

EDITORIAL

## THE POLITICIAN AT HIS BEST.

By DANIEL DE LEON

“P OLITICIAN” in this article is used in what may be considered the strict technical meaning of the term—the governmental agent of the Ruling Class, in other words, the wielder of the collective powers of the economic masters in the Political State, stripped from the features of double-dealing, arrogance and corruption which, with the time, cling to and color the “politician.” An illustration of the politician at his best was once more presented by President Woodrow Wilson. He did so in his address to Congress on Mexico.

When the bourgeois stage of Class Rule is reached, “Competition” is raised to and assumes the dignity of a guiding star. It is the swinging of the social pendulum to the opposite extreme, the extreme opposite to feudalic one over-lordship. As a consequence, “Competition” brings in its wake a number of leading “bourgeois virtues,” virtues that are essential to progress, and that become incorporated in the body of conquests made for the human race—“free speech,” “free press,” “free migration,” “free suffrage,” etc., etc. These virtues may be summed up with the maxim “A free field, and no favor.”

In the measure that capitalism takes increment, “Competition” becomes restricted; in the measure that “Competition” is restricted by economic laws the virtues that it carried in its wake lose vigor with it. A stage is reached, the present, when the virtues, originally introduced by the bourgeois, are in danger, and then they tend to flee for refuge to the next revolutionary Movement, where, indeed, they find their warmest supporters. That is a critical period of transition. The class in power, and with power to protect the virtues of its revolutionary days, has no love for its early virtues; Socialism, the next Revolutionary Movement, not yet being in power, lacks the power to safeguard its inheritance of social virtues.

While the scales are trembling in the balance, a figure like that of Woodrow Wilson arises, and, tho' himself an agent, today the leading agent of the bourgeois, gives a chance to orderly development by fulfilling the role of the politician at his best, in the politician's noblest role.

Competing American capitalist Interests have invaded the territory of Mexico. What with the struggle between these, and the struggle of them all with the vestiges of feudalism found in Mexico, our neighbor Republic is distracted. In the course of the struggle each set of Interests, strong enough to control anything, has set up a military force; and each set has been tugging at Washington for "patriotic" backing against the other. Were a Taft or a Roosevelt at the helm, either intervention would be now in full flame, or the assassin dictatorship of Huerta would be acknowledged. Fortunately, the man at the helm is a Woodrow Wilson.

Summed up in a nut-shell, the President's lengthy and well digested address to Congress amounts to this:

"A free field and no favor—I shall not steep the hands of the Nation in the blood of the victims of Huerta any deeper than they have been steeped through the misconduct of the now discharged Taft Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson; nor shall I allow myself to entangle the Nation by taking up the financial cause that any of the military chieftains, opposed to Huerta, represent. A free field and no favor. Does that render American competition impossible? Very well, then withdraw from Mexico."

As the Socialist applauded President Wilson's stand in the matter of China, the Socialist now again applauds the President's stand in the matter of Mexico.

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