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EDITORIAL

HOMESTEAD—ITS LESSON.

By DANIEL DE LEON

BLOOD has flowed freely this week at Homestead and, probably, the end is not yet.

Capital will, if necessary, summon all the municipal, state and national powers at its command in order to enforce its authority. The workingmen can only die in asserting their right to live.

Why is this? Is it not plainly because the wage workers, who constitute an overwhelming majority of the people, have surrendered all the powers of Society into the hands of a plutocracy?

And if, in their despair, they make of their bodies a target to the bullets of Pinkerton assassins, is it not because trade unionism pure and simple is impotent to cope with capitalism?

Honor, we say, to every man who would rather die in battle than submit to oppression! If there were one million such men in this country, moving together in a solid array, the days of capitalism would be numbered.

And for aught we know there may be millions of them. Local revolts everywhere show that bravery is an attribute of honest toil. But, unable to oppose a solid front at any point against the military forces of their oppressors, each small band of heroes successively falls an easy prey to superior numbers.

How long will this last? How long will the working class sacrifice its noblest members in a desultory warfare of strikes and riots, while sanctioning at the polls the economic system that makes it a slave class, and maintaining by its votes the power that keeps it in abject slavery?

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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