

DAILY PEOPLE



VOL. 11, NO. 48.

NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17, 1910.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

AS TO IDEALS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

WRITING in *The Craftsman* for August, Walter A. Dyer laments the fact that when he left the shelter of college halls, filled with ideals of honor, of altruism, and of service to humanity, he found that he had much to unlearn. The lofty ideals he had imbibed did not square with the facts of life. The ideals were shattered. The men of the study and the cloister, he thinks, are hardly the ones to be expected to teach the art of a war in which they are not combatants. Which may in a measure be true in so far as it applies to the teaching of the colleges, but as for the average head of a college he is usually a hard headed man of business with no ideals above a Ryan or a Rockefeller.

Perhaps it would be better for such men as Mr. Dyer were the way made a little plainer. After graduation the college man enters a world in which the test established has little of altruism. The man who made a considerable figure while with his instructors may in the everyday world make no figure whatever. The college athlete, whose other attainments may be at the minimum, is very likely easily to distance the altruistic scholar in the rough and tumble of the world of business.

In order that sensitive youths entering college should pass through the ordeal without imbibing ideals that are only to be shatterer afterward, not without danger to their "immortal souls," the whole college curriculum ought to be changed. Throw to the dogs classical learning and all that makes for loftiness of ideal, and in their places substitute courses on: Stealing of Franchises; Grabbing of Public Lands; Wrecking of Corporations; Cheating of Customs; Watering of Stocks; Bribery of Public Officials; Buying Senatorial Seats, and on other good business ethics that will readily suggest themselves. Then the young man leaving the protection of Alma Mater would go forth fully equipped for the conflict in the social jungle instead of

having to first start and grow fangs and claws.

The Socialist can afford to extend some pity to the young man, taught that it was his "duty and privilege to be better than his fellowmen, and by example to lead them to better things," who suddenly finds that capitalist society expects of him anything excepting the purification of itself. The Socialist can afford to extend some pity to such a one for the reason that the Socialist, alone of the moderns, can cherish ideals, can live up to them, and strive to make them real.

In striving to realize their ideals all others must lose them. The Socialist, in striving to realize his ideal, has nothing to lose; he has a glorious world to gain for humanity. Happy is he who can contribute his efforts in the struggle to realize the ideal of human emancipation.

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Uploaded August 2011

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