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EDITORIAL

AT LAST!

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE above is the title under which Thomas W. Lawson winds up the “general educational” part of his work¹ to show “just how the people’s billions have been tricked into the hands of the few.” If Lawson were a woman, the sex of which it is said that the most important part of their letters is put into the postscript, he could not have done better than he did in the fat-lettered post-script with which he winds up his wind-up. Says Lawson: “The volume of business of the stock exchanges will not be lessened a fraction during the coming four years by the election of Bryan, Hisgen or Debs instead of Taft. Prices will be influenced, of course, by the election of Bryan, Hisgen or Debs, but the same ups and downs will be applied to the seventy billions of stock—it is the ups and downs that do American people out of their savings.”

At last!—indeed.

At last there has come from the wordy pen of Lawson a thought pregnant with sense.

Ups and downs of stocks is the means by which the plutocracy carries on its raids; these raids are a feature of capitalist society; and the feature will not be lessened by a fraction whether “Bryan, Hisgen or Debs, instead of Taft,” is elected. This sentence is the correctest yet framed by Lawson. It is correct in the names it mentions, and correct in the name of the one Presidential candidate that it omits—Gillhaus, Preston’s proxy.

Lawson, the stock gambler, realizes, as stock gamblers can best realize, that the victory of the Socialist Labor Party would be the only political victory that would

¹ [The “work” is not identified here, but may have been reprinted in another column of this issue of the *Daily People*. Thomas wrote several books and numerous magazine articles. De Leon presumably had reference to one of the latter published as the 1908 Presidential election approached.—R.B.]

put an end to the ups and downs of stocks, because, when the day of that victory shall have come, the foundation for the ups-and-downs raids will be uprooted—a thing that no other political victory could encompass.

And Lawson is right.

Taft, Bryan, Hisgen are plain supporters of capitalism. He who says A must admit Z. The A of capitalism implies the Z of the ups-and-downs raids of the stock exchanges.

As to Debs's party, though it denies capitalism, it is a thing in the air. A kite without a tail—such as all political party of Socialism must needs be that ignores the necessity of the revolutionary economic organization of Labor as the ready “army of occupation” to take and hold and administer what the Socialist ballot proclaims should be wrenched from the hands of the capitalist class. Moreover, that party, true to itself, is impotent, not in that respect only, it is impotent in other, and kindred ones. It stands upon the principle that divides the international proletariat into “superior” and “inferior,” or “forward” and “backward” races; and, last, not least, it accentuates its disruptive nature by the circumstance that, due to its Pecksniffian rejection of the Socialist Labor Party's offer of unity, the sad spectacle is presented in this campaign of divided Socialist forces.

That the victory of such a party, if such a thing were at all possible, would not lessen by a fraction the ups-and-downs raids of capitalism is obvious. Capitalism would remain in the saddle, being in possession of the industries; the victors, or, rather, their misguided followers, would be locked out and thrown upon the streets, there to be mowed down by the Sherman Bells the moment they gave expression to their hunger; the plutocracy would quickly “buy cheap” in a “down” market, to sell dear soon as “peace reigned once more in Warsaw” and the market was “up” again.

Lawson has long twaddled. At last he hit bull's-eye.

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

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