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EDITORIAL

'TIS TIME FOR THE STRAIT-JACKET.

By DANIEL DE LEON

There is a point, as illustrated by the convulsive laughter of Juliet's nurse at Juliet's bier, where sorrow becomes so overpowering that it assumes the manifestations of mirth. Somewhat similar is the revulsion of feeling that must have been experienced by the sane portion of the civilized world at last Sunday's despatch from New South Wales, telling of five miners being deliberately sealed up in the Gretna mines, and thus buried and burned alive, by order of the Company, in order to preserve the rest of the mine from taking fire. Before so shocking, almost matchless, an act of inhumanity the sense of indignation feels stunned, and the ludicrous aspect of Capitalism, presented in this instance at "its best," superimposes itself upon the mind.

Capitalism is in its dotage. As with dotards, its virtues are turned into monomania, and appear as absurd crime.

"Wealth!"—such is the cry of the race. Why? For wealth's own sake? No! For the sake of Life. The virtue of Capitalism lies in that it pointed the way to gratify this human craving; it solved the problem by which the last link—the necessity of spending life in grubbing for life—between the human and the brute can be snapped; thanks to it, wealth and its production have become so ample that Life may be secured against the accident of need, and thereby Intellectual Life may soar free. Guided by this law of its existence, Capitalism became a wealth gatherer; but, like the miser, it soon turned the means into an end. First, forgetting the original spur to its activity, it began to turn the piling up of wealth into a finality. Now, in its real dotage, its virtue turned wholly into vice, it goes further and sacrifices the end to the means: to save a mine, to pile up wealth still more superfluously mountain high, it sacrifices life, calmly, deliberately, ruthlessly!

One would have imagined that Europe and America furnished ample enough proofs of Capitalism having survived its usefulness, and, as always in such cases, having become positively harmful. It was left for antipodal Capitalism to

demonstrate the lengths that this dotard will go in its monomania. The insanity of Capitalism has become criminal, irresponsibly criminal. Henceforth responsibility can rest only with the sane, with the Working Class, for allowing this raving maniac to continue to roam at large.

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