

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 10, NO. 179.

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1909.

TWO CENTS.

EDITORIAL

AMERICAN FORTUNES.

By DANIEL DE LEON

COMMENDABLE is the path on which Gustavus Myers, the author of *History of the Great American Fortunes*, struck out. The first volume of Mr. Myers's work, just published by Kerr & Co. of Chicago, should encourage others to "go and do likewise."

As far as abstract theory is concerned, Socialism has all the literature it can want. What now is needed is literature that may furnish facts for further studies. Nevertheless, so fascinating to the trifler is the dishing up of the thoughts of the great founders of Socialism in new flavored sauces, and so easy is this method of the Socialist cuisine, that well may one say with the wise man of old, "Of many books there is no ending." The loads of books on Socialism that are being dumped upon a patient public, and that are conspicuous for furnishing not a single new fact, least of all a new thought, are enough to scare away anyone who approaches the study of the subject for information. In the meantime rich quarries invite the pick of the earnest prospector for historic facts wherewith to enrich the study of sociology. Mr. Myers's pick has brought from the quarry a valuable specimen.



GUSTAVUS MYERS
(1872-1942)

The American fortunes are things well worth looking into. A history of the same, whether the fortune be old or recent, is bound to shed valuable light upon many a capitalist myth. Whether the investigator be radical or conservative, whether he be Socialist or Anti-Socialist, whether he be animated with the truthful spirit of Science, or whether he be a sycophant who seeks pelf by flattery, matters not. No sycophant, Anti-Socialist, or conservative can wholly escape facts. The

biographer of P.T. Barnum, for instance, unquestionably a Barnum sycophant, nevertheless laid bare facts of inestimable value. A Socialist's work must be proportionally more valuable still.

If the other volumes of Mr. Myers's work are as well put together, and are the fruit of as much original research as this first volume, the work will be a standard to all men and women who seriously put the question: Whence and Whither?

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Uploaded January 2011

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