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SECOND EDITORIAL

Like Sagasta, So McCullagh.

By DANIEL DE LEON

Sagasta, the Chief of the Spanish Government, and McCullagh, the Chief of the New York Police, are being placed by themselves in interesting juxtaposition; incidentally, the illusion, that at bottom there is any substantial difference in the intellectual rectitude or moral basis of the ruling classes of Spain and of our own country, is ruthlessly shaken.

At the sitting of the Spanish Parliament, called there the Cortes, on the 7th instant, Deputy Mella was, at Sagasta's motion, "suppressed"; he was not allowed to speak and was put out. What was the occasion for such summary proceedings? Had he used indecent language? Had he uttered some new and unheard-of political doctrine? Had he made some treasonable or dishonorable proposition? No; no; no! He had quoted from the Bible, the Book on which, from the stony-hearted Queen Regent and her royal brat down to the lockeyed scrubwoman in the Escorial, the whole Spanish Government claims to rest, and by which it claims to be inspired. He quoted the words of Isaiah crying woe upon nations ruled by children, and undone by women.

In New York, the May Day demonstrations of the Socialist Labor Party were "suppressed" by McCullagh; neither parade nor open air mass meeting was allowed to take place. What was here the occasion for such summary action? Is the May Day demonstration an immoral one? Does it announce some unheard-of social doctrine? No; no; no! The May Day demonstration is the demonstration of a principle and a method. The principle that the solidarity of the working class of all nations is a prerequisite for the realization of that aspiration of civilization—PEACE; and that the working class, the class that alone is interested in peace and alone has to suffer by war, is also the class that has the MIGHT, that necessary thing to sustain RIGHT. The noble aim of PEACE and the practical means of MIGHT are both interwoven in our national history; the one rocked the cradle of the Nation's independence, the other affirmed it; in prose and poetry they have been extolled throughout the land; from the syndicated President, now our Chief Magistrate, to the lowest liveried lackey upholding capitalism, not one is there who would venture to dispute either the aim or the method that the May Day demonstration enunciates. They all must accept both.

When words, correct in themselves, arouse ire, the fault lies not with the words but with those whom they irritate. The bare mention of “rope” throws alarm among brigands: it suggests to their consciousness of wrongdoing the thoughts of impending retributive justice. Deputy Mella’s words, taken from the Book worshipped in all Spain, the declarations of the May Day demonstration, taken from universal history, grated on the ears of a Sagasta and a McCullagh because these gentlemen are the direct representatives of a criminal class, and as such, such words and declarations conjure up before their minds’ eyes the vistas of their class’ doom, and, with it, their own, of course.

Happily for Spain, the upheaval whose distant rumblings the cable has latterly been conveying to us, may, even at the moment of these writings, have thrown into the ditch the particular criminal coterie that felt rebuked by Deputy Mella’s words; but, tho’ here in the United States punishment and redress may not be so swift to reach the McCullagh class, come they must, and with all the added emphasis that a long confiding and patiently suffering, but finally aroused people can and assuredly will add to their judgment—solemnly uttered at the ballot box.

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