

Daniel De Leon

Editorial: The Social Question Is International

To those who need a large accumulation of facts before they dare draw a conclusion, this week's events on both sides of the waters must have taught a lesson or two.

In republican America, the locomotive engineers strike for less hard conditions; in monarchic England, the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire dockmen refuse to work as slaves. In "protected" America the New Orleans, Toledo and Pittsburgh courts pinion the strikers and hand them over to the mercy of the physical force departments of the Government; in free trade England, the Courts declare "picket duty" performed by strikers is criminal. In republican America, the strikers at the Columbian grounds are "charged by the police, who drove the men across the streets, administering several hard raps over the heads of those who disobeyed the order to clear out"; in monarchic England, the dragoons charge, at Hull, upon the strikers, and "a dozen men were left on the grounds bruised by the sabres". And so on, and so forth into infinitude.

Capital is international; consequently the Social Question is of no special nationality; everywhere, whether the unicorn or the eagle, the Union Jack or the Stars and Stripes, a republic or monarchy, free trade or protection, is the outer garb of the system of private ownership of the machinery of production, the conditions are identical in all essential respects: society is found to consist of two classes, a working and skinned class,

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and an idle and skinning class; the skinning idle class holds the power of the Government; the skinned working class is up in arms, struggling for emancipation, and the skinning idle class is straining to keep it in subjection by means of the political power.

Such uniformity of circumstances on this as on the other side of the water, can not be wholesome to the Jingo spirit of either hemisphere. The British and Irish workingmen can not long continue to plume themselves upon the superiority of their country's "freedom"; the American workingmen are bound to cease bragging about their "democratic institutions".

When members of the working class in both countries nurse their limbs bruised by one and the same hand, the mailed hand of Capital, they are bound to awake to a sense of their economic and political kinship, to a sense of the solidarity of their class the world over.

The People, Vol. III, No. 3. Sunday, April 16, 1893

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*A De Leon editorial transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the
Official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.*

Uploaded August 2002