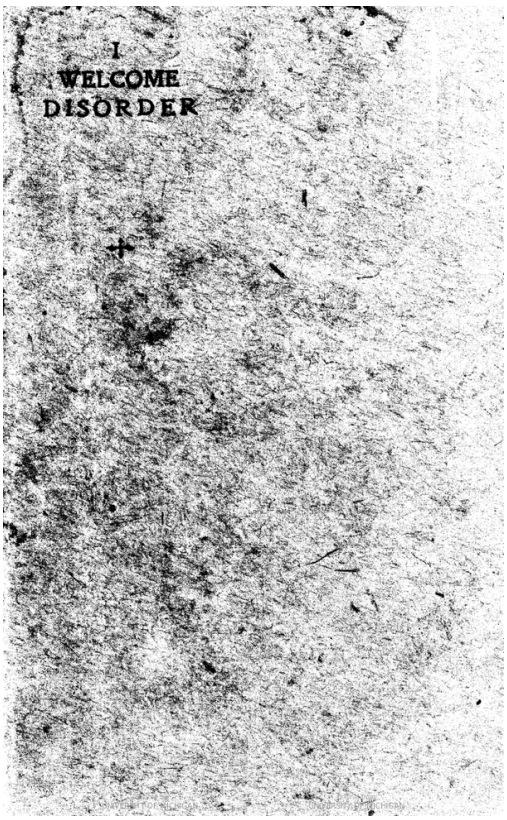
I Welcome Disorder

Joseph A. Labadie



1910

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I Welcome Disorder

When confined to the need of defense
I welcome disorder in the field of work!
Why cry "Peace, peace!" when there is no peace?
When the very air gluts with the clash of interests?
Until my opportunities for making goods shall equal thine,
Until you cease shading the sunlight of joy from my life,
Until you stop siphoning the flow of my efforts into your corrupting coffers,
Until you release your grip from my throat and let me breathe the air of freedom—
The freedom to live, laugh, love and be happy in my own way,
So long as my way does not barricade your right to your way,
I shall raise the hue and cry—
I shall startle the dreamless slumbers of the spoilers of Toil!
Under present vogues, industrial peace means humiliation, slavery, death!
It means the gelatinous bones of our babes shall be molded into money for marauders,
That the mothers and daughters of Toil shall be driven to shame as the price of subsistence,
That mud from the wheels of the wealthy shall scornfully splash in our faces
And blind our eyes to the splendor of our own work, which they enjoy,
And the squallor of our own environs,
Of the meanness of our own estate.
It means that I may work only when you let me,
And you let me only when you may take more than you give.
It means that I cannot look into your eyes with the frankness of friendship,
For how can the flowers of friendship grow

in the gloom of dependence?
How can love linger in the lap of luxury
and share its joy with bitterness and
woe?
So long as idleness and privilege revel in
unearned ease
I shall raise the hue and cry,
I shall shriek into your unwilling ears,
I shall shout with a fanatic's voice until
your deadened conscience is aroused
to sensibility,
I shall clank my industrial chains until you
are driven to remorse and restitution;
And then I shall take you in my arms as a
lost brother returned to the home of
righteousness,
Where you may know the joy of owning
only what you earn,
Where you may feel the dignity of a useful
worker with no spurred loafer goading
him beyond his strength and reaping
no gain for its expense,
Where you shall give measure for measure,
Where you shall be no man's master or no
man's menial.
I shall work with you in making the king-
dom of heaven on earth,
Where the art of free fingers may equal
the dreams of Aladdin,
Where even the meanest who wills may,
without let or hindrance, make material
comforts in plenitude,
Where the plague of money madness will
not deaden the conscience or sear the
soul.

The sunshine of peace can gladden our
hearts only when the blackened clouds
of injustice roll away.
Pleasing progress ordains that the fashion-
ers of the world's wealth shall not bow
in meek assent to the power of privilege;
And nature says the under dog in the fight
may bark, bite, bruise, damage, hurt,
tear, injure, lacerate, aye, even kill if

necessary!
The end indeed justifies the means, and
the cause of the workers is defensible
indeed.
Therefore, for those who toil and tire,
Who work and sweat and produce,
Who are denied the fulness of their efforts,
I have no protesting frown when they
strike, vote, fight, appeal, struggle,
contest, agitate
For the right to life, liberty, property,
happiness,
Be it by individuals, by mobs, by unions,
by brigades, by armies;
Or strive with bluster or passivity or em-
battled warfare,
With winning words or moral suasion or
abuse or satire or argument or lies or
truth,
With fists or clubs or ballots or bullets or
cannon or dynamite
To throw off the deadly load of industrial
spoliation.
Think not we dare not when we do not.
It is war, and war is hell, and hell is disorder,
And disorder is the boiling of the industrial
caldron that purifies.
It is death to those who falter, to those
who hesitate, to those who are weakest;
And the world's story says the workers
were weakest because less bloodthirsty.
The robbed were never so desperate as
the robbers.

Ah! brothers and sisters, are we eter-
nally to have a clash of arms, a clash
of classes, a clash of interests?
How I pray and plead for the milder means.
How I appeal to the man in men, to leave
off the cruelties of the beast.
How I urge that, tho the ravaging storms
of violence may purify the air for a
time, they leave ruin and desolation
behind.
And that justice and freedom radiate social

warmth for every human heart.
How I insist that reason and patience and
persistence, like growing plants that
move brave boulders, may displace
the rudest wrongs.
How I strive to show that as warmth from
the sun brings forth flora brilliant with
beauty and ladened with nourishment
from most repellant soilure,
So may the glow of love and kindliness and
gentility
From even the bitterest of enmity, the most
unyielding grudge, the greatest ani-
mosity, compel
A sense of justice as tough as oak,
A sympathy as balmy as a summer breeze,
A fellowship as strong as the ebbing tide,
A friendship as tender as a mother's love.

But—
When milder means cannot avail,
When stubborn oppulence persists in
ignoring the rightful meed of Toil,
The blame for turmoil must rest,
As the fall of the angels, upon the powers
of darkness;
And then, when within the realm of
defense,
With open arms I welcome disorder in the
field of work!
November, nineteen two.

This Labor Song was printed at the Labadie Shop, 74 Buchanan St., Detroit, Michigan, where they may be had for the asking, 25 cents a dozen, $1.50 a 100. The Red Flag and What is Love? beautiful, handmade, by Jo Labadie (printed and bound, & the cuts made with leather, blocks of wood and a jackknife by the author), among The Labadie Booklets,are 50, 75 and 100 cents, according to binding. If you haven't the price it'll be all right. Birch bark Baskets, leather Handbags, Printing, at cost. Done nonprofessionally by the family, at odd hours.

Some Cranky Notions.

Poverty makes cowards of us all.

Vanity is the overestimation you put on yourself.

Each human soul is autocrat in his own domain.

Wisdom consists in knowing how little you know.

Generally people love you because you scratch them where they itch.

It is wonderful what effect dollars have in stiffening one's backbone.

Your efficiency depends largely on what the other fellow deems efficient.

Tell me of what you approve or disapprove and I'll tell you what you are.

Show me a person seeking power over his fellows and I'll show you one who will abuse it.

Don't imagine you're the whole thing. There are so many pebbles on the beach the ocean hardly knows of your presence.

There are two general ways of accomplishing results:—To muscle them out and think them out. The more the world thinks the less muscle it needs to achieve a given result.

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