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EDITORIAL

PAUL LAFARGUE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

WITH their joint departure from life, virtually in each other's embrace, nearly 70 years old, and determined to escape the annoyances to themselves and surroundings that infirm old age brings with it, Lafargue and his wife, Karl Marx' daughter Laura, sealed the poesy of a life, the poesy of which the scientific attainments of neither tended to deaden; on the contrary, the poesy of which the scientific attainments of both rather fed.



PAUL AND LAURA LAFARGUE (1870)

Paul Lafargue, a Cuban by birth, was of French-Jewish and Cuban Mulatto extraction. When asked at Lille, France, by the writer in 1904, to whom Lafargue imparted the information, whether he had any predilection for any of the races through whose loins he was strained, he promptly answered, Yes, and added, "I am proudest of my Negro extraction." The statement gives a cue to the understanding of Lafargue's

characteristics and career.

Paul Lafargue had a constitutional affinity with The Oppressed. His being was a harp the strings of which responded melodiously to the sighs of man. The poetic nature of Lafargue is the dominant key in his life-work. Off and on he wandered away from that sphere into the realm of statistics, only quickly to return to his own element. There he was at his best.

Lafargue's *Religion of Capital* is a satirical allegory, or allegorical satire of

matchless beauty, keenness and rhythm. *His Right to be Lazy* is a gauntlet, bodily thrown at the feet of the bourgeois apotheosis of “Work,” and is accompanied with organ notes deep-searching and stirring. Even his monographs on questions, in which he drew deep at the fountains of philology and ethnology, are illumined with the poetry of his nature.

As he was internally, so did he look externally. In a crowd of thousands Lafargue, with his flowing hair, vivacious eyes, sprightly port, athletic lissomness, would be easily picked out as a bold poetic type—a child of nature in whom what civilization has of artificial never extinguished the originality.

Already four years ago Lafargue bore his years with painfulness. A philosopher and a lover of man to the end, he cared not to live after his lamp lacked oil. Jointly with his companion in life, he bade us all adieu.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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slpns@slp.org