

DAILY PEOPLE

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ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

A NEW INDUSTRY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

A NEWSPAPER in this city is publishing the below standing notice:

DEMAND YOUR RIGHTS.

Sue Interurban Company if It Will Not Give You a Transfer.
Get on 42d street car and ask for transfer to Madison avenue.
The conductor will refuse to give it to you. Make a note of his number and the number of his car.
Board a Madison avenue car.
Tell the conductor you asked for a transfer on the 116th street car and did not get it.
He will refuse to carry you unless you pay another fare.
Pay it, and make a note of his number and the number of his car.
Also note the time of day and the day of the month, and state where you were going.
Send this information, with your name and address, to The _____, and your claim for \$50 will be put in the hands of a competent lawyer.
If you win your suit, as you doubtless will, you will pay the lawyer a small fee.
No charge will be made for presenting your claim.

Is this a rootlet of the tree on which the present Wall street flowers are flowering? or is it a floweret of the Wall street root? Connected the two are; and this evidence of "genius and individualism" in "starting new industries" serves as well as any to expose the true inwardness, the in-breeding nature of capitalist money-making. Incidentally it also tells its tale on the existing "prosperity."

It goes without saying that the posture of "demanding rights," assumed in this instance, is mere stage play. He whose manliness is sufficiently awakened to be conscious of "rights," and to dare "demand" them, is not going to fritter his energies away, or cool his ardor on such petty matters as "transfers;" least of all will he be in the frame of mind to strike a course in which his blow for his rights must be struck

by proxy—a lawyer. Simple reasons surround him on all sides to feel his rights assailed: he is plucked in the shop, he is plucked at every turn, and on his back the imprint is marked of the heel of the capitalist class that he sustains. Will he bother about “transfers”? Will he hire a lawyer? Indeed, not! He will seek to shake that capitalist off his back; he will himself act for himself by joining those who cast—not by proxy, but themselves—their ballots for Socialism, and who stand ready themselves—not by proxy—to back up their ballot, should the capitalist dare infringe it.

It goes without saying that this “money-making” scheme partakes of the Wall street curb. While millions are gambled inside the Exchange, only thousands are at stake outside, on the curb. But whether within or without, the process is not one of “producing,” it is one of “transferring” wealth in existence—one cheat cheats another.

Finally, it goes without saying that such Chinese style of pickings never grow amidst popular prosperity. They are always symptoms of popular poverty. The human mind does not naturally run in such grooves. When it does it is forced to, and when forced the act tells the tale of long “grubbing under ground.”

The paper in question is experiencing all these truths. Its “call for rights” is remaining unanswered; while the “underground grubbing” mental poise of the legal luminary who conceived the scheme is enjoying leisure to contemplate the beauties of the asylum, offered by the “higher professions,” for the “degradation of having to work with your muscle.”

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