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FIRST EDITORIAL

## Our Political Equinoctial Storms.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**B**y the time the astronomical equinoctial storms strike us, stripping our trees of their foliage and leaving them bare to blasts of the winter, the political equinoctial storm—the real and first one ever experienced in our country—will have struck the forest of our political movements and parties, carrying off the illusions that have hitherto clung to them, and forcing their bare trunks to face the rude reality of facts.

Phrases, sentiment, declamation—of such was hitherto the foliage of the political parties that strove for masterhood. The many were caught with the show; with it the scheming few sought to hide the trunk and branches and stem to which indeed they clung, and which alone they cared for. But the giddy<sup>1</sup> summer weather of our political life is rolling by; the fall is at hand; already the field is strewn with the leaves of several politico-patriotic illusions, and before November the soil will be matted with them.

The Prohibition party started first. It shed in Pittsburgh last week its outward show. The material needs of its middle class rank and file asserted themselves, and off flew the pretences of “alcoholism” being THE issue. The bolt at Pittsburgh was the party; what is now left of it is but a sorry skeleton, that will look all the sorrier in November.

The Democratic party is about to follow suit in the shedding of its foliage of phraseology. “Jeffersonianism,” “Jacksonianism,” etc., are all about to be carried off by the blast. The needs of a bankrupt Southern Shoddiocracy and of a bankrupt Western small farmer class, are recking little what maxims the “party’s founders” adhered to. A 50-cent dollar is the ragged sheet needed by the modern “Democrats” to pay off their debts and reduce the wages of their wage slaves.

Such, likewise, is the predicament of the Republican party. All the prattle with which

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<sup>1</sup> [Giddy. Presumably from the Scotch word *guid*, meaning good.—R.B.]

its foliage used to rustle about “Lincoln,” “Emancipation,” “America for Americans,” is about to be hushed by the approaching storm. The plutocracy, sublimated capitalism, that controls the party, is determined, is driven by the needs of its class, to carry out its programme to its logical conclusion: reduce America to a province of International Capitalism, and our people to the level of the poorest paid wage slave.

And the People’s party, that loud rustling tree of elegant foliage? The class interests that constitute its body and branches is ready to drop its prettiest phrases, forget its wildest denunciations of the old parties, and openly coalesce with that one of them that demands the cheap money which the expiring middle class imagines will regalanize it into vigor.

In this forest stands but one tree, yet a sapling, but of promissful growth, and fated to overshadow all—the Socialist Labor party. It from the start condemned false appearances. Its trunk and form were from the start deliberately exposed to view. No phrases, no clap-trap did it seek to hide behind. The class interests of the Proletariat, of the wage slave, is the only interest it pretended to represent. All its vigor went into the formation of its fibre, none was lost in gay deckings of gay foliage. And now, when at last the season of relentless storm approaches, it alone is truly in condition to weather the storm.

The day is nigh, when all the other political trees in our national political forest will lie prone, beaten down by the gale of a people’s needs, while the mammoth tree of Socialism will remain the sole mistress, affording under its ample branches and rich foliage the protection long needed by a long-suffering people.

[Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.](#)

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