

EDITORIAL

McCLELLAN ECONOMICS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

“**T**HE payment of the mortgage tax”, said the Tammany candidate for Mayor, at last Tuesday’s Tammany rally in the Twelfth Congressional District, “the payment of the mortgage tax falls on every man, woman and child of the city who pays rent; it affects the person who lives in a hired hall bedroom, as much as the man who hires the largest Fifth avenue store or hotel”. Mayor McClellan also said, at the beginning of the campaign, that this was to be a campaign of education. The Mayor is keeping his word. His economic utterances furnish the occasion for education, with himself as the horrible example.

If the mortgage or any other tax falls upon the rent payer, then rents would rise or fall according to taxation. The fact, however, is just the opposite. It is not the tax that sets the pace to the rent, it is the rent that sets the pace to the tax; rents do not rise because taxation rises, it is taxation that rises because rents rise; the size of rents is not the consequence of taxation, taxation is the consequence of the size of rents. This fact, which any report of rents and of taxes proves beyond cavil, is a cannon-shot that hits both the Single Tax and the “workingmen-pay-the-taxes” theorists amidships. It founders the Single Tax theory in that it proves that capitalist society, if left alone and not scared by revolutionary Single Tax firecrackers, is by the very law of its existence drifting towards Single-Taxism and thereby eating the heart out of the landlord, instead of the landlord being the one who is eating the heart out of the Capitalist Class. It founders the “workingmen-pay-the-tax” theory in that it furnishes a strong illustration of the Socialist Labor Party position that taxes come from the plunder that the property-holder levies upon the plundered—from the increased rent, that the landlord racks the tenant, comes the increased tax that the capitalist state levies upon its beneficiaries for the protection of their stolen goods.

Mayor McClellan is said to be a gentleman of varied accomplishments. If he honestly believes that the tax on mortgages would come from the tenant, then political economy is not among his accomplishments. If political economy is one of the Mayor's "fortes", like the talking of "Tuscan Italian" to the Neapolitan laborers of Spring street, and the talking of "choice German" to the Association of Grocery-dealers who are extensively of the class that in Germany is designated as "Kaffer"—if, indeed, political economy is one of the Mayor's many accomplishments, then he is a fraud, and is trying to enlist workers' sympathy for shirkers' troubles. In either case, the Mayor approves himself the peer of his Republican, Democratic, Hearstic and *Volkszeitung* parties' competitors.

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