

The People.

VOL. VI, NO. 51

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, MARCH 21, 1897

PRICE 3 CENTS

SECOND EDITORIAL

Take Note.

By DANIEL DE LEON

It is said that silence often is the choicest eloquence. Whether eloquent or not, silence is often most expressive. Of this the capitalist press of the land has last week furnished a striking illustration.

Austria was having her first popular election. The masses, hitherto shut off from the suffrage by property qualifications, appeared now for the first time at the hustings. The interest created in the elections was wide spread in the Empire, and the cablegrams brought extensive reports of the political contest. What, one would ask, would be the attitude of a press, said to be democratic, in a country, said to be republican, at the new departure toward popular rule in one of the traditionally most oligarchic countries? One would certainly expect that the occasion would be extensively used to point with pride to the progress of civilization. It was just the reverse. While our press has been teeming with news of the European courts, while Court scandals and government intrigues were extensively commented on, not a line of editorial matter appeared upon the progress of democracy in Austria.

Nor is this to be wondered at. The American plutocratic press has abandoned the ways of the "Fathers," and turned to the opposite direction. While elsewhere the ballot is extending, here the "Sons" and "Daughters" of the Revolution are conspiring to abridge it. The press is their creature, the truthful, faithful exponent of their views, their hopes and their fears. Their views are that the people should be excluded from a share in the government, their hopes are that they may succeed in carrying out their conspiracy, and their fears are that the tide of progress may be too strong for them to stem. Silence at the course of events in Austria is just now the most eloquent expression of these views, hopes and fears.

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

Uploaded August 27, 2003