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EDITORIAL

## CAUSE FOR LAUGHTER.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**Y**VES Guyot, ex-Minister of Public Works in the French Cabinet, and well known as a writer on bourgeois political economy, is in the city after a visit to Washington where he met the President and the Secretary of State. Monday, October 17, at the Waldorf-Astoria, he had something to say of Socialism.

“All Socialists,” he said, “argue that when they have the power everything will go on admirably, but the Socialists fail to show us the harmony necessary to that end. The leaders in the movement are separated by violent hatreds. In 1903 the Congress held at Dresden by the German Socialists demonstrated their reciprocal antipathies, and the last international congress, held at Amsterdam this year, showed how divided were the French Socialists.”

There is cause for laughter in this argument. “Harmony,” according to it, “is essential to success.” Then capitalism is a dismal failure. Look at its “violent hatreds.” The middle class hates the trusts, and demands their suppression. The workingmen hate the capitalists, and Colorado is the return. The capitalists hate each other, Frick claw-hammering Carnegie and Lawson the Standard Oil. Nation hates nation. British-Boer, Spanish-American and Russo-Japanese wars are the outcome, while “the Powers” are split up into hostile factions and only prevented from jumping at one another’s throats by the fear of a world-wide cataclysm, destructive of themselves. Talk of “violent hatreds”—why, Guyot, you make us laugh!

Yet capitalism is not a failure. All the advanced class and national divisions of capitalism were true to its essence. Despite their divergent aims and conflicting interests, they won political liberty from feudalism and built concentrated industry on the ruins of isolated handicraft, evolving the greatest wealth-producing machine

ever in existence. And so it is with the Socialists. Despite their “violent hatreds,” they are essentially agreed as to their ultimate aim, viz., changing the ownership of this great wealth-producing machine from capitalist to social, in accordance with industrial evolution. To the degree that they achieve this end, will their present hatreds disappear, for, with the evolution of Socialism the capitalist conditions that give rise to Socialist differences will vanish.

Thanks, Guyot, for the laugh enjoyed!

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

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