

EDITORIAL

GERALDINE FARRAR'S HIT.

By DANIEL DE LEON

ATLANTA, Ga., despatches of May 3rd tell that, upon invitation of the convicts in the United States penitentiary of that city, the gifted singer Geraldine Farrar, playing her own accompaniment on the piano, sang on that day for nearly forty minutes to one thousand convicts, gathered in the large auditorium of the penitentiary. The despatches tell how Miss Farrar's touching songs, concluding with "Home, Sweet Home," converted the auditorium into "one great sob," tears steaming down the cheeks both of the singer and her convict audience. The closing paragraph of the despatches is: "Miss Farrar's singing has been worth more than a hundred sermons," said Warden Moyer."



GERALDINE FARRAR
(1882-1967)

Be it as it may with regard to sermons, certain it is that Miss Farrar bowled down with a pathetic object lesson the monumental slander regarding man's "perverseness," a slander of the human race which, rooted in superstitions, and kept alive by pulpiteers, is used by capitalist politicians, press and professors as an "argument" against the "practicableness of Socialism."

In the words of the Chinese sage: "As water naturally runs downward, but can be artificially made to shoot upward, so does human nature naturally tend to loftiness, but is by artificial methods pressed downward."

Whatever may, one time, have been necessity, or apology, for social systems that compelled the animal in man to assert itself over his better part, and thus artificially to press his lofty aspirations downward, that necessity, or excuse, exists no longer. The wealth producible to-day, under rational social organization, is so ample for all that penitentiaries—places in which ninety-nine and nine-tenths per

cent. of the inmates are sent thither for crimes against “property”—are monumental indictments of the misnamed Social Order that produces the criminals.

The criminal Social Order of Capitalism seeks to justify its felony against the nation by imputing to man innate perverseness. The imputation is calumny, added to the felony. And vain is the attempt. How vain was again proved by the effect upon the allegedly “hardened sinners” of the charming voice and touching words of Miss Farrar’s songs.

The human heart is golden. Whatever is stony therein is, to-day, the artificial product of the capitalist social system.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded May 2011

slpns@slp.org