits of the anarchist case as disclosed by the record made in court, and from that inquiry he concluded that—

the facts tend to show that the bomb was thrown as an act of personal revenge, and that the prosecution has never discovered who threw it, and the evidence utterly fails to show that the man who did throw it ever heard or read a word coming from the defendants; consequently, it fails to show that he acted on any advice given by them. And if he did not act on or because of any advice coming from the defendants, either in speeches or through the press, then there was no case against them, even under the law as laid down by Judge Gary [the trial judge].

So Gov. Altgeld pardoned the imprisoned anarchists. But as he did so because their guilt had never been proved, and their conviction was secured by a packed jury, he did more than pardon the imprisoned men. In effect he also acquitted the hanged men.

That was more than the "better element" of Chicago could bear, more than the local press which had hounded the men on to their death could tolerate. If Altgeld had made out a weak case, it would have been easy to put him down once for all. But the case he made was invincible, and the press, the "better element," even the judiciary of Chicago, stood condemned by the governor's historic pardon—condemned for

judicial murder, convicted of lynching under the forms of law. There was the situation that accused the vicious animosity of the classes against Altgeld, and helped foster it until his death forced the admission which in every fair mind must confirm his awful judgment against the plant tools of a reckless press and a crazed community—the admission that he was an able and honest man.

IV.

The other slander upon Altgeld's character, that which relates to the Debs railroad strike of 1894, had to do with his statesmanship.

It is generally understood that Chicago was in a hopeless state of disorder, with which the governor, in a spirit of partisan sympathy with the strikers, refused to interfere; and that if President Cleveland had not come to the rescue with Federal troops Chicago might have been razed from its site. The truth is that the governor was performing his duty fully and faithfully, while the President committed the unpardonable constitutional offense of invading a state with Federal troops without the request and against the protest of its duly constituted authorities.

Immediately prior to the railroad strike a miners' strike in Illinois had demanded military interference in different parts of the state, and Gov. Altgeld had promptly and effectively supplied the needed State troops. When the railroad strike broke out disturbances in connection with it occurred at various points in the state, and upon the application of local authorities for State troops Gov. Altgeld promptly forwarded them. At different times the Federal marshal of the Southern District of Illinois applied for State troops to aid him in executing the processes of the Federal courts, and his requests were complied with without delay. These circumstances indicate that if any applications had come from Chicago they would have met with a similar response. But no applications were received from that quarter. The resort to Federal troops was made without the slightest regard to the governor's authority or the dignity of the state. It was made, moreover, under the evident influence of a railroad ring.

President Cleveland had appointed a special counsel to represent the United States at Chicago in connection with the strike. Though the Cleveland administration was Democratic, the counsel selected was a Republican. Though the administration professed to have no special sympathy for corporations, the Republican it appointed was a corporation lawyer. Though it professed

to be indifferent to the conflicting interests of the parties to the strike—railroad corporations on one side and their employees on the other—the Republican corporation lawyer was also at the time the retained attorney of one of the railroads involved in the strike.

What the purpose of this railroad attorney, so invested with Federal authority, may have been is not generally known nor at all important. But in fact, one full day before there had been any damage to property in Chicago, and only the day after the roads had publicly declared that their business was proceeding without interference, he sent a dispatch to Washington calling for troops, and on the same day Federal troops appeared in the city and camped on the lake front.

"On to this time," writes Gov. Altgeld, who is at least conceded to be an honest man, "there had been no serious disturbance of mails, no destruction of property, and, according to the reports of the railroad managers themselves, no serious interference with the operation of the railroads or with interstate commerce."

So grave an assault upon the sovereignty of the state could not have been ignored by any governor without gross neglect of his sworn duty. Gov. Altgeld accordingly sent a respectful protest to President Cleveland, in which he assumed that the President must have been misinformed as to the situation, explained that the ample military force of Illinois was at the service of the Federal government for the enforcement of the Federal laws and had not been sent to Chicago because no request for aid had come from there; and, after supporting his general statements by a circumstantial narration of the facts, concluded with these dignified words:

As governor of the State of Illinois, I protest against this [the ordering of Federal troops into Chicago], and ask the immediate withdrawal of the Federal troops from active duty in the state. Should the situation at any time get so serious that we cannot control it with the State forces, we will promptly ask for Federal assistance, but until such time I protest with all due deference against this uncalled for reflection upon our people, and again ask the immediate withdrawal of the troops.

To that respectful message of a Democratic governor to a Democratic president there came a reply which, save for its insulting tone, might have been dictated by a Federalist of the old school. It made no pretense that military assistance had been either sought from or withheld by the

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state, but stated that the troops had been sent to Chicago upon the demand of the postal and the law officers of the United States—a justification which, if valid, would utterly annihilate statehood at the whim of a district attorney or a postmaster; and it concluded with the gratuitous and obviously insulting suggestion that in thus sending Federal troops into Chicago without consulting the state officials there had “been no intention of thereby interfering with the plain duty of the local authorities to preserve the peace of the city;” a peace, by the way, which was not broken until after the Federal troops appeared.

In reply to that extraordinary message from the President, Gov. Altgeld telegraphed a statesmanlike explanation of the constitutional grounds upon which his protest rested, closing with the further respectful assurance that the very presence of Federal troops in Chicago was a menace to the peace of the city, because it had “aroused the indignation of a large class of people who, while upholding law and order, had been taught to believe in local self-government, and, therefore, resented what they regarded as unwarranted interference.”

His final words were:

Inasmuch as Federal troops can do nothing but what the State troops can do there, and believing that the State is amply able to take care of the situation and enforce the law, and believing that the ordering out of the Federal troops was unwarranted, I again ask their withdrawal.

The President returned to this respectful, thoughtful and statesmanlike message another curt reply. Said he:

While I am still persuaded that I neither transcended my authority or duty on the emergency that confronts us, it seems to me that in this hour of danger and public stress discussion may as well give way to active effort on the part of all authority to restore obedience to law and protect life and property.

Could utter indifference to the fundamental law of the nation be more plainly expressed, without departing from diplomatic phrases and adopting colloquial terms? And now we are reaping some of the harvest of this indifference. When a Democratic president, without the excuse of necessity—for the troops of the state had been offered by the governor to enforce the Federal laws—imperiously silenced the argumentative protest of a faithful governor whose state had been invaded

by Federal troops, the seeds of the imperialism which is now rampant and defiant under Republican authority, were sown in the public mind.

The comparative qualities of Gov. Altgeld as a profound Democratic statesman may be safely left to the unbiased historian who contrasts his able state paper on the question of ordering Federal troops upon active duty into a state, with the autocratic replies of his antagonist in this passage at arms in the field of higher politics.

V.

One of Altgeld's acts as governor was never openly criticised. It is briefly told by the Chicago Record-Herald, a Republican paper, from which we quote:

In the 1895 session of the legislature franchise corporation bills were passed very like those which made the session of 1897 a reproach. Mr. Altgeld could have made a million, and probably millions, by letting them become laws, but they were vetoed.

The truth is that one million dollars in cash had been placed at Altgeld's disposal, under circumstances which would have enabled him to appropriate it with absolute safety to himself. The sole condition was that he should sign those bills. But he vetoed the bills.

At that time Altgeld's pecuniary difficulties were pressing. From a rich man he had become comparatively poor, through no fault of his own but chiefly because he refused to join any of the respectable rings that make money for themselves and squeeze money out of others by means of predatory laws. The legislature had been bribed to enact the corporation bills in question. They were so thoroughly bribed that the Senate passed them even over Altgeld's veto, and in the House only a few votes of the necessary two-thirds were lacking. The latter body remained in session long past its hour for sine die adjournment, turning back the official clock for the sake of appearances, to allow the corporation lobbyists time to buy their goods. But Altgeld's veto stood, in spite of the Democratic leader on the floor, in spite of the Republican speaker in the chair, in spite of the lobbyists all over the House, and in spite of as fine an aggregation of respectable gentlemen at Chicago furnishing the funds as one could wish to meet.

Yet all this might have been avoided. Nothing was needed but another respectable gentleman of the same marauding type in the governor's chair. Had Altgeld signed those bills he might have retrieved his broken fortunes, have grown as rich as the richest, have been honored by a

debased press and fawned upon by the sycophants, might have gone to associate and conspire with other such characters in the Federal Senate, and instead of being denounced as a reactionary demagogue been lauded as a progressive statesman. But he was too able to be beguiled and too honest to betray his trust. He held the mercenary plotters back, knowing full well that the rich and influential ones among them would punish him without mercy. And they did. They plotted against this able and honest governor until even this wreckage of his fortune had disappeared. Yet, through it all he defied them and went his way—impoverished, lonely, but faithful.

VI.

Democracy, like that which inspired John P. Altgeld to excite the vindictive wrath of corporation influences by challenging the Federal administration of his own party when it cast aside party ideals and defied national limitations by invading a state of which he was governor with an armed force; sincerity like that which inspired him to incur obloquy by pardoning unpopular prisoners because they had been unjustly convicted, though he might have avoided censure by giving them their liberty as an act of grace; honesty like that which impelled him, rather than bow before Baal, to sacrifice the private fortune he already had and refuse another which he could have got without even the asking, winning at the same time applause from the powerful but sordid moneyed interests which had bribed both political parties in his legislature and needed only his signature to make their conquest of enormously valuable public privileges complete—these were the qualities which made Altgeld's patriotism vital.



Voters tell us they want able men in office; but do they? Altgeld's ability is conceded, but they turned him out of office. He was too able to be the tool of corporations unconsciously.

They say they want honest men in office; but do they? Altgeld's honesty is now admitted, but they turned him out of office. He was too honest to become the agent of corrupt and corrupting corporations consciously.

They say they are hunting with lanterns for sincere men. But if they are, why do the rays of their lanterns never search out the man of sincerity, through the shadows of predaceous misrepresentation and malignant abuse, until after he is dead?



It was a brief and painful life, that of this able, honest, sincere, unyielding and unwavering, democratic statesman; but it closed as all such men might wish to have their own lives close. His sincere democracy made him plead the cause of the Filipinos; not for their sake alone, but for ours as well. It made him plead the cause of the Boers; not for their liberties alone, but for English liberty too. And in this fight for democracy, facing overwhelming odds, but with democratic truths pouring hot from his lips, he died while yet hardly past the middle years of human life. But now as of old, and with John P. Altgeld as with all other men, the inspiring words which Macaulay attributes to Horatius still holds true, as they ever will:

*Then out spake brave Horatius,
The captain of the gate:
"To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers
And the temples of his gods?"*

Address by Charles A. Towne

AT THE GRAVE

Patient under measureless and undeserved calumny; self-contained amid the madness of faction; unselfish in an age of gain; charitable to ignorance and malice alike; firm in his reliance on the ultimate victory of justice in the affairs of men, in spite of every defeat, he was "e'en as just a man as e'er my conversation coped withal."

In every hamlet of the nation today, and in many a place beyond the seas, there are

hearts that share the burden of sadness. Why is this? It is because John P. Altgeld is known to have been the earnest, sincere, able and incorruptible advocate of political liberty and social justice.

We have interred the mortal part of him, but the immortal element that moved him shall speak again and again to generations yet unborn and in every land where freedom shall have her altars.

"The truth that I have tried to make clear will not find easy acceptance. If that could be, it would have been accepted long ago. If that could be, it would never have been obscured. But it will find friends—those who will toil for it; suffer for it; if need be, die for it. This is the power of Truth.

"Will it at length prevail? Ultimately, yes. But in our own times, or in times of which any memory of us remains, who shall say? For the man who, seeing the want and misery, the ignorance and brutishness caused by unjust social institutions, sets himself, in so far as he has strength, to right them, there is disappointment and bitterness. So it has been of old time. So it is even now. But the bitterest thought—and it sometimes comes to the best and bravest—is that of the hopelessness of the effort, the futility of the sacrifice. To how few of those who sow the seed is it given to see it grow, or even with certainty to know that it will grow!

"Let us not disguise it. Over and over again has the standard of Truth and Justice been raised in this world. Over and over again has it been trampled down—oftentimes in blood. If they are weak forces that are opposed to Truth, how should Error so long prevail? If Justice has but to raise her head to have Injustice flee before her, how should the wail of the oppressed so long go up?

"But for those who see Truth and would follow her; for those who recognize Justice and would stand for her, success is not the only thing. Success! Why, Falsehood has often that to give; and Injustice often has that to give. Must not Truth and Justice have something to give that is their own by proper right—theirs in essence, and not by accident?

"That they have, and that here and now, everyone who has felt their exaltation knows. But sometimes the clouds sweep down. It is sad, sad reading, the lives of the men who would have done something for their fellows. To Socrates they gave the hemlock; Gracchus they killed with sticks and stones; and One, greatest and purest of all, they crucified."—*Henry George, in "Progress and Poverty"*.

Address of Clarence S. Darrow

AT THE FUNERAL, FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 1902

In the great flood of human life that is spawned upon the earth, it is not often that a man is born. The friend and comrade that we mourn today was formed of that infinitely rare mixture that now and then at long, long intervals combines to make a man. John P. Altgeld was one of the rarest souls who ever lived and died. His was a humble birth, a fearless life and a dramatic, fitting death. We who knew him, we who loved him, we who rallied to his many hopeful calls, we who dared to praise him while his heart still beat, can not yet feel that we shall never hear his voice again.

John P. Altgeld was a soldier tried and true; not a soldier clad in uniform, decked with spangles and led by fife and drum in the mad intoxication of the battlefield; such soldiers have not been rare upon the earth in any land or age. John P. Altgeld was a soldier in the everlasting struggle of the human race for liberty and justice on the earth. From the first awakening of his young mind until the last relentless summons came, he was a soldier who had no rest or furlough, who was ever on the field in the forefront of the deadliest and most hopeless spot, whom none but death could muster out. Liberty, the relentless goddess, had turned her fateful smile on John P. Altgeld's face when he was but a child, and to this first, fond love he was faithful unto death.

Liberty is the most jealous and exacting mistress that can beguile the brain and soul of man. She will have nothing from him who will not give her all. She knows that his pretended love serves but to betray. But when once the fierce heat of her quenchless, lustrous eyes has burned into the victim's heart, he will know no other smile but hers. Liberty will have none but the great devoted souls, and by her glorious visions, her lavish promises, her boundless hopes, her infinitely witching charms, she lures her victims over hard and stony ways, by desolate and dangerous paths, through misery, obloquy and want to a martyr's cruel death. Today we pay our last sad homage to the most devoted lover, the most abject slave, the fondest, wildest, dreamiest victim that ever gave his life to Liberty's immortal cause.

In the history of the country where he lived and died, the life and works of our devoted dead will one day shine in words

of everlasting light. When the bitter feelings of the hour have passed away, when the mad and poisonous fever of commercialism shall have run its course, when conscience and honor and justice and liberty shall once more ascend the throne from which the shameless, brazen goddess of power and wealth have driven her away; then this man we knew and loved will find his rightful place in the minds and hearts of the cruel, unwilling world he served. No purer patriot ever lived than the friend we lay at rest today. His patriotism was not paraded in the public marts, or bartered in the stalls for gold; his patriotism was of that pure ideal mold that placed the love of man above the love of self.

John P. Altgeld was always and at all times a lover of his fellow man. Those who reviled him have tried to teach the world that he was bitter and relentless, that he hated more than he loved. We who knew the man, we who had clasped his hand and heard his voice and looked into his smiling face; we who knew his life of kindness, of charity, of infinite pity to the outcast and the weak; we who knew his human heart, could never be deceived. A truer, greater, gentler, kindlier soul has never lived and died; and the fierce bitterness and hatred that sought to destroy this great, grand soul had but one cause—the fact that he really loved his fellow man.

As a youth our dead chieftain risked his life for the cause of the black man, whom he always loved. As a lawyer he was wise and learned, impatient with the forms and machinery which courts and legislatures and lawyers have woven to strangle justice through expense and ceremony and delay; as a judge he found a legal way to do what seemed right to him, and if he could not find a legal way, he found a way. As a Governor of a great State, he ruled wisely and well. A Governor elected by the greatest personal triumph of any Governor ever chosen by the State, he fearlessly and knowingly bared his devoted head to the fiercest, most vindictive criticism ever heaped upon a public man, because he loved justice and dared to do the right.

In the days now past, John P. Altgeld, our loving, peerless chief, in scorn and derision was called John Pardon Altgeld by those who would destroy his power. We who stand to-day around his bier and mourn the brave and loving friend are glad

JOHN PETER ALTGELD

to adopt this name. If, in the infinite economy of nature, there shall be another land where crooked paths shall be made straight, where heaven's justice shall review the judgments of the earth—if there shall be a great, wise, humane judge, before whom the sons of men shall come, we can hope for nothing better for ourselves than to pass into that infinite presence as the comrades and friends of John Pardon Altgeld, who opened the prison doors and set the captive free.

Even admirers have seldom understood the real character of this great humane man. These were sometimes wont to feel that the fierce bitterness of the world that assailed him fell on deaf ears and an unresponsive soul. They did not know the man, and they do not feel the subtleties of human life. It was not a callous heart that so often led him to brave the most violent and malicious hate; it was not a callous heart, it was a devoted soul. He so loved justice and truth and liberty and righteousness that all the terrors that the earth could hold were less than the condemnation of his own conscience for an act that was cowardly or mean.

John P. Altgeld, like many of the earth's great souls, was a solitary man. Life to

him was serious and earnest—an endless tragedy. The earth was a great hospital of sick, wounded and suffering, and he a devoted surgeon, who had no right to waste one moment's time, and whose duty was to cure them all. While he loved his friends, he yet could work without them, he could live without them, he could bid them one by one good-bye, when their courage failed to follow where he led; and he could go alone, out into the silent night, and, looking upward at the changeless stars, could find communion there.

My dear, dead friend, long and well have we known you, devotedly have we followed you, implicitly have we trusted you, fondly have we loved you. Beside your bier we now must say farewell. The heartless call has come, and we must stagger on the best we can alone. In the darkest hours we will look in vain for your loved form, we will listen hopelessly for your devoted, fearless voice. But, though we lay you in the grave and hide you from the sight of man, your brave words still will speak for the poor, the oppressed, the captive and the weak; and your devoted life inspire countless souls to do and dare in the holy cause for which you lived and died.

Address by Joseph W. Errant

AT THE GRAVE

He stood by the river of life where the wreckage flows thickest and fastest. He climbed to the mountain top and measured the heights and depths of daily existence. He saw the light. His great heart overflowed. He determined to gain wealth, and thus be able to help the stricken millions. Power and position should be his, and with these he would raise the multitude. And a voice said: "Wealth and power and position shall pass away. These will not avail. Thou must give thyself." He understood the message and gave himself.

He spoke, and everywhere throughout the earth the bent, the tollworn and the oppressed awoke and listened. The downcast looked up with new hope and courage. The enslaved straightened himself to the stature of a man.

The weak and the feeble of the earth leaned upon him. They called to him, and his great heart endeavored to respond to all.

He spoke, and everywhere throughout the earth tyranny trembled and the oppressor feared for his stolen power.

The prophet's voice is stilled. The prophets do not flatter nor do they make obeisance to power and position. They speak the truth as they see it, and they tell it to the people from the housetops and in the market place.

John P. Altgeld believed in establishing the reign of love and justice on this earth. He was not content to wait for its realization in some other remoter place. He felt that only as we strive to realize goodness and justice here, are we justified in any hopes for the future. With him the Kingdom of God was to be here; and with his intense passion for the right he felt that

man had it in his power to establish this Kingdom, if he only would.

And so he summoned men to come up to the full measure of their responsibilities, and to create through their own efforts social conditions which would be worthy of loving and intelligent human beings. With the prophets of old he stood and emphasized the responsibilities of the man and the nation.

We mourn. We mourn because it is hard to part from our dear friend, from the devoted champion of the people's cause. But consider how the world has been enriched and ennobled by his life. If he could speak to us today he would say: "Mourn not for me. Upon you now rests the responsibility. If you are my friends, if you are loyal to the ideas for which we battled, if you wish to remember me, then continue bravely and earnestly in the cause for which we stood. The struggle must go on. By you the banner must now be carried forward."

Today we bury our dead. To the great elemental forces from which the body came we return that which remains. Here, in the midst of nature's children, shall he rest.

*"Open thy arms, O earth, rejoice the dead
With gentle pressure and with loving welcome.*

*Embrace him tenderly, e'en as a mother
Folds her soft vestments round the child
she loves."*

Fare thee well, dear friend, fare thee well. May thy memory hallow and inspire us. May it be to all of us an ever living presence, helping us to understand and live the higher life.

The Present Crisis

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

*When a deed is done for Freedom, through the broad earth's
aching breast
Runs a thrill of joy prophetic, trembling on from east to west,
And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels the soul within him climb
To the awful verge of manhood, as the energy sublime
Of a century bursts full-blossomed on the thorny stem of Time.*

*Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or
blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes by for ever 'twixt that darkness and that
light.*

*Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the
Word;*

*Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong for ever on the throne—
Yet that scaffold sways the Future, and, behind the dim un-
known,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own.*

*Then to side with Truth is noble when we share her wretched
crust,
Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be
just;*

*Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,
Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified,
And the multitude make virtue of the faith they had denied.*

*Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes—they were souls that stood
alone,
While the men they agonized for hurled the contumacious stone,
Stood serene, and down the future saw the golden beam incline
To the side of perfect justice, mastered by their faith divine,
By one man's plain truth to manhood and to God's supreme de-
sign.*

*By the light of burning heretics Christ's bleeding feet I track,
Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the cross that turns not back,
And these mounts of anguish number how each generation
learned*

*One new word of that grand Credo which in prophet-hearts hath
burned
Since the first man stood God-conquered with his face to heaven
upturned.*

*For Humanity sweeps onward; where today the martyr stands,
On the morrow crouches Judas with the silver in his hands;
Far in front the cross stands ready and the crackling fagots burn,
While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return
To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn.*

Address of William J. Bryan

AT THE GRAVE

The occasion which brings us here calls forth both sorrow and gratitude—sorrow that such a life has been taken from us and gratitude that such a man has lived among us. In this material age when so many are seeking to absorb as much of good as they can, it is inspiring to find one who was ambitious to scatter as much of good as possible among his fellow-men. He verified in his life the truth of the saying that it is more blessed to give than to receive. He will be remembered not for what others did for him, but for what he did for others. Not his accumulations, but his distributions made him great. What little of property he left will descend to those who were related to him, but what he left of greatest value will not go to those of his blood or even to those who were intimately associated with him, but rather to all the world, and the world is better for the life of one whose love was boundless and whose heart was large enough to take in every human being. It was fitting that he should die as he had lived—pleading the cause of the oppressed.

It is written that the things which are seen are temporal, but that the things which are unseen are eternal. This is our consolation today. This occasion—sad as it is—would be infinitely more sad if we were consigning to the earth all that there was of our departed friend. But the better part of him whom we knew as Altgeld survives the grave. As the bird escaping from its cage enters a larger world, so the influence of the deceased is broadened rather than narrowed by his spirit's flight from its earthly tene-

ment. The seemingly endless procession of friends who passed beside his bier and looked upon the face they had learned to love showed how many were touched by contact with his life, and each one whom he influenced will bear that influence onward so that the circle of his usefulness will ever widen. He has proved how great are the possibilities under our institutions. Born in another land he has demonstrated what one can do unaided if he has high ideals and a lofty purpose. His was not the prowess of the body—no one considered his physical strength. His was the prowess of the mind and heart. He was clear in reasoning and sound in logic; believing that truth is self-evident and irresistible he tried to present the naked truth and it was through this that he influenced the minds of others. But his heart was his master; it responded to every appeal for help and his sympathy went out to all who suffered or sorrowed. He tried to make the world better and his efforts will bear fruit. The waters that run murmuring down the mountain side and then help to form the river's majestic current at last make their contribution to the sea that washes every coast and add their voice to the ocean's mighty roar. So the thoughts and words of this dead patriot have contributed and still contribute to that public opinion which moulds human action and shapes the destiny of the race.

We pay our tribute of respect at his grave, but we are sustained and encouraged by the thought that that which attracted us to Mr. Altgeld still lives and still incites to worthy deeds.



The Clock in the Chamber of the Omnipotent

EXTRACT OF SPEECH DELIVERED BY JOHN P. ALTGRUD IN THE
AUDITORIUM, OCTOBER 22, 1900

But, says some one, is there any use in our making an effort? Are not all the bankers of this country, all of the trusts and great corporations of this country, all of the powerful forces of this country, is not the fashion of this country, are not the drawing rooms and the clubs of this country now controlled by concentrated and corrupt wealth? Are they not growing stronger every year, and do they not vilify and attempt to crush everybody that does not submit? Can anything be accomplished in the way of curbing this great force and protecting the American people?

My friends, let me cite you a parallel: George William Curtis and other writers of his day have described the slave power back in the 50's. They tell us that slavery sat in the White House and made laws in the capital; that courts of justice were its ministers; that senators and legislators were its lackeys; that it controlled the professor in his lecture room, the editor in his sanctum, the preacher in his pulpit; that it swaggered in the drawing-room; that it ruled at the clubs; that it dominated with iron hand all the affairs of society; that every year enlarged its power, every move increased its dominion; that the men and the women who dared to even question the divinity of that institution were ostracized, were persecuted, were vilified—aye, were hanged.

But the great clock in the Chamber of the Omnipotent never stands still. It ticked away the years as it had once ticked away the centuries. Finally it struck the hour and the world heard the tread of a million armed men, and slavery vanished from America forever. Note the parallel. Today the syndicate rules at the White House and makes laws at the capital; courts of justice are its ministers; senators and legislators are its lackeys. It controls the preacher in his pulpit, the professor in his lecture room, the editor in his sanctum; it swaggers in the drawing-room; it rules at the clubs; it dominates with a rod of iron the affairs of society. Every year enlarges its power; and the men and women who protest against the crimes that are being committed by organized greed in this country—who talk of protecting the American people—are ostracized, are vilified, are hounded and imprisoned. It seems madness to even question the divinity of the American Syndicate. But my friends, that great clock is still ticking—still ticking. Soon it will again strike the hour and the world will see not 1,000,000 but 10,000,000 free men rise up, armed not with muskets, but with freemen's ballots, and the sway of the syndicate will vanish from America forever.