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EDITORIAL

THE “HOUR OF TRIAL.”

By DANIEL DE LEON

THERE is no corkscrew like the “Hour of Trial” to uncork the bosom of Hypocrisy.

The language of Thomas Skidmore—“Excessive wealth in the hands of a few is like a pistol held by a highwayman to extort the wealth of the wayfarer: on the same principle that such a weapon should be wrung from the hands of the highwayman, society must disarm the wealthy few who hold her up”—this language, held in the twenties of last century, and then voicing both the condition of the working class and their awakening aspiration, has been condemned as subversive of “Law and Order”; and, when quoted by the Socialist Movement of this generation, has regularly caused the representatives of the above-named “Law and Order” to turn up their eyes heavenward, piously shocked at the blasphemy against His Holiness Vested Rights.

But now comes the Hour of Need, and, uncorking the bosom of a representative of that very “Law and Order” class, causes the following flow of feelings to pour out of the mouth of William R. Wilcox, Chairman of the Public Service Commission, in his onslaught on Frederick M. Whitridge of the Third Avenue Railroad Company:

“When a gang of pickpockets get together of an evening, and map out their night’s work, that is business—private business. And it is business when those higher up in the social scale get together to plan how they shall give the public an inadequate return for its money. The Public Service Commission occupies the same position to the second class as the policeman does to the first class.”

Big as the bunghole is from which this outpour flows, it is as nothing to the bunghole, from which a vastly more torrential outpour will flow, when the cork is pulled out of it by a still more powerful corkscrew, wielded by a still more pressing

Hour of Need.

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