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EDITORIAL

## THE PULVERIZER PULVERIZED.

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**T**HE *Irish World* of January 3, has an article by Father L.A. Lambert, against Socialism{,} with which it seems very much pleased. It is so pleased therewith that it heads the article: "Socialism Pulverized."

The article lays down, as its basic principle of argumentation, a principle that is correct, refreshingly so, to wit, that in treating a subject one must deal with its principles as expounded by its most authoritative expounders. Nor does the article ignore the fact, nay it expressly announces it, that, on the subject of Socialism, Karl Marx is such an authoritative expounder. Now, how does the "Pulverizer" of Socialism exemplify his loyalty to a dialectic principle that he recognizes to be necessary to all intelligent discussion, if honestly, or to all honest discussion if intelligently conducted. Let's see.

The occasion for the "Pulverization" is a letter by D. O'Donnell of Frontenac, Kans., to the *Freeman's Journal*, combating an article against Socialism, from the pen of Father Lambert, that had appeared in that paper. The first argument of the "Pulverizer" is:

"He (O'Donnell) tells us that he is a Catholic and a Socialist, 'as he understands Socialism.' In our article, which he criticizes, we did not combat Socialism as he understands it, for we know not how he understands it. We combated the principles of Socialism as formulated, explained and defended by its most accredited exponents and leaders."

That's good! That's in line with the principles above mentioned as indispensable to intelligent and honest discussion! It matters not "how Mr. O'Donnell understands Socialism," it matters not "what he means by Socialism and Socialist terms." How did Marx understand it, what did he mean? That's the question. Now watch the "Pulverizer." Without even a line behind which to shelter one's surprise, the "Pulverizer,"

immediately after the above passage, proceeds this wise:

“Our correspondent does not make it clear what he means by our ‘economic system.’ It seems to us that by the term he means,” etc., etc., etc.

Hold on “Pulverizer”! What need you care what your correspondent “means”? What is that to you or anyone else? Did you not justly relegate to limbo “how he understands” the subject of Socialism and its technique, or what he understands thereby? What dire need prompts you suddenly to take his “understanding” and “meaning” from the limbo you justly consigned both to? What stress of weather suddenly impels you to drop, ignore and disregard Karl Marx, the one and only accredited and authoritative expounder of Socialism, whose name you mention and acknowledge as such? He has defined exactly what he means. Why lay him aside, upturn your own correct established principles of honorable and intelligent criticism, and seek to fathom Mr. O’Donnell’s meaning of a Socialist term, and theory upon the subject, and thereby set up your own,—your own, which, for the same reason that Mr. O’Donnell’s are of no account, cut no figure whatever in the consideration of Socialism?

The “Pulverizer’s” dire state of mind may be inferred from such an initial performance. It requires no inference, however, when one follows him further through the mazes of his pretentious criticism. Again and again he twits Socialism with lack of self-reliance, and, as against such Socialist tactical weakness{,} he utters such pearls of wisdom as these: “He whose shoe pinches and pains him is himself the proper person to remove it”; “When you want a thing done, and can do it, do it yourself,” etc., etc. Always keeping “Pulverizer’s” well{-}expressed principles of criticism in mind, remembering that it is Socialism he is criticizing, not forgetting that he mentions Marx as the authoritative expounder of Socialism, and, finally, aware of the Marxian slogan: “THE EMANCIPATION OF THE WORKING CLASS MUST BE THE WORK OF THE WORKING CLASS ITSELF,”—alive to all this, what conclusion is one to draw other than that the copy of Marx, that Father Lambert possesses, is none other than the copy of the one-copy edition, formerly in the exclusive possession of the late Archbishop Corrigan, and from which that lamented prelate drew the startling information that Marx had recanted?!

Father Lambert left Socialism untouched in his “Pulverization.” The only thing that was thoroughly exposed and pulverized by him was himself. How mighty must not that cause be, how buzz-saw-like, that those who would monkey with it are put to such shifts as the Father Lamberts, and left in such a plight as he.

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Not until Father Lambert shall live up to the dialectic principle that he preaches as necessary to all intelligent discussion, if honestly, or to all honest discussion, if intelligently conducted; and not until he shall have consigned to the Index Expurgatorius that copy of that one-copy “Corrigan edition of Marx” will he deserve to be treated otherwise than as a three-card-monte fakir.

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