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EDITORIAL

## WEALTH AND WAR.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**I**T has just come to light that a careful investigation of the mineral wealth of the Transvaal, made by British engineers before the South African war broke out, reveals the existence of natural treasures in that country, infinitely greater than was ever publicly stated. The mining area of the Rand is capable of yielding gold to the amount of almost 14,000 millions of dollars; that is, a mass of the precious metal representing nearly one quarter of the total wealth of the United States in 1890. Nor is this all; a calculation points to 60,000 million tons of “good” coal in the districts that have been prospected.

These colossal figures not only cast additional light of the most vivid sort upon the original “causes” of the war, which have always been fully understood, but makes quite plain the only conditions of peace which are consistent with the Chamberlain and Lombard street conception of “national honor.” It explains the “patriotism” displayed by the capitalists of England in granting to their government all that portion of the surplus-value created by their wage-slaves and all the blood in their surplus-laborers, that may be required for the complete annihilation of the few mean farmers who, as first occupants, dare to claim possession of such rich fields.

To be sure, it is inconvenient for men of refined tastes, upon whom rank and wealth impose the observance of idleness and luxury, to pay an extra penny in the pound upon their income for the maintenance of 250,000 murderous vagabonds in South Africa. But insomuch as it must finally prove a highly paying investment, the sacrifice will be made, and money for the purpose in view—for the great purpose of civilization of course—will not be wanting, even if the sympathetic American cousin, similarly engaged in the Philippines, must be called upon for a new loan. As to fighting blood—why! should British blood get scarce in the slums where the South African army is chiefly recruited, an inexhaustible stream of other blood can be made to flow, for small pay, from every capitalist-ridden nation in the world.

Yet the Boer is fighting. He has not lost all hope. Poor Boer! by tradition, by nature as it were, he is a burgher. With middle class instinct he struggles; and like the middle class of other lands, though not cowardly, he remains blind to his fate, cannot see that he is doomed.

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