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EDITORIAL

LONG LIVE THE FANATICS!

By DANIEL DE LEON

A MR. EDWARD STERN—a gentleman to fame, tho', perhaps, not to fortune unknown—appears in the Philadelphia *North American*, under that paper's pontifical benediction, with a letter in which "fanatics" are "flayed."

Of course, the "fanatics" are the Socialists.

If a non-Socialist says: "Capitalist and Workmen are brothers!" and the Socialist asks—"Is the potato bug a brother of the potato?"—"Fanatic!" is the prompt reply.

If a non-Socialist declares: "Prosperity is blessing the people," and the Socialist inquires whether by "the people" is meant the small percentage of capitalists?—"Fanatic!" is howled at him.

If a non-Socialist announces that "without the capitalist the workers would starve," and the Socialist suggests that a man might get along all the better without having a vampire to suck his blood—"Fanatic!" is the angry retort.

If a non-Socialist orates on the divine mission of the capitalist to preserve the purity of the family, and the Socialist, in mute amazement, holds up the list of squaws-swapping multimillionaires, and reads out of capitalist authorities that "prostitution is a protection to the home"—"Fanatic!" is growled at him.

If a non-Socialist holds up statistics to show that wages are rising and have risen 15 per cent., and the Socialist thereupon blankets the said statistics with statistics to prove that prices have gone up 55 per cent., consequently, even if it were true that wages rose 15 per cent., nevertheless, the cost of living having risen 55 per cent., that amounts to a lower earning of 40 per cent.—"Fanatic!" thunder the echoes, and echo the thunders.

If a non-Socialist sings the praises of Capitalism as a promoter of inventive

genius, and the Socialist quotes the United States Supreme Court reports deciding with the regularity of clock-work against workingmen inventors, and for the capitalist seizers—"Fanatic!" "Fanatic!" is the knock-down rejoinder.

If a non-Socialist pronounces Socialism impractical and Capitalism ideal, and the Socialist asks whether the ideal is a state of things under which panics can be manufactured by and in the interest of a few plutocrats, throwing hundreds of thousands of men out of work—"Fanatic!!" is the clinching refutation.

If a non-Socialist orates on the stump that the Republican party is the representative of the whole people, and a Socialist meekly asks: "How can a plunderer represent at once the interests of plunderers and plundered?"—"Fanatic!" is flung in his face as the solution of the riddle.

If a non-Socialist grows enthusiastic over the labor-loving Democratic party, and a Socialist demurs that Democratic Presidents and Governors have vied with the Republican dittos in smashing strikes for a living wage with military and militia—"Fanatic!" is the patriotically indignant retort.

If a non-Socialist perorates on the philanthropy of the Carnegies, and the Socialist expresses the view that the philanthropy is indulged in retail, with plunder levied wholesale, upon the philanthropized workers—"Fanatic!" is the rattling confutation.

If a non-Socialist declaims on the virtues of Capitalist Governments and their desire for international peace, and the Socialist argues that, seeing Capitalism spells class war at home, it can not spell peace abroad—"Fanatic!" is the crushing answer.

If a non-Socialist speaks of political freedom, and the Socialist opines, first, that freedom to cast a vote is a snare and a delusion, unless there is the certainty of the vote being counted; and, secondly, that what does political freedom amount to if the politically free man can be kicked the very next day out of the shop and thereby out of bread, to say nothing of butter?"—"Fanatic!" is the roaring reply.

Etc.; etc.; etc.; etc.; etc.

The name "Christian" originated as an insult; time was when to call a man a "Christian" was to pronounce him unspeakably vile.—Time came when "Christian" became a badge of honor.

The name “Protestant” was first used as a fling. To say of a man that he was a “Protestant” was to announce that he “talked through his hat.”—Time came when Protestants proved, and quite forcibly, too, on many a settling field of battle, that they talked very much, and uncomfortably, to the purpose.

“Geux” (beggars) was the term with which Margaret of Parma pointed the finger of scorn at the Dutch revolters against Spain. The revolters took up the title as a badge of honor, and, to the tune of “Geux!” mopped the earth with the Margarets of Parma.

“Rotos” (tattered crew) was the designation given by the well clad menials of the Spanish vice-roys of South America to the half-naked South American insurgents—a picture of whom at work can be seen in the “Governor’s Room” at the City Hall of this city, representing the battle of Queseras del Medio in Venezuela. The time came when the Spanish functionaries in South America would have given all their worldly havings to be taken for a “Roto.”

Who does not remember the stigma that went, barely half a century ago, with the epithet “Abolitionist!” That epithet, hurled at a man, was supposed to answer all argument, and exposed the man to a coat of tar-and-feathers, and a free ride on a rail.

So will it yet be with “Fanatic!” The present generation of “Fanatic!” criers will discover that the epithet is a blank cartridge, impotent against the cannonballs of fact and reason fired by the “Fanatics.”

The future belongs to the “Fanatics”—the men who, unbending, reject imposture, nor are to be intimidated by numbers, fuss, feathers, or bluster.

Long live the “Fanatics”! On their shoulders rests progress.

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

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slpns@slp.org