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EDITORIAL

# PARRY ON WAGES.

**By DANIEL DE LEON**

AT Pittsburg, on May 17, 18 and 19, the National Association of Manufacturers will meet in annual convention. In anticipation of this profound occasion, the President, D.M. Parry, has already mailed to the Association's members the annual address to be delivered by himself. A copy of this address is now before us. From the contents, it is evident that Mr. Parry will again on May 17, 18 and 19, with his usual prodigality and geniality, cast pearls of economic wisdom to the labor swine, for, as appearances indicate, his address is not so much intended for Mr. Parry's associates—for they are "wise"—as it is for the untutored workingmen who fail to realize the sacrificial beauty of Mr. Parry's devotion to their interests, and upon whom he, accordingly, though fruitlessly, bestows the priceless gems of his broad and magnanimous intellect. Needless to say these gems are numerous. One of them—a veritable gem beyond price—however, will suffice to show the inestimable value of all of Mr. Parry's offerings. Here it is:

> "The rate of wages in any country is dependent upon the per capita production. If the average amount of product turned out by each man is large, then wages will be high, and vice versa. This is a mere truism, but some are slow to recognize the truth when it does not coincide with their desires."

How fascinating is this gem! Though somewhat second-hand, since other manufacturers' presidents have used it in their intellectual diadems, Mr. Parry just revels in it. He holds it up and turns it to the light in many directions. There is one direction, however, that he avoids, and that is toward the census of 1900. The light from that direction knocks the shine out of Mr. Parry's gem, leaving it lusterless.

According to the census of 1900, the "per capita" production of each worker engaged in manufacture was valued at $2,450. In 1890, it was valued at $2,200.

This is a difference of nearly 10 per cent. In 1900, the "per capita" wages of each worker so engaged was $437. In 1890, it was $444. This is a reduction of 2 per cent. In other words, the worker who in 1900 produced nearly 10 per cent. more than in 1890, received two per cent. less for doing so. As a consequence, he actually suffered a reduction of wages amounting to 12 per cent. Thus Mr. Parry's gem—that wages are dependent on the per capita of wealth produced—is found to be not only second-hand, but paste. Instead of being a mere truism, running counter to the desires of those who are slow to recognize it as such, it is a mere lie, promulgated for the purpose of continuing the robbery of the workers by the capitalists.

Wages are dependent upon the supply and demand of labor. Machinery, concentration of plants, the division of labor and the employment of women and children, keep the supply above the demand; hence the more labor produces the less it gets.

This is the real gem. It is not found among Mr. Parry's "treasures."

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