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EDITORIAL

THE CAUSE THAT WON AND THE CAUSE THAT LOST.

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THE convention of the Democratic party of the State of New York has come and gone. It has been described as “the most turbulent and riotous convention ever seen.” Why the turbulence? Why the riotousness? Epithets speakable and unspeakable were hurled by one set of delegates at the other set. Fights took place. Tables were upset. In short, the police had to be called in to quell the riot. Why all this? Was it personal animosity, a disease that can develop into wonderful manifestations of hysteria? Not at all! Was it, then, some shade of opinion clashing against another shade, and both involving some great principle, or Cause? Still less. It was a Punch and Judy show, and the Punches and the Judies banged one another over the head, not responsive to any feelings in their contending breasts, but responsive to the wires that pulled the figures on the stage.

The premonitions of the free fight that made up the principal work of the convention were furnished by the falling out between Bourke Cockran, the Tammany Congressman from this city, and Charles F. Murphy, the Tammany Chief, several weeks ago. The two Tammanyites denounced each other as “bad Democrats”. When that dust settled it was discovered that the issue was something infinitely less lofty than Jeffersonianism, for which, as every intelligent man knows, neither combatant cares a fig. The issue was nothing less prosaic than the receivership of the Knickerbocker Trust Company. Cockran wanted it for his father-in-law Ides, Murphy wanted it for some crony of himself. Murphy’s pet, on the one side, and Cockran’s pet, on the other, stood for different bunches of Wall Street speculators and magnates. In this way Pat McCarren was suctioned into the swirl, he being the political representative of the Sugar Trust. It seems that McCarren’s side of the controversy, which is also Cockran’s, turned out to be in control of fewer

banks and syndicates. The upshot of it all was that the Murphy bunch “indignantly ejected” the McCarren delegates, or a majority thereof, leaving Bird S. Coler, political agent of the Brooklyn Traction Company, as the boss in that city in lieu of the “usurper”, as McCarren has been called.

He who would really believe that the Murphy element was indignant at the “McCarren methods” of fraud, of stuffing primaries, of enlisting the services of thugs, and of voting dead men, must be an Innocent Abroad. He who would be taken in by the show of “Democratic Principles”, set up by the Murphy victors, must be green, indeed. He who is curious enough to want to know exactly what it was all about, should scan the stock exchange reports. He will there learn, from the stocks that went up and from those that went down, what the “Cause” was that triumphed, and what the “Cause” was in whose behalf McCarren “made a thrilling speech”, and predicted dire things to the Democratic party.

But while these two “Causes” were in each other’s hair on the floor of the Democratic convention, justly denouncing each other as scoundrels and liars, there was a third Cause present. That Cause hovered over the rioters below, in silent eloquence over their heads above. It was the Cause of popular enlightenment on the urgency of sweeping off the Nation’s stage both the political shadows and the bodies that cast the shadows at the political conventions of the brigand Capitalist Class.

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

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