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EDITORIAL

PICKETS CONVERGING.

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ALMOST simultaneously with the propositions that issued from Rochester, N.Y., and from this city to amend the constitution of the Socialist Labor Party in the sense of endorsing the Industrial Workers of the World, Local Omaha, Neb., of the Socialist party comes out in the West with a similar proposition, looking to the same end in its own party. The Socialists of the land are coming together: they are bound to be united. The class conscious, the Socialist economic organization, founded in June-July at the Industrial Convention in Chicago, is beginning to cast its reflex in premonitory steps towards a united Socialist political party of labor.

Two opposing theories have for the last six years been wrestling for supremacy in the field of the political movement of Labor in the land. Idle is the notion that personal animosities and personal malevolence lay at the bottom of the struggle. Such petty feelings existed, but they were no cause. Much though they sought to dwarf the issue to their own groveling standard, such motives were only incidents: they but availed themselves of honest convictions and sought to ride them. Below the noise of petty quarrelers there was the substance of two bodies of men sincerely aiming at the truth, and wrestling with each other to attain it. Each represented a different theory upon a vital question.

One body maintained that the economic organization of the Working Class was so essential a part of the Labor Movement that even if the political Movement tried to ignore it, it would not ignore the political Movement. This body summed up its position with the maxim: "Without political activity, the economic organization of Labor can not triumph; without the economic organization of Labor, the day of Labor's political triumph will be the day of its defeat". As a consequence of these principles, the body that held them gave as much thought to the economic as it did

to the political wing of the Labor Movement. Proceeding along the identical lines that caused it to set up a class-conscious political party to give battle to the Capitalist Class on the political field, it strove to raise and found the class conscious, in other words, the bona fide Union of the Working Class. An inevitable consequence of this policy was a hand-to-hand conflict with the A.F. of L. and all such craft organizations, which inevitably fell into the hands of the Labor-Lieutenants of the Capitalist Class and by them were operated as buffers for capitalism.—This was the position of the Socialist Labor Party.

The other body differed from the first on each of these points. It denied any such close relations between the political and the economic Movement; and, being organized for political purposes, concluded that the economic Movement should be left to take care of itself. Its motto was “neutrality on the economic field”.—This was substantially the position of the Socialist or Social Democratic party.

Five years of struggle proved the fallacy of the latter position. It proved even more than that. It proved that false premises are the pasture ground for dishonesty to thrive upon. While the rank and file of the Socialist party sought to adhere to its impossible theory, the Editors of that party’s privately owned press used the theory of “neutrality” as a mask behind which to practice a revolting partiality. While pretending “neutrality” in the controversies within the Union Movement, they became veritable bruisers and gougers for the A.F. of L. No infamy that the A.F. of L. imputed to bona fide Unionists at war with it, but these Editors echoed and re-echoed; no infamy that the A.F. of L. fakir committed but these Editors lay low about; the A.F. of L. slimiest fakirs became their pets. These editorial mouthpieces of the Socialist party, in a way, rendered homage to the principle of the Socialist Labor Party. They proved the unavoidable intimacy between politics and economics: they furnished the demonstration that “neutrality” in the affairs of the economic field is but a lure for knaves to dupe the unwary.

The proposition of Local Omaha, of the S.P. amounts to a double declaration—it amounts to the declaration that the Local has gained its bearings in general on the question of Trades Unionism, and it amounts to the concrete declaration that, having discovered the error of “neutrality” on Unionism, the Local proposes to be, not a gouger for the obscene lieutenants of capitalism, not a bruiser for the obscene

capitalist device of craftism, but a paladin for Labor Unionism.

This evolution is as it should be. We see to-day here in the city of New York the “Municipal Ownership league”, the “Hearst League”, the “Reform Leagues”, the “Citizens Union” and whatever other such so-called anti-Tammany organizations there may be, log-rolling, dealing and dickering, in order to effect a “fusion”. Such conduct befits political intriguers for pelf. Among men there is no dicker or deal on principle. So long as opinion differs on principle, a battle royal rages. The point of principle being mutually clarified, the former foes rush into one another’s arms, and stand upon the common, conquered principle, indissolubly united by the common bond of conviction.

We are coming, Father Abraham, we are coming many hundred thousand strong, from East and West, from North and South, the political reflex of the Industrial Workers of the World—a mighty party of united Socialists.

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