

The People.

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SECOND EDITORIAL

Correct!

By DANIEL DE LEON

At a meeting of the Kentucky Coal Exchange, held on the 12th instant in Louisville a resolution was adopted declaring that as the production of the coal miners so greatly exceeded that of the silver miners it ought to be recognized by the Government. It was suggested that for each ton mined the Government should issue a certificate for \$2, and that they should be made legal tenders. It was thought this would increase the circulation more rapidly than free coinage of silver.

This view of the subject is certainly correct. If the product of the gold mine owners is given the power of bullion, why, ask the owners of silver mines, should not the product of their plants be given equal power, whereupon, and before the silver mine barons have had time to grow accustomed to the unwonted posture they strike as champions of the people against concentrated wealth, up jump the stockholders of coal mines and ask: "If the owners of silver mines claim for their product bullion power why should not we for ours?"

What in sauce for the goose, is sauce for the gander. We are ready to see the manufacturers of shoes, those of trousers, those of hats, those of suspenders, those of horseflesh Bulogna sausages, those of furnitures, in short, all manufacturers, one after the other rise and demand certificates for from \$2 upwards for each certain quantity of goods they turn out. The clapper-claw among these successive "Champions of the People" and "Foes to Plutocracy" and "Paladins of Freedom" would be the treat of the century.

But if that should come about, and why should it not? we do not propose to allow the fun to last very long. "Marplots" as Socialists have been justly called more than once by disgusted capitalist plotters, we would promptly test the sincerity of these "friends of the working class" by just putting in our oar to this affect:

"Gentlemen, all! You are perfectly right. Liberty is the word. A free field and no favors is the motto. What is right for one is right for all. If the gold mine owners may

cart their gold to the mint and coin that, and the silver mine owners may get silver certificates for the silver they dump into our treasury, there is no reason in law, in justice or in commonsense why the identical privilege should not be granted to those who turn out shoes, clothing, hairpins or are the proprietors of any other commodity. We appreciate also the love that moves you all in behalf of the working class. However you may wrangle among yourselves, we have noticed with a deep sense of gratitude that you are agreed upon just one thing—solicitude for our welfare, the welfare of the proletariat. Now, gentlemen, we too own a certain property—LABOR POWER. This commodity is more precious than gold or silver, than hairpins or hats. Without it there can be no gold, no silver, nothing for you to turn into bullion and on which to get the money certificates which you are all after. In fact, all fabulous values you propose to translate into dollar certificates are but OUR commodity—LABOR POWER—transmuted into them. Now then, be ‘Honest Injuns’, freedom is what you are after? Freedom for all? Equal chances? Very well! We now put in our demand that our commodity—LABOR POWER—be put at a par with yours. That’s certainly modest enough. We demand that we too receive dollar certificates for our all-wealth-producing commodity!”

The capitalist clapper-claw would come to an instantaneous stop. The former wranglers who, with books on political economy written to order by some hungry professor, had been scratching out one another’s eyes, would forthwith become tight friends; all their love for labor would melt into thin air; and as one solid mass “NO!” would be growled back to the “impudent” demand of the workers.

But whatever the vim of this answer, it frightens not the proletariat. The proletariat, organized in the S.L.P. and the S.T. & L.A. is marching with a firm resolve, and the power to boot, to take its own.

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

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