

AN APPEAL FOR AID.

Debs' Legal Defense Fund.

Eugene V. Debs stands as one of the most conspicuous and interesting figures before the country. None doubt his honesty and his fidelity to the cause of the wronged against the wrongdoer. Yet he is in jail awaiting the action of the United States Courts upon the charge of contempt of its dragnet injunctions. He is required to appear before four different courts, located hundreds of miles from each other, at one and the same time. He is under indictment for conspiracy for obeying the instructions of his organization and requesting railroad employees to quit work to aid their struggling fellow workmen. Law is being strained and distorted, corporate power is exerting its every effort to incarcerate this unselfish, earnest and sincere lover of humanity, Eugene V. Debs.

The corporations now have their claws ready to fasten them upon the body of Debs, not simply to try and crush him, but they hope to awe the men of labor into silence and slavish submission. That purpose cannot, dare not and will not succeed. Debs must be defended and ably defended. In his person at this time he represents the rights of Labor before the law to organize, to quit work in defense, protection and advancement of its interests.

The corporations have their creature, Attorney General Olney and their other most skilled attorneys to prosecute Debs. He must therefore be defended by counsel equally capable and with equal zeal, but whose hearts as well as brain throb and hope for the right.

Eugene V. Debs is a poor man. He has no money; his trial and preparation for it will require a considerable amount of money and we know that the workers of the country have never yet been appealed to in vain to help in the cause of justice, humanity and right.

We appeal to all members of organized labor, to a sympathizing and liberty loving public to come to the rescue in this momentous legal struggle.

Unions, central bodies, union members and all should contribute to the best of their ability towards "*The Debs Legal Defense Fund.*"

We recognize that the industrial depression must interfere with the liberality of many who would otherwise be only too well pleased to donate large sums, but be the amount large or small send it and do so at once, each according to his means.

Every contribution will be acknowledged in the columns of the AMERICAN FEDERATIONIST, a copy

containing the acknowledgment forwarded to each contributor and the entire moneys received sent to Mr. Debs weekly or oftener.

We ask all labor and reform papers to open subscriptions for the "Debs Legal Defense Fund."

Send all contributions to Secretary Chris. Evans, 14 Clinton Place, New York, N. Y.

By order of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor.

SAMUEL GOMPERS, President.

Debs' Legal Defense Fund.

(Contributors not wishing their names published will please state so and it will be respected.)

American Federation of Labor.....	\$500 00
Samuel Gompers.....	5 00
John B. Lennon.....	5 00
Chris. Evans.....	5 00
Freitag Printing Co.....	15 00

THE PRESENT FORTOLD.

Upon the subject of strikes President Gompers made the following statement in his report to the St. Louis convention of the American Federation of Labor, held in 1888 :

"It is true that no man who has given the question of strikes and the labor movement any thought can look upon strikes with favor ; but to be continually condemning them is entirely another thing. To know when to strike, and particularly when not to strike, is a science not yet fully understood. To strike upon a falling market, or being insufficiently organized, or if organized, not properly equipped with the ammunition so necessary to a successful strike—funds—is unquestionably the height of ignorance. The story of the strikes that may have failed of their immediate objects yet have prevented reductions in wages and worse conditions, will probably never be entirely told. Mousing condemnation of strikes, we find by experience, does not abolish or even reduce their number. As a consistent opponent of strikes though, I do find that those organizations of labor which have best provided themselves with the means to strike have continually less occasion to indulge in them. The most potent factor to prevent or reduce the number of strikes is a well organized trade union with a full treasury ready to strike should the necessity arise."

And again in his report to the Detroit convention in 1890, President Gompers made the following statement on the same subject :

"I desire to impress upon the minds of the working people the absolute necessity that they should keep in view that it is not bluster nor ostentation that will win victories for them.

Such organizations of labor may at times win victories from employers, but they are generally of a transitory character. We must not only be right, but possess the power to enforce that right. There is no argument so potent with unwilling or unfair employers to grant reasonable demands as a well-organized trade union, with a well-filled treasury, to stand them in need should a strike be necessary to enforce the demand.

The payment of fair dues in a union, regularly contributed in times of peace, is much more valuable than assessments enforced during strikes. The workers are then always prepared to meet any attack and give their organizations the character of permanency so essential to success."