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EDITORIAL

WHY BE POOR, WHEN YOU CAN SAVE LIKE THIS?

By DANIEL DE LEON

HOW false is the Socialist claim that the workingman can never hope for wealth, or hardly for comfort, under the present system is shown by the schedule of prices adopted by the physicians of Manchester, Conn.

There it is set down that the fee for attendance in child-birth cases shall be \$15. But for two babes at a birth the rate is only \$5 more, or \$20 in all, a clear saving of \$10 by having both children together. Hence the workingman, by seeing to it that nothing but twins are born to him, can go through life saving \$10 at a clip with but inconsiderable intervals. Nay more, by becoming an active propagandist of the Mormon faith, and marrying wives enough, and having them all bear twins all the time, he can save enough \$10's to buy some Standard Oil stock.

The ordinary charge for a sick call is to be \$1.50, but great economy and foresight can be exercised by allowing two persons in the same home to become ill together. Then the treatment of the second patient will cost only seventy-five cents, a clean-as-a-whistle saving of 50 per cent. By arranging for the family to sustain their diseases in teams—say the mother with the eldest son, and the mother-in-law together with the yearling—the head of the house can pocket seventy-five cents at each visit the physician makes. By having the physician call frequently enough, the savings can be made to run into the millions.

But all this is as nothing, to what follows. Manchester being a large silk manufacturing center, with looms run at high speed without regard for the operatives, amputations are of frequent necessity. For removing one finger or toe \$10 will be charged. This expense can be knocked into a cocked hat, however, by simply mangling two fingers or two toes in the machine together, when the bill drops to \$5 for the second member. A workman, and a working woman also, for that

matter, has at least twenty toes and fingers. By getting them crushed and amputated in pairs, therefore, each individual in Manchester can save at least \$50 right out of his own digits.

Of course, unlike the children and the sicknesses, the number of fingers and toes one can grow to save on is limited. This, it must be admitted, is a serious drawback, and will well bear looking into. In the meanwhile, however, the principle stands substantially vindicated, and the gloomy tales of the Socialists are again shown to be the “figments of a disordered imagination.”

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