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EDITORIAL

## GAMBLING.

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**W**HILE Committees of Fifteen, of Seventy-five, of Five and of all sorts of arithmetical combinations and permutations were loudly beating the drum of the anti-vice crusade to uproot gambling in the city; while the reform and purist Judge Jerome was breaking, axe in hand, into “gambling dens,” and threatening even the use of dynamite to blow up gamblers’ safes so as to trace gambling to its “most hidden hiding-place,” and extirpate it; while all this noise and dust was being raised about a gnat, the camel was being swallowed by our social purifiers down in Wall street. There, kept time to by the clock of Trinity Church, reformer Bishop Potter’s church, gambling, real gambling, demoralizing gambling was going on in the open, upon a scale never known before, and with results more disastrous than had ever been witnessed.

Looked at from another than the economic or social side, the Wall street transactions—sanctified by capitalist law, protected by the machinery of capitalist society, countenanced by the morality of the capitalist mind—that have culminated in the financial breakdown of yesterday, and day before, and whose crop of suicide and sudden death has already started, are essentially gambling transactions. Stocks, many times in excess of those in existence, were contracted for and the mad, delirious gamblers’ dance was started. And what a dance! The elite of capitalist society twirled the marble on the roulette table; the would-be elite in the same social system of crime, crowded around the cloth, staking their little piles; some, possessed of stronger nerves than the rest, withdrew contented with comparatively small rakings, and all the more convinced that the existing social system is matchless, and that the Socialists who would upturn it, are a “turbulent, disturbing element;” finally, others stayed long enough to figure on the stage at the last act of all gambling dramas: the delirious joy of the successful manipulators, the delirious ravings of the plucked dupes.

Why did the sundry Committees, on the hunt for gambling, fail all this time to turn their attention to Wall street? Why did they burrow underground, like moles?

Why did not the infinitely more demoralizing spectacle in Wall street draw their civic indignation that way?

If the gentlemen prominent in the make-believe anti-vice crusade, and those who pulled the strings that set these in motion, could have been photographed on Friday morning, the mystery would be solved. The hectic flush of joy on the cheeks of some, the hectic flush of despair on the cheeks of others, according as their glittering piles of gold had risen or been swept away the day before, would have furnished answers, direct and lucid, to each of the above questions.

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