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EDITORIAL

THE “CLIMBACKS” REACHED.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THERE are those who insist in believing that the Socialist or Labor Movement is one long-drawn struggle, one long-drawn tragedy. Even those who recognize that victory awaits the struggler at the other end of the line, do not always, or all of them imagine how much fun there is connected with and woven in the struggle. Probably that's one of the reasons more people, otherwise desirable, do not take hold. Man naturally is not of the school of the Weeping Philosopher. Nevertheless, the fact is that, strange as it may seem, the Socialist Movement brims over with fun. Here are a couple of instances: in reality the two constitute one.

To fame, if not yet to fortune, known there is a certain brace of gentlemen in the Socialist Movement. The present name of one of the brace is Henry Slobodin; the other's name is Cameron King, jr. Dame Nature, who, though lavish in color, is, as all true artists, rigid in symmetry, located the one near the Golden Gate on the Pacific, the other near Sandy Hook on the Atlantic. As the light-house attracts kites, the splendor of the Socialist beacon, held aloft by the Socialist Labor Party, attracted both; from the opposite quarters of the country they joined. What they did not and do not yet know of Socialism would fill exactly the measure of classic Socialist literature. This notwithstanding, or, perhaps, by the very reason thereof, they set themselves up as “authorities.” The S.L.P. did not share their views about themselves, whereupon, in chorus, the two denounced the Party as “un-democratic;” and they joined hands as well as voice across the continent in a new Socialist party, the corner-stone of which was to be “democracy,”—and the fun started. Last week it reached the point commonly styled “climax,” but more pictorially spelled by Artemus Ward as “climbacks.”

The start of the fun was about three years ago. During this period the Socialist Movement was treated to one continuous opera bouffe on “democracy.” King, jr., held

the Golden Gate end of the show; Slobodin the Sandy Hook end; and, between the two, the anti-Socialist Labor Party "democracy" was on exhibition for fair. Each manifestation, as they succeeded each other in rapid succession, seemed to reach top-notch. But not yet. The procession of clownish pretentiousness ever had something better, more laughable, in store. But top-notch was finally reached. Last week, almost on the same day and hour, and addressing themselves to the innocents, on whose vote they boasted, but who begin to see through the fraud and are becoming uncomfortably restive under the anti-S.L.P. "democracy," "democratic" King, jr., hurled at them the epithet "Yearling upstarts!", and "democratic" Slobodkinowsky, or Slobodin, as he now calls himself, admonished them that their part in the "democracy" was to "sit at our feet,"—in other words: "Cough up and shut up!"

The "climbacks" is reached.

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

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