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EDITORIAL

HE ILLUSTRATES THE POINT.

By DANIEL DE LEON

IF there be any who think that the Socialist is too severe towards the mouth-pieces of capitalism when he pronounces them “intellectual bankrupts,” let the doubting Thomas turn his eyes to the below, the first, leading editorial item in the Dover, N.H., *Foster’s Daily Democrat* of the 12th instant:

“Daniel De Leon, the Socialist Labor candidate for Governor of New York in the last campaign, declared in a Socialist meeting in New York Sunday, that the industrial millennium which Socialism will bring is that laboring men will have to work only four hours a day. That’s too easy. What would the men do in the other twenty hours? They couldn’t sleep more than ten hours a day, on an average, what would they do to ‘kill time’ in the other ten hours?”

Leaving aside the evidence of a superficial reading denoted by the notion that the above was said at a meeting, instead of in the course of an interview, as this capitalist Editor could have found out if he read with the care that a serious man reads,—leaving that aside, what must one think of the “intellectual” who reasons as this precious Editor reasons?

He obviously reasons this way: “Workingmen to-day work most all the time that they are not in bed. Therefore if their hours of work are so shortened that they will not be able to sleep the whole rest of the time, they will have to kill time, they will not know what to do with their leisure. Consequently the hours of work must remain what they are.”

Who but an intellectual bankrupt can fail to perceive that the present hours of work are inhumanly long, especially so considering the intensity with which improved machinery compels labor to be performed?

Who but an intellectual bankrupt can fail to perceive that, if the intellectual horizon of the workingman is to-day narrow, and he, in unfortunately too many instances, might

not immediately know what to do with his time if his leisure increased, it is simply a result of the vicious system of capitalism, which holds his nose so close to the grindstone that his mind has been cramped by it, and that the pressure being removed, the hitherto suppressed intellectual aspirations will soon expand, finding ample occupation to satisfy intellectual craving?

Who but an intellectual bankrupt proceeds from the notion that, because the workingman to-day does not distinguish himself in intellectual pursuits, therefore he has neither aspirations nor fitness in that direction?

Who but an intellectual bankrupt does not know that, so strong are the intellectual aspirations of the workingman, that the circumstance that capitalism deprives him of all opportunity to indulge these aspirations is not the least of the martyrdoms of Labor?

Finally, who but a moral, as well as intellectual, bankrupt can look upon the present martyrdom of the Working Class with such complacency and levity as to treat with cynic jeer the prospect of the race's upbuilding?

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