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EDITORIAL

A BOURGEOIS SASSYING HIS GOD.

By DANIEL DE LEON

DEEP is the sorrow of the New York *Times*; deep the moans and the sighs that paper heaves; deeper yet the resentment that it breathes in its leading editorial, “Rents and Taxes,” on October 20 over the “Equal Pay” for teachers bill which, if signed by the Governor, “would add \$3,500,000 to the second largest item of the city’s budget.”

The *Times* argument is pathetic. It admits that the city’s population has grown at a great rate. This is just what capitalists like, ’tis true. The more numerous the population, all the more numerous are the potential purchasers of goods to sell. It is clear that the more numerous the potential purchasers are, all the more numerous will the individuals be, each of whom leaves his contribution on the heap of profits realized in cash, by bourgeois newspapers, for instance. Obviously, an increase of population is grist to the mill of the bourgeois heart. And the *Times* indicates as much. But—

An increase of population is not all “velvet.” True enough it means increased contributors to the bourgeois’ heap of profits in cash. But the increase of population also has its seamy side. For instance:

The larger the population, all the larger the number of children; the larger the number of these, all the larger also must be the number of school-houses and the number of teachers. School-houses have to be paid for and kept up with taxes. The more numerous the school-houses, all the larger the taxes wherewith to build and keep them up. Furthermore, the more numerous the school teachers, all the larger the taxes to pay their salaries; worst of all, the more numerous the school teachers, all the stronger the pull of these away from starvation wages (salaries) and towards a living wage. An illustration of the strength of this particular pull is the fresh and successful effort on the part of the teachers for larger remuneration—an effort

which the *Times* correctly estimates will cost \$3,500,000 more to the taxpayers, and on account of which, as a taxpayer, the *Times* wraps itself in sack-cloth and strews ashes on its head—and throws fits of indignation.

Pathetic, indeed, is the plight of the bourgeois; and the *Times* is a type thereof.

Increased taxation for the school budget is not the only seam on the seamy side of an increased population. There are many others. Is not that unkind on the part of the god Capital? Adored by the bourgeois with an adoration unstinted, the bourgeois expects of his deity better things than to give with His right hand, and then turn around and take away big chunks with His left hand. The least that the bourgeois should expect of his god when He makes a gift is that He give without rebate. Of what use is a god who can not perform miracles in behalf of His votaries? A god that will send an increased population, like a school of fish into the bourgeois net, and not simultaneously perform the miracle of warding off the consequence of increased taxation, surely is a god that deserves the rebuke administered to him by the *Times*. It is a disappointing deity, deserving to be sassed.

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