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EDITORIAL

## ANENT SPOKANE.

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**O**F those, if any—who may have believed the statement, “Pure and Simple Socialist party Ballotism merges into Pure and Simple Anarchist Bombism,” was a bit of ill temper, at least an exaggeration, on the part of the *Daily People*,—the attention is hereby called to certain happenings going on in Spokane, together with the attitude thereon of both the avowedly Anarchist and the S.P. press.

To the Pacific slope there regularly gravitates a large number of workers from among the vast mass of proletarians, whom insecurity of occupation keeps on the go in search of a job. It should seem that the hard conditions inflicted by capitalism upon this worried element would render them exempt from further attempts at exploitation. It happens otherwise. During the second and third year of the existence of the I.W.W., one J.H. Walsh, a man of shady antecedents who managed to obtain from the organization credentials as organizer, gathered, here and there, what he could of the roving proletarians beyond the Rockies, men and some women, into “lodging houses,” “organized” them into I.W.W. “locals,” and proceeded to make his living out of them. It was essential to Walsh’s plan to keep the men and women who fell his victims in excitement and, of course, uninformed. Salvation Army-like they were dragged along the streets, and made to sing hysterical songs, the refrain of one of which, their favorite one, being “I am a bum.” These lodging-house ventures of Walsh’s sprang up and melted away. One of these, however, the one in Spokane, survives to this day.

The Spokane lodging house “Local of the I.W.W.” is virtually all that was left of the I.W.W. to the Anarchist element which, upon motion of the avowed Anarchist Axelson, and upon his urging: “Show me where political action has accrued to the benefit and where it can benefit the working class,” tore from their preamble the

I.W.W. call upon the proletariat to “unite upon the political as well as upon the industrial field.” Impelled by the Anarchistic momentum imparted to it by the tearing out of the political clause from their preamble, the Spokane lodging-house concern speedily ripened into full fruit. The visions of capturing big things and big bodies in the East having quickly vanished, and their national organ, *The Industrial Bulletin*, issued in Chicago, having speedily given up the ghost, the Spokane lodging-housers set up their own paper, *The Industrial Worker*, and, through its columns, announced themselves to the world for what they were. *The Industrial Worker*, while preaching a social revolution, repudiated the ballot absolutely, jeered and sneered at the same, and urged “direct action” only. Logically enough from such premises, the paper suggests theft, as well as other crimes and frauds, as legitimate weapons in the arsenal of the revolution that it agitates for. In short, the fruit of Slummery ripened mellow on the Anarchist stalk. The Spokane “I.W.W.” concern made good its refrain “I am a bum.”

It goes without saying that men and women, brought up in such an irrational and poisonous school, were bound to “break loose,” sooner or later, especially sooner. It has so happened. Their riotings they have sought to dignify, probably in all sincerity (as far as the rank and file is concerned) with the term of “Free Speech Fight”; and the capitalist Police and other authorities, only too anxious to help degrade Labor, vex, worry and bait it, gladly availed themselves of the opportunity.

That, under such circumstance, *Mother Earth*, the organ of the Anarchists Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman, should turn somersaults of delight, and refer to the Spokane “I-am-a-bums” as “our Spokane comrades,” is legitimate; equally legitimate, to those who have a grasp of social science, is the conduct of the Socialist party organization of Spokane, together with the S.P. press of the land—monthly, weekly, and daily. Just now when and immediately after the monumental failure of their Pure and Simple Ballotism, these bodies and papers, that had and have nothing but hostility, even vilification, for the original I.W.W. with the political clause, are seen merging enthusiastically with the Spokane Pure and Simple Bombism. The ostrich, when pursued, hides his head in the sand; the S.P., in distress, dips its head in a sewer.

With malice toward none, with charity for all, above all, with profound

reverence for Facts,—the S.P. having fulfilled its mission of illustrating the utter bankruptcy of its policy of Pure and Simple Ballotism, should now wipe itself out of existence, and leave to Anarchy alone the unenviable mission of soiling the good name of the Socialist or Labor Movement.

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