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EDITORIAL

PANAMA IN EMBRYO, AND VICE VERSA.

By DANIEL DE LEON

ELSEWHERE in this issue is reproduced the account of the secret spiked police club that was introduced in this city under the Commissionaryship of Theodore Roosevelt, now President of the United States, and rough-riding the nation into war.¹ The account is now reproduced by reason, not only of its having been frequently requested, but because it is strangely illustrative of contemporaneous events upon the international field.

The act of sending naval forces to the Isthmus with instructions to keep off Colombian forces that might come to overthrow a “revolution” that had not yet taken place, and the resorting to such an act under the pretence of safeguarding a treaty of peace and friendship with Colombia is psychologically closely connected with the mental make-up that would place so vicious a weapon as the secretly spiked-club in the hands of the Police. The one act explains the other. They are two candles to see each other by. But there is also a third. While he was Commissioner of Police and the secretly spiked club was introduced, the so-called “Ship Democracy” was a party of official standing, polling its 25,000 and odd votes in the State. As such, its rank on the official ballot was not a matter of discretion. It was entitled by law to the third place. But this did not suit Commissioner Roosevelt, and he arbitrarily ordered the Ship Democracy to the fifth place. Of course, an order was obtained against Mr. Roosevelt and he was mandamus-ed to place the Ship Democracy in its proper ranks. The three events—Panama, Ship Democracy and secretly spiked club are kindred incidents.

“Law” means nothing to the capitalist: he is ready to violate it whenever it suits his whim or interest; “humanity” means nothing to the capitalist, under his vest beats a hyena’s heart; “order” and “peace” means nothing to the capitalist, whenever

¹ [See “The New Saw-Tooth Club for Policemen,” from the *New York World* of September 15, 1896, appended on page three. A second and lengthier article included in De Leon’s reference (“Returning to Barbarism: The New Club. If This Does Not Open Your Eyes It Will Open Your Head”) from *The People* of September 20, 1896, will be appended at a later date.—R.B.]

his pockets crave it, he is ready to trample upon order, and throw the fagot into civilization.

“Panama” is best understood when read by the light of the fiendish spiked police-club, and of the high-handed attempt against the Ship Democracy. The former is foreshadowed by the latter two events. Inversely, the workingmen at home may all the better comprehend what the spiked police-club means to them at home by the light of the Panama refined sharp practice abroad.

THE NEW SAW-TOOTH CLUB FOR POLICEMEN.

THE new police club, a short description of which has been published in The World, is already the subject of enthusiastic comment of the rank and file of the force in this city. The general belief is the weapon will carry terror promptly to the pugnacious evil-doer whose idea of gentle sport is to wrest a club from a policeman and hammer him over the head with it.

The new club, of which there are only two or three in use, has a swivel handle, which prevents it from being twisted from the grasp of its holder.

The novel feature of the club is the arrangement by which sixteen saw-teeth, each half an inch in length, pop out of sixteen holes, and dig into the hand which grasps it and gives one strong pull.

The teeth remain concealed until an attempt is made to wrench the club from a policeman. The united pulls in opposite directions lacerate the hands in a jiffy.

Transcribed and edited by [Robert Bills](#) for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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