

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 5, NO. 177.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1904.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

LAWSON'S REVELATIONS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

IT is all very well for the multimillionaires to affect indifference at the Lawson revelations. The fact is the gentlemen feel mightily uncomfortable. They feel as uncomfortable about it as did the courtiers of Louis XVI when the necklace scandal exploded. It matters not whether Lawson exaggerates, as little as it mattered whether the necklace scandal was all true. What is undeniable about the former, as was about the latter, is so stupendous that all exaggeration may be discounted, and yet there remain huge chunks of unquestionable truth. In this respect, Lawson revelations and necklace scandals differ materially from the slanders that petty souls set afloat and wing with a little bit of more or less immaterial truths. In such cases the expectation is to catch the unwary with the little particle of truth. Such schemes usually fail. The huge body of falsehood ever proves too much for the little frail wings of truth, and the conspiracy collapses. Not so with Lawson revelations and necklace scandals. Not only is the truth in them of proportions large enough to make a solid lodgement, but they never break out except at historic seasons that are ripe for just such revelations.

Of course, the workingman has no direct interest in any of the Lawson revelations. It is nothing to him whether "Standard Oil" did or not did not plunder investors to the tune of \$39,000,000 at a clip. Workingmen are not investors. It is as much as they can do to meet their own running expenses for the merest necessities of life. All profits are plunder. "Standard Oil" plundering investors is a case of "dog eat dog." The workingmen's wages would not rise one cent a year whichever side did the plundering, or if no such plundering were done in speculation. Nevertheless the workingman has deep interest in these scandals. His class, his movement, his cause cannot reach triumph until the ripeness of times: and these scandals tell that the season for the rotten-ripe tooth of capitalism to drop out of the jaw of society is at

hand. The dropping of that tooth cannot be hastened this side of its own decay. But neither is its dropping all-sufficient. The new, the healthy tooth that is to take its place must itself have ripened to the point of being ready to replace the old. Is the workingman's Movement ripe? If not, why not? And this being ascertained, what is there to do in order to ripen the new tooth for the social jaw?

It is in this sense that the Lawson revelations are valuable. They would lose all value to the Working Class if the workingman were to stand and gaze at them open-mouthed. Their value will be inestimable if they cause the workingman to turn his thoughts to his own class—and set himself to work.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded September 2007

slpns@slp.org