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EDITORIAL

DIVINE DISCONTENT.

By DANIEL DE LEON

IN the current issue of *The Independent*, Courtney Hughes Fenn, a missionary at Peking, writes of "China's 'Divine Discontent.'" He says:

"The most sturdy and stubborn enemy of all hope of change and progress has been China's supreme satisfaction with herself and all that pertained to her. Her form of government, her educational system, her merchandise, her modes of transit, her language, her literature, her social customs, her ethics, and her religion were, in the eyes of rulers and people, the best in all the world; her civilization the only one worthy of the name. But of late she has been steadily going down the list, opening her eyes, little by little, to the fact that her government is not only corrupt, but antiquated; her educational system not only narrow, but shallow; her merchandise not only crude, but costly; her language not only difficult, even for her own people, but distinctly clumsy; her literature not merely obsolete, but, in the main, paltry; and she is now on the point of realizing that her social system is not only intensely artificial, but exceedingly wasteful; her filial piety a euphonious name, her sexual barriers mere empty and ineffectual prudery, her elaborate etiquette {etiquette?} extravagant of time and strength and destructive of manly sincerity."

To stir up this "divine discontent," the Rev. Fenn declares, is the effort of China's friends. May they succeed. When 400,000,000 people arise from antiquity to modernity, civilization is raised to a higher plane. The remaining peoples will feel the impulse and advance all along the line. Already has China given impetus to Japan and aided revolution in Russia. Europe and America are enmeshed in the word-problems to which it gives rise. Such a vast population offers vast prospects of exploitation, also of competition and conflict. Already do they use foreign machinery whose products may soon enter foreign markets. When this occurs re-adjustment will come once again among the more advanced peoples, hastening industrial evolution and Socialism. Then will other nations discover their governments to be

corrupt, their educational systems narrow and crude, their merchandise lacking in perfection, together with their social systems, sex relations and etiquette. This prophecy will be fulfilled, for the things that will be are already begun. Revolution is in the air.

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