

# DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 11, NO. 180.

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1910.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

## A MORE HUMAN PRESCRIPTION.

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**T**HERE are two sets of people who are perpetually holding the Post Office up to view as a radiant Star of the East, upon which humankind, in its pilgrimage along the thorny paths of life, should keep its eyes fixed. One of these sets, brought greatly into prominence by the recent expressmen's strike, is that of which the Post Office is beloved because of its lack of wage agitation and freedom from strikes. This set requires no special handling. Its purely capitalist desires and utterances unmask it sufficiently to render it incapable of harm.

Far different is the other set. Of it the Post Office is beloved on exactly opposite grounds. Seeing in that institution a vast industry—the mail handling industry—governmentally operated, the folks in this set go further; they behold in it a miniature Co-operative Commonwealth hung up in the skies for men to copy. Socialism becomes to them interpreted in terms of a new ism—Post Officium; and thereby the progress toward true Socialism is immeasurably blocked.

Neat antidote to a severe attack of Post Officium comes *The Post Office Clerk*, the national organ of the supposed partakers of Socialism in pre-installment under capitalism. Its issue for November contains at length the recent memorial presented to Postmaster-General Hitchcock by the representatives of the body. The document's almost every section is a potent corrective in its own line, and all together compose a matchless decoction with which to cure the disease.

Is it adequate remuneration for his labors the wage slave seeks under Socialism? The memorial shows that though Congress made a provision for increased wages, only fifty per cent of the clerks, and in only two classes of offices, were provided for, so that "clerks who comply with every established requirement of the efficiency system can not be promoted," and thus "merit remains unrewarded."

Does the worker follow the banner of social revolution to secure conditions of

health and sanitation in his workplace? The memorial calls attention to the filthy condition of the mail sacks, pointing out that when they are opened in the offices “the atmosphere is filled with dust and germs” and that “much of the tuberculosis contracted by post office clerks is traceable to this cause.”

Is it seven-days-a-week toil, is it insecurity of position, is it exhausting speed, excessive hours, or nerve-sapping concentration over long periods—is it in short any one of the common manifestations of exploitation which the worker seeks to free himself from by substituting the present private-ownership system of industry with Socialism? If it is, the memorial is eloquent upon the fact that that manifestation has not been lopped off in the Post Office. By taking the mail-handling industry out of individual hands and putting it in the Government’s, the exploitation of the employes therein has not been ended. It was merely a transfer of profit-squeezing rights from the single capitalist to the capitalist class. The capitalist, in one case as in the other, is in; the worker is out in the cold.

If this were the fantastic age when pulverized spider-legs and dried roosters’ combs were recognized remedies, the sufferer from Post Officium would be condemned to stew the postal clerks’ memorial to Hitchcock in boiling water for ten hours and drink the infusion. As this is a more human era, ’tis merely suggested that he read it.

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Uploaded November 2011

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