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SECOND EDITORIAL

## FIGHTING UNDER FALSE COLORS.

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**M**ore than once one hears drop from innocent lips the remark: "The debates in Congress mix me all up." The present expansion debate that is going on will no doubt be no exception to the mixing up qualities of our capitalist disputations. It, nevertheless, deserves close watching: if followed closely and approached with the key of Socialist science, the secret will be discovered of why these debates "mix up" the innocent; incidentally, the discovery will throw light upon kindred mysteries.

"Expansionists" are arrayed against "Anti-expansionists." The arguments they use are those of "ethics," "patriotism," "religion," "morality," "Americanism," etc., etc.; both sides thus seem to fight under the same banner. It must no doubt be highly "mixing" to the uninitiated how "Americanism," "ethics," "religion," "patriotism" and what not can each furnish such opposing practical conclusions: the one resulting in the "demonstration" that expansion is all that is holy and anti-expansion all that is unholy; while the other results in the "demonstration" of all that is just the reverse. And yet how plain is not the mystery!

In the first place, our controversialists are not saying what they mean, they are both concealing what they mean; their real reasons for holding, as they respectively do, are not trotted forth into the field, and, consequently, not being exposed to being hit, are not overthrown by one another; hence each side keeps its own field.

If the expansionists uncovered what they are really after, it would be found that their business, the industries that they represent and in whose behalf they are really speaking, need, in the opinion of these gentlemen, a broader market, and that that market can be best, easiest got by "expanding."

On the other hand, if the anti-expansionist capitalists were to open their hearts, it would be found that the interests of the industries they speak for would suffer by expansion.

Thus neither dares to say what he really means. Almost invariably the interests of one industry, in capitalist hands, flourishes best at the expense of an other. If either admitted what he is after, he would forthwith give his adversary weapons against himself; thus both sides dodge the question, set up false colors under which to conceal their motives, and shift the field of discussion from where it actually belongs to a field where it does not belong. Thus what they actually do is to raise a cloud,—a cloud that does not confuse them but that can not choose but confuse the innocent on-looker.

In the second place, the mystery helps to illustrate the scientific principle of Socialism that all sentiment about “patriotism,” “religion,” “our Fathers,” etc., is, not the foundation, but the shadow and reflex of material interests. To the capitalist, whose dividends, or plunder from Labor, will be so increased by expansion that he would be able to purchase some more rotten princes for his daughters, and regale himself with some more “Little Egypt” debauches,—to such a worthy expansion becomes the acme of “religion,” of “patriotism,” of “Americanism,” of “our Fathers,” etc.

And vice versa, to the capitalist, whose dividends i.e., plunder of Labor, are so threatened by expansion as to endanger the satisfaction of his lewd senses and his vulgar aspirations, to such “Pillar of Society” anti-expansion stands translated into the sublimest “Americanism,” the purest “religion,” the noblest “patriotism,” the most hallowed reverence for “the Fathers,”

Let the fact, like prominent phylacteries, be well kept in sight by the Working Class: only by so doing will it escape being duped by the phrases of phrase-mongers and schemers.

Material interests alone give direction to the aspirations of mankind, as a whole: civilization depends, therefore, upon the ascendancy of such material interests as turn the face of the race upwards. The material interests of the Capitalist Class turn the face of man towards the mire, hence Civilization demands their overthrow; the material interests of the Working Class turn the face of man towards a nobler life, hence Civilization orders their victory.

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

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