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EDITORIAL

THE POLICE SPY AT WORK IN FRANCE.

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FOR once a nasty report concerning the European Labor Movement, and appearing the Rep-Dem bourgeois press, is more likely true than false. Altogether probable are the Paris despatches to the effect that a riotous manifesto has been issued by a certain “Revolutionary Federation” of workingmen, “appealing to all workingmen to join in every form of violence” in order to overthrow existing society and establish a new order “exempt from all authority.”

Anybody acquainted with the ways of Usurpation to discredit the Movement of the forces organizing to destroy it, must have expected, after the epoch-making recent strike of the Parisian Postal employes, something of the kind of the manifesto reported to have been issued. The thing was due; it has arrived on schedule time.

The strike of the Parisian Postal employes marked the turning of a long lane in many a matter concerning the Labor Movement. It denoted a long step taken in the enlightenment of a division of the proletariat that did not formerly look upon itself as proletarian. It had the effect of the “setting of bones” in one part of the anatomy of the working class. It had the further effect of promoting the “setting” of a number of other bones in other parts of the same anatomy, and to consolidate “settings” that a propaganda of years had already brought about. This was quite enough to send the shivers down the spine of bourgeoisdom, and to cause it to hasten to seek to explode the dangerous combination by means of their police spies, or agents-provocateurs. But worse happened than a mere “setting of bones” in the anatomy of hitherto wholly dislocated Giant Labor.

The Parisian Postal employes on strike gave evidence of being legitimate children of the XXth Century civilization and experience. The firmness with which they put their feet down upon what in the French Movement is known as

“sabotage,” and here is beginning to be known as “Slummery” or “I-am-a-bumism,” was, if anything, a more ominous sign to capitalist rule. It told the tale that the Movement had learned to distinguish between Revolution, on the one hand, and Felony or Blackguardism, on the other; between the freedom of legitimate democracy and the rowdyism of license; between the order that is led by the Intelligence, and the disorder that is taken in by Clowns.

So epoch-making a display by the Labor Movement of France in two important respects justified the expectation of some speedy agent-provocateur’s counter-display. Dynamite bombs seem to have lost their charm for police-spies and their hirers in France. The manifesto, so fully reported from Paris, was preferred. It has all the ear-marks of its source—the very language to captivate unsettled brains, by captivating these human cripples, to cause the Movement to be judged by them; above all to furnish Usurpation with a pretext to “save society from anarchy.”

The trick is stale. Still, the new method denotes progress. The bourgeois is becoming less barbarous. The trick is not as dangerous to life as the dynamite trick formerly in vogue.

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