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EDITORIAL

## AS TO IMMIGRATION.

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“IF the immigration question is of no importance to the workers why does the Socialist Labor Party bother so much about it?” is a question put to us for elucidation.

The immigration question is of importance, and that is just the reason why the S.L.P. has paid so much attention to it. The question of immigration is similar to the tax question, the free silver question, the tariff question, and other questions raised by capitalism, and apt and meant to humbug the workers.

If, as the anti-immigrationists, among whom are the Gompers unions and the so-called Socialist party, hold, it is the immigrant that overstocks the trades, reduces wages and throws the workers here workless into the street, then the question of immigration is of importance. If, on the other hand, the acknowledged deplorable condition of labor is not due to immigration, it is of prime importance that the worker be not fooled by that as an issue.

The Socialist Labor Party holds that for every one man, whom immigration increases the supply of labor in the labor market by, the privately owned and steadily improving machine increases the supply of men in the labor market by ten. According to present day calculation there are several millions of “superfluous” workers in the land, not displaced by immigrants, but displaced by machinery, displaced by one man at work doing the work of two men, displaced by the long hours of work that must be put in by those at work.

Close the doors to immigration and this condition will remain just the same, there is no gainsaying that. Another fact that confirms it is that conditions do not improve as a result of emigration in the countries from which the heaviest immigration comes, which they should do if the theory of the anti-immigrationists be correct. That conditions do not improve in European countries, despite the heavy

emigration, is due to the very same factor that makes the question of immigration not the cause of misery here, the factor that machinery is ever increasing the supply of labor by displacing it.

On the other hand the question of immigration is of prime importance to help divorce the worker from the capitalist agencies who dangle the immigration issue before his eyes, cheating him and thereby capturing his vote in their own interest.

The Socialist Labor Party points out to the worker the absurdity of raising a hue and cry against the insignificant displacement of labor by immigration, as against the wholesale displacement of labor by the privately owned machinery of capitalism.

The anti-immigration cry comes from the felon class of capitalism who utter it as a sort of pretense of sympathy for the workers. No longer able to deny the suffering and misery of the people they now try to put the responsibility for it anywhere, so long as it is away from themselves.

These gentry too are the very ones who brought and continue to bring the immigrant here, and so long as immigration serves their purposes no laws passed{,} even if they would relieve the labor market, would be enforced.

Anti-immigration as an issue is one that is wonderfully calculated to cover up the real sore. If the worker can be sent scurrying to keep out the immigrant as his enemy, all the more securely can the real enemy, the capitalist, pluck and exploit him.

On the other hand the immigration issue is a valuable one to illustrate to the worker the futility of supporting the capitalist parties and that can not be done by lying to him and claiming that the immigrant is the cause of all his woe. To do that is to play the workers into the hands of the capitalist parties.

The real cause of the “overstocking of the trades” is the capitalist system of private property in the machinery of production whose rapid improvement keeps continuously displacing labor. Gompers unionism, which shuts out of the union all workingmen in excess of the jobs it controls, is logically anti-immigration; the so-called Socialist party is anti-immigration because its leaders are weak-kneed poltroons who cower before the labor fakirs for material support and in the hope of getting “union” votes. The Socialist Labor Party alone holds to the Socialist position,

that to prevent immigration would not improve labor's condition, for the reason that whether there is immigration, or no immigration, the condition of labor must deteriorate under the capitalist ownership of the machinery of production whose rapid improvement increases the Reserve Army of labor and thereby lowers its condition by lowering its price or wages.

The militant Socialist does not by any means waste his time in showing up the fallacy of such issues. It is only by taking them up and tearing them to pieces that the militant Socialist can make his agitation effective.

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