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EDITORIAL

THAT “MISERABLE PITY.”

By DANIEL DE LEON

CAN it be possible that the British Chief Secretary for Ireland, Mr. Birrell, who pronounced “a miserable pity” the passages in President Taft’s inaugural address, indicating that America was now to join the ranks of the great armed nations—can it be possible the British official needs to be told that we have in America large steel plate mills which want purchasers, large ship-yards which want orders, a large powder Trust which wants a market, extensive establishments that turn out military accoutrements and pant for cash, besides swarms of unemployed who are after jobs?

Chief Secretary for Ireland Birrell evidently needs information.

The country is going through the pangs of an unparalleled crisis—financial and industrial. All the tricks known to political necromancy have been set to play in order to woo Prosperity. Yet the coy damosel refuses. She will not, she does not return. What’s to be done?

The only card left is the governmental card that will set money in circulation. The salaries of officers have been raised. That’s something, but not much. The only other way is to have the Government make large purchases. What other field is there but that of armaments?

Capitalist Society is like the quack doctor that threw his patients into fits, and then cured them of the fits he threw them into—and acquired a great reputation for a curist. Capitalist Society produces panics, and then it sets about curing society of the ills it inflicts upon society. Of course, such systems of cure are bungling; of course the system of the body social suffers. But a cure is apparently effected. At least the mouths of many clamorous complainants are silenced, and their voices are enlisted in the service of shouting “Prosperity!” thereby drowning the voices that continue to clamor.

Aye, indeed, it is a "miserable pity." But the "miserable pity" lies not so much in the quackery with which the cure is attempted, as it lies in the fact of the disease itself—a disease that is bound to last so long as Capitalism is tolerated.

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

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