

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 11, NO. 198.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 1911.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

THE “MILITIA OF CHRIST.”

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THE report from Schenectady, found elsewhere in this issue, of the move on the part of the Roman Catholic Church to organize a “Militia of Christ” among the members of the Unions,¹ gives the fullest information, so far had, upon one of the moves, which, combined with many others, point unmistakably to the looming up of a Clerical political party in the United States.

The Schenectady report states expressly the avowed purpose of the “Militia of Christ.” Is the purpose to make converts for a special form or system of devotion, as opposed to another? No. Is the purpose to make propaganda for a special style of worship, hostile to some other style? No. Is the purpose to teach some special faith, in denial of some other or others? Yet again, no. The avowed purpose is “to fight Socialism.”

That which is opposed ever explains the opposition.

Socialism is not a movement concerning devotion, worship, or faith. In short, Socialism is not a religious movement. Socialism is as far from religion as Free Trade or Protection; as Monometalism or Bimetalism; as Forest Preservation or Forest Private Exploitation; as Greenbackism or Metallic Money; etc.; etc.; etc. And Socialism is as far from religion as any and all of these for the identical reason—one and all are pivoted upon Property, are reflexes of Property Interests, consequently are POLITICAL ISSUES. As little as any, even the most powerful, microscope could detect the faintest trace of religion in Free Trade, in Protection, in Greenbackism, etc., etc., etc., can any trace of religion be found in Socialism, the essence of which is the purely economic and political principle that the private ownership of the necessaries for production cleaves society into a class of enjoyers without toil, and a class of toilers without enjoyment. Obviously, opposition to such a movement throws light upon itself. The opposer, whatever its pretenses, is not Devotion, is not

¹ [Not included here. To be appended.—R.B.]

Worship, is not Faith; in short, is not Religion—it is Property, Property Interests, in short, POLITICS.

Despite the woe that it is accompanied with, the Socialist welcomes every new Trust: The woe the Socialist knows is transitory, the benefit—increased plentifulness with decreased toil—he knows is permanent, and a step nearer to the Socialist Commonwealth. On the identical principle, despite the increased arduousness of facing, and having to contend with, one more political opponent, the Socialist welcomes every move on the part of the Roman Catholic Church to step forth openly as a political organization: the increased arduousness the Socialist knows is amply compensated by the increased power to the Cause of Human Progress that comes from certainty.

Again, despite all the woe incidental to the Trust, its appearance is a wave of the hand with which Social Evolution greets and pays homage to Socialist Science—fain would the capitalist class curb the Trust development, these at once demonstrations and stepping stones to the Socialist Commonwealth; but the very law of capitalist existence drives it on relentlessly to its own undoing. Identically so in the instance of the Roman Catholic Political Machine. Despite the increased arduousness of the political task that it imposes upon the Socialist, its appearance as a political entity is a bow of respect and encouragement from the Logic of Events to Socialist Intrepidity—fain would the Roman Catholic Political Machine keep up the mask of Religion. Its experience in one European country after another, Portugal latest, teaches it, Bourbon though it be in its incapacity to learn, that its safety lies behind the mask. Yet such is the Logic of Events that the Roman Catholic Political Machine is fatedly driven forth from cover, and the mask is being relentlessly torn from its face.

It is with a shout of conscious ascendancy, and the consciousness of certain triumph, that the Socialist hails the evidences of the Roman Catholic Political Machine's being steadily forced in America, as it has been in Europe, to bend to the exigencies that force it to a step that fatedly leads to the spot where it is to receive the sentence that civilization has pronounced against it.

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Uploaded December 2011

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