

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 3, NO. 187.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 1903.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

A SPECIMEN FROM THE QUARRY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE Labor papers from Chicago reflect a strong movement under way in the ranks of Union Labor to set up [Clarence S. Darrow](#) as its candidate for Mayor in the approaching municipal election. The move, or thought, fitly headed by one of these papers with the question: "What shall we do to be saved?" is, in the domain of social science, what a fine mineral specimen would be to the mineralogist.

When mass-poverty had, relatively and absolutely, touched in Rome the point of discontent, perpetual, up-bubbling and threatening, all the physical conditions were at hand for a social overturn. The overturn did not come. What kept it off? The utter class-unconsciousness, in other words, the psychologic unripeness, of the physical element by which alone the revolution could have been accomplished. The conclusive sign of this fatal unripeness was the poise of the masses on the head of leadership. To use their own terminology, they looked for "a man of senatorial rank" to head them. In other words, the vigor that only a consciousness of their own class could impart, was absent. This quickening force being absent, the potentially revolutionary element relied, not on elements within, but on elements without its own camp "to be saved." The issue was that, catching at the straw of one sentimental leader "of senatorial rank" after another, the Roman masses finally developed into a pliant war-horse, ridden by the Caesars.

In reaching out beyond their own camp for Clarence S. Darrow "to save them," the working class masses of Chicago are following in the footsteps of the Roman plebs. Mr. Darrow, the present counsel for the miners, is essentially a sentimentalist. He is of that sympathetic class, among the well-to-do and professional men, whose heart does more bleeding for the woes of the workingman than its head does thinking in the workingman's behalf. It was via the Gracchi that the Caesars came. The road that leads

over the Darrows must be blocked: at the end of the avenue stands, ready waiting, the Man on Horseback.

It is no pedantic turn of mind that pushes the S.L.P. to preach unremittingly, and insist upon keeping clear, the line of demarkation between class interests; nor yet is it yearning for physical conflict that directs the Party to fan the flames of class antagonism. Just the reverse: pedanticism revels in phrases that argue likenesses where none exist, and nothing but sorrow flows from blindness to facts. Class-consciousness not merely renders the working class intelligent, above all it quickens among them that sense of self-respect and self-reliance, without which they would be just so much dead weight for the Socialist Movement to carry and Socialism would be impossible, but with which the workingman becomes fit to carry the Socialist Movement, fit for emancipation.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded October 2006