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EDITORIAL

SENSE IN NONSENSE; NONSENSE IN SENSE.

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UNDER a double-line full page-wide heading “What Means the Great Increase in the Socialistic Vote? Answered for *The World* by Politicians of All Parties” the *New York World* of the 17th of December fills almost a page with the opinions of leading lights in the capitalist political firmament, from Republican and Democratic National and State Committees, Senators and other dignitaries down.

The gentlemen whose views were solicited, and were expressed, have the Socialist party vote in mind. Some of them know of the existence of the Socialist Labor Party, and of its increase at the polls and otherwise. Most of them probably do not. All of them, however, have their eyes filled with the S.P. vote. Naturally so.

Condensed into a few words, the collective views amount to this: “The increase is in appearance only; it is due to dissatisfaction; it will vanish as it came.”

This is sense, and this is nonsense. There is sense in the nonsense, and nonsense in the sense.

Socialism means the overthrow of the capitalist order of society. The overthrow of the capitalist order of society means, in turn, the downfall of the political State. The downfall of the political State means, in turn the rise, or, rather, the re-rise, upon the elevation of XXth Century material possibilities, of the Industrial Republic. In the term “Industrial republic” volumes are compressed, and implied The term implies, among other things, the end of Class Rule—a social order founded upon the economic interests of Useful Human Exertion. The political party whose vote voices such a goal has certain distinctive marks:—

Its effort is to collectivize Monopoly, not to regulate Competition;

Its effort is to organize the constituencies of the Industrial State, that is, the

Unions, and solidify them into the coming Nation;

Its effort is to draw sharp the line between the political aspirants after seats in the political State, on the one hand, and its own candidates, the pilots for the Industrial Delegates in the Parliament of the Industrial State, on the other hand;

Its effort is to make clear as a pike the difference between the economic interests of the revolutionary class, and the economic interests of the ruling, or reactionary class.

The Socialist party lacks, conspicuously, each one of these distinctive marks. It frets about Competition; it is an ally and supporter, not infrequently a bruiser, for the working-class-dislocating A.F. of L. and kindred economic bodies; it fuses right and left with capitalist political aspirants after political seats; its propaganda against taxation and for cheap goods blends into one the economic interests of the rulers and the ruled. The vote attracted by a party, whatever its name, that bears such marks, is a revolutionary vote in appearance only; its increase must vanish as it came.—The poor estimate made of the Socialist party vote is good sense.

On the other hand, the existence of dissatisfaction is avowed. Is the dissatisfaction a malady that comes from without, like bacteria? “Dissatisfactions” come from within—from within the body social. There was such a dissatisfaction about twenty years ago. It took the shape of the Populist Movement. That dissatisfaction uttered itself in votes that swelled nigh to two million strong—and it vanished as it came. Is the cause the same, justifying an identical issue? “Far otherwise, and to the contrary.”

The economic cause for Populism was the decline of wheat to 30 cents a bushel. When wheat rose to \$1 a bushel the bottom fell from under Populism. Is the cause for the present dissatisfaction of similar type? Nay, nay. The cause is the declining well-being of the working class, of the class in the country, of an increasingly large majority. What is more, that cause is not subject to the oscillations of the market, like wheat. That cause is a permanent one; it is one inherent in the capitalist social order; it is one, moreover, that time can only aggravate, never mitigate, let alone remove, so long as capitalism abides. While Populism rested upon a shifting economic sandbank, Socialism rests upon an economic foundation that time can only broaden, and deepen and strengthen. The vote for Populism came and vanished, by

parity of reasoning the vote for Socialism is immune against the same fate.—The complacent estimate that the Socialist wave will recede is nonsense.

There is Sense in the bourgeois politician's Nonsense, and there is Nonsense in their Sense.

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