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EDITORIAL

SELF-EXERTION.

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The recent election to the United States Senate of the multimillionaire Wm. A. Clark, of Montana, is furnishing the candle-holders of capitalism with a text on which they preach a variety of more or less idiotic sermons intended to prove that wealth, under the existing social order, is the inevitable reward of industry, thrift, and all the other virtues on the catalogue of virtues. If these gentlemen understood the subject they are handling they would give multimillionaire Wm. A. Clark a wide berth. He, so far from bearing out the nursery-tales of capitalism, overthrows them.

Clark, we are told, owns mines of gold and silver in Colorado and Nevada; owns 15,000 and 30,000 acres of beet plantations in California and Nebraska; owns factories in the East for the manufacture of copper wire; owns in the South and in Mexico broad plantations that grow coffee, sugar-cane and rubber; and owns banks East and West. This roll of property, from which Clark extracts a daily income of \$5,000, need but to be unrolled in order to knock into a cocked hat the theory that wealth is, under capitalism, the rewards of industry—meaning, of course, thereby of the industry of the beneficiary.

It goes without saying that no man lives, ever lived, or ever will live who can himself operate such a variety of industries. Even if he had the mental and physical powers of all the Solomons and Socrateses and of all the Samsons and Fitzhughs combined the thing would be impossible. The \$5,000 a day revenues stand out, however, as a fact. If he can not produce that wealth, it being impossible for any one man to cover such an area and such a variety of industries, the conclusion is inevitable that his large revenues must flow from the labor of others. Indeed they do so. What multimillionaire Clark's great wealth demonstrates is the Socialist maxim that, under the capitalist system,

“Wealth is the product of labor and the reward of idleness.”

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