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EDITORIAL

MODERN KNIPPERDOLINGS.

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WHEN, under the throbs of the capitalist revolution, seeking to free itself of the trammels of feudalism, the religious revolution of Luther broke out in Germany, the language he held, and which was sanely in harmony with material development, fell also upon the ears of several lunatics outside of the lunatic asylums, and was lunatically interpreted by these. Luther had spoken of the “naked truths.” The expression seems to have knocked out what little sense there was in the heads of the aforesaid lunatics. They interpreted it literally. They stripped themselves—men and women—and rushed about proclaiming themselves the “Naked Truth.” The wild chimera became tragic. A band of these seized the town of Munster, where they indulged in their wild capers, until massacred. A leader in that insanity was one Knipperdoling. The Knipperdolings are not dead. The *Iowa Socialist*, an organ of the so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic Party, dishes up, in its issue of January 16, and over the gentleman’s own signature, the latest Knipperdoling that we know of—brought up, however, to date, that is, with the sincerity of fanaticism left out, and in its stead self-seeking scheming tacked to the old Knipperdoling freakishness. The gentleman in question is the Rev. Frederick G. Strickland.

Like the Knipperdolings of old, the Rev. Strickland has heard something he did not understand; that, as in their instance, filtered queerly through his head; and, just as with them, reappears colored with his own quaint genius. The Rev. Strickland heard about Trades Unions. He has heard a great deal about that. But his Knipperdoling mind could not digest the subject. He could only perceive in it something to get at cash by. Having been trained in no useful trade, he became a jaw-smith, joined the only party that has any use for the occupation—the said alias “Socialist” party—and now proposes a jaw-smiths Union—“speakers Union” he calls

it! In other words the sober-sane revolutionary idea of Unionism, of an organization against the exploiter by the exploited, now leaps from the Rev. Strickland's Knipperdoling pate transmuted into a scheme whereby members of an organization, all of whom are supposed to be gathered for a common purpose, are to band themselves with the object in view of, by "Union rules," preventing—what? Why, PREVENTING THEMSELVES FROM EXPLOITING THEMSELVES!

A serious mistake it would be were the Rev. Strickland to be taken for a unique freak in his set. Knipperdoling was not alone; would not have been heard of had he been the only one of his kind. He typified a set of people. So does the Rev. Strickland. Owing to the relentless logic of the Socialist Labor Party on the burning subject of Trades Unionism, and to the consequent wild dance that the S.L.P. has unremittingly led the "Union" frauds and fakirs of the Rev. Strickland's party, his party has come as a whole, to assume a Trades Union posture that puts its foot into the "party's" mouth, and that simultaneously wriggles every toe of the "party's" foot into its own Trades-Union-posture's mouth. The net result of it all is that the said alias party is extensively a Knipperdoling affair in point of "pure and simple" freakishness, only brought up to date in the matter of low down labor fakir scheming—the which two features have found their joint and clearest expression in the Rev. Frederick G. Strickland, and his proposed "Jaw-smiths Union."

Fortunately for the modern Knipperdoling, his life has fallen in benigner days. He will not be massacred, he will be uproariously laughed out of existence.

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

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