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EDITORIAL

SEEKING TO HOOK WORKINGMEN'S NOSES.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE prospective appointment of Oscar S. Straus as Secretary of Commerce and Labor on President Roosevelt's cabinet is announced with flaming headlines, and the point is jubilantly underscored that the gentleman will be "the first Jew to hold such a post in this country." Much lies at the bottom of the appointment; much at the bottom of the jubilation on the part of the capitalist press.

The increase of the Jewish population in the country has been phenomenal in latter years. Nevertheless, numerous as this immigration has been and continues to be, its significance and its effect upon the country are clean out of proportion to the actual numbers. The significance lies in the special nature of this Jewish immigration. A large Jewish immigration from England, Germany or any of the countries of western Europe would not be fraught with the significance of this one. The flood of Jewish immigrants is flowing from Russia; it comes like molten lava, heaved up by the volcano of the Russian Revolution; it is incandescent with lofty aspirations; and—most ominous of all for the ruling and labor-exploiting class of the land—that fierce flood comes, not as certain others have come in years gone by, heated by the straw fire of bourgeois aspirations, and, consequently, easily captured, cooled off and harnessed to bourgeois needs. That flood now comes to a great extent disillusioned regarding bourgeois "freedoms"; it comes to a great extent schooled in the practical wisdom of Socialism; above all, and weightily supplementary to these circumstances, that flood is mainly composed of workingmen. In their old home this element carried the Revolution to the Russian peasant, and thereby conjured up a spirit that has cracked the throne of the Czar



OSCAR S. STRAUS
(1850–1926)

beyond repair. Such an immigration, pouring into America, could not choose but make its mark even if utterly trivial in numbers; pouring in, however, as it does, by the tens of thousands, however relatively small it may be to the total population, it is fraught with results the most weighty. These results are ominous to the Capitalist Class, nor does the instinct of that class, Jew and Gentile, slumber before the danger to itself. How is that flood to be captured? How is it to be subjugated? How is it to be turned from the channel of the Social Revolution, of which it is an offspring, into the swamp of dumb-driven abject wage slavery? The methods of old are no longer available. For one thing, opportunities are not now what they were; for another the Russian Jewish immigration arrives abreast of the century. Conditions demand a new method. What new method the class of Labor despoilers have hit upon appears from the appointment of "the first Jew to a Cabinet position." The new method is to endeavor to narcotize the revolutionary Russian Jewish immigration with the false pretence and appearance of the elevation of "one of their race" to the rank of Cabinet Minister.

It is not in honor of, but in affront to the Jewish workingmen of the land that Oscar S. Straus,—one of the beneficiaries of the notoriously inhuman male, female and child labor exploiting firm of "Macy," to mention none of the many other Straus Labor shambles—has been "distinguished." Isaiah, in a rapturous passage prophesying the triumph of Jehovah, the emblem to him of Universal Peace and Wellbeing, tells of His bridle being put into the mouth and His hook in the nose of the grinders of the faces of the poor. The Capitalist Class of America, "the circumcised Christians and the uncircumcised Jews," as the witty Lafargue well sums up the hypocritic, God-Capital-worshiping vampire class, has thrown out its line with the hook of Oscar S. Straus as "the first Jew in the Cabinet" expecting to hook the nose of the Russian Jewish workingman immigration.

Hopeful of success the capitalist press jubilates. This will not be, as it is not, their first disappointment.—THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION WILL SNAP ALL HOOKS; all such are but broken reeds on which the fatuous Usurper leans his hopes.

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