

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 2, NO. 12.

NEW YORK, FRIDAY, JULY 12, 1901.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

SOCIALIST UNITY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

TRUE unity, consisting in the aggregation of homogeneous elements to the exclusion of all others is at last accomplished in France. The Social Revolutionary forces have all broken away from the middle class exploiters and political “arrivists” who seemed for a while to have succeeded in fraudulently appropriating them, and making them serve their own dastardly purposes. By that natural law of gravitation which operates in the moral not less strongly than in the physical world, they found each other, came together and are now one.

The readers of THE PEOPLE—and they alone in this country—have been kept thoroughly posted on the progress of that mighty conflict between false and true Socialism which has reigned in France for the past three years. It was, and is still more than ever, deserving of their close attention, for the value of its teachings cannot be over estimated, and its effects upon the proletarian movement of the whole world will still be greater in the future than they have been in the past. Its history so far, may be briefly summarized as follows:

Until scientific Socialism was first taught in France by Guesde some twenty-five years ago the proletarian movement of that country was rather “insurrectionary” than “revolutionary.” The failure of the common uprising had actually killed it. A few “Blanquists” alone remained, very earnest, and thoroughly class conscious, but by no means clear-headed. With the appearance of the “Guesdists” a wonderful change began to take place. Their “Parti Ouvrier Français” (French Labor Party), despite all obstacles, soon became a moral and numerical force. The “Blanquists” themselves, though retaining their autonomy as an organization, acknowledged the soundness of the principles and tactics of the new agitators and, as honest men, co-operated with them.

The working class of manufacturing centers fell into line. The proletariat of the great industrial North became a unit. First, Paul Lafargue was sent to the House of Representatives by the city of Lille; then Jules Guesde, by the city of Roubaix. In

the meantime Valliant, of the Blanquists, and some of his associates, entered the municipal council of Paris. Propelled by these primary successes the organization rapidly spread throughout the country. Socialism became a power.

Not only the plutocracy but the middle class, not only the aristocratic reactionists but the republican conservatives, began to tremble in their stolen boots. The middle class, in particular, saw its doom written on the book of fate, but with its traditional hypocrisy, undertook to stem the tide by sidetracking the proletarian movement. Some of its brightest “intellectuals,” under the lead of Millerand and Jaures, professed to have seen a new light and declared themselves “Socialists.”

To be sure, the Parti Ouvrier Français looked with suspicion on these new allies; but it could not dampen the enthusiasm which these remarkable accessions of “intellectual power” excited among masses which were as yet insufficiently educated, impatient for some improvement in their wretched condition, and inclined to see in the reserve of the more enlightened Guesdists an evidence of personal jealousy.

It goes without saying that the “intellectuals” did not “throw themselves” into the “Socialist movement” for the mere sake of serving the middle class. They looked, first of all, as any true middle class man is bound to do, for their own personal aggrandizement. A seat in the Chamber was good enough in its way; but it was good inasmuch only as it might be used as the rung of a ladder to climb to the top, where the power lay with its large emoluments and enormous patronage. They watched {for} their opportunity, knowing that it would surely come.

And the opportunity came sooner, even than they expected. “The affair”—the Dreyfus affair—brought it on, and Millerand was lifted into the “bourgeois” Cabinet, at the head of the Ministry of Commerce, that is, with a patronage and consequent power of corruption unequalled in our own White House.

With Millerand’s conduct since then; with the infernal machinations of his supporters against the Parti Ouvrier Français, for the disruption of that bulwark of Revolutionary Socialism; with the cowardly act of the International Congress in adopting the famous and infamous “Kautsky resolution”; with the withdrawal of the Parti Ouvrier Français from the so-called French National Socialist Congress, held immediately thereafter; with the boast of the “Intellectuals” that if the Parti Ouvrier Français had not thus fully committed suicide they would in fourteen days actually kill it; and lastly, with the withdrawal of the “Blanquists” and the “Communists” from the so-called “Unity Congress” held at Lyons, our readers are

acquainted.

Now comes, as a logical sequence, the union of the “Blanquists” and the “Communists” with the Parti Ouvrier Français, supplemented by the adhesion of the most important and compact labor federations of France, and of a number of powerful Socialist “syndicate ouvriers,” or trade unions. The “Intellectual” bunco-steerers of the middle class{,} driven out of the proletarian, class-conscious army of emancipation with a whip of scorpions, stand aghast, apologizing, professing good intentions, and begging for mercy.

Of the effects of this victory of True Socialism we shall have to speak later on. They are already felt in Germany, in Belgium, and in all the countries where a middle class spirit had been for some time threatening the integrity of the Socialist movement.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded April 2006