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SECOND EDITORIAL

Sovereign, the Clown

By DANIEL DE LEON

Mr. James R. Sovereign has once more meteorically shot through the public firmament. His fake organization of K. of L., so called, is so wholly collapsed that it offers no further opportunity for self-advertising; the silver mine baron's campaign has turned out so disastrous that its heap of ruined platitudes is now too low a stump from which to do any more hollering; and his own reputation for knowing what he talks about is so discredited that he was running great risk of wholly sinking into oblivion. But he wouldn't. Somehow he got himself into the public press again. And, to draw attention to himself, he now turns up in the role of a blind Cassandra, up to date, seeking to horrify the people with blood-curdling prophesies. He informs the people that they have lost faith in the ballot, that he is the recipient of untold invitations to join a raw-bone and bloody secret society, and, like Artemus Ward's tragedian, he struts across the stage, shouting: "Berlood, largo; berlood!"

The people have not lost faith in the ballot. What the late campaign did teach was that middle class politics are suicidal: they scare the middle class itself away, and rivet the large masses of the working class to the capitalists. It taught eloquently that the working class can be united and held together only on an outspoken revolutionary platform. The magnificent Socialist vote, all things considered, settles that.

In the second place, Mr. Sovereign is not getting any such letters as he says, at least not in any such numbers. Mr. Sovereign belongs to a clown class that can't count. We know more such. Each of these looks at himself in the glass and imagines he sees a whole regiment, and says, and is silly enough actually to believe, that the "people" are all there with him. It is barely two years ago when this identical Sovereign was, according to himself, the recipient of "hundreds of thousands of letters," from all parts of the country, by workingmen who were "flocking to the standard of the K. of L." One-thousandth of these would have kept the order up. Yet the thing has run down so low that Mr. Sovereign's salary had to be cut down, and there is no money coming in to pay even that little.

Finally, to imagine Mr. Sovereign on his feet in case of a real outbreak is

funinness itself. At the first noise he will crawl behind Jack Haye's petticoat, and the two will creep under the nearest bed, fearing that the police are at last after them to demand an account of certain schemes concerning the bribing of aldermen to obtain franchises for wild cat gas companies.

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

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