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EDITORIAL

A REVEREND FALSIFIER AND SOCIAL MENACE.

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FROM the mouths of those who combat Socialism on the ground that it would destroy morality and religion, one expects to hear the truth, for the truth is alleged to be the very essence of both. But there is often a vast difference between expectation and realization, for as Antonio well exclaims in the *Merchant of Venice*, “O what a goodly outside falsehood hath!”

These observations are mainly induced by an address on “What Socialism Proposes,” delivered by the Rev. Dr. Nevins, and reproduced from the *Philadelphia Ledger* elsewhere in this issue, under the heading “A False Statement.”

This address is remarkable for its misstatement of fact, amounting apparently to deliberate falsehood; for every one of the propositions purporting to emanate from Socialism emanate from the clerical consciousness of the Rev. Mr. Nevins.

It is false to assert that Socialism proposes “to level down,” “to maintain an impossible equal distribution of wealth,” “to hold back those who have ability,” “to transfer one’s wealth, property and trade from his own hands to the State to own,” and “to transform society as a whole into a mighty association, and make the chief end of man in this association the production of wealth for the State.”

It must be repeated, emphatically repeated, that the man who knowingly says Socialism proposes such things deliberately lies.

Answering a series of similar objections last May on the part of the *Catholic Union and Times*, the *Daily People* pointed out that Socialism is an industrial evolution inherent in capitalism. Continuing it said further:

“The Socialist, let us repeat, acting in accordance with the tendency toward concentration, desires the collective ownership of capital: that part of wealth used in the production of more wealth for capitalist profit and not social use.

Socialists are not communists. They do not desire nor do they think it essential or beneficial to society that society should own and control ALL property.

“This is made clear in the oft-repeated quotation from Schaffle’s *Quintessence of Socialism* that ‘The Alpha and Omega of Socialism is the transformation of private and competing capitals into a united collective capital.’ This quotation, made by a man who is not a Socialist, is eminently true; though it is not entirely accurate, as it implies an arbitrary plan rather than an evolutionary growth.

“Again is the fact that Socialists are not communists, who desire the social ownership and control of ALL property, made clear in another quotation, not so well known, by another non-Socialist: the American professor, Richard T. Ely. He says in his Chatauqua lectures, ‘Objections to Socialism,’ ‘Socialism, the reader should remember, means simply the socialization of the instruments of production, social control over and management of production, social distribution of the national dividend, and private property in individual income.’

“Private property, except in the instruments of production and distribution which are social in character and effect, . . . will be possible under Socialism. He who labors will be given an income in proportion, to do with as he chooses. He can spend it in houses, books, libraries, clothes, paintings or whatever he will, SO LONG AS HE DOES NOT USE IT TO ENSLAVE OTHERS . . . Socialism has no relief for those who would live without working.”

From the foregoing it will be seen that Socialism is an industrial proposition, more bent on the preservation of private property—that is, the product of the workers: his “individual income” as Ely calls it—than is Capitalism. It will also be seen that primarily Socialism is no more bent on the subversion of “morality, religion and God” than is the capitalism over which the reverend gentleman waxes so eloquent. As a consequence none of the propositions to which he calls attention has any existence outside of himself; and are, therefore, more imaginative than real.

Society, nevertheless, has dangers in connection with Socialism. These dangers consist in the addresses of gentlemen, lay as well as clerical, who palm off falsehood for truth and thus prevent the possibility of a peaceful solution of industrial problems.

When viewed from this standpoint, the Rev. Dr. Nevins is a greater menace to Society than Socialism.