Self Respect

by Eugene V. Debs

The man that respects himself will meet with the respect of others. As we measure ourselves so do others measure us. This is exemplified every day. The loafer, the bully, and the deadbeat are despised by all. Why? Because they have drawn their own measure and men accord it to them. The diligent, sober, honest citizen meets with the applause of his fellows. Why? Because he too has measured himself and men accord him the measurement. If one desires to be respected, that one must respect himself. Be proud! Pride yourself on your integrity, on your sobriety, on your industry, and self respect and the respect of others will follow.

The man who slouches through life, who evades his duty, who deadbeats his friends, never attains anyone's respect, not even his own. A sneak can't respect himself; how then can he, in reason, expect others to do so? The manly man, the man of broad views, of liberal action, of fearless conduct, the world hastens to honor, while the coward, the dishonest man, and the lazy meet with swift condemnation.

Self respect does not belong to the rich. Many a man who wears fine clothes is a dog at heart. The engineman, with the stain of smoke and grease on his face, is just as capable of commanding respect as is the man in broadcloth and fine linen; it is a question of conduct and not of clothes.

We desire to enforce upon our members the necessity of self respect. Respect yourselves too much to get drunk, too much to neglect your duties, too much to play the deadbeat. Ours is an honorable calling, and we can make it more so by acting honorably. Scorn littleness! Turn from dishonesty as you would from

a snake. Pay your way. Help the needy. Be true to your friends. These things, well done, will make you honorable, self respecting citizens.