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EDITORIAL

## LETTING OUT CATS.

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**W**HEN the capitalist finds himself crowded by the Socialist, and realizes that he can not hold the position that he is a wealth producer, he forthwith seeks shelter in a cloud of abstractions. One is that his share in the wealth produced is the reward of the risks he takes, another is that it is the reward of his abstinence, a third is that it is the reward of his enterprise; he usually clinches the last point with the announcement that Socialism would undermine initiative and destroy enterprise: everything would depend upon the Government: the individual would have to lean so much upon the Government that he would forget how to stand upon his own feet: whereas, under capitalism, the Government only regulates the conduct of individual towards individual, leaving both to exercise their self-reliance. Hence capitalism develops enterprise, while Socialism would develop paternalism. The Congressional debates on the railroads in the Philippine Islands are letting out cats galore on the subject.

When our American capitalists took possession of the archipelago they found there only 120 miles of railroad, extending from Manila to Dagupan. Capitalist “initiative and enterprise” started to improve upon that. A complete system of railways was projected, aggregating about a thousand miles; and then?—and then? And then self-reliant Capital exhibited its self-reliance—by “standing upon its own feet” and thus earning the reward of its enterprise? No! By getting its Government to guarantee 4 per cent return for thirty years! Needless to say that, if American Labor had demanded from Congress a one-half of one per cent return on the fiber it would have to expend in building the projected roads, American Labor would have been hooted out of that Temple of Anti-Paternalism for aiming a blow at individual self-reliance and enterprise. Quite otherwise when the application came from the capitalist class for a guarantee of 4 per cent return upon its stolen goods.

“Risks,” “Abstinence,” “Enterprise”—these are but variations to the same tune, the tune of plunder. The capitalist class takes no “risks”; if it at all “abstains” the abstinence is of honor and sobriety; and as to its “individuality” and “self-reliant enterprise” that is but terms to conceal the fact that its Government is there to be leaned upon.

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