

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 1, NO. 330.

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, MAY 26, 1901.

TWO CENTS.

EDITORIAL

AGUINALDO IN BUSINESS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE secret of Aguinaldo's "capture" is out. The details are not yet public, but will be. When they come, they may "fill up crevices"; they will not be essential. The essential information is that "Aguinaldo is interested in an American corporation."

What a flood of light,—economic, political, sociologic—from so short a sentence!

The Aguinaldo rebellion is a belated Spanish colonial revolution.

Spain's colonies were mainly located in America. With the exception of Cuba, they all shook off the Spanish yoke some eighty years ago. Being located in America, the Latin American revolution has been generally placed in the same category with the revolution of the British colonies, now the United States. Yet the two revolutions differed essentially: the revolution in British America denoted progress; the revolution in Latin America was a step backward. The revolution in British America was a break-away from centralized feudalism, but forwards towards capitalism; the revolution in Latin America was also a break-away from centralized feudalism, only it was not forwards towards capitalism, it was backward towards decentralized feudalism. The Latin American revolution was, economically, what the war of the Roses was in England, an effort, successful in Latin America, to restore the autonomy of individual large landed proprietors.

When the Latin American revolution broke out, there stepped upon the stage of the world's history, and faced each other, two distinct Social Beings, between whom there stretched a wide and deep chasm in social evolution: one, the haughtiest product of class rule—the holder, direct and in his own name, and by virtue of his trusty sword, of vast landed domains, with none but serfs of the glebe below him; the other, the scrubbiest product of class rule,—the holder of capital. The two needed each other. Due to the lateness of the day, and the full world's stage on which he then turned up again, the Latin American landlord, requiring cash to make head against his feudal overlord, the King of Spain, deigned to deal with the British bourgeois; due, on the other hand, to the earliness of the day in which he

happened to be figuring, the British bourgeois filled the role of the bribee: he readily parted with his money, despite kicks and cuffs, in exchange for concessions that made him sniff the atmosphere of a “belted earl.” Under these circumstances, the Latin American revolution won out, oddly enough by harnessing to its own class interests the superior social evolution implied in capitalism, and thereby virtually turning this against itself.

The Aguinaldo revolution started where the Latin American revolution started. Again the same products of class rule faced each other as when the Latin American insurgents faced the British traders: landed lords faced bourgeois. How tremendous the economic evolution is, that has taken place in these eighty and odd years, may be gauged by the distance that separates a Bolivar, victoriously dictating terms, with his war treasury well stocked with bourgeois loans, and an Aguinaldo scrawnlily accepting terms, with his private pockets stocked with bourgeois bribes.

The sceptre has passed from the feudal lord to the capitalist. It is now the turn of the Proletariat to snatch the sceptre from its present holder, and, breaking it, forever put a period, with the destruction of the symbol, to the thing it symbolizes—CLASS RULE.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded March 2006