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EDITORIAL

## THE IMMORALITY OF A MORAL SIMILE.

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**T**O the obvious truth that labor produces all wealth, the mouthpieces of the exploiters of labor, are opposing dishonest rhetoric. A recent issue of the *World*, for instance, contains a simile that adorns a tale and points a moral. The tale is of a ship that, having lost its captain, is, through the inability of its crew, set adrift and exposed to the dangers of the sea, from which it is saved by another vessel. The lost captain is likened to capital, and the helpless crew to labor; and the moral is drawn that without the directing genius of capital, i.e., the capitalist labor's efforts, like those of the crew, would be productive of naught but disaster.

This highly moral simile's greatest drawback is its immorality: it is based on half a truth and is used to perpetuate a whole lie. The whole truth is that modern sea captains are servants of corporations—they are not owners of their craft, or capitalists. Like their crews they are employees—laborers—working for wages determined by supply and demand; and exploited for profit—surplus value—by their capitalist master. In other words the capitalist to-day hires executive ability as he does unskilled labor, and for the same purpose. The directive genius which he claims is peculiarly his own, belongs, as does the wealth he expropriates, to others. These being the facts, the immorality of the moral simile is apparent.

It now remains to be said in conclusion that modern labor is specialized and co-operative. This makes it interdependent. To this fact is the incompetency of some of its subdivisions due in unusual conditions. On the whole, however, modern labor is sufficient unto itself. The capitalist class is not. Without the executive and manual labor—co-operatively organized—which that class exploits, it would be worse than a captainless ship at the mercy of the sea—it would be a nonentity!

[Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.](#)

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