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SECOND EDITORIAL

THE STRUGGLE FOR RIGHT.

By DANIEL DE LEON

With the beginning of the present war in South Africa, some “moral” capitalist papers began to moralize on the affair from a singularly vulgar viewpoint, and have kept it up ever since. Their line of argument is this:

“It matters not whether the Boers or whether the English are right. Say the Boers are; even then every humane man must wish them to be speedily defeated. The power of England is tremendous; that of the Boers is insignificant by comparison. They are bound to lose. The sooner they lose the less will the effusion of blood be at an end. Humanity demands the speedy defeat of the Boers.”

Such reasoning insinuates the quintessence of vulgarity and immorality in human action.

We shall not here waste much space on the fact that what has been taken for “tremendous power” more than once has gone down before what was taken for insignificance in comparison. Nor care we to make much of the fact that the point happens to have been illustrated by the very race that now is standing up against England. The power of Spain was in the sixteenth century more overshadowing than that of England is to-day, and yet it was the ancestors of these very South Africa Hollanders who stood up in Europe against, and after eighty years of struggle, wrung their freedom from the then “Omnipotent” Spain. Nor is it important to the purpose to inquire on whose side—Boer or British—right lies in this conflict. The vulgarity and immorality of the stand taken by those who, proceeding from the theory that the Boers are bound to lose in the end, therefore they should surrender from the start, lies in this, that, upon such principle, Wrong would have free sway. Such an attitude is typically bourgeois in its poltroonery.

Whether able to successfully resist Wrong, or not, the moral man will ever strike a blow for Right. No such blow ever is lost. Wrong, resisted, even if

unsuccessfully, is Wrong weakened; and no effort in that direction is ever effort wasted.

The final victory of Right has for its broad basis untold preliminary blows for Right, that failed to be completely successful. Whatever in civilization is to-day worth having, is the combined echo of all the blows that have ever been struck for Right—not one of them not counting.

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

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