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EDITORIAL

S.P. IMPOSSIBILISMS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

IN the course of a long signed article in his Milwaukee *Social Democratic Herald* of the 25th of last month, Victor L. Berger touches up with deserved severity those members and papers of his party who are monkeying with the American alleged syndicalism, and whom he correctly calls “impossibilists.” To and of them he says:

“The American impossibilist is an *unsuccessful imitation* of the European *syndicalist*—from whom he borrows a few phrases like ‘direct action’, meaning the general strike, ‘the ballot is a humbug’, etc. Our impossibilist also prefers to pose as the social protector of the ‘man with the callous fist’ against the ‘intellectual.’

“And he calls every man with some brain an ‘intellectual.’

“However, there is this difference:

“The European syndicalists have a number of trades unions behind them. They represent something.

“There is simply no basis for our American impossibilists. A few of them are wealthy intellectuals who *play the ultra-proletarian* as a game—a few others belong to the slum proletariat. They mean nothing and they represent nothing.

“*Our impossibilists are really Anarchists.* Only they are either to ignorant to know it, or too cowardly to acknowledge, it.”

This is first rate. It is a bull’s-eye. It explains the secret why the *Social Democratic Herald* has kept its hands clean from the Spokane nastiness.

It is now in order for those members of Mr. Berger’s party, in whose head a tallow candle has gone up, which, however flickeringly, has enlightened them on the ineffectiveness of the ballot unbacked by requisite force to put a “bone into it,” to return the compliment to the gentleman and his fellow pure and simple ballot “impossibilists” with equal frankness and preciseness, as follows, to wit, that is to say:

“American impossibilist is an *unsuccessful imitation* of the European *socialist political party men*—who, owing to European conditions, have a legitimate mission to perform, and from whom he borrows a few phrases like ‘Vote!’ ‘On to the ballot-box!’, etc. Our impossibilist also loves to strut with his nose up in the air as if built of different clay from the proletariat, for whom he has no use but to collect dues and ballots from.

“And he calls every man who does not share his admiration for him a ‘demagogue.’

“The European Socialist political party men have a number of votes behind them. An increasing number. They represent something.

“There is simply no basis for our American impossibilists. A few of them are wealthy intellectuals who *play the ultra politician* as a game—a few others belong to the intellectual slum proletariat. They mean nothing and they represent nothing as shown by their vote. Although their vote was the only argument with which they met the charges of corruption, preferred against them, the vote-bubble has burst.

“*Our impossibilists are really bourgeois politicians.* Only they are either too ignorant to know it, or too cowardly to acknowledge it.”

That would be a return-bull’s-eye. If the two sets of impossibilists would only keep up bull’s-eyeing each other thoroughly, they will perform the only mission that is left for them to perform.

Their first mission was to demonstrate the S.L.P. sound. That mission is performed.

The mission now left for them to perform is to clear out, by bouncing each other out.

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