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EDITORIAL

## AN OPEN LETTER TO OWEN R. LOVEJOY, NEW YORK CITY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**D**EAR Sir—

Will you take frankness ill?

Hoping you will not; hoping that you will do even better, and appreciate frankness, we shall tell you in all frankness that hardly had we read the first three lines of your circular, introducing the five “planks in a living and industrial platform” proposed by your National Conference of Charities and Corrections, when we started to smile; and the smile broadened as we read on; and we laughed outright when we reached the end.

Altho’ the Socialist Labor Party aims at so complete an overthrow of the present system of Capitalism, and its substitution with the Industrial Order, that earnings shall equal production; that hours shall be determined by the swiftness with which modern methods make possible abundant production; that safety and health shall be paramount; objects and child labor a cruelty unknown; that homes shall not be pigeon-holed to grind out rent for landlord-capitalists, or capitalist-landlords; and all such considerations as “the minimum limit at which self-support should begin” shall cease to have any sense;—altho’ the goal at which the S.L.P. aims, with all the directness that the circumstances will allow, is not a reform of existing conditions but their wiping out, the S.L.P., knowing that “every mickle makes a muckle,” gladly seizes any opportunity, and gladly supports any move, that will alleviate the burden under which the working class is now weighed down. From this, however, it does not follow that the S.L.P. will fall in line with every move that is said to be in the direction of improvement.

Improvements, or reforms in the status of Labor fall under two categories—those that redound to the benefit of the Working Class, and those that furnish

Charities employes, and other beneficiaries of the capitalist system with subjects to write essays and deliver speeches upon.

The two sorts of improvement or reforms are species of different genera.

The improvements, or reforms, that redound to the benefit of employes are marked by this feature: They are breeders of fresh demands for fresh improvements.

The improvements, or reforms, that furnish occupation to such beneficiaries of capitalism as Charities, are rigid and barren.

As a consequence of the different natures of the two sets of improvements, or reforms, the S.L.P. knows no such thing as a “standard,” meaning thereby an acceptable status, with regard to any of the numerous links in the chain that fetters Labor. As another consequence, the S.L.P. knows, with regard to the links in that chain only one “standard”—the snapping of the said links. As a final consequence, the S.L.P. promotes that general intelligence among the working class that will keep them “on the move,” ever on the move forward, from one improvement to another, from one place of vantage to the next, until the afore-referred to “standards,” or links in the chain of wage slavery, will be snapped.

You will realize that, guided by such a policy, the term “standard” can apply in S.L.P. parlance to naught but the standard of the Socialist or Industrial Republic—and that surely is not the standard that your honorable organization is collecting data to promote.

Very respectfully,

EDITOR DAILY PEOPLE

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