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EDITORIAL

A FAST-SNORING RIP VAN WINKLE.

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MR. William Jennings Bryan's *Commoner* continues to bubble over with indignation at the recent so-called "Insular Decisions" rendered by the United States Supreme Court. "The attitude taken by the Court," Mr. Bryan declares, "is to the effect that 'the Constitution does not follow the Flag.'" Fact is that the decisions establish just the reverse. They establish that the Constitution follows the Flag as closely as the heel follows the toe; or, to use a better fitting simile, as closely as the skin follows the muscles, that is, adapts itself to them.

When the "Flag" was first unfurled, an infant bourgeoisie held the flagstaff and pulled the halyard; to-day flagstaff and halyard are in the hands of an adult bourgeoisie, the Capitalist Class, full-blown into a Plutocracy. Accordingly, when the "Flag," the symbol of the Nation, was first unfurled, the ruling Class was flushed with the revolutionary breath, which, sincerely by some, hypocritically by others, always breathes the breath of noble ideals. A democratic republic naturally sprang from the combined aspirations and economic conditions of the time. Colonial possessions are excluded from such conception: they imply central despotism. Closely fitting such a state of things the Constitution "was framed," which to all sensible folks means "was interpreted." Since then, as already stated, and as is well known to all except the fast-snoring Rip Van Winkles, the infant or revolutionary bourgeois gradually grew into man's estate, until he has reached to-day the rotten-ripeness of old age. At each such stage, the "Flag" continued to be, what flags always are, the symbol of the day; and in equal tempo with the progression, the "Constitution followed the Flag;" in the measure that the "Flag" accelerated its step in the progressive run, the "Constitution" quickened its steps, as is clearly shown by the tracks it left in the Supreme Court interpretations; and, to-day, when the "Flag" has broken into a break-neck trot, the "Constitution" is faithfully following it, with tongue hanging out, keeping step with the "Flag's" mad career,—as shown by the Insular Decisions. Plutocracy and despotic rule, colonial dependencies, are co-

ordinate terms.

It certainly is a heinous political crime for a “Constitution” to lag behind the “Flag.” To-day, the only element guilty of the thought is the Bryan fast-snoring Rip Van Winkles, who, in their stupor, would keep the “Constitution” from following the “Flag” and dream of producing in the XXth Century the never heard of political monstrosity of a flagless-“Constitution” and constitutionless-“Flag.”

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