

EDITORIAL

DEAD AND DON'T KNOW IT.

By DANIEL DE LEON

A BEAUTIFULLY gotten up booklet is that issued by Elbert Hubbard entitled *The Standard Oil Company*. The title is wrong. Should have been: “London Rules Persisted in After Marquis of Queensbury Rules Have Come Into Force.”

The booklet is, of course, a eulogy of the Standard Oil Trust. That’s timely enough: Standard Oil stands badly in need of eulogy. What is utterly out of season is the mold in which the eulogy is cast. It is the old mold—a mold wholly worn out, and now yelling at every crack for a new.

Utterly old and decrepit is the style of throwing dust in the eyes and ears of the workers by slinging before them such figures as the Company “pays out in wages fifty millions annually” and then committing the imprudence of stating the number of employes—“more than eighty thousand”—among whom the fifty millions are distributed.—One time, when “London Rules” prevailed, that sort of thing “worked”; not that “Marquis of Queensbury Rules” are in vogue, the more than 80,000 employes take paper and pencil, divide themselves into the huge-seeming \$5,000,000, and the bubble shrinks to less than \$2 a day.

Utterly old and decrepit is the style of throwing dust into the eyes of the “Public” by claims of “decentralization.”—One time, when “London Rules” prevailed the trick took; now that “Marquis of Queensbury Rules” have come in, one investigation after another exposes the fact that, like criminals who sail under a variety of aliases, the “decentralized” Standard Oil has almost as many aliases as plants.

Utterly old and decrepit is the style of turning political economy topsy turvy with the claim that capital is a result, not the starting point of Standard Oilism.—One time when the “London Rules” passed current that sort of gold-brickism

“caught suckers”; today, when the “Marquis of Queensbury Rules” of experience hold the “Public’s” nose to the grindstone of fact, and Capital bars Individual Enterprise, the gold-brick, that once took in people, does so no longer.

Utterly old and decrepit is the style of throwing dust into the “Public’s” eye regarding the prosperity of ONE meaning the prosperity of ALL. That sort of thing used to puzzle enough people long enough to have their pockets picked: that was in the days of “London Rules.”—Now that we are in the days of “Marquis of Queensbury Rules” no one is taken in—at least not enough to suit the purposes of Standard Oilism.

Utterly old and decrepit is the style of claiming that “the nation is safe when its people are employed.”—The duplicity of the claim succeeded in the days of “London Rules”: it does not in these days of “Marquis of Queensbury Rules.” In these days when the unemployed masses can no longer be humbugged into believing that they are employed, and when those who are employed have by a bitter experience discovered that “employment” under Standard Oilism leaves the country ever on the brink of crises—in these days to talk “employment” is to remind people of that which regularly alternates with such employment—the bread-line, the tramp, etc.

Elbert Hubbard, using the allurements of art to eulogize Standard Oilism is an object lesson of the debauching influence of Capitalism—that is a sad spectacle. But the sadness of the spectacle is relieved by the simultaneous spectacle of the intellectual bankruptcy that Capitalism now suffers from. As Capitalism does not know, tho’ its light still shines, it is a star extinct, neither are its candle bearers aware that the old tricks are worn out.

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