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EDITORIAL

THE USES OF HEARSTISM.

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THE defeated Tammany candidates—Mayor McClellan and his running mates McGowan and Metz—have received their “certificates of election” from the “regularly constituted authorities”, and are being sworn in by Republican and Tammany judges. These performances are being gone through under the political benediction of the Court of Appeals decision, which, despite proof that the inspectors of election had committed high-handed fraud in the counting, refused to allow the ballot boxes to be re-opened and a recount had, on the ground that “it is the wiser policy that the result shall not be left in uncertainty after its proclamation by the Board of Inspectors at the close of the canvass”, and that “it is impolitic that the administration of Governmental affairs should be permitted to be embarrassed through the delays occasioned by a judicial re-opening of the canvass at the interest of any defeated candidate”. In view of the facts and the reasoning, the decision amounts to saying that it is the part of capitalist wisdom and good policy, a crime having been committed by the inspectors by returning a defeated candidate as elected, to cure the crime by submission. Or, compressing the decision into compacter shape, that the election inspectors are there not to register the will of the people, but to correct that will in the interest of the peace and comfort of the ruling class, whenever the will of the people is expressed in a way that might, could, or would, in the opinion of the said ruling class, inconvenience their peace and comfort aforesaid.

To obtain such a decision, in fact, to wring such an avowal under the official sanction of the highest capitalist court in the Empire state, is no slight merit on the part of the reform movements to which the name of “Hearstism” may be given collectively. Hearstism, like any other reform movement, will fail utterly in accomplishing any of the reforms, or “one thing at a time” measures that it strives

for. Reform implies tinkering at the existing social system and upholding it. As Dickens well called it, the existing social system is a Princess' nails system—a system where the masses are given nail parings of the ruling class. The capitalist social system has outlived its usefulness. The season for reforming it is gone by. At such a season, reforms are not only useless, they are unattainable. They imply suspicion that things are not as they should be. A ruling class, rotten ripe for overthrow, can brook not the slightest suspicion upon its soundness. Any project at reform threatens its whole structure. For reform our capitalist ruling class has, accordingly, the same feelings, instinctively, that it has for Revolution itself. Hearstism is, therefore, bound to miss fire. Yet, while it misses fire, it accomplishes results of first magnitude—for Socialism. Hearstism aims at the carom of reform, but “pockets the ball”—for the Social Revolution. Such a ball is the decision of the Court of Appeals upon which the defeated Tammany candidates are now swearing themselves into office. Everybody was well aware of the corruption of the Depews, of the lackeyship of the Odell-Governors to the Harriman railroad owners, of the robbery of the McCalls, the Alexanders, etc., etc., but now, since the insurance investigations, accurately knows all about it. And so every thinking man, every one who is not a political moon-calf or a pure and simple political Socialist was well aware of the imbecility of the Socialist ballot unbacked by the proletarian might, the industrial organization, to enforce it, but now, since the Court of Appeals decision, accurately knows all about it. Correctly was the statement made in the Minneapolis address on *The Preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World*:

“Political power is reached through the ballot box. But the ballot-box is not an open field; it is a veritable defile. That defile is held by the agents of the Capitalist Class. The election inspectors and returning boards are capitalist appointees; they are veritable garrisons with which the Capitalist Class holds the defile. To imagine that these capitalist garrisons of the election defiles will complacently allow the candidates of the Revolution, whose program is the dismantling of the political burg of capitalism, peacefully to file through, is to indulge in a moon-calf's vision.”

If Hearstism did nothing more than compel the admission of this important fact it did not live in vain. It matters not that Hearstism did not aim at such a result: it matters not that it missed and is bound to miss its carom. IT POKETS THE

BALLS—FOR US. The rising Movement for the rearing of the Socialist Republic needs many a ball of this caliber: it can not itself pocket such balls: its mission is quite another—to drill the proletariat and exercise it in the use of the “wind-falls” that Hearstism furnishes—and is there to furnish.

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