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EDITORIAL

STEALINGS OF THUNDERINGS.

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THE press of the Socialist party is throwing fits, partly of rage, partly of girlish giddy-headed vainglory, that Roosevelt has stolen their thunder.

Who is it “steals thunders”?

A tailor can not steal the thunder of an astronomer; a carpenter can not steal the thunder of a lawyer; a prima donna can not steal the thunder of an excavator. The reason is obvious. While each of these has a “thunder” of his own, the “thunder” of none is available by the other; they do not fit with the other’s “line.”

The supplemental phenomenon is noticed on the political field. Republicans steal “thunders” from Democrats; Democrats steal “thunders” from Republicans; both steal “thunders” from Prohibitionists and Prohibitionists, as the “broad-gauge” and “narrow-gauge” varieties, respectively, did in the first Bryan campaign, steal “thunders” from their Democratic and Republican foes. And so forth.

The uniformity of the incapacity to steal “thunder,” in the one set of instances, and of the practice of “thunder-stealing,” in the latter category of instances, establishes the law that underlies “thunder-stealing.” The stealing of thunder can be done only by kindred spirits to kindred spirits. Where no such kinship exists no “thunder” can be stolen; where “thunder” is stolen, stealer and stealee are kith and kin.

Roosevelt certainly has stolen the “thunder” of the Socialist party. The statement, to that effect, made by Democrats and Standpat Republicans, is no libel upon the Socialist party—except it be in the sense that “the greater the truth, the greater the libel.” Moreover, in this instance, there can be no question of libel. The “Socialists,” whose “thunder” Roosevelt is said to have stolen, are admitting the charge.

“State Socialism”—a term, we think, of Bismarckian coinage—is purely technical. It designates the social regimen in which the Capitalist Class, having advanced

far enough to “feel its oats,” drops the mask of its political government being “by, of and for the people”; comes out with the truth that its political rule is by, of and for the Top-Capitalist; and is ready plump and plain to disclose the fact by publicly organically identifying its political agents with its Corporation Directors. There may be guile, and probably is, in the choice of the term “State Socialism” to designate Sublimated Capitalism. But, guile or no guile, there is as much Socialism in “State Socialism” as there would be Drunkenness in “State Prohibitionism,” or Protection in “State Free Trade.” Everyone who knows anything, knows that.

The long list of facts with which the Socialist Labor Party has demonstrated that there is of Socialism only the name in the Socialist party, and that the party is essentially bourgeois;—the long list of facts with which the Socialist Labor Party has demonstrated that the Officialdom-and-Press of the Socialist party only speculate on the word Socialism;—the long list of facts with which the Socialist Labor Party has demonstrated that the path on which the said Officialdom-and-Press leads the Working Class is the cow-path to the shambles—the long list of facts with which the Socialist Labor Party has demonstrated that the said Officialdom-and-Press conduct themselves with Socialism in the way of wild Indians who have found a watch, and that, after having had “their day” of silly “triumph,” would find themselves “left”—those long lists are now confirmed by the Event.

Those long lists are now confirmed by the historic event of the phenomenal apparition of the Roosevelt party on the nation’s stage;—they are now confirmed by the fits of rage that the Officialdom-and-Press of the Socialist party are throwing at the prospect of their forfeiting and losing “thousands and even hundreds of thousands of votes,” because of their “thunder” being stolen;—they are being confirmed by the fits of girlish giddy-headed vainglory that the said Officialdom-and-Press are throwing at the discovery of their “thunder” being considered valuable enough to be stolen.

The revolutionary party, whose thunder can be stolen by the class against which it takes the field, had better quit.

For the identical economic, sociologic and psychologic reasons that the Socialist party has “thunders” that can be and are stolen by a Roosevelt party, no capitalist party would venture to touch, let alone “steal,” any of the thunder of the Socialist

Labor Party. In that thunder there is bolt.

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