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EDITORIAL

McKEESPORT.

By DANIEL DE LEON

AND yet again, the great Steel Strike rakes up a text for a lesson to be learned, and never to be forgotten.

The steel plant in McKeesport is to be dismantled and set up elsewhere. Nor is the fact that it is at all to be dismantled all that is important in the matter. Important is the additional fact as to where the plant is to be transplanted to. The aid that the strikers received from the Mayor, or rather McKeesport Mayor's determination not to tolerate the influx of hoodlums that capitalist concerns regularly introduce into a town so as to give a color for calling out the militia, made the locality so uncomfortably hot for the Company that it decided to emigrate. He who leaves a hot place does not usually seek an equally hot one to take refuge to. The Hobson's choice of jumping from the frying pan into the fire in such cases is compulsory only upon the working class. Under the capitalist system, wherever the worker may take refuge to, he is bound to fall within the flames of capitalism. This is not the fix of the capitalist. If he leaves a hot place it is to go to a cooler one. The significance of the move in this instance lies in the circumstance that the capitalist in question does find a cool and safe place to move to out of the hot and unsafe one he finds himself in. And where is that place? Beyond the confines of the country? No. It is situated within United States territory; in other words, it is within reach of the same influences that cause McKeesport to be hot.

Towering over this fact comes the question: "What becomes of the pure and simple theory that the Union, the economic organization of Labor is all sufficient, and no politics should enter the Union?"

The straightness of the conduct of the Mayor of McKeesport is slight in comparison to that which would have been observed by an incumbent, elected class-consciously upon the class-conscious platform of the Socialist Labor Party. The McKeesport man acts merely upon an impulse, and that impulse being merely

sentimental, may at any time turn the other way, driven by some opposing sentimental wave. Even so, however, an earnest is had of what the working class could do if the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance principles of Unionism prevailed: while the fact that the capitalist can avoid McKeesport, and pick out another place, is a demonstration of the blighting effect of pure and simpledom or Gompersism upon Labor.

The political arm is the most powerful arm of the Working Class. To-day that arm is palsied by pure and simpledom. The arm is held tied, preventing it from striking in such a way as to make every spot of the land a hundredfold hotter for capitalism than McKeesport. The emancipation of the working class is conditional upon the sundering of the pure and simple bonds that to-day it is fettered with in the interest of the capitalist class by the Labor Fakir class.

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