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EDITORIAL

## BLOODSHED IN PANAMA.

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“Capital is said by a Quarterly Reviewer to fly turbulence and strife, and to be timid, which is very true; but this is very incompletely stating the question. Capital eschews no profit, or very small profit, just as Nature was formerly said to abhor a vacuum. With adequate profit, capital is very bold. A certain 10 per cent. will ensure its employment anywhere; 20 per cent. will produce eagerness; 50 per cent., positive audacity; 100 per cent. will make it ready to trample on all human laws; 300 per cent., and there is not a crime at which it will scruple, nor a risk it will not run, even to the chance of its owner being hanged. If turbulence and strife will bring a profit, it will freely encourage both.”

—T.J. Dunning.

**T**HE State of Panama in the Republic of Colombia is now the scene of turbulence, strife and bloodshed. This is nothing uncommon. Uncommon, however, is the circumstance that the present revolution is not cried down by our Democratic and Republican press. Uncommon is the circumstance that the present revolution is not used as a text for hypocritical and self-sufficient sermonizings on the superiority of the “Anglo-Saxon” race. Still more uncommon is the circumstance that this revolution, for once, is talked of in most sympathetic strains by these otherwise decriers of “turbulence.” All this is fit to puzzle him who is in the habit of thinking. If, however, besides the habits of thinking, one is possessed of the quality of “putting two and two together,” another set of facts will occur to him, which, joined to the first, will incandesce and throw upon the subject a light of many volts.

This other set of facts is that for several weeks rumors began to leak out at Washington about a pending uprising in Panama; furthermore that these rumors proceeded from quarters interested in the Panama canal project; finally, that

United States battle ships were handy when the “uprising” took place, plenty of arms and ammunition were furnished from these sources, and that they joined and even promoted the “uprising,” pushing it to the point of a “declaration of independence,” that is, secession by the State of Panama from the Colombian Republic. The two sets of facts join into a flash-light across the stage.

Unquestionably, the Isthmus should be cut through. Unquestionably commerce, that is, human facilities of intercourse would thereby be promoted. It is not that, however, that is instigating the Panama Canal scheme. Other canals could be cut, across Nicaragua, for instance. But the elements, headed by Mark Hanna, who sought, and have not yet desisted in their endeavors, to loot the Federal Treasury for their Ship Subsidy bill, have in this Panama Canal project a scheme of jobs and loot that throws the Ship Subsidy bill into the shade. For the promotion of intercourse between nations, for any such and other noble purposes these men have neither eye nor thought. Their eye and thought are upon profit. They forced their Panama scheme through Congress with the aid of a series of artificial earthquakes in Nicaragua, gotten up in the papers that they control, so as to defeat the Nicaragua plan by making it seem unsafe. Arrived at that point, they saw, not 100 per cent., nor yet merely 300 per cent. profit. They saw 500 and 1,000 per cent.. If 100 per cent. will make the capitalist ready “to trample on all human laws;” if 300 per cent. will screw them up to the pitch where there “is not a crime at which he will scruple, nor a risk he will not run, even to the chance of his being hanged;”—what must not have been the crime-driven pitch reached by the Panama Canal capitalists in sight of 500 and 1,000 per cent. profit! Such was their poise when the government at Bogota, substantially no better than they, put a spoke into their wheels by rejecting their treaty. A tigress robbed of its cubs is the picture suggested by the frame of mind of the Panama canal capitalists at the conduct of the Government at Bogota. The rest is obvious. The government at Washington, being a capitalist Government promptly obeyed the impulse of the Panama Canal capitalists. The result is the turbulence, strife and bloodshed now in Panama. The result is the “indignant uprising” at the Isthmus and its secession from Colombia.

American capitalists, gorged with the plunder from the American working class, has its appetite whetted for more plunder, still larger profits. These being in

sight, it does not scruple to raise sedition abroad, to trample over human lives and to heap up more crimes upon its crime-laden head.

The “independence” of Panama, with all its accompanying deeds of violence is but a “business move” gotten up in the back parlors of American capitalists, Republican and Democratic, whose elbow can not be strengthened except by bending still lower the backs of the American working class.

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