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EDITORIAL

CONCENTRATED INFAMY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

AT the beginning of last week a dapper little lawyer was taken to the penitentiary at Blackwell's Island. This man had grown wealthy on the crimes of the capitalists, which he used for blackmailing purposes. It is reported of him that he kept a record of the infamous doings of the elite of this and other cities, and employed them as opportunity permitted, craftily using his knowledge, together with the power of his victims, for his own protection and enrichment. He played the infamies of one set of capitalists against another, with success to himself; until, finally, he barked up the wrong tree and was undone; landing, a nervous wreck, on "the island."

The same capitalist press that prominently heralded the end of this dapper little lawyer is now busy chronicling a social scandal, in which the scion of a well-known capitalist family and the police are involved. The details of this scandal, so far disclosed, portray the close relations existing between the capitalist class and the police, in matters affecting the interests of the former. When these are concerned the police cease being a public function and become a class servant. These details, while detrimental to the scion referred to, also disclose enough to lead to the belief that here, too, as in the cases formerly enriching the imprisoned lawyer, opposing capitalist infamies, backed by opposing capitalist influences, are also in active play against one another.

It would indeed be idle to believe that a woman ostensibly aggrieved by a capitalist husband could overcome his powerful influence with the police, unaided and alone. At least, one prominent public character, whose name has been associated with hers, has found it necessary to rush to their mutual defense. And it is said that if the whole matter is permitted to see the light of day, a scandal of the most colossal proportions will be disclosed. Who knows but that, if the matter is

pushed far enough, the capitalist interests opposed to the heirs of “the little wizard” may not be found to be accessories to the attack, in the hope of profiting from the discomfiture of their opponent? Capitalists are prone to fish in troubled waters. The misfortunes of others are rich in opportunities of confiscation to them!

One thing is certain, and that is that capitalist infamies, like capitalist interests, are now becoming matters of factional warfare, to be hushed up or aired as the power of the factions concerned may determine. As in finance and industry, so in law and morality—the strongest faction will win, while the tools of the weaker ones will be compelled to suffer public humiliation and disgrace. And this will continue until a power transcending even that of the strongest capitalist faction takes the latter by the nape of the neck and sends it whirling through space. Such a power is Socialism.

Socialism, by transforming capital from private to social property, in accordance with industrial evolution, will deprive the capitalist class of the means of exploitation, which enables the members of that class to pile up stolen wealth and live in a state of hyper-luxury that tends steadily to degeneration and all that that implies. Socialism is the only salvation for society.

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