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EDITORIAL

CONGRATULATIONS TO PATERSON.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THERE was a time when our neighboring city of Paterson, in the neighboring State of New Jersey, enjoyed the unsavory reputation of being a hotbed of Anarchy.

The popular sentiment on the subject seemed well founded.

It was to Paterson that was traced the nest from which was delegated the Anarchist who assassinated King Umberto in Monza, Italy.

It was to Paterson that was traced the nest from which was delegated the Anarchist who assassinated the Austrian Empress in Geneva, Switzerland.

It was in Paterson that the Anarchist Ludevico Camanita—he who, jointly with the Minneapolis Anarchist Axelson, the subsequent expunger of the “political clause” from the Chicago so-called “I.W.W.,” sought, at the third convention of the I.W.W., to turn that body into an Anarchist concern—it was from Paterson that the said Camanita hailed and in Paterson that he published his *Questione Sociale* in which, illustrating the directness of “Direct Action,” he argued that, if, for instance, fire were set to a suburb of Paterson, that would draw thither all the police, thus leaving the rest of the city defenceless, “to be seized for the Revolution,” on account of which prosecutions were started against him, and he fled and returned lately in disguise to assist his associates in Paterson in their efforts to stab in the back the strike of the I.W.W. silk weavers, but, the disguise being discovered, was arrested under the old indictments.

It was from Paterson that all along periodical Anarchist outbreaks were reported.

All these circumstances combined to promote the popular impression that Paterson was a hotbed of Anarchy. It was an error. We must confess we ourselves succumbed to the error. We had forgotten that, with Anarchy, as with Limburger

cheese, a very little can and does go very far. How negligible the quantity of Anarchy is in Paterson the present I.W.W. silk weavers' strike has completely exposed

A strike that has been lasting for weeks, giving ample opportunity for Anarchy to inject its poison of "sabotage," violence, mischief, riot and other "Direct Actions," or manifestations of viciousness,—a strike, moreover at the rear and flanks of which, and from the start, Anarchy prowled watching, with all the malice that is in it, for every chance to "get in its licks"—that strike, composed of a variety of nationalities, some of which pass for "constitutionally Anarchic," has been conducted in such exemplary manner that its high ideal, the Emancipation of the Proletariat, was never an instant darkened by disorder, and aroused emulation all around, in surrounding towns, in the State of New York, in distant fields of Pennsylvania, and in even farther away States.

Evidently, the nettle of Anarchy has but to be seized firmly, as it was by the silk weavers on strike, to be squelched, and thus exposed as trifling.

In Hamburg, Germany, it was left to the Social Democracy in 1892 to take charge of the administration that stamped cholera out of the city. It was left to the I.W.W. {silk weavers} to give the lie to the popular error that Paterson was "rocked by Anarchy"—for which the city deserves congratulations.

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