

EDITORIAL

TOM SOLEY'S END OF "EQUALITY."

By DANIEL DE LEON

AN article on old-age pensions in the current issue of the *Cosmopolitan* depicts the condition in which the several people engaged in a certain concern are left after half a century of activity, when the suppositious firm—"Spinner & Dresser"—dissolves.

One goes off in a private yacht, the other dies and "leaves ten millions to his wife." Thus things look at one end of the line. At the other end is "Tom Soley," he is the working man. He is old, feeble and moneyless.

With such an introduction one expects conclusions in which the anti-climax shall be in keeping with the climax. Now, what are the conclusions in the case?

Introduced with the "grand fanfarre musicale" of the "healthy interpretation of equality"—"equality," mind you; and "healthy," don't you forget,—made in Massachusetts, the conclusions are:

"If we divide the sum of two million dollars [the total poll-tax] into pensions of a hundred dollars each we should have two hundred thousand of such pensions. If we paid a hundred dollars to every citizen, man and woman over sixty-nine years of age, we should have to pay about one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars. Each one of them [Tom Soley, too?] would feel that HE HAD BEEN INSURING HIMSELF IN OLD AGE."

One hundred dollars a year an insurance for old age!

To the survivor of the firm of "Spinner & Dresser," the amount is too much; it is redundant; it is superfluous.

To "Tom Soley," to the "Tom Soleys," the men whose life-tissue went into producing the wealth that floats Dresser's palatial yacht, and who got all along barely enough to keep body and soul together,—to him and his class such an insurance is too little; it is cruel; it is like a means of prolonging agony at a

shipwreck. Not until our working class shall have been pinched down to the coolie level, with Chinese mandarins of high cast and wealth above them,—not until then, and not until such a state of things has been established, will that hundred dollars DO FOR THE "TOM SOLEYS."

To think that such a proposition is soberly made in America!

To think that it is made to the orchestration of "a healthy interpretation of equality"!

To think that it is made by Edward Everett Hale, the author of the article!

Capitalism is a malaria, it poisons the blood and mind of whomsoever fails to render himself immune by Socialist knowledge and morality.

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

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