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EDITORIAL

## THE FRUITS OF FLIM-FLAM.

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**T**HE sound of the volcanic rumblings, the detonations of the explosions, together with the lurid lights that are shooting up with the latter, from the camp of the so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic, alias Public Ownership party, east, west, north and south—these sounds and sights, heightened and intensified by the steady and unerring canonade of the Trautmann letters, afford a fitting setting for a certain jewel of “tactics” that has run its course, and is now producing its effect. It is the “tactics” pursued by the said party of aliases, and typified by their “Davis Case.” Off and on *The People* has taken up the matter incidentally. With this, however, as with all other matters of importance, “season” has much to do with success: the best of seed needs the proper temperature to germinate: the Socialist tenets require capitalist conditions to cast root and be appreciated: likewise the “Davis Case” tactics of the polynomial party. The season is now ripe for the thorough handling of the matter, once for all, and to draw from it its solemn, impressive lessons.

Davis & Co. is a cigar factory in this city. The International Cigarmakers’ Union’s officers declared a strike against the shop, but, such action notwithstanding the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance cigarmakers, employed in the shop, remained at work and enlarged their organization. Even persons who are not familiar with Union matters would realize from these facts that they are too meager to base a conclusion upon, either for or against either the International men or the Alliance men; persons who are familiar with Union matters would all the quicker appreciate the meagerness of the facts. This notwithstanding, the then prospective and now actual Civic Federationized labor lieutenants of the Capitalist Class, with the *Volkszeitung* Corporation as their head-center, started the hue-and-cry of “scab!” against the Alliance and the Socialist Labor Party. Their policy was obvious. By making a concerted and frightful racket, they expected to prevent the masses from reasoning and inquiring; by

rousing the unthinking masses into an indignant up-rising, they hoped to cow the Socialist Labor Party. The policy was not new. Malefactors, especially social malefactors, resort to it instinctively. But neither is their failure in this instance exceptional. The policy never succeeded in the long run. In this particular instance, the Socialist Labor Party proved itself of too strong fiber to be cowed, and its unterrified resistance gave time for Peter to sober up.

The sobering process was aided by the malefactors themselves. They did not mean to, but they were bound to proceed obedient to the law by which, however unwilling the thistle may be, it cannot escape proclaiming itself by itself producing the tell-tale thorns. This was done by the New-Haven Debate, the noose of which the malefactors themselves wove, and into which they themselves ran their heads, leaving to the Socialist Labor Party nothing but the agreeable function of pulling the rope tight.

Job Harriman, whom the malefactors had put in 1900 as their special representative on their presidential ticket, the same as, four years later, they placed Ben Hanford there, traveled all the way from California to the tune that he would debate the Union question with Daniel De Leon of the Socialist Labor Party. He was accommodated. The debate took place in New Haven on November 25, 1900. The malefactors had expected to have the affair in some hole in the wall—the Socialist Labor Party foiled them, the debate was held in the Grand Opera House; the malefactors had expected to have the affair before a small crowd where they could dump their dirt mainly before their likes—the Socialist Labor Party foiled them, the debate was held before a large crowd; the malefactors had expected that no record would be kept of the speeches—the Socialist Labor Party foiled them, the affair was taken down stenographically, despite their refusal to have a stenographer, and immediately published in full. So far, everything that the Socialist Labor Party could do to insure FULL PUBLICITY to the facts that were to be drawn out, and which were drawn out, was done. But something more was needed; that something depended not upon the Socialist Labor Party; it depended upon the malefactors themselves;—and once more they were accommodating. What was that thing? It was a publication by themselves of the debate which they first had sought to hush into some dark hole. Obviously, in all such matters, what an adversary himself issues leaves no room for quibble. The accuracy of the Socialist Labor Party publication of the debate might be questioned by

light-headed men; none can question the accuracy of what an adversary himself publishes about himself. At first there was danger that this self-stultification could not be used. As the malefactors had no stenographer, they printed the S.L.P. publication of the debate, without indicating who the publisher was; but the Socialist Labor Party quietly gave them rope, and latterly they have issued the thing in a new cover stating that it is “published by the Socialist Co-operative Publishing Association, 184 William street, New York”—the Volkszeitung Corporation. Now we got them. It matters not they do not give the name of the stenographer; it matters not that Harriman recast his speech. All that matters not. We take their statements as they appear in the publication, which now they cannot repudiate. This is the season to illustrate flim-flam, its tactics, its source and its fruits.

We invite the reader’s attention to pages 25–26 of the said edition of the debate published by the Volkszeitung Corporation. It will there be noted that the malefactors were compelled to take up the only item of importance in the facts in the “Davis Case” so as to enable a conclusion to be formed as to the alleged scabbery of the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance. That fact was whether the Davis shop was or was not an open shop; if it was an International Union shop, if it was an open shop, then {working} there during a strike would be scabbery; if, however, it was not an International Union shop, it was an open shop, then the declaration of a strike against the shop by International officers, against the knowledge and consent of the Alliance men in the shop, was simply an act of impudence on the part of the International officers, that the Alliance men were no wise bound to abide by. Was Davis’s shop an open shop or not? That is THE question. The malefactors said it was not; the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance said it was. Now, here are the facts as given in the said Volkszeitung Corporation publication of the debate on pages 25–26, the underscoring being our own:

“The following is the contract signed by the Davis Company and the committee from the International Union:

“New York, Oct. 16, 1899.

“To those of our employees whom it may concern: In consequence of recent dissensions among certain of our work-people, and in order to bring about harmony, we hereby agree to pay from date hereof, and during the year, prices for the making of our cigars as follows (here the list of prices is set forth, together with qualifying clauses concerning those prices). THAT IF ONE OR MORE OF OUR EMPLOYEES ARE BEING AT ANY TIME COERCED BY

OTHERS IN ORDER TO CAUSE THEM AGAINST THEIR OWN FREE WILL AND JUDGMENT TO JOIN ANY ONE OR CERTAIN LABOR UNIONS WE SHALL CONSIDER THAT ACT AS AGAINST OUR INTEREST AND NOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROMISE OR UNDERSTANDING COME TO with the said, our work-people, and as a consequence the aforementioned list of prices shall thereupon cease to exist and be made null and void.

“Sam'l I. Davis & Co.,  
 “by August Sutherloos  
 “N. Rosenstein, President  
 “A. Marousek, Sec.-Treas.’

“And these last two men are respectively the president and the secretary-treasurer of the Advisory Board of the International Union.

“Further, on page 16, of Davis' affidavit he says that 'said (October) strike was initiated, managed, directed and controlled by the International Cigarmakers' Union and was participated in by the defendants above named.' (N. Rosenstein and A. Marousek and others.)

“Thus the fact is established that there WAS 'a contract between Davis and the International Union,' 'thus clothing the International Union with rights and duties there.'”

All the facts are here in court.

First—The contract expressly declares the status of the open shop—the employees are not to be coerced into any Union, if that is done the promise or understanding is broken.

Second—The International Union having conducted the strike which resulted in that contract, a contract which declares the Davis shop shall be an open shop, the International Union suffered a defeat, and by its officers' records the fact that it lost the shop, if it had the same before, or failed to secure it, if it did not have it.

Third—Notwithstanding the express declarations of the contract itself, the malefactors would have people believe that because two of the signers of the contract are International officers, therefore the stipulations of the contract which keep the shop out of the International Union's hands, are repealed!

Fourth—Upon the same principle, when the treaty will be signed between Russia and Japan, sweeping and keeping Russia out of Manchuria, as completely as the International Union was kept by the stipulations of the contract out of Davis's shop, the Russians might claim that Manchuria is their closed shop, BECAUSE, FORSOOTH, THE TREATY BEARS THE SIGNATURE OF THE RUSSIAN PLENIPOTENTIARIES!!

This is flim-flam. Flim-flam breeds flim-flam. Men who are so brainless and

undignified as to advance such arguments, and to imagine that a great historic Movement like that of Socialism can be promoted by such imbecility and knavery are bound to flim-flam themselves into perdition. The above flim-flam was hailed by the so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic, alias Public Ownership party and re-echoed. As the scorpion carries with it the poison that destroys it, so does flim-flam. It bred a brood of flim-flam that is doing its work to perfection. The identical flim-flam involved in the reasoning that the Davis shop was an International shop, on the ground that the contract which takes it from the International shop is signed by International officers—that identical flim-flam re-appears in the Wisconsin argument that a capitalist candidate may be recommended on the ground that the constitution does not expressly forbid the act; the identical flim-flam re-appears in the sanctimonious denunciation of fusion with capitalist candidates by men who fuse with the capitalist labor-lieutenants in the shops; in short, the identical flim-flam is re-appearing in the arguments made in Los Angeles, in Michigan, in New York, in Chicago—everywhere by the majority of the party of aliases and that is helping the Socialist Labor Party to enlighten the duped minority into the rumblings and explosions we now hear and that are bound to flim-flam the concern out of existence.

The “Davis Case” was the starter of the prolific flim-flam family. Hence to understand it is well worth space and time. The lesson it teaches is both impressive and solemn. Serenely looms the peak of the Socialist Labor Party through the breaking clouds that hung heavy over it, and were supposed by the flim-flammers for evermore to veil it and deprive the wayfarer of its guidance in his effort to emerge from the wilderness of the capitalist tangle.

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