

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 6, NO. 117.

NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1905.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

A BROTHERHOOD IN DEED.

By DANIEL DE LEON

DESPATCHES from Russia tell the story of how one railroad link after another, connecting the great cities with one another and all with the frontier, is being snapped. Only one line now connects St. Petersburg with the frontier, while Moscow, Simbrisk, Sartoff, Vyazma, Poltava, Nizhni-Novgorod, Kharkoff, Smolensk, Kieff, Elizabethgrad, Kazan and other leading railroad centers all over the empire are reported to be wholly isolated. Not a rail has been torn up. The isolation is due to the gradual extension of the strike among the railroad men, and these acting in unison with the workers in the several cities. The action of the railroaders is reported as having the effect of not only aiding but promoting the strike in the industrial centers. The lack of fuel, that only the railroads can supply, is bringing about such a scarcity of coal in the factories, that, even where the workingmen have not yet "caught the infection," shut-downs are becoming imperative. Russia is illustrating the strategic post that the railroad industry holds in the Labor Movement. It is a post from which comfort or disaster may come to the ruling class or to the working class, according as those who hold the post are either a brotherhood in deed, or in name only. Officered by the Stones, the Sergeants and the rest of that ilk, the post is used as Judas would; officered by true men as the post seems to be in Russia, the railroad brotherhood acts true to the principle that the brotherhood extends industrially, and takes in all the workers, all being entitled to the support that any can give.

While the Russian railroad men are attesting the genuineness of their brotherhood, it is to be hoped that the fact will escape neither them nor the onlooking working class that where the power exists to smite the oppressor with the back of the sword, THE STRIKE, the power certainly is held to dispatch him with the sharp edge of the same sword, the LOCKOUT. The strike leaves the oppressor

in possession: it proceeds from the silent admission that he is entitled to possession. The lockout of the oppressor “takes and holds” possession; it proclaims the fact that he is a usurper, not entitled to possession, entitled only to being dispossessed—locked-out.

Why waste the uplifting sense of the Brotherhood of Labor in halfway measures? The full grown Brotherhood of Labor locks-out the capitalist class.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded October 2008

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