

EDITORIAL

## HERTZKA'S MARE'S-NEST.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**S**O thoroughly exploded is all colonization or “co-operative” plan to save society within capitalist rule, that we would not bother with the colonization vagaries of *Freeland*, the organ of the Bow, Wash., Brotherhood of the Co-operative Commonwealth,” were it not that this concern seems to pivot itself upon a brand-new mare’s-nest—Hertzka’s “discovery” in economics. Seeing that by its very mare’s-nest nature the “discovery” can help to elucidate the relations that actually exist between the capitalist and the workingman, it will not be amiss to take it up.

According to *Freeland* of last December 1, Hertzka’s theory in a nutshell is this: “The higher the rate of labor (wages) the lower the cost of products of all machine made goods.”

The elucidation can be condensed into the following series of whereases and resolutions:

“Whereas, The capitalist does not exist who would not almost break his neck in order to reduce the cost of the products of his plant;

“Whereas, It is not in his power to affect the rate or cost of any of the elements that go into the cost of his products, except one element;

“Whereas, That one exceptional element is the labor that he employs;

“Whereas, Whatever endeavor he makes in the direction of lowering the rate or cost of this exceptional element, labor, gets him regularly into a peck of trouble with his employes;

“Whereas, According to Herzka, such attempts at lowering the rate of labor have the opposite effect to the desired one of lowering the cost of products;

“Whereas, According to Herzka, other things being, of course, equal, the higher the rate of labor the lower will be the cost of products of all machine-made goods;

“Whereas, It is entirely in the hands of the capitalist to raise the rate of labor; and

“Whereas, Such a proposition on his part, so far from running any risk of being answered by a strike, will certainly be answered by huzzas and with election of the respective capitalist to honorary membership in the respective Union; therefore be it

“Resolved, That the capitalist who does not raise wages as fast as he can get the cash to do so beats any and all the anchorites put together who have macerated their bodies with self-inflicted thorns and lashes; and

“Resolved, That such a capitalist does not hold a candle, in point of long ears, with Goethe's brute, which insisted upon pasturing on a barren heath, when all around him lay juicy and inviting grass meadows.”

Much we fear, however, that Herzka and the Herzkaites are so wholly deficient in the sense of humor that they are not able to appreciate the joke of their own mare's-nest. But that is always the feature of unconscious humorists.

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

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