

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 5, NO. 185.

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 1905.

TWO CENTS.

EDITORIAL

HER NAME WILL BE BLESSED.

By DANIEL DE LEON

IT is well known that when a son, daughter or wife of the capitalist elite steals, he or she does not get a suit of striped clothes, he or she is not given free lodgings in a penitentiary, in short, he or she is not convicted for theft and pronounced a thief. Instead of punishment, she or he is treated with extra kindness and solicitude. Her or his act is called “kleptomania,” and the doer of the act is placed under “treatment,” that is to say, becomes the object of special pandering. All this is well known; it is society or law; it is one of the capitalists’ “vested rights.” But all this is rapidly becoming inadequate to capitalist requirements. The rapid progress made by the Capitalist Class in its pillar-of-social-morality zeal demands a proportional extension of the “kleptomania” plea. The “kleptomania” plea does well enough for a Capitalist Class that is still at the infant knee-breeches stage of the thrift-and-push of petty chicanery. When, however, the Capitalist Class has come of age, when it has put on the long trousers of the adult, when, in short, it has reached the “frenzied finance” stage—when it has done that, then the “kleptomania” manoeuvre is obviously inadequate, then something more comprehensive is requisite. Mrs. Chadwick,—together with her civic supplements, her lawyers, are blazing the way to that more comprehensive something.

News comes from Cleveland that Mrs. Chadwick’s attorneys are to set up the plea of insanity in her behalf. But will not that lock her up in a lunatic asylum? Not at all; just follow the clever plan. The plea is not to be one of absolute insanity. It is to be a plea of insanity only **AT THE TIME** that she duped the Oberlin bank. That being established, the next move is to be an inquiry into the state of the lady’s mind immediately **AFTER** the duping was done. Her sanity ever since will be demonstrated. Human conscience, Christianity, morality—all the stage mountings of capitalism will then be invoked against the monstrous cruelty of keeping a sane

being in duress vile, and the agonizing company of lunatics, after she has recovered her senses. Whereupon Mrs. Chadwick will be set free, will be admired as a special protégé of Providence, she will be exhibited as an instance of “medical triumph,”—and none will be louder in their hallelujahs than the fraternity of “insane” floaters of gold bricks whom Lawson has pilloried, together with the rest of the Capitalist Class whose industry to-day is to bunco society.

“Temporary insanity” is about to supplement “kleptomania” as a vested right of the Capitalist Class. With the enjoyment of that right the Capitalist Class will get a fresh lease of freedom, until the lease is summarily cancelled by the triumphant working class. And Mrs. Chadwick’s name will in the meantime be blessed for having blazed the way.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded October 2007

slpns@slp.org