

EDITORIAL

ADDITIONAL “STATE’S EVIDENCE.”

By DANIEL DE LEON

PROF. Joseph French Johnson, Dean of the New York University School of Commerce, has an article in the New York *Herald* of the 2d instant entitled “A Peep at ‘Prosperity’s’ Seamy Side.” It will be noticed that Prosperity in the said article appears in quotation marks. Well it may.

Prof. Johnson describes the appliances and means to boot of what is termed “Prosperity.” Hard is the description to distinguish from a description of the course of the events around a faro table during the rush season. The Professor’s conclusions are couched in these words:

“I may be pessimistic, but I think the social and moral effect of our record-breaking prosperity is bad, and I doubt if we should pray for its long continuance without the chastening stroke of a panic.”

The sentiment is fully implied in the title of the article itself. Prosperity in quotation marks, with a “seamy side” besides, can not be what it is cracked up for. Moreover the “Prosperity” that requires the “chastening stroke of a panic” must be essential adversity. Prof. Johnson’s views tally closely with those of ex-Treasurer Shaw, who expressed his apprehensions on the score of “our prosperity.”

Prof. Johnson’s article has the merit of being in line with the truths that are now escaping in rapid succession from the lips of the capitalist class—truths that Socialism has been foretelling and foreproving these many years: Capitalist Prosperity spells national, popular adversity, decline and ruin.

Prosperity is a blessing. Blessings proceed from sound sources. That which has its roots in a faro-table system may at times look like prosperity. The proof of the pudding again lies in the eating. That which looks like prosperity is so or not so if its continuance or discontinuance continues well-being or prevents it; if, however,

that which seems to be prosperity has a "seamy side," a side unknown to blessings, the seamy side is bound to wear into view, leaving in the end nothing but that side. The admission that nothing but "the chastening stroke of a panic" can redeem "our prosperity" involves a contradiction that gives the lie to the claim that what the nation has been enjoying is prosperity.

There is no popular prosperity possible under a social system which places the people's welfare in the hands of faro-bankers. Capitalism is such a system. The "Prosperity" it ushers in is one whose trail is marked by the moans of the working class, and which leads direct to the "chastening strokes" of panics, that is, to periods of intensified and multiplied popular distress.

Whether the case is put as ex-Secretary Shaw did; or whether it is put as the New York *Sun* did when it admitted the existence to-day of greater discontent and uneasiness than before the firing on Fort Sumter, despite "our unparalleled prosperity"; or whether it is put as did the New York *Evening Post* when it recently dropped "Laissez-faire" as a principle of conservatism; or whether it is put as Prof. Johnson now does, it all comes down to the same—the paths of Capitalism lead but to disaster.

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