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EDITORIAL

HEARST, THE NEMESIS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THERE is more than one symptom that our free-trade, Manchester school of capitalists are beginning to feel decidedly uncomfortable on the Hearst presidential boom. At first they laughed; then they called it a myth; then they grew more serious and began to refer to it as a mystery. They certainly neither laugh nor feel mystified now. With endorsements pouring in upon Mr. Hearst from Unions and even from bankers, as in the instance of C.M. Williamson of Jackson, Miss., pronouncing Mr. Hearst “the man of the hour,” our Manchester capitalists have sat down to serious work, at last. They started an anti-Hearst evening paper here in New York, and now they are engineering a strike of newsboys against Mr. Hearst’s papers. Both moves are expensive manoeuvres—it costs much money to take hold of such a paper, more yet to keep such a paper going, and still more to line the pockets of the fakirs expert on launching strikes. Whether these moves will succeed in damming the Hearst flood or not remains to be seen; whether it succeeds or not, but much more if it does, already has Mr. Hearst earned his spurs as the Nemesis of the fatuous.

Hanna capitalism may be revolting. What capitalism is not! But in the inscrutable ways of Providence, the stars, as the old proverb has it, can not be reached except through brambles. The path to the Socialist Republic lies through the prickly brambles of capitalism. But this much is certain about Hanna or Roosevelt capitalism—it is consistent. Now, then, as inconsistent as Bryan capitalism was, just so inconsistent is the free trade, or Manchester school capitalism. To want capitalism and at the same time to want Bryanism is idiotic; equally idiotic it is to want capitalism and to want Manchesterianism. In 1896, the Manchester twin idiot of Bryanism rushed to McKinley. The breach was then established which the campaign of 1904 was, by the fatuous, expected to be healed.

Obviously it will not be healed. The Manchester capitalists, now calling themselves Democrats, may again have to choose their nearer affinity, as they did in 1896, and wheel in line with the Republicans, or out-and-out capitalists.

The Hearst boom may not yet materialize this year. It looks as if it will. Yet it may not. But, if not this trip, a “Hearst boom” is inevitable in the land, eventually, if not sooner. The camps into which capitalism is dividing the country demands such a party. It will and must come.

The camp of the SATISFIED, those who “stand pat,” is bound to be run by the Republican party. In that camp “standing pat” means to be capitalist first, last, and all the time; the free traders with their Manchester school vagaries, will have to suppress their notions.

The body of the DISSATISFIED will split into two camps. Those who know what they want and understand “what’s up,” will be found in the camp of the Socialist Labor Party, drilling for future days and deeds. But the by far vaster body of the dissatisfied, who do not know what they want, and expect to get it when they “get there,” will be appropriated by the Democratic party—the “Hearst boom” party we shall designate it. And who is there so venturesome as to dare deny that such a reorganized Democracy may not elect its man?

At any rate, cold blows the Nemesean blast upon the free trade capitalists. And chillily and expensively ’tis teaching them to drop their air-castles.

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