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EDITORIAL

EVER MASKING.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THERE IS such a thing as conscience. Let the skeptic argue, or rant, as he will, conscience there is—a something that asserts itself whether the being it asserts itself in be clever or dull.

One would think that the Congress of the United States is the last place in which to seek for material on such a subject as the existence or non-existence of conscience. Well, Congress turns out to be just such a place.

What if not conscience ever could have driven the apostle of Capitalism, Senator Cabot Lodge, to utter the maxim “the consumer is a myth”? The declaration furnishes a choice illustration to Edgar Allan Poe’s theory about the Imp of the Perverse—an Imp within man that leaps from his guilty conscience and compels him to give himself away.

Capitalist politicians all along claimed that their purpose was to protect “the consumer” and that the consumer is the working class. The false claim was of the regulation nature of capitalist false pretences.

The only class to whom the title of “consumer” applies is the capitalist class, especially seeing it is not a producing class. Of course, the producing class also consumes; but, for one thing, it consumes little; for another, a class that does not produce and only consumes is the only class to whom the designation of “consumer” can apply.

Furthermore, the Working Class, at least its intelligent portion, does not fret over the issue of consumption. It knows that the issue is one of production, and that, according as production is carried on, consumption adapts itself. Under Socialism, where all the product belongs to Labor, consumption will take care of itself.

As a consequence, the Socialist workingman has all along repudiated the “consumer” argument.

And now comes Senator Lodge and takes up that very argument—declares the consumer is a myth—and thereby seeks to screw his features into such shape as to appear non-capitalist.

How could this happen if Lodge had no conscience that prompted him, without premeditation, to assume the Labor mask, and thus conceal the features of his rogues' class?

There IS such a thing as conscience. Vide Senator Cabot Lodge.

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