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EDITORIAL

TRYING TO “STICK” EACH OTHER.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE present attitude of the Democratic and the Republican wings of capitalism, at the very threshold of a presidential election, should not escape notice. It tells plainly of the economic and political quackery of both, and what the workingmen have to expect from either.

A crisis, financial and industrial, is at hand. Every man who is posted and has no personal purposes to subserve knows it, and says so. The facts graphically leaped from Mr. Hanna's lips at the private banquet, reported in these columns, when he declared soup-houses would soon be seen in all the industrial centers; and these views, almost literally, are reappearing in the press in all manner of connections. What, under such circumstances, would be the attitude of real statesmen, men of skill and feeling? They would, to the extent of their lights, seek to cope with the threatening storm, and each holding his own diagnosis correct and his methods best, would in all sincerity be trying to secure the helm of the ship of state in order to steer it into port. Not so with the Republican and Democratic chieftains. While fatuous and vainglorious individuals in the camp of each are seeking to “get there,” the two organizations and those that run them are “playing shy.” The astute Democratic leaders prefer to be defeated at the next presidential election, because of the hard times that they foresee are then due, and they do not wish the Democracy to get the blame for it, as it would were it in power; and, in their turn, the astute leaders of the Republican party are getting ready to “ride for a fall” wishing to escape being in power during the crisis they likewise foresee and, if in power, would be held responsible for. The only enthusiasm noticeable among the two sets of managers is in behalf of some candidate of the opposing camp. Each wishes to see the other stuck.

There is no difference between these capitalists, on the one hand, and the ignorant superstitious sachems of barbarians, on the other, who stood impotently by during pestilential outbreaks or astronomical convulsions. As the latter looked upon these visitations as “natural” and as “punishments” inflicted by God, so do the

former, regard these periodical devastations of men and their homes as “inevitable,” and having nothing better to think of than to so manoeuvre as to “stick” each other’s competitor, duck and let the storm blow over.

Not from the capitalist camp has the Working Class anything to hope for. Its hope must be in itself. Not till it overthrows the mischievous system of capitalist society can it be rid of the epidemics of crises, alternated by chronic poverty and degradation. Our present masters are political quacks.

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