



EDITORIAL

THE PARTY'S VOICE.

By DANIEL DE LEON



The Volkszeitung Corporation Goose:—"What I know about Trying to Capture the S.L.P."

The largest membership vote—2861—, yet Recorded on an issue Presented to the Party, responds to the Call of the National Executive Committee, and thus Puts Its Foot Down hard Upon Reaction, together with all that the Word Implies.

aggressive, relentless policy, solemnly adopted by the Party in National Convention of '96, and subsequently justified by maturing experience, receives the Party's emphatic verdict of approval.¹

The Masters—the rank and file—have been heard; and in unmistakable notes too; and through the regular channels, besides.

The returns of the General Vote, called for by the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Labor Party last August 1, and tabulated on the fourth page of this issue, are of transcendent significance. They close an old, and open a new era to the Movement in America.

Upon the largest vote yet cast by the Party membership—2,861—and uttered through the unprecedented number of Party organizations—144 Sections—on an issue presented to them, the National Executive Committee is overwhelmingly upheld, and thereby, the straightforward,

¹ [A reference to the Socialist Labor Party's decision to endorse the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance.]

And the demonstration was worthy the occasion.

Repeatedly has the warning been uttered in these columns: We may not be Socialists in one corner of our mouths, and sots in the other. Socialist science banks upon the Class Struggle, with all that "Class" implies, and all that "Struggle" implies. Back of both lies the recognition of the principle that material interests shape the views, and direct the actions of man in social evolution. Only those material Class Interests, that make for progress, promote the moral sense; the material Class Interests that are reactionary, create immorality. Accordingly, the Struggle of Classes, with its roots low down in matter, presents above the surface the spectacle of a conflict between Morality and Immorality, Purity and Impurity.

Such at all points was essentially the nature of the internal conflict that the S.L.P. just emerges from, victorious. The most groveling of reactionary class interests—the small traders'—gathering around them the kindred and supplementary interests of the Labor Fakir, banded themselves in a foul conspiracy to ambush the Party. Like attracts like. The foulness of the principles, of the aims, of the weapons and of the conspirators drew to them the support of whatever foul element had lain low inside, and also the applause of all the foulness outside, the Party throughout the length and breadth of the land. The foul suburbs of capitalism strained to annihilate by capturing and ditching the Party of man's redemption in the land.

Critical seemed the situation for a moment. Surprised overnight, as it were, the Party reeled; the turmoil sought to be created by the conspirators, who, of all things avoided, a verdict from the Party, and thus sought to prolong disorder, as the only waters in which they could fish, threatened to spread. The National Executive Committee stepped in with firmness; it went straight to the point; the general vote it called for was tantamount to a call: "Shall the S.L.P. live; yes or no?"

The response—from those agreeing, together with those disagreeing in manful manner, with the National Executive Committee—has been emphatic; it and its effect are well reproduced pictorially by Comrade Sidney Armer, of San Francisco, in the magnificent cartoon that adorns this week's first page.

An old page may now be turned down in the book of the Movement in America, and a new page turned up.