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EDITORIAL

A NEW TERM—“EXTERMINATED”.

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THE New York *Independent* of November 17—the identical capitalist publication that pronounced “indecent” the Socialist Labor Party’s Presidential candidate’s statement that the S.L.P. “seeks control of the public powers in order to administer the affairs of the Government in the interest of their class”—now closes a review of the “Socialist vote” in which it gives as actual the initial and exaggerated returns of the “Socialist” party, and closes with this exultant sentence:

“The Socialist Labor Party has been practically exterminated in the recent election”.

“Exterminated” is a new term; and yet it has a familiar sound, all the more coming from the quarter that it does. It recalls the language of the identical *Independent* when the same “Socialist” party was polling over 30,000 votes in Massachusetts, when it counted three members in the Legislature of that State, when it had at least two Mayors and a number of members in the municipal governments of Brockton and Haverhill;—and when the Socialist Labor Party’s vote, small indeed, had been able to elect not a single candidate. In those days also the *Independent* all but “boomed” the S.P. editorially, and in specific language it spoke of the S.L.P. as having been wiped out. And yet, what do we see to-day? The towering Massachusetts S.P. vote took a header downward—so deep downward that it has probably lost its official standing; the three S.P. seats in the Legislature are wiped out; the S.P. Mayors belong to ancient history; its municipal governments are things of yesterday; and the S.L.P.? the wiped out S.L.P. of Massachusetts stands with all its rights, unshaken,—let alone wiped out!

The present plight of the Massachusetts S.P. portrays in advance the nearby

future plight of the S.P. sky-rocket of elsewhere in the late campaign; the S.P. sky-rocket of elsewhere in the late campaign illumines the nature of the recent Massachusetts S.P. flare-up. No wonder the *Independents* seek to make the most they can of the present straw-fire. They seek to make hay while the sun shines—turn the working class's attention to a will-o'-the-wisp, and away from the steady beacon of the S.L.P.

Yet all in vain—nor are they without misgivings on the futility of their efforts. The S.L.P. may, on the whole, have lost COUNTED votes outside of Massachusetts compared with the last Presidential counted poll. But, as in the instance of the S.P., the S.L.P. present vote, outside of Massachusetts, will be understood only by the light of the former vote in Massachusetts. S.L.P. education has proceeded effectively—votes, or no votes; and never will the fate of the S.L.P. depend upon capitalist election inspectors and returning boards.

A sound political idea, soundly poised, never is "exterminated". With its cause rooted in the reality of things, it has a hold on the understanding with a firmness of grip that nothing can shake. Storms may blow over its head, only to wear themselves out, never to bend or shatter it.

The extermination of the Socialist Labor Party will come only after the Capitalist System has been exterminated. Then will the S.L.P. disband with a globe-encircling cheer for the Socialist Republic, whose corner-stone it laid, whose rising structure it shielded, whose flag it kept unsullied, and, to the end, battled against capitalism until final victory was wrung from the tightest clutches recorded in history that ever victory was wrung from—the hypocrite-brigand Capitalist Class.

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