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EDITORIAL

THE EMPIRE OF LABOR.

By DANIEL DE LEON

DANIEL WEBSTER once referred to England as that nation whose morning bugle calls, following the sun, encircled the globe with a continuous performance of the martial airs of Britain.

To-day, not only from East to West, but from North to South of the globe, goes up the paean of May Day, the pledge of Labor's international oneness, the promise of the onrushing revolution.

England's boast of a few years ago, "We hold a greater Empire than has been," shrinks into a bit of schoolboy's swagger before the glory of the Empire that shall be—the Empire of Labor. In Japan no Socialist bugle calls may rise; the fate of Kotoku and his eleven associates is still too recent and too grim a memory. In Russia, ground under the boot of the Czar equipped with its "beneficent" rubber heel Stolypin, the music of revolution is also for the present stilled. But even there, though dumb to the ear, arises in thought the hymn of May Day, the hymn of proletarian emancipation.

"The time is out of joint, O cursed spite that ever I was born to set it right," is not the language that flows this day from the mouth of the militant Socialist. On the contrary, the words he utters are words of encouragement, words of determination, words of eagerness for the fray from which the workers of the world shall emerge triumphant over wage slavery.

That fray, it is not something coming in the future, to be looked for below the horizon with a spy-glass, and idly waited for. It is here, it is now, it envelopes the worker in his daily life. Every minute of his day he is grappling with the forces that tear the bread from his mouth, the learning from his children, the comfort from his home. With the reduction of man's wage, the woman and the child have been dragged into the conflict. The producing class of the world are to-day one under ex-

plotation, one in servitude to the masters of the bread, and, thanks to the growing vigor and insistence of Socialist propaganda, fast becoming one in knowledge of the source of their ills and steadfast constructive labor to abolish it.

Capitalism, wage slavery must go. At a stage of mechanical progress like the present, where sufficient can be produced to render all alike well off, a system which keeps the few in plenty, the mass in want, is an anomaly, and anomalies have a way of being wiped out as soon as those to be benefited by the act perceive its possibility.

Enlightened by the Socialist Movement of the world, the embattled workers of the world this First of May renew their devotion to the cause that shall free them, the cause that shall rear their Empire, the Empire of Labor on the ruins of the Empire of Capital.

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