

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 5, NO. 194.

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 1905.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

THE IDENTICAL ROUNDELAY.

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THE world is one city, so runs an ancient proverb. A more modern and more poetic version is to the effect that one touch of nature makes the whole world kin. An adaptation of this last version with an eye especially to social science might be made to read: "One turn of the screw of Revolution makes all usurpers chirp one roundelay." Prince Hilkoﬀ, the Russian Minister of Railroads, furnishes a matchless and latest illustration of this great truth.

Now that all Russia seems to be in a revolutionary ferment against the misrule and despotism of Czarism, and is demanding a "Constitution", Prince Hilkoﬀ comes forward with the polite declaration that "the Czar is striving earnestly to accomplish the reforms which the country needs", but, he declares, "the questions involved are too vital to permit of a solution in the haste of passion"; the gentleman warns his beloved fellow subjects that "conditions are not ripe for a constitution", and he closes with the plaint that "the vast majority of the people lack elemental education". It would be a digression from the point in view to interpellate the noble Prince and ask him:

"The Czar has had things all his own way for, lo, these many generations. What you call 'earnestly striving' on the Czar's part to accomplish the reforms which you now admit 'the country needs', has been given a thorough trial. What success has HIS striving met with? According to your own words, 'the conditions are not ripe' for these reforms, and you explain why: 'the vast majority of the people lack elemental education.' His failure is complete. The intentional keeping of 'conditions unripe' by keeping the 'vast majority of the people' without 'elemental education' could have done no worse than what you call his 'earnest striving' in the opposite direction. Will there ever be a time when the unripeness will have turned to ripeness if he and you and your set are left alone? Would you ever consider a reform, that clips your

usurpers' wings, a demand made otherwise than 'in the haste of passion'? Is not any and every demand, that threatens a despot's power, a thing that moves at a pace too 'hasty' to suit the despot's convenience? Could any such demand ever move at a step slow enough to suit you?"

Such is the interpellation that forces itself upon the mind. But it shall be here repressed, in order not to lose sight of the point in view. The point in view is that Prince Hilkoﬀ's words have a decidedly familiar sound. Tho' he be a Russian, and our own despot, the Capitalist Class, be American, his language is theirs exactly whenever American Labor demands any improvement in the existing institutions, especially if the demand is for Socialism. Then OUR Princes—not here named Hilkoﬀ, but known here as Prince Railroad, or Duke Sugar Trust, or Count Standard Oil, or Marquis What-not, etc., etc.,—if their language is not couched in spiked policemen's clubs, Gatling guns on paper, or the rattle of musketry, they ever courteously inform the Working Class that they (our Princes) are "earnestly striving to accomplish the reforms which the country needs", but that "the questions involved are too vital to permit of a solution in the haste of passion"; that such things must be done slowly, calmly, deliberately; that "investigating committees must first make a careful examination and report the facts"; and that while these committees are investigating (read junketing), the workers should wait patiently, because they "lack elemental education" and "conditions are not yet ripe for their demands". The language of our own American despot, ever echoed by his A.F. of L. labor lieutenants, is Prince Hilkoﬀ's at all points. Also our American despot and his labor lieutenant satraps could be interpellated in the words that Prince Hilkoﬀ might be interpellated. They also could be asked whether the emancipation of the Working Class could possibly move at a pace slow enough to suit the beneficiaries of capitalist usurpation.

But we shall refrain. Instructive enough, for the present, is the fact that one turn of the Revolutionary screw makes all usurpers chirp the identical roundelay—whether Russian or American.

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Uploaded October 2007

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