

# DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 8, NO. 282.

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 1908.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

## THE IRREPRESSIBLE ISSUE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**P**ROPERTY having reduced the masses of China to the level of beasts of burden, something had to be done in order to glorify the beast with humbug. Once every year, as an evidence of the “nobility of labor”, the Emperor, surrounded by his mandarins, put his dainty hands to a plow, and opened a furrow. In America we now see a President’s daughter take her stand in the cabin of a locomotive engine, “handle the throttle” and “let her rip” for several miles.

There is much comfort to be gathered from the Chinese and from the American comedy. Of course, evil is meant; and no little evil is accomplished. The humbuggables are humbugged, and the clarification, which must precede emancipation, is delayed. That’s true. Nevertheless, not a crumb, but a huge chunk of comfort is to be gathered from the comedy. Whatever “Property” may do, it can not wholly de-humanize a people. The comedy is a proof that “Property” is aware of the fact, and, being aware of it, finds it necessary to supplement brutality with cajolery. In China the cajolery is done by the comedy of an Emperor “plowing”; in America it is being tried by the companion comedy of a President’s daughter “running an engine”. If the power of “Property” alone is not strong enough to keep a people down, and the yoke must be padded with humbug-comedies, the hope is not a delusion that the shackles of slavery will be broken—eventually, if not sooner.

In the meantime it is food for thought to see movements set on foot to “keep out the Oriental”, lest he “reduce us to the Asiatic level”, and at the same time Oriental methods of humbug being introduced duty-free. Not the biggest shipload of “Coolies”, dumped into the American Labor-Market, could so effectively tend, or is meant so effectively to tend to “Coolieize” American Labor as the performance of Miss Ethel Roosevelt “running an engine” and the farce soberly reported, together with the engineer’s plaudits: “She’s a chip of the old block: we’ll make her honorary

member of the lodge!”

Lord Salisbury dancing with his cook, as an evidence of “democracy”; the Kaiser draining stein after stein at the students’ club of the University of Bonn, as an evidence of “equality”; the Chinese Emperor “plowing” as a proof of “labor’s nobility”; the President’s daughter speeding a locomotive engine a few miles, as a proof that “we are all workmen”;—none of these farces, any more than the farce of Napoleon III. promenading arm in arm with the Emperor of Austria over the battlefield of Marengo, can effectively conceal the irrepressibleness of an irrepressible issue. On the contrary. To him who has eyes to see, the farcical efforts accentuate the fact that the issue IS irrepressible.

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

Uploaded January 2010

[slpns@slp.org](mailto:slpns@slp.org)