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EDITORIAL

ENCOURAGING SIGNS.

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OF course, the first sentiment that comes over one at the news, published a few days ago from California, to the effect that the Kangaroo-Social Democracy of San Francisco is getting the capitalist papers to call them Socialist Labor Party, is one of indignation. What honorable man does not feel like administering a cowhiding to the scamp, who he learns is parading under his name? It goes without saying that the S.L.P. can not but feel indignant at the thought of that ash-barrel collection of San Francisco middle class job-seekers, that make up the Social Democracy of that city, trying to convey the idea that they are, or have aught in common with, the S.L.P. But the first feeling of indignation being spent, one must admit that the incident is an encouraging sign, several encouraging signs.

It is an encouraging sign to see a body of men, whose conception of militant Socialism must be on a par with a Hottentot's conception of decorum in dress, and who, as a consequence have a sincere, deep-rooted dislike for the Socialist Labor Party, seek to pass under its name. Their conduct is of a piece, at all points, with that of the raw-boned capitalist politician, who seeks to pass for a "Socialist too." This gentleman has, of course, fraud at heart, but his conduct is a homage to Socialism: At first he fought it, declared it utterly utter, and stormed against it. Why? Because he knew it would affect his political success. With no more love for the thing now, and no more understanding of it than before, his change of posture denotes that he now thinks he can thereby promote his political prospects. This belief, in turn, denotes that the unpopularity of Socialism has vanished, and that there is positive strength behind it. The capitalist politician, who turns "Socialist too" spreads his sail to a breeze that he knows is blowing. The Socialist takes in the sight; scorns the trick; warns the working class against the contemplated deception; and then? And then he gleefully rubs his hands: The conduct of such capitalist politicians is proof positive that Socialist agitation is bearing fruit among the masses; the Socialist feels encouraged and redoubles his zeal.

It is just so in the instance of Messrs. San Francisco Kangaroo-Social Democrats. They have sincerely fought the S.L.P. Their little heads and smaller morals could not comprehend the dignity and scope of such a historic Movement as Socialism. They could see in it only a chance for freaks, and an opportunity for crooks. Accordingly, to them, the S.L.P. was an unmitigated nuisance: it positively interfered with their "freedom." With no more love for the S.L.P. now than before, and not a whit better understanding of it, what means their anxiety to be taken for that self-same S.L.P.? It means the same thing that a similar conduct by the capitalist "Socialist too" politician means. It means that they now believe they can thereby promote their "chances;" it means that through their thick skulls, the fact has at last percolated that the S.L.P. attitude commands popular respect; it means that, though they are incapable of understanding why this should be so, they are willing to spread the sails of their mud-scows to that breeze; it means that the unflinching loyalty of the S.L.P. to the cause of the proletariat and the Party's steadfast adherence to the load-star of class-conscious, militant propaganda is having its effect among the workers, and the effect is rising above the horizon; it finally means that, though with fraud at his heart, the Kangaroo-Social Democrat bows in homage before the majesty of the S.L.P.

Are not these encouraging signs? What matters it if it takes such a concern as the polynomial Social Democracy to help perceive the signs? None but the S.L.P. can profit thereby. The frauds, like chaff, will be swept away in the rising storm.

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