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EDITORIAL

POBEDONOSTSEFFISM.

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THE world is indeed one city, and the usurping class one breed. The *Cosmopolitan* for February has an article from the pen of Constantine Petrovitch Pobedonostseff, the Procurator of the Holy Synod, on “The Delusions of Democracy.” The article was written in Russia and probably in Russian; it might as well have been written in English, right here in New York. It is cast in substantially the same mold in which the capitalist arguments against Socialism are cast. The cardinal lines of the two are identical.

The Procurator of the Holy Synod decries the idea that “democratic institutions are a universally applicable panacea.”—This tune has been heard before. Every time the finger is placed upon a concrete wrong and the remedy therefor is pointed out, the Usurper vilifies the remedy by pronouncing it a “panacea.” If the wrong of the plunder levied upon Labor by the capitalist is shown and proven, and it is proven and shown that the remedy for the evil is the social ownership of the machinery of production, the private ownership of which enables the capitalist to confiscate Labor’s product, immediately the Usurper sets up the cross between a screech and a wild guffaw: “There is no panacea for the ills of this world: Socialism will not cure the whooping cough, and rivalry between lovers will still lead to jealousy, and often to tragedies.”

The Procurator of the Holy Synod brushes aside the demands of the Russian people for the abolition of autocracy with the sapient observation that happiness can not be insured “at a moment’s notice.”—That tune also has a familiar ring. Every time the finger is placed upon some concrete outrage and its stoppage is demanded, the Usurper gives an impatient shrug of the shoulder—“evolution, not revolution; let’s go slowly and sanely.” If the outrages committed by capitalist autocracy are pointed out, if, for instance, it is pointed out that capitalism will and

does sacrifice the limb and life of the workingman, tear up his family, destroy his initiative, crush out his individuality and reduce him to an automaton, and the call is made for the stoppage of the despotism, immediately the Usurper flies out of patience and argues that “happiness can not be insured at a moment’s notice.”

The Procurator of the Holy Synod oilily indicates that the enjoyment of freedom is a fruit enjoyable by all who are fit for it, and that all who are so fitted prove their fitness by raising “the pedestal of their own” and “work out their destiny unaided.” It needs no effort of the imagination to perceive that the Procurator of the Holy Synod is all the while pointing at himself as an illustration.—Is that argument, together with the illustrating, an unknown sound or sign in America? Every time the finger is placed upon the fact that economic freedom is an impossibility for the masses under capitalism, immediately the Usurper points to some Jay Gould, some Carnegie, now they are pointing to Marshall Field—to some man with longer fangs and sharper beak—and say: “Thus can all raise their own pedestal, and work out their own freedom.”

Pobedonostseffism is international, like Capitalism.

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