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EDITORIAL

JOAN OF ARC.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THAT Archbishop W.H. O'Connell of Massachusetts should, according to the report of the Boston *Herald* of the 11th of this month, have referred to Socialism, in the course of his address delivered the previous evening at the Cathedral, in the following words: "No fatherland, no banner, no fireside, no altar, no law, no ruler, no God. Thus are summed up all the damnable negations of this satanic doctrine, which overturns with one fell blow all the holiest principles of human life. No wonder that where the voice of these prophets of evil is listened to and obeyed the disorder of hell reigns," furnishes no subject for wonder. Anathema was the one weapon of the political machine, known as the Roman Catholic hierarchy, in the days of its power. No wonder that in these, the days of its impotence, it should have retained the bad habit. What does furnish cause for wonderment is that the archbishop should have been so incautious as to indulge in such a diatribe in connection with his subject for the evening—"The beatification of Joan of Arc." Of all subjects, none more than that should have warned the lecturer to take a reef in his tongue.

Joan of Arc—the pure, the patriotic, the home-loving, the religious, the submissive vassal—was tried, sentenced, "passed over to the secular arm" to be burned alive, and additional official sanction was ostentatiously given to her execution by the presence of French dignitaries of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, at Rouen, then located within the English camp.

Joan strove to free her fatherland from the English invader—in what estimation was "fatherland" held by the French prelates who, attached to the "English interests," pronounced her guilt?

Joan raised the banner of France, her native country, against the banner of England—in what estimation was {that} "banner" held by the French prelates who

deprived the banner of their own country of its staunchest supporter, in the interest of a foreign banner?

Joan recognized, fought and bled for the ruler of France, whose title to the crown was church-sanctioned—in what estimation was “ruler” held by the French prelates who did the work of the English crown by sentencing the paladin of the French ruler to the flames!

Joan worshipped God with a heart immaculate and devout—in what estimation was “God” held by the French prelates who pronounced her a witch and a heretic?

Joan found the disorder of hell reigning in her fatherland through the bloodthirsty hordes of the English monarch, and she checked the hellish disorder, and turned its course, and opened an era of peace—was the sentence of the French prelates who, on this score, pronounced her a messenger of Satan, an emanation of dislike for the “disorder of hell”?

There is hardly a figure furnished by history whose fate, as much as Joan of Arc’s, teaches more emphatically the lesson that “fatherland,” “banner,” “fireside,” “altar,” “law,” “ruler,” “God” are words of double sense on the lips of a ruling class, and on those of the agents, clerical as well as lay, of such a class; there is hardly a figure furnished by history whose fate, as much as Joan of Arc’s, urges mankind out of the present and on to that social system guaranteed by the Socialist Republic, where material interests will no longer debauch the human conscience: there is, therefore, hardly a historic figure whose memory, as much as Joan of Arc’s, the modern mental, moral and material successor’s of the prelacy that sat in judgment upon her should give a wide berth to when they seek to denounce Socialism.

Archbishop O’Connell did not render homage to Joan of Arc, he fell foul of that noble figure—an inevitable consequence of the futile attempt, at the present stage of civilization and against Socialism, to repeat the manoeuvres that assassinated the Deliverer of France in the interest of Usurpation.

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