**The Political Economist and the Tramp**

Primary source: Phillips Thompson, "The Political Economist and the Tramp," poem, 1878.
Background information: In this poem, Phillips Thompson pokes fun at certain notions of Social Darwinism.

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| Walking along a country road, While yet the morning air was damp, As unreflecting, on I strode, I marked approach the frequent tramp. The haggard, ragged careworn man Accosted me with plaintive tone, "I must have food-" he straight began; "Vile miscreant," I cried, "begone! Tis contrary to every rule That I my fellows should assist; I'm of the scientific school, Political economist. Dost thou know, deluded one, What Adam Smith has clearly proved,That 'tis self-interest alone by which the wheels of life are moved?This competition is the law By which we either live or die; I've no demand thy labor for, Why, then, should I thy wants supply?And Herbert Spencer's active brain Shows how the social struggle ends; The weak die out the strong remain; 'Tis this that nature's plan intends. Now really 'tis absurd of you To think I'd interfere at all; Just grasp the scientific view, The weakest must go to the wall."  |

Phillips Thompson, "The Political Economist and the Tramp," *Labor Standard* (14 December 1878).

Courtesy of [History Matters](http://historymatters.gmu.edu" \t "new), a project of the American Social History Project/Center for Media and Learning (City University of New York, Graduate Center) and the Center for History and New Media (George Mason University).

**Carnegie on Wealth**
Primary source: Andrew Carnegie, "Wealth," journal article, 1889.
Background information: Andrew Carnegie made millions in the steel industry during the nineteeth century. While he was willing to share his wealth with those less fortunate than himself, he did set certain restrictions, as outlined in his 1889 article "Wealth."

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| Neither the individual nor the race is improved by almsgiving. Those worthy of assistance, except in rare cases, seldom require assistance. The really valuable men of the race never do, except in cases of accident or sudden change. Everyone has, of course, cases of individuals brought to his own knowledge where temporary assistance can do genuine good, and these he will not overlook.But the amount which can be wisely given by the individual for individuals is necessarily limited by his lack of knowledge of the circumstances connected with each. He is the only true reformer who is as careful and as anxious not to aid the unworthy as he is to aid the worthy, and, perhaps, even more so, for in almsgiving more injury is probably done by rewarding vice than by relieving virtue.  |

Andrew Carnegie, "Wealth," *North American Review* 148 (June 1889): 653–64; transcribed by Katie Morgan and reverse-proofread by T. Lloyd Benson, at <http://alpha.furman.edu/~benson/docs/carnegie.htm>.

Courtesy of Professor Lloyd Benson and the [Nineteenth Century Documents Project](http://alpha.furman.edu/~benson/).

**Twenty Years at Hull House**
Primary source: Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, memoir, 1910.
Background information: Jane Addams, a leading social worker during the Progressive Era, founded the Hull House settlement for immigrants in Chicago in 1889. She wrote about her experiences there in *Twenty Years at Hull House,* published in 1910.

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| [ . . . ]You may remember the forlorn feeling which occasionally seizes you when you arrive early in the morning a stranger in a great city: the stream of laboring people goes past you as you gaze through the plate-glass window of your hotel; you see hard working men lifting great burdens; you hear the driving and jostling of huge carts and your heart sinks with a sudden sense of futility. The door opens behind you and you turn to the man who brings you in your breakfast with a quick sense of human fellowship. You find yourself praying that you may never lose your hold on it all. A more poetic prayer would be that the great mother breasts of our common humanity, with its labor and suffering and its homely comforts, may never be withheld from you. You turn helplessly to the waiter and feel that it would be almost grotesque to claim from him the sympathy you crave because civilization has placed you apart, but you resent your position with a sudden sense of snobbery. [ . . . ]Other motives which I believe make toward the Settlement are the result of a certain renaissance going forward in Christianity. The impulse to share the lives of the poor, the desire to make social service, irrespective of propaganda, express the spirit of Christ, is as old as Christianity itself. We have no proof from the records themselves that the early Roman Christians, who strained their simple art to the point of grotesqueness in their eagerness to record a "good news" on the walls of the catacombs, considered this good news a religion. Jesus had no set of truths labeled Religious. On the contrary, his doctrine was that all truth is one, that the appropriation of it is freedom. . . .  [ . . . ] |

Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House* (New York: Macmillan, 1910), 91–98.