

EDITORIAL

SOCIALISM AND CAST-OFF CLOTHING.

By DANIEL DE LEON

IT so happens—things will happen in that way, constant reminders that happenings are not accidental—that within a few hours two communications reached this office from widely different localities, yet mutually illuminating each other.

The one will be found in another, the correspondence column; it is headed “Dealers in Cast-off Clothing”¹; the other contained a document, the May 11 *Weekly Bulletin* of the Socialist party, on page 2 of which there is, underscored for our benefit, this entry:

“PROPOSED NATIONAL PARTY REFERENDUM.

“Paducah, Ky.

“Moved by Local Paducah, Ky., that a referendum vote be taken on the question of holding a Unity Conference for the purpose of uniting the Socialist party and the Socialist Labor Party, same to take place if adopted and the Socialist Labor Party concurs.

“Comment: We believe it folly to postpone this action any longer. At the rate we are progressing at present we believe by uniting all the forces greater

¹ DEALERS IN CAST-OFF CLOTHING.

To the *Daily and Weekly People*:—Through a fortunate chain of circumstances I am in a position to record a conversation that took place in a hospital in this city, a short time ago, between a patient, an intimate friend of Morris Hillquit, and a nurse. Needless to say Mr. Hillquit was held up as a “fine character.”

But somehow the two started off on a discussion of Socialism, the nurse first having picked up the *Call* from the patient’s bed. Though surprised myself thereat, I must also record that the nurse new is the Socialist Labor Party.

She mentioned it by name, saying: “I understand there are two Socialist parties; that there is also a party called the Socialist Labor Party.”

“Why, no,” the lady patient answered, “the S.L.P. does not exist any longer—it has been dead for eleven years.”

“I am under the impression that it still exists,” continued the nurse.

“No, no,” said the patient, “that’s a mistake.”

“Well, but I know that the S.L.P. has it’s own press, and keeps several lecturers in the field,” the nurse insisted.

“No,” again explained the patient, “you see, there was a split eleven years ago and the S.L.P. was killed then; there is only the SOCIALIST PARTY of the United States.”

‘Nuf sed.

Charles H. Seaholm

New York City, May 22.

things could be accomplished. This is a duty we owe to ourselves and to the world-wide Socialist movement in order to overthrow our one common enemy and hasten the glorious day of freedom.”

By comparing the Paducah S.P. statement with the statements made by the close S.P. associate of Mr. Morris Hillquit, reported in the correspondence “Dealers in Cast-off Clothing,” an irreconcilable discrepancy will be found.

While Mr. H.’s associate positively states to a nurse in a hospital that “the S.L.P. does not exist any longer,” “has been dead for eleven years,” has no press, has no agitators, the Paducah statement proceeds from the conviction that the S.L.P. does exist, is not and has not been dead, has a press and carries on an active agitation.

While Mr. H.’s associate positively asserts to the person she was speaking to that “there is only the Socialist party of the United States,” the Paducah statement as positively proceeds from the knowledge that there is another party—the Socialist Labor Party.

Why is this thus, and whence this thusness of contradictory statements in one and the same party?

The contradiction contrasts the two elements of which the S.P. is, at present, made up.

One element is animated by the Socialist Spirit. As such that element realizes the need of reliable information, and that none can make progress without such information. As such that element knows that the Socialist Revolution can not be carried on by dupes.—That element the Paducah S.P. Local represents.

The other element is animated by the Spirit of the Dealer in Cast-off Clothing. As such, this other element treats Socialism the way a dealer in a cast-off pair of trousers treats his ware, and treats those whom it would attract in the way that the said dealer treats a prospective customer—tries to stick him.—That element is represented by Mr. Morris Hillquit and his friend.

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