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FORT FRICK—COEUR D'ALENE

By Daniel De Leon

The militia of Pennsylvania has been turned loose upon the iron workers of Homestead, in the East; the Federal troops are marching upon Coeur d'Alene, in the West.

In both cases, the bayonet is sent in aid of Capital, and to the subjugation of Labor; in both cases, too, the tramp of the soldiery falls over the prostrate bodies of the American Constitution and of the Declaration of Independence.

Yet it is well that this be so.

As these events deploy themselves, myths, hitherto held for truths, are ruthlessly dispelled, and the vision of the toiling millions acquires, in proportion, the clearness requisite for their emancipation.

Down goes the myth that Capital is the brother of Labor. Its exploiter, in fact, it can only live off the sweat and blood of the working class. If a brother at all, its attitude towards Labor is that of Cain towards his brother. It now stands unmasked beyond the power of hypocrisy to conceal its character. The irrepressibleness of the conflict between the two has been made clear to the blindest. Hand in hand they cannot go much longer. One or the other must down.

Down goes the myth about the "Freedom of Contract" between employer and employe. Stripped of all his havings; his instruments of production knocked off his hands, and the bread knocked off his mouth, by the progress of machinery and the concentration of capital; reduced to ever more galling dependence for a living upon the employer, despite his unceasing toil and his own increased productivity—the workman now perceives his "Freedom of Contract" to be none other than that of the surprised wayfarer towards the highwayman who covers him with his pistol.

Down also goes the myth that we are a homogeneous people, the peer each of the other; and out in bold relief now stands the truth that ours, like all other nations, is divided into two classes: the toilers and the idlers; the workman and the capitalist; and that the latter—calling himself here

Democrat, Republican yonder—is entrenched behind the powers of the State, which he uses like any other despot to outrage his slaves.

Truths these are so valuable that their knowledge is cheaply gotten, even at the expense of the honored lives that it has cost.

They clear up and point the path out of the wilderness of capitalism.

They greatly aid the solution of the Social Question.

Enlightened men, who of right ought to be free, will henceforth know how to act.

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