

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 10, NO. 194.

NEW YORK, MONDAY, JANUARY 10, 1910.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

DISCONTENT, A CURSE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

EVIDENTLY Japanese astuteness did not go out of the world when Ito died. Some of it remained to illumine the path of the *Japanese-American Commercial Weekly*, published in this city, which in its issue of December 29th declares: "The weakness most common to human nature is discontent," and again, "It is undeniable that this sense or rather sentiment is the curse and bane of human happiness."

Of a truth, discontent is most shockingly prevalent in these degenerate days. It pervades all classes of society, but principally its vicious manifestations are confined to the working class. Indoor workers, such as weavers and varnishers, complain of hot stuffy workrooms and no ventilation. Outdoor men, like trolley conductors and motormen, object to exposed vestibules in winter and 16 hour runs without rest or meal in summer. Cigarworkers think they are not treated fairly when they are docked large percentages for imperfect cigars, which are then sold by the firm at the full price of the perfect smoke. Brass and metal polishers as a class are especially given to discontentedness; they say the dust clogs their lungs in a few years. In the steel mills, it is worse; the men see their comrades swallowed up in molten metal, and not knowing but their own turn may come next, are very liable to dissatisfied spells. What with crumbling walls, rotten cage-ropes and gas explosions, miners can never be depended on to be content. Moreover, regardless of occupational lines, the whole working class seems to be growing discontented with the intensity it is driven at, the niggardliness of its wages, the insecurity of its future, and the worthlessness of the materials handed out to it for food and clothing.

Of course, all this discontent cannot be expected to stop there. It invades the master class as well. These, seeing their workers increasingly restive, or even rebellious and striking for more of the good things of life, are themselves forced into

a dissatisfied frame of mind.

All of which the *Japanese-American Commercial Weekly* has most neatly summed up—aided thereto by the swift development of capitalism in its home country, where scenes of pastoral simplicity are steadily being replaced by the strife and struggle which makes of the civilized world to-day a jungle.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded January 2011

slpns@slp.org