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EDITORIAL

## THE “MAGICIAN’S APPRENTICE” UP TO DATE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**T**HE Social Democratic party, as it issues from its recently held Chicago National Convention, is in comic-tragic plight. How tragic and how comic the plight, appears from the reflexion it casts upon the columns of the only paper that rises to the dignity of a national organ of the said S.D.P., to wit, the Milwaukee, Wis., *Wahrheit*.

The Socialist Labor Party, hewing close to the line of the impending Proletarian Revolution; building, accordingly, with all the slowness that deliberation demands, and all the deliberation that an earnest purpose and ripe information render imperative,—that Socialist Labor Party was pronounced too slow, too narrow, too stagnant, too ORTHODOX by a certain element in the land, that forthwith proceeded to “take the Socialist Movement into its own hands.” That element was the Social Democracy: it threw “orthodoxy” to the dogs; it emancipated itself from the trammels of “narrowness;” it quickened itself out of “stagnation” into flow; instead of “slowness” it rushed with rapid pulse—the rapid pulse whose orchestration is the death-rattle.

Says the *Wahrheit*, in part, while commenting upon the situation in its own party:

“During the last year we have had to record a tremendous accession of geniuses and Messiahs, among whom, it must be admitted, there is many a Catiline and many a Judas. . . . How, for the rest, things will develop in this country lies ‘hidden in the dark folds of the Future,’ the history of the Socialist Movement in America, unfortunately, does not allow much favorable anticipation. . . . Besides, there is the inflow of many populist and parboiled elements, many of whom have already in the Populist party practised political selling-out as a trade,—the affair has a sad aspect.”

Not more mortuarily sound the peals of the “Dies irae” over the catafalque that enshrines the dead, with all his hopes and aspirations.

Thus was the fate of the Magician’s Apprentice, immortalized in Goethe’s ballad. He too thought his master too slow, too narrow, too stagnant, too orthodox. He too “took the matter out of the master’s hands” (as he thought), and tried his own hands at it on the sly, in “broad,” “swift,” “unorthodox” style, and his plight—as the Spirit which his unorthodox rashness had invoked, and his broad inexperience could not master, overwhelmed him—is forcibly recalled to mind by the comic-tragic plight that the Social Democracy is in to-day.

The Socialist movement implies a REVOLUTION: Organization, not Mob; Knowledge, not Vanity; Fortitude, not Shuffling; Practice, not Phrases; Integrity, not Turpitude; Deliberation, not Light-headedness, are theses implied, and antitheses excluded in the term. As there is no “royal road” to the acquisition of learning, neither is there any “short-cut” to a social revolution, least of all to that culminating revolution of all ages, the revolution that shall rear the dome of the Socialist Republic.

Firmly holding the Socialist movement in its hands, as alone found trustworthy in the land, the Socialist Labor Party proceeds undeterred, enthusiastic, and conscious of assured triumph, with its “slow,” “narrow,” “stagnant,” “orthodox” work of educating, organizing and drilling the army of the American Proletarian Revolution, that will storm the fortress of Privilege, and emancipate our people.

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