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EDITORIAL

MASSACHUSETTS A SAMPLE.

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RARELY does a set of figures preach so eloquently as the figures of the so-called Socialist party vote in Massachusetts during the last five elections. In 1902 the S.P. polled for Governor 33,629 votes; in 1903 the vote dipped to 25,251—a loss of over 8,000. In 1904 the S.P. vote sank further down; it was 11,591—a loss of nearly 22,000 votes when compared with the 1902 vote, and of nearly 14,000 votes when compared with the poll of the previous year. In 1905 the vote rose again, not very much, about 1,500 more than the year before; it was 12,874. In 1906 the vote was 7,938—a drop of about 5,000 below 1905 and of about 26,000 below the high-water mark of 1902. Finally, last November the vote was only 7,621. This sequel—for a sequel it is—tells its tale.

The broadness of the so-called Socialist party renders it a party peculiarly adapted for political soreheads to roost while they get even with the party of their real predilection. Sorehead Democrats, or sore-head free trade Republicans, for instance, never would cast a “temporary” vote for the Socialist Labor Party. That is too perilous an affair. A vote for the S.P., however, “hurts nobody.” In the meantime the soreheads can “make their power felt” to their own parties by boycotting them. Massachusetts is a sample of how the principle has worked at its clearest. It has worked in Chicago, it has worked in New York State, but nowhere so clearly as in Massachusetts.

Again, a political party of revolution must have for its attraction the clip-and-clearness of its program, and that must be matched by the “narrowness” of its conduct. A political party of revolution is no Church, but neither is it a cesspool. A party that proceeds upon the fly-paper principle may attract some votes, and will off and on be used as a temporary roosting place for the political soreheads of all other parties—the out and out capitalists as well as the reform ones. But when “Look at

our vote!" is the only thing a party presumably of revolution has to show, if that is the only argument it has with which to meet the charges against its conduct, then that party is exposed to the fix that the vote-catching labor-swindling Republican party now is in with its old "Prosperity!" cry. As the Republican party claimed it was answerable for "Prosperity!" the moment "Panic!" set in the party could not help shouldering the responsibility. So with the so-called Socialist Party. As hollow as the Republican cry of "Prosperity!" was, so hollow is the S.P. cry of "Look at our vote!" The loss of the vote proves that its "argument" does not hold water. The loss of its vote leaves it stripped. It has thus happened everywhere—in Massachusetts most clearly.

A political party of Socialism is undeserving of its name if its eye is fixed upon the conquering of political office, instead of upon preaching, agitating for, drilling and helping to organize the REVOLUTIONARY POWER which lies in the integrally industrial organization of the working class. America had to learn this lesson. It has learned it. The S.P., with its Massachusetts vote at the head, has taught the lesson. The rubbish may now be swept into the ashbarrel of history.

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