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EDITORIAL

AS TO THE DANBURY HATTERS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

DANIEL DAVENPORT, the Bridgeport lawyer who is credited with having engineered the Danbury employing hatters' case to the successful culmination of mulcting the working hatters in the sum of over \$200,000, is being exalted by the bourgeois press as a new Social Savior—the *Daily People* also exalts the gentleman, only that, being keener of sight than its “esteemed bourgeois contemporaries,” the *Daily People* exalts the gentleman for what he really is, a powerful grave-digger of bourgeois society. The prowess of Mr. Davenport is being sung by the bourgeois press in accents of Hosanna—the *Daily People* also intonates the song, only that, enjoying an ear better trained to the music of sociology, it recognizes in the song a dirge of the capitalist regime.

Labor, meaning the workingman, is a merchandise under the capitalist regime. Like all other merchandise, Labor is bought and sold in a market—the Labor Market. This fact the capitalist class seeks to conceal. This fact it succeeds in concealing from its human chattel with the aid of its press, its professors, its pulpiteers, its politicians, and, last not least, its labor-lieutenants, otherwise known as labor-fakirs. With the aid of these agencies the workingman, a chattel in fact under capitalism, imagines himself a human being, the peer of the capitalist—and conducts himself accordingly. Accordingly, the capitalist-besotted workingman upholds the capitalist system, and at the same time seeks to break its laws. He upholds a system that sentences him a mere merchandise, yet he acts as though he were human, a citizen, an independent being. The upshot of the contradictory posture of Labor is seen in the kind of Unions the hatters have organized, and in the kind of tactics that they pursued in pursuit of their “peership.”

How long this sort of thing would last no one could tell, were it not for the Daniel Davenports, pushed and prompted by the remorseless laws that underlie the

capitalist system. These laws drive the capitalist class itself to acts that counteract, and finally must break down the superstition regarding the status of Labor being that of a human. A leading act of this nature is the deed for which the bourgeois is exalting Mr. Davenport. It is in the nature of a surgical operation that severs the superstition from the minds afflicted by it.

Capitalism does more than to drill mankind for the Co-operative Commonwealth: capitalism is an earnest that slavery shall not be permanent on earth. The power of inertia would leave the mass of Labor in its present state of wage slavery, were it not for the surgical operations that capitalism itself is imperatively compelled to perform upon that mass, thereby shocking it more and more out of its quiescent posture. In the performance of this special task Daniel Davenport has done nobly—thereby approving himself, however unconscious, an expert grave-digger, widening the grave for capitalism to be dumped into by a disenchanting proletariat.

What lover of progress would not applaud the Bridgeport lawyer! What lover of mankind would not join the funeral chant of capitalism that the praises of the bourgeois press really amount to!

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