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EDITORIAL

“GENOSSE TAENZER.”

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THE New York City local of the so-called Socialist party, known in this State as Social Democratic party, held on the 7th instant a meeting in this city on the subject of the “California Troubles,” these “troubles” having been brought on by the fusion of the California wing of the so-called Socialist party with the Union Labor party, whereby a candidate of the Democratic party, Livernash, became a candidate of the said so-called Socialist party. The *New Yorker Volkszeitung* gives an extensive account of the debate. In this debate, as on most other occasions, it is found that the “sense of the body” finds expression through and is incarnated in one man,—“Genosse Taenzer.” The following is a conscientious translation of what the “Genosse” said:

“As a party, we have nothing to do with the Unions. By summoning the Trades Unions to independent political action, we invite just such occurrences as befell in California. If we persist in our present system of agitation, we shall soon have here also a Union Labor party. In Milwaukee and in Wisconsin, such things are impossible. There the Unions are invited merely to send delegates to the convention of our party, where none but party members can be nominated.”

As the sticking qualities of the mucilage manufactured by Stickwell, and hence known as Stickwell’s Mucilage, are providentially advertised by the name of the manufacturer himself, so in this instance, the saltatory qualities of the Trades Union “policy” of the so-called Socialist party enunciated by “Genosse Taenzer”—Comrade Dancer or Hopper—are providentially elucidated by the name itself of its best exponent, indeed, its incarnation. Translated into the vernacular, the dancing or hopping qualities of the Trades Union “policy” of the so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic party, are these:

“We want the votes of the fakir-led pure and simple Trades Unions; also, and very muchly so, do we want their money,—as much, at least, thereof as we can get. Hence, we must talk politics to them; hence, above all, we must praise them: whatever rascality they commit, we must laud as ‘a noble waging of the class struggle’: however stupidly felonious their leaders may behave, we must sing their praises as ‘champions of Labor’: whatever infamous slander these leaders may set afloat against the Socialist Labor Party for exposing their treason to the Working Class, we must make ourselves telephones of. ‘No crawling, no money.’ And money we need to fight the S.L.P.”

Having hopped on that leg up to that point, the “policy” throws itself on the other leg and dances back:—

“But we must not say ‘Independent Labor Politics.’ If we do, the pesky Union fellows will take the bit between their teeth, and set up a political party of their own, a Union Labor party. And then the S.L.P. has beaten us with our own weapon.”

Having danced back on this other leg, the “policy” again throws itself on the first leg and hops forward again:—

“We can not get at the votes, especially the money of the fakir-led Unions, unless we ‘bore from within.’ To lambaste them ‘from without,’ as does the S.L.P., would be to pull tight against us the strings of their purses. ‘No wrongs hushed, no hush-money.’ And what would become of our press, that can not live without such hush-money?”

Having again hopped forward so far, the “policy” once more throws itself on the other leg and dances back again:—

“But if we boost them, and inflate them with their own importance; if we habituate them to the first fiddle role with ourselves as modest ‘borers from within’ second fiddle, they will consider themselves THE THING. The purse rules. They have the purse. And we are goners.”

Having thus bumped itself on either leg, the “policy” then performs a ballet dancer’s pirouette whirl to this effect:—

“There is only one way out,—humbug them all around. Tell them they are the WHOLE THING, and treat them as NOTHING. Make them believe they are going into politics, but treat them as food for cannon only. Humor them with the idea that they got something to say, and take the plug from under the idea

by limiting the candidates they can vote for”; etc., etc.

It takes a very swift whirl to so completely turn a man’s head as to cause him to imagine that such a course will stand. One must be very much of a Taenzer (dancer) to grow so giddy. But “Genosse Taenzer” is, we said, the incarnation of the bogus Socialist party, and as such, the dance he dances he is forced to by the music that the Socialist Labor Party plays;—and a wild dance it is that the S.L.P. leads him.

One thing or the other: either “boring from within” is the correct thing, and then a Union Labor party “bored from within by Socialism” is the only logical political manifestation of the Socialist Movement; or “boring from without” is the correct thing, and then only the Socialist Labor Party is entitled to the floor.

The issue is between these two ideas. One or the other must prevail. All saltatorial Taenzereien will dance themselves off the stage.

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