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EDITORIAL

## THE FRENCH ELECTIONS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**A** SUMMARY of affairs in France, as revealed by the election returns, is that the Socialist Movement has received a set-back. The figures for the class-conscious or bona fide Socialists, as published in these columns, are reassuring, even cheering when it is considered what sort of cabal Socialism had to beat its way through in France during these elections. Nothing short of the annihilation of Socialism was aimed at by the banking and Dreyfus interests who had captured Millerand. That they failed speaks well for the Parti Ouvrier Français and its affiliated bodies. Nevertheless it must be recognized that whatever delay is made in positive, tangible progress by Socialism is in the nature of a set-back; this is so everywhere; it must be especially so in a country of such revolutionary instincts as France, and where the history of the Labor Movement has so magnificent a perspective. The aspect of things thus depicted gives ground for reflections sufficiently grave; but the comments made thereupon from certain sources add gravity to the situation.

Beginning with Hyndman in England, and extending through the continent, even in France, the blame for the set-back is being laid at the door of Millerand. No doubt Millerand is the immediate cause; but who caused Millerand? And there is the rub. Beginning with Hyndman, the people who are now blaming Millerand are the very folks who steered Millerandism into continued life.

Millerandism was THE burning question at the last International Congress, held in Paris. Unfortunately for Socialism, the Congress was controlled by a majority of theorickers. With the exception of the delegations of the Socialist Labor Party, the Irish Socialist Republican party and the French Parti Ouvrier, besides a few other individual votes, the vote of the Congress went solid for the so-called Kautsky resolution. Apart from other serious defects of the resolution, it was fatal in view of what really was up. It

was a dodge that concealed itself in volumes of words. The one thing to be done, the express condemnation of Millerandism, the resolution failed to do. It dodged the issue. Such was a virtual endorsement of Millerand. At the very least it was an expression of doubt as to what opinion should be held in the matter. Anywhere such conduct could not fail to be construed by the Millerand element as favorable. The deed being done in Paris itself, its effect was doubly strong. The Millerandists felt jubilant. The result was their brazen adherence to their former course. The further result was the set-back received by the Socialist Movement in France.

For this dire result none is responsible but the late International Congress at Paris, and none deserves blame more than the collection of Hyndmans, Kautskys, Adlers, Vanderveldes, Plechanoffs, etc., some, like Hyndman, mere stage-strutters, others, like Kautsky and Plechanoff, mere theorickers, and all of them treating the Socialist Movement like Indians who have found a watch. It is not the least of the grave aspects of the situation in Europe that this guilty element, alone responsible for the pertinacity of Millerandism, should now have the effrontery to fill the air with the cry of "Stop Thief!"

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