

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 3, NO. 340.

NEW YORK, FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 1903.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

A GEM AND ITS SETTING.

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WITH the Republican State Convention of Ohio casting its shadows before it; with Mark Hanna's "eulogy" of Roosevelt casting its shadows before it, wherein, while seeming to describe Roosevelt, he pointedly described Cleveland as the only fit man to steer capitalism through the next Presidential storm; with the rumblings of the creaking structure of capitalism heard from far and wide;—with all that, and in the midst of all that, the State convention of the so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic, party of Ohio meets in Columbus. Providentially, the "gem" and the "setting" came together, the latter illumining {illumining?} the former.

The report of that so-called Socialist convention has been published in these columns. It was as full of points as an egg is of meat. Yet, hard though it be to pick out one point that more than any other characterizes the affair, there is one that we shall have to take up. It is a statement made by the delegates of Local Cincinnati: they said:

"Nearly all the members of Local Cincinnati ARE CARRIED ON THE LOCAL BY A FEW GOOD MEMBERS."

And they were proud of it.

In other words:

1° The local is private property—indeed, a typical status of the whole so-called Socialist party.

2° The local is a mob, and, like all mobs, is dominated by a few intriguers,—indeed, a correct photograph of the whole.

The Socialist Labor Party has demonstrated that a bona fide political movement for the emancipation of Labor must own its own press: without that, such

a movement is at the mercy of the private individuals who are the proprietors. Indeed, the premises and the conclusions on this head are strictly parallel to those that explain why the working class is a slave class. The Socialist Labor Party, thereupon further demonstrated that, from one end of the country to the other, the so-called Socialist party press was private property, consequently that the party that allowed such a state of things was itself private property. How deep the steel of this logic entered the soul of the owners was noticed by their conduct, At first, they doubled and twisted, and denied. But they were followed up in all their doublings, and twistings and denials, until, finding themselves thoroughly cornered, they have begun to make a “virtue out of vice” by beginning to justify such private ownership as a “tendency toward independence from party control”!!—in other words, the independence of what should be the servant from the control of what should be the master! The admission made by the Cincinnati delegates of that party reveals officially the extent to which the gangrene has spread in that party. As its press so its membership, its delegateship at conventions, its vote on referendums, etc., etc.,—all are held in the vest-pocket of a few: if these are willing, and to the extent that they are willing, there is a press, a vote, a delegateship, etc.; if they will the other way, these things collapse.

The second point is a sequence of the other. Bodies whose memberships are kept up by “a few good members” are mobs; as mobs they are the toy of masters, consequently purchasable.

To think of such a bizarre formation talking against “bosses”! To think of it masquerading as a body that is to grapple with Hannadom!

The gem is well set. The setting is well gemmed. What wonder that this gem crew is found fused almost everywhere with its capitalist corrupt politician setting from Haverhill to Sheboygan, from San Francisco to Cleveland?

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

Uploaded December 2006