

# DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 3, NO. 332.

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, MAY 28, 1903.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

## THE MERRY WAR.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**T**HE duel, on next year's Presidential tickets, between the innocent politicians and the professionals—that is to say, between the light-headed brigade, whose head is stuffed with “honorable aspirations”, and the veteran field-m Marshals of capitalist society, who give not a fig for the “honorable aspirations” that they raise dust with, but are solidly planted on the dollar-and-cent—is rapidly losing its dull character and assuming the magnitude of a war or a battle. The combatants are becoming more numerous, and the temper displayed in some quarters is becoming more acrimonious. All this may tend to confuse the “issue” and blur the line of cleavage. It is well, to insist all the more upon both, and to reiterate them. So far from the increased number of combatants and the increasing noise they make, becoming a source of confusing {confusion?}, they help to understand what's up, provided the issue and line of cleavage are kept distinctly in mind. As events unfold, the article first published in these columns, and which called considerable attention, on the subject of a speech recently delivered by Hanna at a private banquet of financial magnates, is being confirmed point by point.

Taking into consideration only the capitalist powers that actually steer the country, these are to-day divided into two main camps: They are the capitalist protectionists and the capitalist free traders. Hanna heads the former, Cleveland the latter. The death of McKinley deprived the Hanna camp of a safe figurehead and imposed upon them the unsafe, simply because too picturesque, Roosevelt. In the absence of this complication, the two camps would wage war to the knife against each other—in their back parlor conventions. In the presence of the complication, they may at any time make common cause. Thus, accordingly, is Hanna seen showing his teeth to Roosevelt, and simultaneously causing the Republican press to boom Cleveland: thus, accordingly, is Platt holding language that must be irritating to Roosevelt, and simultaneously the anti-

Platt Democratic press is drawing ever closer to the otherwise “unspeakable boss.” With these elements occupying the center of the stage, there is Bryan as a clown in the performance, entertaining the children, and there is Hearst cautiously looming up, to the not slight annoyance of the main combatants.

In the meantime, the working class is pursuing that peculiar tenor of its way described by Marx in a passage of the *Eighteenth Brumaire* as indicative of a mental unripeness that allows “the political battle to be waged over its head.” The large number of strikes, differing in not the slightest respect from those started and lost twenty and more years ago, present a significant orchestration to the merry political war that is going on in the upper capitalist circles. Nevertheless all of these are highly explosive ingredients, which, coming together may, at a moment’s notice, place a wholly different complexion upon the situation.

He who would know and keep knowing “where we are at” should lose not one of the passes that are being made at one another by the chief combatants, nor should he miss a single trick of the side clown performances.

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