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EDITORIAL

BOYCOTT AND COUNTER-BOYCOTT.

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AS WIDELY advertised in the public press, Bishop James E. Quigley of Buffalo, N.Y., issued on the 23rd of February a pastoral letter to the priests of the German and Polish churches in Buffalo placing the Social Democratic party under the ban of the Roman Catholic Church. Such conduct, at first blush, would arouse popular indignation. It matters not what political convictions a man may be of, every worthy American citizen would appear solidly arrayed against any pulpiter, of whatever denomination, who would officially interfere in politics; and the indignation would be all the more vehement if the meddler spoke as the subject of a foreign potentate, as Bishop Quigley does. But the nation's saving sense of humor will, in this instance, stay its indignation. The occasion is rather for a loud, long, roaring and prolonged guffaw.

Even a superficial reading of the Bishop's pastoral suggests quaint suggestings. Why is the thunderbolt factory of the Bishop set in motion specifically against the Social Democratic party? How comes it he does not flare up at the Socialist Movement in general? Or can it be that he is actually so well informed as to know that the Social Democratic party stands to Socialism in the relation of Ireland to snakes? And even so why does he pick out the shivering and forlorn bakers-dozen of Buffalo Kangaroos, who don't know themselves whether they are dead or alive, for the toads on whom to ply this toad-sticker? These questions, that naturally suggest themselves and in that very order, suggest a full and careful reading of the Bishop's fulmination that, in its turn suggests some special inquiry. The secret that then leaps forth is well deserving of all the roars of laughter that one may have to spare.

This is the secret: There are in Buffalo two obscure, penny-chasing German papers, struggling hard for existence. They are the *Volksfreund* and the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*. The former is a Roman Catholic organ, the latter is the organ of the

German Organized Scabbery, which flies the Social Democratic party colors. The competition of these two papers for subscribers is as sharp as that of two rival dives facing each other on the same street. That is the secret of the Bishop's letter to the German and Polish priests of Buffalo; that explains his singling out of the Social Democracy; that accounts for his wrath at the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*; and that is the milk in the coco-nut of his indignation at the threatened boycott of the *Volksfreund*. In other words, the Bishop's letter is but a counter-boycott hand-bill in a fight for subscribers, i.e., shekels.

Who, in view of all this, would not rather laugh than indignant; and, rather than denounce the meddling priest, thank him for a conduct that lets in so much light upon the "godliness" of pulpiteerdom?

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

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