

EDITORIAL

BRYAN AND THE CHAUTAUQUA.

By DANIEL DE LEON

LEAVING aside the Republican papers that, being opposed to Wilson as a Democrat, are ready carpingly to criticize his Cabinet, and leaving aside also those papers whose owners, tho' normally Democratic, are financially hurt {by} the straightforward course which the President has been steering, and whose ill-nature toward the President naturally vents itself against the President's "political family,"—leaving all these aside, and discounting them, the bourgeois press has been falling over Bryan for what they call his "undignified" conduct in giving Chautauqua addresses "sandwiched between" Yodlers and other "catch-penny attractions."

Why such criticism on the part of such, otherwise, friendly papers?

Do not these "gentlemanly" Editors "sandwich" their editorial ingots between catch-penny advertisements, and even fraudulent advertisements?

Yes; and just for that very reason, and the reasons that flow therefrom, they feel constrained hypocritically to salaam to a standard which they themselves do not observe, and, what is more, a standard that is not of a piece with existing conditions.

During this very Administration two leading embassies went begging. None of those who were considered pre-eminently fit would accept. The post was too expensive: the salary too small: the nominee too poor to meet the deficiency.

There are only two solutions to the problem thus presented—either wealth and not capacity must be considered as the qualification for distinguished posts, or—? Or the appointee must be allowed to eke out his existence in the way he did before.

The hypocritical bourgeois mind refuses to accept, categorically, the former alternative. De facto it accepts it.

As bourgeois economics gets itself, along with its devotees, into frequent tangles, so does the bourgeois standard of ethics. As in the instance of the former when, for instance, the bourgeois pretence of humble submission to the “Law of Supply and Demand” is “remedied” by the wholesale destruction of food stuffs in order to keep up prices above the mark that the large supply would otherwise dictate; or when, inversely, the same law is “rectified” by shanghaiing workers in order to escape paying the higher price that a scarcity of labor would otherwise command—as in the instance of bourgeois economics the bourgeois “rectifies” and “remedies” things by some high-handed proceeding, in the instance of the tangle that the bourgeois standard of ethics gets itself into, the bourgeois makes up by a display of homiletics.

Bryan, lecturing on the Chautauqua platform “preceded by yodlers and followed by other attractions,” is a sight that brings home to the bourgeois upstart sociologic “family reminiscences” which he would like to keep dark; by denouncing the sight he also endeavors to veil the sources from which rich officials draw the funds with which they meet the deficiencies of their office.

As for us, we prefer to see an official eking out his expenses with lectures, whether preceded and followed or not by yodelers,—we prefer to see that sight rather than the sight of an Ambassador to Great Britain luxuriously covering the deficiencies of his post with the coined flesh, bone, marrow and blood extorted from the miners in the Coeur d’Alene; or an Ambassador to France covering similar deficiencies with the ill-gotten gains that proceed from the fraud of watering railroad stocks.

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Uploaded February 2016

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