

EDITORIAL

WILSON'S FIRST EVASION?

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE seven Wilson bills on corporations introduced in the New Jersey Legislature are reported to have created “quite a stir and agreeable surprise.” Wall Street feels “interested but easier”; corporation lawyers have been “looking into” the bills “with admiration”; and the New York *Sun* hitherto a carping critic of the President-elect, sits back comfortably in its editorial arm-chair, takes a pinch of snuff, and nods its head approvingly.

Why should they not?

The Trust is that concentration of production in any industry which limits competition to a limited number of capitalists—to those only who can manage to amass a force of wealth large enough to enter the competitive field. The connecting of several industries, such as mining and railroading, or oil distilling and drug stores and banking, is a difference in degree, not in kind, in the process of trustification. This branching off may be omitted and the Trust remains. Neither are the watering of stock, price-agreements, and the like, peculiarities of and inseparable from the Trust: they are practices known among concerns that do not yet boast a Trust stature. The Wilson bills lop off these branchings-off and these practices, and enter them in the category of misdemeanors punishable with fine, or imprisonment, or both.

Is Wilson, indeed, so weak in his economics as to imagine that such bills will “put an end to trusts and monopolies,” even if the bills be rigidly enforced? Or do the seven bills record the first evasion of which the President-elect is guilty?—are they attempts at securing without being?—are they exhibitions of an endeavor to strip an evil of its filigrees, of palming off the filigrees, as the evil itself, and thereby give the evil a “character”?

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded July 2014

slpns@slp.org