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EDITORIAL

EVES IN TROUSERS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

IN his *Eve's Diary* Mark Twain gave a sample bit of reasoning of the Mother of Us All somewhat as follows:

“Water never runs up. At least not in the light; for I’ve watched it, and it never ran up. But at night, when the light is gone, it runs up, else the brooks would all go dry. But I can’t see it in the dark to prove it, so I just have to know it without proving.”

And a keen-sighted reviewer at the time added: “—a sort of reasoning which many thousand of her descendants still indulge in.”

In a current magazine, a “Socialist” party litterateur of the type that is given trips to the Panama Canal to write articles smoothing things over for the administration, reviews at some length “The Industrial Struggle.” He shows the growth of the working class, the shrinkage of the middle class, and the concentration of the wealth of both in the hands of the upper capitalist. He shows the growing impotence of the strike to relieve conditions. So far, so good; the water is running down hill in approved physical fashion.

But suddenly something happens. The light, in the presence of which water runs down hill, is removed, and the writer concludes in this characteristic strain:

“More and more the workers come to see that the ballot, wielded not in behalf of one or the other of two contending camps of capitalist owners, but as a weapon of working class interests, in accord with a working class policy, is the ONE AND ONLY means of gaining their ends.”

The water has run up hill!

The underscoring above is ours. It shows that our writer’s mind is still, according to orthodox theology, at the stage of 5,913 years ago.

True, capital is concentrating. True, the knitting of American Manufacturers' Associations and United Hatters' Associations, the swelling of the unemployed army, and the supplanting of skill by the improved machine, are rendering strikes increasingly futile. But—and a big but, too—for every reason that can be urged against the union ALONE because its strikes fail, at least one equally potent reason can be urged against the ballot ALONE. The workers are being continually disfranchised by qualification laws and by industrial conditions which make them lose their residence. Opposition parties are being increasingly hampered with obstacles in getting on the ballot. Ballot stuffing and ballot counting out have become bywords in the land. And even if all these reefs are successively weathered by a working class purely-political ship, and a victorious vote is cast, that ship will yet be wrecked—as the New York *Evening Post* warned Hearst his would be—on the reef of “having no organization to count” and enforce that vote.

Here is where the learned writer of “The Industrial Struggle” breaks down. He is unable to see that what is true one half the time—on the economic field, in the “light,” must also be true the rest of the time—on the political field, in the “dark.” Both the economic and the political weapon ALONE are impotent. What is necessary is the consciously revolutionary combination of both.

The water can not run down hill part of the time and up the rest. The learned “Socialist” who thinks it can—and his party which echoes his fallacy—are no better than Eves in trousers.

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