

THE PUBLIC FORUM

WILSON AND SOCIALISTS.—It

grieved me very much to learn of your position in regard to the presidential campaign, now at its height.

Throughout the year *The Day Book* is posing as a semi-socialistic newspaper, but when the time came, when it could have done the most good for the Socialist party, and incidentally for the workers, it turned to the Democratic party.

The platforms of the Democratic and Republican parties are almost identical, and no matter for which of the above-named parties a working man votes, he gains nothing. So why don't you advise the workers to vote for their own candidate, as they have nothing to lose and a great deal to gain.

If the people would take your advice and vote for Mr. Wilson, there wouldn't be any votes cast for the Socialist candidate, and the party would die. But if the Socialists double their vote of the last election it will show Wall street parties that the Socialist movement is to be reckoned with, and in trying to head off the growth of the party they will pass favorable laws and concede disputes to the wage-earners. While it is certain that things will happen as I have described, it is also apparent that if the Socialist party is allowed to die the workers will be still more exploited than they are now.—Harry Markham, 1124 S. Whipple st.

COCHRAN'S REPLY.—I am glad to answer a letter written in such spirit. I have not advised Socialists to vote for Wilson. I have told my readers that I will vote for Wilson and why. It is up to them to vote as THEIR conscience dictates. I act with the light I have. So should they. I belong to no party. I have signed no party pledges. I am free at every election to throw my vote where in my judgment it will do the most good. I can easily conceive of a situation

where I would vote the Socialist ticket, but I wouldn't join the party. I wouldn't sign away my political liberty. But the Socialist party won't die even if most of its members were to vote for Wilson. It won't die until a party that can enlist all labor takes its place. In fact, the soul of it won't die at all. The body may grow, become more comprehensive and change its name. Up to Wilson's time there was mighty little difference between the Democratic and Republican parties. That's why I voted the Progressive ticket in 1912. I thought the new party that would embrace all progressives had arrived. The party was killed, but Wilson saved its spirit. He has actually made the Democratic party progressive. The line this year is sharply drawn. Plutocracy is on one side, democracy on the other. Wilson's performance is more significant than Democratic party platform promises. He has put on the statutes most of what the Progressive party promised—and much that Socialists have advocated. Instead of having nothing to gain, the working class has much to gain by Wilson's election, much to lose by his defeat. I don't consider the Democratic party under Wilson a Wall street party. One of the biggest things Wilson has done was to transfer the actual seat of government from Wall street to Washington. It wasn't fear of the Socialist party that passed the child labor, workmen's compensation, anti-injunction and 8-hour-day legislation. It was Wilson's iron-jawed determination back of his clear-visioned democracy. I am doing what in my judgment seems best for the working class. If I thought I could do more by supporting the Socialist candidate for president I would do it. But I don't think so. I think Wilson's reelection will be a great triumph for social and industrial justice, a splendid victory for the workers—a victory that means something they can get their hands on NOW, instead of