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EDITORIAL

WITH APOLOGIES TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

By DANIEL DE LEON

WE know not who the Jesuit Father Bernard Vaughan is, whom *The Independent* of May 13 quotes, “in a lecture against Socialism,” and who “thus described the order of which he is a member”:

“As a Jesuit I have lived for fifty years under a state of things which is the nearest approach to Socialism that has yet been seen on this planet. We Jesuits have to go where we are told, to do what we are told, to live under the superior we are told, and for as long as we are told, being switched to and fro and off and on like any poor gas light. Furthermore, we may be given things, but they must go to the community. We have the use of clothes, of food, of lodging, and when money for traveling or what not is needed we get it from the common purse, into which we drop back again what has not been needed for personal consumption. We may not buy, sell, invest, or in other ways build up capital. This, surely, is a state of things not altogether unlike some phases of Socialism.”

Which reminds of a soliloquy, or monologue, held—if it wasn't actually held, it ought to have been held—by a moth fluttering around the editorial lamp in *The Independent's* sanctum:

“As a moth I have lived for fifty minutes under a state of things which is the nearest approach to capitalist Journalism that has yet been seen on this planet. We moths have to go whither we are blown, to follow any light someone else lights, to flutter under any conditions we may be blown into, and continue thereat till that light goes out and some other light goes up somewhere else within sight, which we must then follow. Furthermore, we may make a flutter, but the freedom of the flutter is not for our freedom, it is a manifestation of the freedom of the winds to blow and make us flutter. We have the use of books and folios over whose outsides we may crawl, but never their insides, unless they happen to be open, and then we

must be on the alert not to be caught napping lest the book or folio suddenly close and flatten us out. We may not think for ourselves, lay up knowledge, or in other ways go it alone. This surely is a state of things not altogether unlike some phases of capitalist Journalism.”

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