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FIRST EDITORIAL

More Cats Out of the Bag

By DANIEL DE LEON

Here and there facts have leaked out that expose the fraud of the claim that our workingman has a glorious time of it in America. The circumstance that immigration continues to flow in aids greatly in the delusion, where the notion is honestly entertained, and gives a handle to the fraud that the designing are not slow to grasp. But one cat after another leaps out of the bag, and the lie is becoming pretty well nailed.

The latest collection of cats to leap into sight comes from the shoe industry.

Through the official organ of the shoe trade, the *Shoe and Leather Reporter*, this bald truth is given to the world by Mr. S.V.A. Hunter, the president of the Goodyear Shoe Machinery Company:

“An American workman does so much more for his day’s work than an English workman. A man with us will make 300 pairs of shoes a day at one of our machines; yet in England, I am told, the average output of each machine is only 100 pairs per day. The English workman does not make up to the machine capacity.”

Next, the same journal states that the price paid to the English shoeworkers for making a pair of fine grade shoes is 3s. 2d. per pair. For the same work the American workman receives $38\frac{2}{3}$ cents, i.e., only about one-half the English wages.

Putting these two facts together, for which we are indebted to a publication of the manufacturers themselves, we find:

1. That the American capitalist fleeces the American workingman in the shoe industry six times as much as he does the British workingman.

2. That the American workingman in the shoe industry works with three times the intensity that his British fellow wage slave does, i.e., imparts to the product of his toil three times as much life tissue.

Thus vanishes in one of our leading industries the claim of American superiority in both relative and actual wages. Thus the telltale cat makes her appearance and tells the tale of how one may live under the shadow of the tail of the American eagle, inhale Fourth of July orations by the gallon, and be fanned by the Stars and Stripes, and yet be sucked dry to a greater extent, i.e., enjoy life to a lesser extent, than those who are still in a monarchy.

Out pops the truth that the form of government means nothing; that, given the capitalist system of production, the proletariat lives in an actual penitentiary; and that the only effect upon him of “free” institutions is to befool him so completely that he will sink even below the level of others who live under institutions that are less “free.”

[A De Leon editorial transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the Official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.](#)

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