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EDITORIAL

CLASS INSANITY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

DR. ALLAN MCLANE HAMILTON, an alienist whose home is in Eldorado, Kan., is reported by the *Republican* of his town to say:

“The people of this country have no idea of the widespread lack of confidence the Old World has in this more or less happy land. Well, who in thunder cares what they think about us and ours? Were it not for this country thousands of people in the old country would die of starvation daily. Europe cannot raise a crop of peanuts without American ploughs; and they would not have a shirt to their backs without American cotton, while half of them would go barefooted but for American shoes. And if the impudent lobsters think we won't fight they had better try us. America can turn all Europe hatless, coatless, shirtless, barefooted, and barelegged in six months, while starving them to death; and it would not take us many months to whale the daylights out of them just to restore confidence.”

Whether there is more sense than nonsense in this boast, or more nonsense than sense, fact is the element of truth is so large in the Doctor's words that their very brutality renders them useful.

The Doctor epitomizes the mental posture of the American capitalist—a genuine sample of paranoia.

There is no capitalist like the American—bumptious, ignorant, conceited, brutal. Many things combine in Europe to keep the brute in some degree of decency; everything combines in America to promote the brute's utter unutterableness. As he deals with the proletariat at home, so does he deal, or is ready to deal, with his fellow capitalists abroad.

At home the capitalist has created a condition of things, through the poverty of the masses and the disorganized state that his police spies keep the masses in, when he can say:

“The American workingmen can not buy a 5-cent package of peanuts without I

am willing to furnish them wages; and they would not have a shirt to their backs without I opened my cotton mills, while half of them would go barefooted but for my willingness to operate my shoe factories. And if the impudent lobsters think I won't fight they had better try me. I can turn the whole working class hatless, coatless, shirtless, barefooted and barelegged in six months, while starving them to death; and it would not take me many months to whale the daylights out of them just to restore confidence."

As to Europe, or rather, the European capitalist, the American capitalist does not hold quite the power that he holds of the demoralized American wage slaves. Nevertheless, it is true that America is the pivot upon which international capitalism revolves. To a great extent the American capitalist is a "fly on the wheel" to the pivot; to an appreciable extent he has a good deal to say on the subject. What with both reasons, and especially with the despotic power he exercises here, the American capitalist swaggers over creation as THE thing, a victim of paranoia.

Not frequently is the exhibition of the American capitalist's mental irresponsibility exhibited as glaringly as it is in the instance of Dr. Allan McLane Hamilton of Eldorado, Kans. The usefulness of the exhibition lies in the glaringness of its manifestation.

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

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