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EDITORIAL

SOCIALISM AND ROMANISM.

By DANIEL DE LEON

AN indignant Missouri correspondent writes:
“At the unveiling of the tablet of Thomas Dongan, Governor of New York from 1663 to 1668, Cardinal Farley said that ‘where the liberties of the people are committed to a Catholic their liberties are safer than when committed to any other individual.’ I would like to know what you think of that. What do you say to such impudence?”

What we have to say is:—

There is no more impudence in Cardinal Farley’s words and sentiments than in the sentiments and words of Protectionists who declare that “where the liberties of the people are committed to a Protectionist their liberties are safer than when committed to any other individual”; or of Free Traders who declare that “where the liberties of the people are committed to a Free Trader their liberties are safer than when committed to any other individual”; or of Socialists when they declare that “where the liberties of the people are committed to Socialists their liberties are safer than when committed to any other individual.”

There is no political organization in existence that is a “scheme of schemers” against popular happiness. That self-seeking schemers are often, if not generally, found in all political bodies does not change the fact. The schemers of schemes would have no chance were not honest, however mistaken, conviction, entertained by honest men, at the foundation of political bodies. The Roman Catholic political machine offers no exception to the rule. However mistaken, there is, for the backbone of Romanism, the honest conviction that the masses are incapable of self-government, hence, that, in order to secure popular happiness, Absolutism, mystic Absolutism, is needed.

Socialism denies, from foundation up, the soundness of Romanism as a political

system. Yet Socialism, just because it is a political system deducted from scientific premises, refuses to see in any political concept the scheme of fiends and scamps; it looks through appearances; it perceives the material foundation in all other political movements; it recognizes the logic of their conclusions while denying the correctness of their premises;—and while granting the sincerity of each in believing, and the right of each in saying that the country is safest in their respective hands, claims for itself the identical privilege, and combats them all.

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