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EDITORIAL

THE REV. PARKHURST AND HIS VACATION.

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If a reform administration can not govern the city, its effect in a way is worse than that of a Tammany administration, for simple depravity is not so debasing as moral incompetency.

WHEN, in the municipal reform campaign of 1890, a statement, substantially like the above, was the answer with which a Socialist declined an invitation from the “reformers” brought to him by the Rev. Heber Newton, the Socialist was told by the Reverend that it was one of the distressing experiences made by him that “good purposes,” like those of the Socialists, were always accompanied by “a degree of fanaticism that hindered all progress.” Twelve years have since elapsed. “Reform” went in some seven years ago, and was promptly knocked out three years later and now again a “reform” administration is in; and not quite five months later the above remark is justly made on it, not, this time, by a Socialist, but by another Reverend, one, at that, who helped boost in the Low Combine. The above passage is from the parting words of the Rev. Parkhurst, before going to his Geneva Lake, Switzerland, residence to spend his summer vacation.

An ulcer is infinitely more dangerous if covered up than if exposed. If exposed, there is good reason to hope that constant contemplation of the evil may, besides spurring the decent part of the population with a desire to get rid of it, suggest to the thinking portion the correct way to go about it. If covered, however, there is no hope for any such result. The visionary will imagine it gone, and others would be deprived of the opportunity, that observation would afford, to learn the cause, the features and the ways of the ulcer, and thus to go about to exterminate it in the right way. Such an ulcer is Capitalist Society. Under Tammany the ulcer throbs in plain view; under “reform” it throbs under a silk handkerchief. The Socialist, for that reason, among others, has no

use whatever for “reform.” The breed is made up of rainbow chasers, dupes and knaves.

The fact that the Rev. Parkhurst raises his voice against the “incompetence” of the “reform” administration gives ground to the belief that he is not of the third category. That, however, he should have expected a better issue justified the belief that he belongs under either the first two, if not both categories.

There was a time when, regularly as summer approached, that the Rev. Parkhurst betook himself “for a vacation” to his summer home in Switzerland, we asked the question, What is he going to have a vacation from? We now suspect we did the Rev. Parkhurst an injustice. He needs a vacation. Not one but several a year. Wearing must be that man’s work who labors at mopping back the Atlantic Ocean of Capitalist corruption and social ills. That man needs frequent rest. He might as well take rest before that ocean engulfs him. The Rev. Parkhurst needs plenty of rest for mind, and heart, and hand.

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