

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 10, NO. 313.

NEW YORK, MONDAY, MAY 9, 1910.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

GEORGE V.

By DANIEL DE LEON

DUE allowance being made for that language of courtly adulation that the journalism of the early days of the Republic sneered at and condemned, but which has since become the vogue with the journalism of our ruling class,—even after making due allowance for that, it is not at all unlikely that much truth lies in the report that the dying hours of Edward VII were “greatly perturbed by the deplorable political condition.”

It is said that, at the last moments of a man who dies a tragic death, his whole life shoots through his mind. If this be so, it should not be unlikely that the last hours of a monarch are far from easy. At the supreme hour of Bosworth field Richard III is said to have been pursued by the ghosts of the many whom he slew, and that his quickened conscience then spoke to him with a thousand several tongues, each tongue condemning him for a villain. It should not be matter for surprise if the descendant of an Elizabeth Plantagenet, himself strained through the loins of a Henry VIII, furthermore filtered through a House of Stuart, and finally chief beneficiary of economic conditions best summarized in the fact that the land, over which he spread his royal mantle, was the birthplace of the Salvation Army—it should be matter for small surprise if such a being’s last hours were greatly perturbed.

But there were reasons in addition.

Thackeray’s couplet:

“When George the Fourth was dead,
Thank God, the Georges ended”

may well have risen before the mind of the dying Edward VII, with ominous and particularly perturbing effect. The serial of the Georges was about to be

resumed—resumed by a “little dullard,” a shrinking, weak-minded George, about to become George V, and as such to captain the ship of State through seas vastly more agitated and threatening than the carefully chosen halcyon seas over which he steamed when he went through the mummery of “serving his apprenticeship” for a cadet in the Navy.

Well might the dying Edward be “greatly perturbed by the deplorable political conditions” that souged around the gables of the palace in which he lay, expiring. But his perturbation may be a people’s gain—may be more than one people’s opportunity

Social Revolutions require something more than their own ripeness to burst forth—they require the opportunity. Such opportunities have ever been a block-head, or a pig-head at the helm. With the Big Stick looming big above the horizon as the probable President of the United States, and the “little dullard” becoming King of Great Britain, it would seem that, not one people, but both the English-speaking empire peoples of the world are being offered at one time the opportunity to end the class rule of the Reign of Terror.

Perchance the dying Edward VII had ample reason to be perturbed while giving up the ghost.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded May 2011

slpns@slp.org