

W. K. ...

(#5)

ANTI-POVERTY.

Robert Scholkenbach Foundation
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I thank you for this enthusiastic greeting. I thank you for it at the beginning of another campaign. (Great applause. "Three cheers for the next secretary of state." "Three cheers more for Henry George.") The next two months that lie before us are most important. (A voice: "Lively".) Aye, lively we will make them. Now has come our time to reach out into the state - to make a union between the workmen of the cities and the workmen of the country - (applause) - and to weld into one mass a great party that will go forward on its mission of victory. (Applause. A Voice: "The next secretary of state." Applause.) Yes, it is indeed possible that I may be. (Applause.) It is entirely within our power, not merely to send one of the great parties to the rear - that we are bound to do anyhow - (applause) - but it is entirely within our power to push them both to the rear. (Great applause. A voice: "The last shall be first.") Aye, the last shall be first. We are the last in the field, and we will be the first. All it requires is work, hard work, constant work. But it can be done. (A voice: "And will be done." Applause.) I don't say it will be done; I say it can be done. (Applause.) Upon us as individuals depends it whether it will be done.

This ought to be made something more than a campaign of shouting and meetings. Make it a hand-to-hand contest. (Applause.) Let every man and woman - for the women can count as much as the men - (A voice, "And a great deal more") - let each one single out some voter and go to work to enlighten and to convert him. (Applause.)

Many who are opposed to us are opposed to us simply because they do not understand what we want. (Applause.) If we can get these men thinking they will think themselves into our ranks. (Applause.) It is utterly impossible for any intelligent man who is not hopelessly blinded by prejudice to think over the matter without seeing that the great cause of poverty lies in this great wrong which we point out and which we are pledged to rectify (applause); the wrong that disinherits men; the wrong that makes the gift of the all-father for all His children the private property of the few. (Great applause.)

We are to be congratulated, as Mr. Post has said, upon the platform adopted at Syracuse (applause); on the fact that it has been made plain beyond any peradventure that the united labor party is not a socialistic party (tremendous and long continued applause); upon the fact that it has been made plain that we are not deniers of the just rights of property (applause); that we want to give to each that which is properly due to each one, his equal share in the bounties of the Creator, and in all the advantages that come by social growth and improvement, and at the same time to secure to each full opportunities to employ his powers as he may see fit, and security that he shall enjoy the fruits of his exertion. (Applause.)

And on this platform of natural rights and equal justice I believe we can go into the interior of the state with the assurance of rallying the great masses to our standard, as we have already rallied them here in the metropolis. (Applause.) I say it is entirely possible for us to beat both of the old parties in this coming campaign. (Applause.) If that is done, if the Empire state is carried for these principles, the whole union is half won! (Great applause.)

Secretary of state! (A voice: "That is what you will be.")
What is secretary of state? But let it go forth over the telegraph
wires next November that you have elected Henry George (deafening
apolause) as a representative of these principles, and it will be
a message that will ring around the world. ("Hear! hear!" and ap-
plause. A voice: "We want patience, perserverance and courage.")
Patience, perservance and courage - you are right. (Applause.)
Let each one do that which he can do best, and do it as well as he
can. For my own part, it concerns me little what the result shall
be. All that concerns me is that I shall do my best. (Applause.)
For many years now I have felt as Dr. McGlynn (great applause) so
beautifully said last Sunday night, that there is in this movement
a higher power than that of man. It is our business to do what we
can. When we have done that, then we can be satisfied, whatever be
the immediate result. For, no matter what be the set backs, no
matter what the temporary defeats, in the long run the good will
triumph. (Applause.)

I feel that it is an honor, a high honor, to be chosen to
head this movement in the state of New York. Sitting here to-night
I have been thinking how strange it would have seemed to me if ten
years ago anybody had told me - (At this point the whole audience
arose and gave one tremendous shout as the massive form of Dr. McGlynn
appeared upon the platform. The enthusiasm was only equaled by that
which was manifested on the Sunday when the excommunication was an-
nounced.) I was thinking how strange it would have seemed if ten
years anybody should have told me that I should have been called on
to head the ticket of such a movement as this in the state of New

York. I never even dreamed at that time that I would ever live in the state of New York. (Mr. George was again interrupted by a little girl who toddled up to Dr. McGlynn bearing an enormous floral emblem in her arms. On it was inscribed. "Purity of intention is the life of a nation.") And yet, when I think of it, there is a certain propriety in it.

It was in this state of New York, when a sojourner for a little while in this great city, that my attention was called so intensely to the bitterness of the poverty that is to be found amidst the greatest wealth. It was in this city that I took a vow in my heart that I would do my best to seek out its cause, and as long as life was left in me, with all the power that I could command, I would do my best to remedy it. (Applause.) Through ways that I could not have anticipated, by paths that I could not have foreseen, I have been led to this: that I have seen this great movement spring up and grow, and that to me has been allotted the honor of heading it in its first great struggle. (Applause.)

I am thankful for this, not alone to you, but to the power that I believe is above us all - the power that all through this universe is struggling for the good; the power that all who feel in their hearts that they are trying to do something to make life better and higher and purer, something to make the conditions of man easier and nobler, can confidently rely upon, no matter what comes to them here.

Results! Let us care for them; but let us all strive in this great battle to do the very utmost that is in our power. (Applause.) If we can start out with this determination; if we can carry it through the campaign, I believe that we can carry the state of New

York. (Great applause.)

There is one thing that I would like to suggest to those who are heartily enlisted in this cause; to the men who are really going to work for it, and that is that until election, no man who intends to take an active part in the contest should drink intoxicating liquor. (Uproarious applause. A voice: "We will have the prohibitionists with us then.") No, I do not think that that will follow, nor is that what I was think of; but that we may get the best results of our own powers. If we make a good fight here, if we show a disposition to do all that we can do, we can count on our brethren in other states for their help. (Applause.)

This is more than a mere local election contest. It is a campaign of national importance. (Applause.) New York is the battle ground this fall of the nation - ay, and, as my friend said, of the whole world. From the continent of Europe, and even from Australia, eyes will be turned to New York; and people will be waiting next November to hear what we have done. (Applause.)

Let the thought inspirit us and arouse all our enthusiasm, all our devotion, all our energy. Let us begin now, and carry forward the campaign day by day, week by week, never faltering, until the last vote is placed in the box. (Deafening applause.)

Speech: Henry George,
August 27, 1887