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EDITORIAL

THREE GREENES AND NONE GREEN.

By DANIEL DE LEON

GEN. Greene is a Police Commissioner in this city. But that does not yet tell the whole tale. A Police Commissioner is theoretically in sample of civic virtue. He is to enforce law and morality, so he must be, or is supposed to be, a paragon. Again, when in such a paragon the title of “General” is found combined with that of Police Commissioner, the paragonship increases greatly—theoretically. Nor yet is this all. General Greene is not merely Police Commissioner; he is that as the appointee of a fusion or “Good Government” administration. Accordingly, he is, as it were, the sublimation of purity—theoretically. Yes, theoretically.

And now comes Receiver Tatnall, acting upon an order of Judge Kirkpatrick, and brings out a series of facts, connected with the Asphalt Trust, from which it appears that one Greene sold imaginary stock at a fabulous price to one Greene, and this stock was turned in to one Greene, “insider” in the bogus Trust, and that these three Greenes, a veritable trinity, were—who? Just one person, to wit, General-Police Commissioner Greene. Thus there were three Greenes, with nothing green about them but the name.

People who are merely theorickers in Socialism will be amazed at such a spectacle. Not that the turpitude of the triple Greene and yet non-green transaction would astonish them. Not that. They are sound on the understanding of capitalist “morality.” What will amaze is that a reputed capitalist and rich man should be driven to such shifts. There is nothing amazing about it.

Few if any capitalists stand upon firm ground. They all stand on banana peels; the only thing that stands unchanged is the capitalist class. Among themselves, the members of that class wage such a murderous competitive battle that most of them—considering their needs, so as to keep up appearances and their

“credit”—may be truly said to live from hand to mouth;—net results Asphalt Trusts, etc., etc.

Who would bestow his energies to keep a social system that begets such ulcers above, and the want and privation below, that are the share of the masses?

Who would spend his forces to beat down an Ice Trust Tammany with an Asphalt Trust “Good Government”?

Not a day passes but the capitalist system, together with its political agencies, roar out to the working class and to all decent citizens:

“Down with capitalism and its political parties! Up with Socialism!”

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