

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 6, NO. 282.

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, APRIL 8, 1906.

TWO CENTS.

EDITORIAL

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR?— DEVIL'S ENDEAVOR!

By DANIEL DE LEON

A DISASTROUS collision between two passenger trains took place on the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad near Adobe on March 16. Not less than thirty-five, perhaps fifty people were killed outright, and about the same number more or less seriously injured. The immediate cause of the disaster was the circumstance that Thomas M. Lively, the station agent at Swallows, failed to give the proper signals. He had fallen asleep. But this does not end the sequence of facts that led to the accident. Lively had been overcome with sleep because HE HAD WORKED NINETEEN OR TWENTY HOURS—HAD BEEN CONTINUALLY ON DUTY THAT INHUMANLY LONG STRETCH OF TIME. What with the normally inhumanly long hours, demanded of him by the railroad company in its endeavor to “save expenses,” which means deal out to the idle stockholders a larger quantity of workingman’s blood, bone and marrow transmuted into “dividends,” and what with the additional stretch of his day’s work, owing to the railroad company’s method of paying wages—Lively was worn out, sleep overcame him, his head sank on his breast, and he fell sound asleep. Thus the crash happened.

In sight of these facts the *Christian Endeavor World* of March 29 says:

“Asleep at his post’ is the terrible record against the name of a telegraph operator in Colorado. The result was a railroad wreck near Adobe, with a cost of more than \$200,000 and at least thirty-six lives lost.”!!!

“A terrible record against the name of the telegraph operator”—not “against the railroad company”—Is such judgment a sample of “Christian Endeavor”?

At the bar of God and man Lively is innocent; at the bar of God and man the record of guilt stands against the railroad company. Human conscience speaks the

man free whose physical endurance succumbed to a strain not given to man to resist; human conscience points the finger at the railroad company whose methods are obviously criminal. One should not need to be a Socialist to rise in indignation at the vampire capitalist concern that stands doubly convicted of reckless disregard for life; one should not need to be a Socialist to throw the shield over the victim Lively. The Socialist, with his fuller perception of things, must on such occasions raise anew the cry against the system upheld by the capitalist class. Of him, however, who is less than a Socialist but not a fiend, the least that could be expected is emphatic protest against the inhumanity of the railroad company's action. Even heathen charity uttered the precept "ultra posse nemo tenetur"—let not more be demanded of man than what is possible.

Not so thinks and acts the *Christian (?) Endeavor*. Nor is this the first instance. Are coal miners on strike for living wages against the coal magnates who crush the miner's home, wife and children?—the *Christian Endeavor* echoes the calumnies of the Baers and modern Caiphases against the miner. Is the "death-line" established whereby men above a certain age are insultingly termed "dead-wood" and, after having been squeezed out of all their vitality and left penniless through the smallness of their earnings, are thrown adrift?—the *Christian Endeavor* joins the applause of the stockholding vampires. And so regularly, every time.

Is this "Christian Endeavor"?—"Devil's Endeavor" is the fitter name.

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

Uploaded March 2009

slpns@slp.org