

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 4, NO. 51.

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 1903.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

A RUSSIAN MARTYR.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE story that comes from St. Petersburg, via London, concerning a Captain in the army who, at the recent strikes in Kieff, countermanded the order of his superior to fire on the strikers, whereupon he was immediately arrested, court-martialed and sentenced to death, reads like a page of days when religions are crystallized into shape at the heat of deeds of astounding abnegation, purity of purpose, singleness of design, and unswerving rectitude. The incident is a symptom of the times.

For generations people have been singing the psalms of the psalmist and doing the acts of fiends; preaching the admonitions of the Prophets and indulging in the ways of the wicked; professing Christianity and practising deviltry. The days of this generation promise to end the hypocrisy. A keener spirit, awakened by fuller knowledge, is rising to demand of man that he practise what he preaches; that he conform his conduct with his professions—and insisting that he do at the cost of being whipped out of the temple of humanity that he desecrates with his criminal conduct.

Whatever the reason may or may not have been at one time for looking upon the maxim “Do unto others as you would be done unto” as beyond human reach, that time has passed. The maxim can be practised to-day. To-day there is wealth enough producible for all. No longer need any part of humanity pine and serve as foot-stools for some other part of humanity to rise above the brute. The present material economic facts have created an atmosphere that is suffocating the Philistine and that is producing a higher sense of duty. Simultaneously the martyr to the sumblimer human aspirations is fructifying the ground with his blood. The Russian Captain in question knew that his devotion to the higher law meant certain death. He was not earthly wise, but he was pure. When he ordered the troops not to

fire upon their “poor, starving brothers” he was the mouthpiece to the spiritual breath of the material conditions that have given rise to Socialism.

Not forever, nor for long will the spiritual breath and the physical power, needed to hurl Enthroned Crime from its place of power, stand divorced, bringing on death to the dislocated members.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded January 2007