

EDITORIAL

MISSOURI RIGHT TO WORK LEAGUE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

UNDER the above title an organization has been formed, with headquarters in St. Louis, one dollar a year per member, “for the purpose of securing the submission and adoption of an Amendment to the State Constitution, providing that the State furnish employment to all who apply for it, UNDER SUCH CONDITIONS THAT THE PRODUCT WILL NOT COME INTO COMPETITION WITH LABOR NOW EMPLOYED NOR GOODS NOW IN THE MARKET.”

If ever there was a proposition the tail of which bites off and swallows up its head it is the purpose that the Missouri Right to Work League announces as its goal.

Whatever can that work be the product of which “will not come into competition with labor now employed nor with goods now in the market”?

The human mind may, perhaps, sometimes be able to grasp the idea of infinitude; to grasp the idea of work, the product of which “will not come into competition with labor now employed nor with goods now in the market,” and that as a solution of the direst features of involuntary and enforced idleness—that idea no mind’s arms can ever clasp.

The story is told of Girard, the founder of the Girard Institute of Philadelphia, that, seeing one day a man idle who said he could find no work, Girard engaged him to carry a heap of cobblestones, that lay on one side of the street to the opposite side; and that, when the man had done this job, Girard directed him to carry the stones back to where they first lay. Can this bit of Girardic sarcasm be the kind of employment the Missouri Right to Work League has in mind? Even that will not now go down. The unemployed in the Laborers’ Unions are numerous enough to demand the employment for themselves, and to denounce as “scabs” those out of the

Union who may apply. Whichever way one might turn the question, the answer is—The only employment the product of which “will not come into competition with labor now employed nor goods now in the market” must be employment for the product of which there is no market.

The answer suggests another question—“What is the matter with the Missouri Right to Work League?”

The answer transpires from the make-up of the Organization Committee. That body consists of an aggregation of St. Louis Socialist party luminaries, Single Taxers, and other such sociologic heels-over-headers, with a Labor-Lieutenant of the capitalist class, Percy Pepoon of Typographical Union No. 8, St. Louis, to jolly them along—and keep them from doing mischief, by consuming their funds with work for “Union printers.”

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