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EDITORIAL

TEMPERING THE SWORD.

By DANIEL DE LEON

There is a certain line of argument, which frequently crops up in the letters that come to this office from friendly sources, and yet betray so fundamental a misapprehension of the organic development of the organized Socialist force, now going on in the country, that the matter deserves consideration.

These correspondents, according to their different temperaments, express their loathing of the several bodies and individuals that are harassing the rear and flanks of the Socialist Labor Party, and like thorns are lacerating it; and the conclusion is unanimous with them that these individuals and bodies are “doing mischief”; hence, there is a unanimous expression of hatred for them. It is against the wrongfulness of the conclusion that “mischief is being done” by such elements that a word of warning is timely. The “mischief” being disproved, the resulting hatred should fall with it.

It is undeniable that the calumnies, the fraud, the blackguardism, the pettiness, the treason, the cowardice, that have constituted the only weapons wherewith the motley crew of Labor Fakirs, Kangaroos, and “intellectual” riff-raff have assailed and continue to assail the S.L.P., brand the whole pack as physical, moral and intellectual degenerates. It is undeniable that their conduct is loathsome. But it does not follow from this that they are “doing mischief.” Undoubtedly mischief is their only purpose; but neither does it necessarily follow that the evil purpose of the sinner determines the total effect of the sin. That Providence, whose ways are so often found to be inscrutable, presides also with ways of its own over the organic development of great historic movements, such as the Socialist Movement in this generation, and, in ways of its own, accomplishes its beneficent purpose.

Of no ordinary metal or temper must the Sword be, that, wielded by the Proletariat, will strike the shackles off the limbs of Humanity, and carve out the

Socialist Republic. Any alloy of dross would threaten it with breaking in two and with missing its purpose at the most critical moment. That Sword in America is the Socialist Labor Party. Whosoever can be taken from it, never was of it, was dross in its ranks, and well it is he be absorbed away; whosoever can be kept away from it, is not yet of it, would be dross in its make-up, and well it is he be yet kept aloof. Churned in the outer melting-pot of experience, much of the bulk of these elements is being purified, and rendered fit for absorption, and will ultimately merge indissolubly with the Sword of the Social Revolution.

The Sword of the Social Revolution in America is now being deliberately forged and tempered. In the scheme of Providence there is a place and a mission for the thorn, that, thrown into the fire, tho' it means to devour, aids in its way the work of tempering and purifying, while itself crackles in the furnace and is consumed into oblivion.

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

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