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EDITORIAL

VENTURESOME METHODISTS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE Methodist Ministers of the city of Philadelphia, in conference assembled, have adopted by a unanimous vote a report demanding the confiscation, absolute and unqualified, of the property of the Roman Catholic friars in the Philippine Islands upon the ground that the friars secured the said property “by theft and intimidation from a simple and confiding people.” The moral ground for confiscating property, established in this report,—acquisition by theft and intimidation from a simple and confiding people—is concrete enough to hoist every capitalist front pew-holder and church-donor, Methodist or otherwise. It is moreover concrete enough to hoist the whole capitalist system, enthrone the Social Revolution, and establish the Socialist Republic.

Surely, the Reverend Methodist gentlemen who voted so unanimously to expropriate the Roman Catholic friars of the Philippine Islands on the ground that they acquired the property “by theft and intimidation from a simple and confiding people,” do not mean that their Filipino brothers of the cloth actually “lifted” the gold and silver candelabra, now found in their churches, out of Filipino parlors; surely our Reverend Philadelphia gentlemen do not mean that their Filipino confreres leaped by moon or other light over the fences of Filipino land-holders, rolled up the real estate, packed it upon trucks, and decamped with it to their “estates,” grown thereby to mammoth proportions. Surely not. The only explanation, the only interpretation possible to the words “theft” and “intimidation,” found in the report, is that when people who toil not and do not spin, yet are found in possession of the wealth that can be the fruit of work only, it must follow that somebody is robbed, and that the robber is he who is found in possession.

Excellent sociological reasoning! It is a whole page taken from Socialist philosophy. And now the question comes, are these Methodist Ministers quoters or garblers of Socialism? If they are quoters of Socialism, then there can not be one sociologic morality for robber Filipino friars, and another for robber American lay

capitalists. Then the identical justification, for stripping the Filipino friars of their ill-gotten gains, exists for stripping the American lay capitalists of their ill-gotten gains,—theft and intimidation of the simple and confiding American Working Class.

What say the Reverend Methodist Ministers of Philadelphia?

The Socialists of the land, while awaiting the answer, hold their breath in suspense wondering: “Can we have all along done pulpitude a wrong in placing confidence in neither its powers of reasoning nor its moral integrity?”

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