

The People.

VOL. VII, NO. 11

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, JUNE 13, 1897

PRICE 3 CENTS

FIRST EDITORIAL

The Patria Club.

By DANIEL DE LEON

Our ruling class claims the right to rule on the ground that it has superior intellect. What this superiority amounts to may be judged from the utopian, rainbow chasing, horse-by-the-tail restraining efforts they are putting forth to keep the people from leaping off the tracks of the present social system. We have enumerated several of these attempts in previous issues. The plan of the Patria Club is the latest that has come to our notice—nor is it the less silly.

The Patria Club is an organization of leading fleecers of labor, who have grown fat under the present industrial dispensation, who fear the fleeces are growing restive, and who have reached the conclusion that the best way to prevent the dire calamity of their having to starve if they don't work is to train the young generation from the kindergarten up to patriotic devotion. In pursuit of this idiotic plan, the Patria Club offered a prize for the best essay outlining a kindergarten course that is expected to clap the blinkers of patriotism to the eyes of the young, and keep them in the traces when grown and full of wool for the capitalist clip.

The Patria Club is ignorant both in theory and history.

It is ignorant in the theory or the genesis of patriotism when it imagines that the seat of patriotism lies with the fleeces in a section of the human anatomy other than that in which it is located in the anatomy of the fleecers. With the fleecers the seat of patriotism is the stomach. Capitalism fills the capitalist's paunch, hence Capitalism is the beloved Fatherland of the fleecers. But the thing that fills the stomach of the capitalist is the very thing that empties that of the proletariat. For the same reason that the capitalist dotes patriotically upon capitalism, the proletariat is bound patriotically to detest the thing with ever deepening detestation, blinkers or no blinkers.

The Patria Club is ignorant of history when it imagines that any amount of

blinkers can keep from the head the information imparted to it by the promptings of the stomach. History is full of leading illustrations. If blinkers could do the work of full stomachs Voltaire and Victor Hugo, both brought up in Jesuit Colleges, would have talked to no purpose.

Silly Patria Club!

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

Uploaded September 2003