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EDITORIAL

HIPPODROMES.

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ON Sunday, the 10th instant, a large aggregation of elements—"they were all there"—launched a new scheme from the platform of the large assembly hall at Cooper Union. The scheme was the rearing of a "People's Palace." The object of the scheme was—thanks to one of those "accidents," that contribute to wipe out the vulgar notion concerning "accidents," and to prove that "accidents" never happen, that all that happens is logical, and, therefore, the outer reflection of an inner fact—the object of the scheme, we were saying, was well and concisely put, or be it neatly let out of the bag, by the first speaker, Mr. Earnest H. Crosby. The projected "People's Palace," said Mr. Crosby, is to be "a hippodrome where every man could ride his hobby."

The uninitiated may wonder. Why still another hippodrome, and much smaller at that? Is not our national hippodrome big and ample enough? In a country where speech and the press are free, and of the dimensions of this, has not each and every rider of a hobby ample space and opportunity, between Ocean and Ocean, the Great Lakes and the Gulf, to ride and ventilate his hobby to his heart's content? Is not our vast territory, does it not present a hippodrome vast enough for the most vaulting hobby? Let the uninitiated be initiated.

Look at some recent performances of President Roosevelt. They help to understand.

There was the Anthracite Commission; there was also the action against the Northern Securities. In the one and the other capitalist interests seemed to have been assailed—to the joy of the miners and innocent workingmen, in general, and to the joy of the middle class. At the same time, the net results, in the one instance and the other was the keeping capitalist interests in safety,—to the greater joy of the capitalists who saw a farcical wreath of victory placed on the brows of the actually vanquished miners, and who saw an equally barren victory heralded as a grand one for the Trust-smashers. Was

not all this in the nature of a specialized hippodrome performance? The capitalist politicians can now strut forth before the workingmen and the middle class, and, pointing at the Commission and at the action against the Northern Securities, say: "You see, we are your friends, give us your votes"; and they can immediately thereupon, turn to the capitalists, and, pointing at the same two events, say: "You see, we protect your interests, despite appearances; give us your confidence." Does not this yet enlighten on the projected new hippodrome? If it does not, this other instance will.

Among the speakers was Prof. Clark of Columbia University, a corporation that is just now seeking \$10,000,000 and, of course, popularity. The professor stated: "We have to get the referendum," etc., in other words he planted himself upon "democracy." But it so happens that the identical corporation glories in another luminary, Prof. Giddings, and this gentleman's special trapeze has been, and is, to show that "democracy is impossible." Clear now? While Prof. Giddings' language will oil the purse-strings of the money-bags, to whom "democracy" is an unmitigated nuisance, if not danger; Prof. Clark will administer "democratic" hypodermic injections to the masses, whose outcry against a would be popular educational institution would materially affect the flow of the wished-for funds.

To him who has eyes to see, stuck in a head to think, the purpose of the new scheme is obvious. It is obvious why it must be a hippodrome. It is obvious why it is not a hippodrome too many.

More than money; more than policemen's clubs, spiked and otherwise; more than militias and "regulars";—more than any of these, or all put together, the capitalist class, just now, needs confusion of the public mind.

Capitalist society has reached the point when the capitalist is like the fisherman, who can fish best in troubled waters. Nothing will tend to create the needed confusion like the projected hippodrome, the scheme for which was launched last Sunday;—at least such is the hope of those who are pulling the strings of the launching manikins.

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