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EDITORIAL

POTENTIAL MASS AFFLUENCE.

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THE statement—"Society being properly organized, 100 days labor at 4 hours a day, would supply every adult male with a yearly amount of wealth that, to-day, would cost \$10,000 to purchase"—more than once made in these columns has elicited a number {of} questions. How is that fact ascertained?

All that will be necessary at this place is to mention a series of facts, from which inquirers may think further for themselves:

1st. The exigencies of modern society—a social order in which, as a consequence of the private ownership of the necessaries to produce, production is carried on for sale and not for use—require that fully one-half of the physical and mental effort expended is expended non-productively and goes to waste. Armies, navies, police, detectives, watchmen, drummers, lawyers, etc., etc., besides the labor expended in the equipment of armies, navies, etc., safes to keep out burglars, complicated locks to battle thieves, advertising cards and their composition—the reader can with these hints extend the list—it is safe to say these occupations, useless and wasteful, consume every bit of one-half of the human effort put forth to-day. That can be saved and turned into useful channels.

2nd. The exigencies of the same social order require, and for the same reasons, that the wealth produced, even under the present system of wastefulness of human effort, be below the wealth producible. Production being for sale and not for use the supply must be kept down for the sake of prices. Only last year a goodly percentage of the coffee produced in Brazil was ordered burnt, not by destructive Anarchists, but by London financiers. Similar spectacles are furnished every year in some crop or other.

It is not necessary to go into further details. With the census figures of the actual wealth produced, the departments in which the wealth is produced, the

nature of such wealth, the capabilities of production that are compulsorily left latent, etc., etc., if carefully computed, will furnish figures that prove the \$10,000 annual estimate, as the fruit of 100 4-hour days work, to be, however seemingly fabulous, nevertheless extremely conservative.

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