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EDITORIAL

FORGING TO THE FRONT.

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THE declaration by Adj.-Gen. Sherman M. Bell and his Citizens' Alliance, echoed with gusto by the capitalist press of the land, to the effect that, what he is in arms against is, not Unionism, but Socialism, should not be allowed to lose its real or instructive significance. There is great danger of this. The natural indignation at the sight of a principle, which, like "free trade" or "protection," has become the platform of a recognized political party, being pronounced under the ban and fit for the target of rifles that are held in the hands of a set of men who pre-eminently claim to be the guardians of "law and order" and democracy—the natural indignation at such a sight is apt to cause a more important, because more encouraging, feature of the performance to be overlooked.

In *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, Marx characterizes the intellectual hollowness and helplessness of the dominant element in the French bourgeois revolution of 1848, with the following pithy sentence:

"Whether the question was the right of petition or the duty on wine, the liberty of the press or free trade, clubs or municipal laws, protection of individual freedom or the regulation of national economy, the slogan returns ever again, the theme is monotonously the same, the verdict is ever ready and unchanged—SOCIALISM! Even bourgeois liberalism is pronounced Socialistic; Socialistic, alike is pronounced popular education; and, likewise Socialistic, national financial reform. It was Socialistic to build a railroad where already a canal was; and IT WAS SOCIALISTIC TO DEFEND ONESELF WITH A STICK WHEN ATTACKED WITH A SWORD."

That the conduct of the Colorado miners, who have been defending themselves with a stick when attacked with a sword should be pronounced "Socialistic" and believed to be "Socialistic" by the bourgeois powers of America is an encouraging

feature in the general lay of the present situation. Like the French bourgeois of 1848, whose ossified mind was insensibly being permeated by the knowledge of another idea than Capitalism, to wit, Socialism was rising; who were too intellectually hollow to grasp what the new idea really was; but who instinctively felt the ground slip from under them and realized their own helplessness, the modern American bourgeois has but one monotonous verdict and slogan—the bugaboo of “Socialism!” True enough the circumstance reveals our American capitalists of 1904 to be just 56 years behind their French cousins of to-day. But that means progress. They were further behind eighteen years ago. They are making progress. They will yet forge to the front—where the Social Revolution wants and needs them.

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

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