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EDITORIAL

## A SOCIAL CANCER.

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**T**HE suicide of a prominent Mayor serves to bring to notice the increase of self-destruction among the members of the capitalist class. Suicide is not a pleasant theme. To the normal mind, peacefully awaiting Nature's call, death by one's own hand appears shocking. It appears as an indication of unsound mental conditions, or abnormal impulses. Many of the suicides among capitalists are the results of the mental aberration growing out of the difficulties in which they are hopelessly involved, as in the case of Lawyer Levy, who, having failed to bring his amusement project to a successful completion, shot himself to death recently. Not a few of these same suicides are the outcome of degeneracy, being resorted to in instances where self-destruction affords the only escape from the disgrace arising from the commission of some unspeakable crime, as in the case of the English general, McDonald, or the recent Hoboken rape case. Whether mental or moral, suicides among this class are attributable to the workings of a system which either so harass a man as to cause him to lose his grip on life, or else so debase him as to make death by self-infliction the only way out of the overpowering disgrace entailed.

Capitalism, it has well been said, makes idlers at both ends of society. Among the capitalists it develops the 400, whose main occupation is the cultivation of immoralities and useless pastimes. Among the working class it develops the "hobo" and "tramp," the men who, through unemployment, gradually come to lead lives of idleness and crime. So too, in the matter of suicide. Capitalism is the cancer at work eating away both ends of society. It drives the harassed and degenerated capitalists, as well as the unemployed and starved workingmen, to seek death by their own hands. A system, which compels a resort to such measures in an ever increasing degree, cannot last. Man cannot thrive where the practical execution of the doctrines of Pessimism take ever stronger hold. Sunshine and pleasure—

Optimism—are essential to existence. The system that does not give them is doomed. Such a system is the capitalist system. Socialism is its antithesis. It must replace it.

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

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