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EDITORIAL

A RICH MEN'S STRIKE FOR JOBS.

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THE State Civil Service Commission recommends in its annual report to Gov. Hughes that “confidential offices” be also submitted to the best Civil Service examination. What the Commission says in support of its recommendation is the need of mentally well equipped “incumbents” in confidential offices. What the Committee means is that the concentration of the capitalist establishments is not merely knocking out of jobs whole rafts of workingmen, (that the Commission can look upon with Christian fortitude), but that the said concentration is also wiping out no end of “gentlemanly” jobs that sons of stockholders formerly enjoyed, and that there is need of the Government’s providing soft berths for these idlers. What the Commission does in its recommendation is to act as a strike committee for the idle youth of the rich in quest of jobs, that is, salaries.

The extension of Civil Service tests to confidential offices will not of itself furnish jobs. Not exactly. What it would do is what the Civil Service does, and is mainly intended for—exclude from the Civil Service, by disqualifying them, the large numbers of applicants whose parents were too poor to afford their children much schooling. The scheme thereby opens the doors only to the children of the rich, they having had better opportunities; being the only “qualified” applicants they have only {to} show to secure the jobs.

During the ante-bellum days, the Civil Service was a particular hobby of the Southern aristocracy, and a particular bogey of the Northern working bourgeoisie or oncoming plutocracy. The children, cousins and nephews of the former, having enjoyed extensive education, while the children of the latter had their minds turned to money-making, rather than to the acquisition of learning, Civil Service tests would have played havoc with the Northern, but smoothed the path of the Southern

applicant. The steady growth of the North in economic power enabled it successfully to oppose the Southern scheme. Times have changed. It now being the North that has an educated set of idle boys, while the South has declined, the Southern aristocracy rather objects to, while the Northern shoddeyocracy is pushing the Civil Service for all it is worth.

With the historic key to the Civil Service scheme, the attempts—of which the present one of the State Civil Service Commission is the latest—to extend the tests to wider and wider areas, and also to raise the tests more and more, will be seen to have their roots in the shifting sands of economic changes.

Education is priceless. But education is becoming a quality to give a color of propriety to intensified capitalist iniquity towards the Working Class. Kept out of school and college through the poverty of their parents, the children of the Working Class are to be furthermore mulcted in being deprived of opportunities to live, by the children of the rich, whose education was acquired by virtue of the very cause that kept the children of the workers uneducated—the plunder of the Working Class.

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