

EDITORIAL

A REMARKABLE DESPATCH.

By DANIEL DE LEON

“**T**HERE was a renewed slump in the stocks at the opening of the Exchange this morning, because of the results in yesterday’s elections which seem to indicate a Liberal majority so large that the assistance of the Irish vote may not be necessary,”—so runs the London despatch of the 18th of this month.

There is more meat, historic and sociologic, in this short financial report than in volumes of works on the history and social development of England.

Imagine such a despatch in the times of the [Plantagenets](#). The despatch would be simply unimaginable, as unimaginable as if it had talked of the telephone, or the X-ray.

The elections in England to which the despatch alludes have turned mainly upon the House of Lords, its prerogatives, and that, in turn, turned upon the material foundation of the Lords. An election, in the days of the Plantagenets, took place at a time when “white parasols and elephants mad with pride” were the fruit of a deed of land. The material foundation of the Lords, under the Plantagenets, excludes all idea of commercialism—an “unclean” idea to the “parasols” and the “elephants.” Whichever way the elections went, the whiteness of the “parasols” remained untarnished, the pride-to-madness of the “elephants” remained untamed. Evidently the times have changed; with them the men. Danger to the Land Lords throws the pulse of the Exchange, of “unclean” Commercialism, beating funeral thumps through its veins.

Nor yet is this all.

Imagine such a despatch in the days of Sir Robert Peel. Again the despatch would be simply unimaginable, and for opposite reasons. An election, in the days of the great Commoner, the days of the abolition of the Corn Laws, the days of

Manchesterian principles of free-trade, in short, the days of triumphant Capitalism against Land-Lordism—an election in those days, indicating an anti-Lords triumph, would send “stocks” booming. To conceive a despatch announcing a “Liberal” victory to announce a simultaneous flutter of trepidation in the pulse of the Exchange would be to conceive of polar bears pining on an ice hill in Greenland. Evidently, in this respect also the times have changed; and the men with them.

The London despatch heralds the fact that, like confluent small-pox, in Great Britain, the historically successive ruling classes—Land-Lords and Capital-Lords—have not supplanted each other, but have merged into one, ONE class, ONE pox-blister, the evil that betides either being felt by both. With the heralding of the fact, the remarkable despatch loudly toots the warning and command:

“An alliance with either is an alliance with ’tother also. He who would smite ’tother must strike at both!”

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