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EDITORIAL

## SPECIMEN JOHN R. WALSH.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**T**HE president of the Chicago National Bank, John R. Walsh, is to-day a convicted felon. The original indictment contained 182 counts. Demurrers were sustained as to 32 counts. He was convicted on the remaining 150 counts. As president of the Chicago National Bank Walsh loaned the pretty sum of \$16,000,000, not upon securities, good, bad or indifferent, but to support a number of struggling enterprises which HE owned. Accordingly, bank president Walsh used \$16,000,000 of the people's moneys to promote his own private ventures. Such "cleverness," "push" and "enterprise" as Walsh displayed is too humdrum to entitle him to the distinction of a specimen. Not on this particular score is the gentleman worthy of specimen distinction. He is entitled to the distinction on a separate score.

When the mouthpieces of capitalism find themselves confuted and refuted in facts and principle, they frequently resort to the myth of the "self-made" man. They set up some "self-made" man, and say here is the proof conclusive that he who is "clever," "pushing," and "enterprising" can become rich. Only the stupid remain poor. John R. Walsh was a "self-made" man. He began life as many a self-made man is said to have begun it, "a penniless boy selling newspapers,"—and he rose majestically into a striped penitentiary suit.

John R. Walsh, like his kind, was held up, and he did himself hold up himself as a sample of "what can be done" provided the doer is "clever," "pushing" and "enterprising." He is a specimen of his kind. For one thing, how many men were unmade in order to "make" this one? Walsh's finale throws a light back upon the rungs of the ladder by which he climbed. His track is strewn with others' ruin. For another thing, the moral atmosphere of the self-made man is exemplified by Walsh.

That there is not a single "self-made" man of the several who are held up to public gaze, who did not travel the identical road that Walsh traveled, and who, if

he had his desserts, would not be just where Walsh is to-day, every intelligent man knows. The capitalist is no better than his social system. Crimes are the rungs by which capitalism rises—so the “self-made” man.

And such are the specimens that pulpiteers, professors, politicians and capitalist press sing in chorus the praises of, and urge the youth of the land to emulate.

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

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