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EDITORIAL

THAT “PARADISE” AGAIN.

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THE first thing that catches the eye on the cover of the *Journal of the Department of Labor*, regularly issued at Wellington by the government of New Zealand, and the September issue of which has now arrived, is “The Labor Market.” This item leads all others under the head of “Contents”—probably as evidence and proof of the respect and power that Labor enjoys in that “Workman’s Paradise.”

What is the “labor market”? What does the term imply?

A market is a place where goods, wares and merchandise, chattels, in short, are offered for sale and are bought. Nothing lands in the “market” that is not a chattel; what is not a chattel finds no counter on which to be laid in the market. The term “Bankers’ Market” would be unintelligible: bankers are not bought and sold, hence a “Bankers’ Market” is an absurd term. So with railroad kings, merchant princes, mine barons, capitalists in general. As railroad magnates, merchants, mine owners, in short, capitalists, are not chattels, they are not bought and sold, consequently there is no such thing as a “Capitalist Market.” It is otherwise with leather, pork, cotton, beef. They are all chattels, hence they are objects of sale and purchase, and we have a “Leather Market,” a “Pork Market,” a “Cotton Market,” a “Beef Market”—and a “Labor Market” as an evidence that Labor, or labor-power, is a chattel, a merchandise like pork, leather, beef, etc.

There is another fact that must be apprehended in order to understand well the full social significance of the term “Labor Market.” The merchandise cattle may die of the murrain, that does not bring its owner into his grave with the murrain; the merchandise cotton may burn up, that does not reduce its owner to ashes, and so forth with all other merchandise—except one. Inversely, the owner, or seller, of the merchandise cattle, cotton, etc., may die, but his merchandise is not affected by his

taking-off. It is so with all other merchandise-owners—except one. The exception of the merchandise the death of which drags its owner with it in the grave is the merchandise LABOR-POWER; the exception of the merchandise-owner, or seller, whose decease means the simultaneous decease of his wares is the merchandise owner WORKINGMAN. Only in the instance of the merchandise labor-power and of its owner the workingman are merchandise and owner so closely connected by every fiber that the fate which overtakes the one overtakes the other, instanter. Thus labor-power and workingman, the merchandise and its seller, are to all interests {intents?} and purposes one.

From these two facts—the chattel nature of labor-power, and its identity with its owner—flows a sociologic fact of prime importance—WHAT IS SOLD IN THE LABOR MARKET IS THE WORKINGMAN HIMSELF.

In the "Workman's Hells," the workingman is a subject of trade. Should not a "Workman's Paradise" do better, at least a little better? That the "Workman's Paradise" of New Zealand either can not, or will not, stands patentized by its leading institution, or main pillar—just the same as in any other of the sisterhood of "Workman's Hells."

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

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