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EDITORIAL

## AN IMPENDING CALAMITY.

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**D**R. BRITTON D. EVANS, superintendent of the State Insane Hospital at Morris Plain, N.J., testified on the 12th of this month to the effect that Thaw was insane, and knew not the difference between wrong and right when he shot White. Dr. Evans's testimony set forth that Thaw's specific forms of insanity are technically known as an "exaggerated ego" and "paranoid." The Doctor detailed the features of these forms of dementia. They consist in "a disproportionate idea of importance of self, a belief that one is clothed with powers, capacity and ability far above normal or above those actually possessed"; in "delusions of persecutory character"; in "jumping from one idea to another"; in "imagining himself omnipresent—the ruler of the world." Upon these grounds the Doctor concluded Thaw was irresponsible and therefore not guilty.

Should the jury take this view of the subject it will have opened the sluice gates of manslaughter. There is not a capitalist whom the cap of "exaggerated ego" and "paranoid" does not fit exactly.

Take Roosevelt, the conspicuous personality who unites upon his head the double crown of Political and of Economic power. When reading Dr. Evans's illustration of "exaggerated ego" as the patient's "imagining himself omnipresent—the ruler of the world," the suspicion is justified that the distinguished alienist had, not Thaw in mind, but rather the present occupant of the White House, with his Big Stick policing all the seas, bringing order in South America, redressing the wrongs done to Europeans in Morocco, curbing the Filipinos, acting as Censor Morris in America,—in short, imagining himself everywhere—the ruler of the earth.

Coming down from Roosevelt, take any of the capitalists who have foregathered in the Post Citizens' Industrial Association. How graphically are not they defined in

Dr. Evans's term "the delusion of persecutory character." Which of them does not pose as a perambulating monument of abnegation, intent only upon furnishing Labor with work, and yet dogged, harassed, persecuted by the ingrate workingman?

Or take any member of the bunch of which John D. Rockefeller is a type. Watch them denying the Socialist axiom that "value" is not a thing of whim, transitory taste, or legislation, but depends wholly upon the amount of labor power crystallized in and requisite for the reproduction of a commodity; then watch them when the advocates of free and unlimited coinage of silver at the ratio of 16 to 1 took the Rockefellers at their word, likewise denied the Socialist axiom, held that "value" does depend upon transitory taste and legislation, and insisted upon legislating silver into a "value" that did not depend upon the labor power needed for its reproduction—watch the Rockefellers thereupon incontinently jumping from their first idea to another, stealing pages wholesale from Socialist philosophy, disprove that "value" was a matter of whim, taste or legislation, and maintain that it was determined by Labor; finally, watch them now again, the danger of free coinage being over, the identical Rockefellers will be seen to have jumped once more from their 1896 idea and jumped back to the idea they held before. The psychopathic taint of "jumping from one idea to another" is typical of the moral make-up of the Capitalist Class.

Or take any capitalist at random—Thaw himself or Corey, the President of the Steel Trust; George Gould cruising in the West Indies and catching "fifteen-foot man-eating sharks," or Percy Belmont; Depew or Colorado Guggenheim;—which of them is not monomaniacally addicted to the theory that the idleness of the capitalist is the source of all activity; his vices virtues, his stupidity wisdom? In other words, and using the terminology of Dr. Evans, which of them all has not "a disproportionate idea of importance of self" or "a belief that he is clothed with powers, capacity and ability far above normal or above those actually possessed"?

Thaw may be insane. If he is he is irresponsible, and should not be punished. Nevertheless, it is devoutly to be hoped that, in case the jury does find Thaw insane, it will, in merciful thoughtfulness for their kind, place its decision expressly upon the opinion of some alienist other than Dr. Evans. Should the jury fail in this precaution, the Capitalist Class will feel free to shoot and kill at will—with the

inevitable result that the rest of humanity will, in sheer self-defense, have to deal with these dogs gone mad as mad dogs are dealt with.

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

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