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EDITORIAL

“FIGHTING BISHOPS.”

By DANIEL DE LEON

IN one respect after another the cycle is turning. One thing after another is recurring in our own days which was thought to be typical of feudal times only, and could not be thought of at any subsequent period. Among the peculiarities of feudal times was the “fighting bishop.” The thing is looming up to-day.

Bishop Knight, the Episcopal Bishop of Cuba, now on a visit here, immediately after a sermon delivered at St. Bartholomew’s Church, allowed himself to be interviewed on things Cuban. The topics Cuban upon which Bishop Knight spoke with impassioned interest did not relate to the “bread from heaven,” but to bread and butter and meat terrestrial.

The Bishop discontended with enthusiasm upon the activity displayed in Cuba by the American mining companies; he had at his fingers’ tips the statistics of prices and the prospect thereof as given by steel magnates and he agreed with the same that in a short time Cuban ores would fix the price of steel in America; and, waxing warmer and warmer upon the prospects of Cuban minerals and sugar in the world’s market, and also upon the hindrances in the path of these industries, the Bishop laid down the socio-economic principle with canonical preciseness and infallibility, that these Cuban industries “compel the colonization in remote regions of employes with their families,” because, the Bishop hastened to explain, we should say to prove, that “it is one thing to depend for labor upon wandering Spaniards, here to-day and gone to-morrow; it is another thing to have steady and prosperous help.”

So spake the fighting Bishops,” who, in days feudalic, themselves vested with and exercising full feudal privileges, the feudal privileges of the “first night” included, put on their mail, leaped upon their steeds, and, swinging their swords, enforced the principle that the serf was guilty of treason and impious, to boot, who

left the domain of his lord, because “it is one thing for the seigneur to depend for labor upon wandering men, here to-day and gone to-morrow; it is another thing to have steady and piously contented, hence, prosperous vassals.”

The “fighting Bishops” of feudal days were “invested” by gorgeously sealed parchment deeds of land; the “fighting Bishops” of days capitalistic are “invested” by plainer looking but equally powerful documents, called negotiable stock, listed on the Exchanges.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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slpns@slp.org