

EDITORIAL

EIGHTH EPISTLE AT THE LAMBERTIANS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

FATHER L.A. Lambert's article against Socialism in the April 16 issue of the *Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register*, which has been the subject of seven previous epistles knocking the thing silly, offers the following additional target to hit. It says:

“If the laboring majority cannot now with the ballot protect themselves from the greed and coercive intrigues of capital, how can they protect themselves from the same greed and intrigues under the Socialist State?”

If the “laboring majority” cannot now protect themselves, how can “they”—the laboring majority—protect themselves under the Socialist State?

Suppose somebody, after listening to a fervid sermon by Father Lambert on the blissfulness of the just in Paradise, were to interpolate the Father with the question:

“But would not the devil continue his pranks and make life a burden to the denizens of Paradise?”

Suppose such a question were put to the Father, would it require any strain of the imagination to picture the good Father's face? He certainly would look astounded at the fool who asked the foolish question. Why, the very idea of Paradise excludes the idea of the devil. Where the devil is there is no Paradise; where Paradise is there is no devil. How can any reasoning being suppose the devil in Paradise, and upon such a supposition rear a question?

It is just so with regard to the “laboring majority” and the “Socialist State.” He who says “laboring majority” implies the existence of a “non-laboring parasitic minority.” Socialist literature is expressive upon the subject that that majority cannot exist in the “Socialist State” for the good and sufficient reason that in the

Socialist State he who can and does not work has only one alternative left to him—to starve to his heart’s content. “Laboring majorities” exist to-day, under capitalism, under the system beloved of the Lambertians—a system under which, the land on and the machinery with which to work is held by a minority; and that minority, being in possession of these essentials to production, can and does use them so as to roll the burden of labor on the majority of the people, and thus with the aid of their original plunder, the land and capital, plunder the majority of the bulk of its product—86 per cent. is the volume of the plunder in America, according to the unwilling admission of William J. Clarke, the manager of the foreign trade of the General Electric Company in a recent article in the *Engineering Magazine*.

The Socialist State may or may not be feasible. It may or may not be a dream—as the Lambertians hold. But when a Lambertian tries to show the absurdity of the expectations of the Socialists under the Socialist State, he may not turn a somersault backward and repudiate his premises—the existence of the Socialist State, that is, the existence of a state in which there can be no “laboring MAJORITY” seeing that a “non-laboring MINORITY” is a contradiction in terms with the concept of the Socialist State—as contradictory as the “devil” is to the Lambertians’ concept of Paradise.

Our next and closing epistle will review and finish up the ruins of the Lambertians’ fortification from which they imagine they could demolish Socialism.

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