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EDITORIAL

THE “FRUIT” THAT IS IN DANGER.

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THE A.F. of L. Volkszeitung Corporation municipal ticket here in New York city is in such dire straits that it has entered upon the delirium tremens stage. Within three days after the Corporation’s principal organ, the *Volkszeitung*, jubilantly announced that its Carnegie Hall ratification meeting of the 15th instant “was not a mass meeting but a demonstration,”—within three days of that proclamation, the self-same *Volkszeitung* comes out with a front-page long drawn-out moan over the imminent danger of the “fruit of its party’s activity” being wholly lost to it. According to the moan the danger comes from the Hearst candidacy. This is false pretense. Nobody better than the Volkszeitung Corporation party is aware that the nerve that aches is not the Hearst candidacy, that the real danger comes from two other wounds, from which it is bleeding at its vitals.

Say that the Hearst candidacy deprive the Corporation party of even as many as 10,000 of its last year’s votes. What of it? That surely would be no serious injury to a sound party of Socialism. The harm would certainly be repaired. The Hearst posture is false: it is false in economics: it is false in sociology: it is false in politics. Such misleading movements have arisen before: they will arise again. However powerful their effect for evil upon a soundly constructed party of Socialism, the effect would be transitory only. The proof is seen in the Socialist Labor Party and the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance. Will-o’-the-wisp movements untold have arisen against them and these vagaries were at times backed by a veritable Albigenian Crusade of crime and calumny, often physically enforced. The effect was that the vote of the S.L.P. was reduced to one half, and the membership of the S.T. and L.A. was ripped up. Nevertheless, powerful though the onslaught was, the fruit of the S.L.P. and of the S.T. and L.A. never was endangered. As to the latter, it has ripened into the many times more powerful Industrial Workers of the World; as to the former, it is now ripening mightier than ever. Even if crushed to earth, Truth

will rise again. Aye, just because of its being combated, just because of its being dipped in seething tears, just because of its being tried and tempered in the furnace of adversity—just because and in the measure of such trials, Truth earns its spurs and acquires the fitness for ultimate triumph. Falsehood never can inflict a lasting wound. It never can endanger the fruit of Truth. Whatever wounds it may inflict are skin wounds only. It can never touch the vitals. Accordingly, it is not in the Hearst candidacy to endanger aught. If the Volkszeitung Corporation party is a sound party of Socialism, let Hearstism rip up that party as it may, the wound it inflicts would be stanchable, and beneficial for the future. Not from Hearstism proceed the wounds that are draining the lifeblood of the Volkszeitung Corporation party. The ominous flow of blood proceeds from two other wounds, two wounds at the Corporation party's vitals.

The triple head of the municipal ticket of the Volkszeitung Corporation's party was deliberately chosen. It consists of three picked men. They were all three chosen as a demonstration in favor of the A.F. of L. On the same principle that Tammany Hall nominates the men who are most assailed for their Tammanyism, the Volkszeitung Corporation nominated the Morris Braun ticket with its Lee & Cavanaugh right and left bowers. The policy is a shrewd one, when victory is certain. Victory is then interpreted into a "vindication". The policy is a stupid one when victory is doubtful. There were ample signs to warn the Volkszeitung Corporation against picking out the Morris Braun ticket at the time that it did. The Corporation was, however, seized with the blindness that they are ever seized with who are doomed to impending fall. Rapidly maturing conditions have since proved the action fatal. The foundation of the Industrial Workers of the World with its declaration of war against the obscene labor-lieutenants of the Civic Federation, and the immediately following enthusiasm with which the fakir-ridden rank and file hailed the advent of the I.W.W., threw the flash-light upon the utterance of the Volkszeitung Corporation's employe and candidate for Mayor, Lee, when he contemptuously designated the I.W.W. in an editorial as "so-called industrialists", and, seizing the weapon of calumny forged by the Corporation, sought to throw odium upon the I.W.W. by referring to it, again editorially, as "De Leonite disruptionists". Such utterances from the running mate of a Morris Braun—the professional A.F. of L. committee man who stands documentarily convicted by Wm.

E. Trautmann of victimizing the brewery workers and of selling them out to the bosses, and who also stands convicted of more recently aiding Belmont in outraging the Interborough strikers—and of Cavanaugh, who obsequiously bows down, without a word of protest, before his A.F. of L. Union's contemptuously rejecting an anti-militia resolution at the very time when the militia was riding rough-shod over the miners on strike in the west—such attempts, on the part of the *Volkszeitung* Corporation's employe and candidate for Mayor, at throwing obloquy upon such a movement as the I.W.W., lighted up the essence of the whole Morris Braun ticket, while the steadily growing virility of the I.W.W. movement could not but proportionally resent the affront and detect the betrayal of the cause of Labor.—That is a wound at the vitals of the *Volkszeitung* Corporation party; that wound can never be healed; the blood that flows from that wound is a precursor of death.

There is a second wound of this category. The *Volkszeitung* Corporation party formerly called itself "Social Democratic party". Upon the decision of the Court of Appeals denying it the use of the word "Democratic", the Corporation sought to assume the name "Socialist". The Socialist Labor Party detected in the move a tricky attempt on the part of the Corporation to lay a foundation for next year, when a State election would be on, to deprive the S.L.P. of its full name. So holding, the S.L.P. started proceedings against the newly styled "Socialist party". The S.L.P. might for once have done injustice to the Corporation. The attorney of the S.L.P. took it upon himself to test the point. He approached the Corporation with a flag of truce. His proposition was, despite the certain rights of the S.L.P., to discontinue the proceedings against the Corporation's new name, and that both it and the S.L.P. guarantee each other their names. If the Corporation's move was without guile; if it was sincere in its charge that the proceedings initiated by the S.L.P. were intended to "fish in troubled waters"; if the Corporation had at heart the cause of the "unity of the Socialist forces", and it, indeed, had an aversion to recourse to the "capitalist courts"—here was its opportunity. IT SPURNED THE FLAG OF TRUCE and, encouraged by an inconsequential decision in its favor by the Board of Elections, it dropped the mask and IMMEDIATELY INSTITUTED PROCEEDINGS TO DEPRIVE THE S.L.P. OF ITS NAME. Nor was that all. The Corporation's organs—*Volkszeitung* and *Worker*—SUPPRESS ALL MENTION OF THE OFFER

MADE TO THEM FOR PEACE. This course of wrong doing and stupid duplicity could not remain a secret, or without its effect upon the onlooking masses. They now know that the Corporation’s original move was crooked; they now know that the “recourse to the capitalist courts” is the Corporation’s own doing; above all they now know that the Corporation is treating them for fools in that it seeks to keep them in the dark, and that it, accordingly, adds stupidity to its crookedness in imagining that it could keep the lid on such matters. Knowing all this, the onlooking masses, the current of whose sympathy had pronouncedly been setting in towards the S.L.P., now is setting in more strongly than ever in that direction—and the Volkszeitung Corporation party is aware of the fact.—That is the second wound at the vitals of the Corporation’s party. It is a wound that does not concern economics or Socialism, it is one that concerns character. The Corporation party stands convicted of attempting to monkey-shine the public. That wound also is one that can never be healed. The blood now flowing from it is lost for all time.

No wonder the Volkszeitung Corporation’s party is throwing the fits of delirium tremens, and that, in its efforts to stanch the wound from which its A.F. of Hellism is fast bleeding to death, it has now begun to hold out to its wavering columns the prospect of having Eugene V. Debs several days as its speaker. Whether the man who, last June, at the Chicago convention correctly stigmatized the A.F. of L. as “preaching capitalist economics”, “serving capitalist purposes”, and “chloroforming the working class while the capitalist class go through their pockets”—whether such a man can be induced to come to New York to bolster up the sinking fortunes of a Morris Braun ticket, that is a matter that will have to be seen before it is believed. At any rate, this stands firm. The “fruit” of the Volkszeitung Corporation’s party activity, being admittedly in danger, is thereby admitted to be not the “Fruit of Life” but the fruit of the Upas tree of Death.

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