

EDITORIAL

SULZER'S LAMENT.

By DANIEL DE LEON

GOV. Sulzer's special message to the Legislature of this State—a State that once, he points out, occupied the first place and has now sunk to third in agricultural rank,—if not exactly a Byronic lamentation, may be classed as mock-Byronic.

In the approved style of lamentations, the Governor's is not wholly taken up with moans. The Governor's Lament points to the possibilities of improvement, and of New York's succeeding in crowding her rivals down to where they belong, and swinging herself up to pristine pre-eminence. Nevertheless, the Governor must have been too lamentably lamental when he penned his Lament. Though he points to numerous possibilities he leaves them all unfinished, broken off, impossible.

For instance:—

One of the possibilities is “the study of agricultural and rural subjects.”

—Study is good; study is absolutely necessary. Many a kid-mind never realizes the importance of “study,” and approaches the weightiest of subjects without the needed preparation that “study” imparts. “Study” is essential; but “study” is not all-sufficient, surely not on subjects agricultural and rural. “Study,” on these subjects, needs to be supplemented with CASH. Of what will the most elaborate theoretical preparation avail in agriculture without the requisite capital to apply the study, and thereby to compete with the interloping States? The Governor omitted from this “possibility” the supplement of a bank account. There is no fertilizer like cash.

Another of the possibilities touched upon by the Governor is that “the special State schools shall pay special attention to the development of fruit and vegetable growing interests.”

—Special attention to the development of fruit and vegetable growing interests

is just so much attention thrown away, if unaccompanied with parallel attention to the means of transportation whereby to reach the market. Apples have been left to rot by the loads on the branches and at the feet of apple trees; peaches have been left on trees and in crates to lose their blush; corn has been left on farms to be burned for fuel; coffee has been used to feed bonfires; potatoes, cabbages, pumpkins, peas and all varieties of vegetables, craved by city folks, have rotted in the furrows time and again for want of transportation available to the agriculturist at prices that did not constitute the transportation company into the real owner of the farm products. The Governor omitted from this possibility the supplement of proper freight lines.

All told, the "feet" of Governor Sulzer's Lament are as unsteady as the feet in the versification of Byron's mock Laments.

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