

EDITORIAL

UNEASY LIES THE HEAD OF THE EVIL-DOER.

By DANIEL DE LEON

IT is now barely ten years ago that *The People* took the Sacramento, Cal., *Bee* over its knees, and dusted the Pacific slope luminary for its then utterances on Socialism. The *Bee* had haughtily threatened to shoot down the Socialists, should the “brigands” ever become numerous enough to be taken notice of. The *Bee*, in its exultant impudence even became picturesque in its threats. It talked of “the rataplam plam-plam” that the musketry of the capitalist class would administer to the “brigands”, the Socialists. That was ten years ago.

And now? Not a word of “rataplam plam-plam”. The *Bee* recognizes the rapid strides Socialism is making. It no longer calls the thing “brigandage”. It has lowered its tone. Now the thing is called a “fad”, a “fad” that, as soon as victorious, “would go to pieces inside of twelve months”. Yet amidst all its confidence in the impracticability of Socialism, the *Bee*’s mind is disturbed. It correctly refers to the Socialist propagandists as “indefatigable”; it admits that “Socialism has become a great force in the nation”. It gives another toss on its uncomfortable bed and quotes “many deep thinkers of the times” as believing that “inside of twenty years at the very furthest” the political issue in the country will be fought out between two parties “one the Socialistic, the other anti-Socialistic”. And, arrived at this point, the *Bee* gives a final and so violent toss on its thorny bed at the thought that the two former old parties, long used to keep the workers divided, are now divided by “really nothing but a name”, that the poor *Bee* rolls out of bed.

Can the disconsolate, now “un-rataplammed plam-plammed” *Bee* be blamed if it seeks comfort and imagines it has found comfort pillowing its aching head upon the belief that “no two Socialists will agree as to what Socialism really is”? Hardly! The *Bee* deserves sympathy, all the more seeing that even that imaginary pillow, does

not seem to afford it rest. Its dreams are troubled. In its sleep it mumbles the ominous reflection: "And yet they are persistent and ceaseless in proselytising as though they were fighting for ONE UNITED IDEA!"

Aye, indeed! There is no balm in Gilead for the distressed apostle of capitalism. One central idea unites all Socialists. With the Socialist, as with his predecessor the Abolitionist, as the latter was described by Jane Grey Swisshelm, there may be different views on tactics; even within the Socialist Labor Party, at times violent dissuasions may convulse the organization, just as happened with the Abolitionists; and just as in the instance of the Bourbon slave-holders and their Northern Copperhead sympathizers, the descendants of these, the modern Capitalist Class, expect their salvation from such divisions which, the wish being father to the thought, they magnify into irreconcilable feuds, and cause them to leap and cling to the broken reed that "no two Socialists are agreed". But, again just as in the instance of the Abolitionists, the broken reed will plunge the Usurper into the despair of crushing disappointment. As the Abolitionists were held united by one central idea, the Abolition of CHATTEL SLAVERY, so the Socialist, wherever found, is indissolubly bound to all Socialists, wherever found, by the central idea of the abolition of WAGE SLAVERY. That bond holds them now; that bond will draw them together at the hustings of the approaching "Nov. 6, 1860" of this century and generation; and that bond will marshal them, together with their increasing hosts, at the approaching "Appomattox" of this century and generation.

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

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