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EDITORIAL

THE CORN THAT ACHES THEM.

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Unquestionably Socialism aims at a revolution. It offers no apology therefor. Neither does it seek to dodge the point in the least. When told, as we are often told, that a physical clash will and must ensue, that enthroned Capital will no more abdicate than enthroned Landlordism, i.e., Feudalism, did, Socialism acknowledges the soft impeachment: it frankly acknowledges that it means to go the logical length of the line, and that, the peaceful methods of civilization having been exhausted and Capitalism having appealed to the “last resort,” Socialism will unquestionably pursue its foe on that field too, and squelch Capitalism there. It is, accordingly, in no dogeeful vein that Socialism insists, however, upon the fact that “revolution” does not necessarily include force or bloodshed, and, furthermore, that not a few of the changes implied in Socialism are infinitely less “subversive” than certain folks affect to believe. The composition of what goes loosely by the name of “Government” is of this latter sort.

Nothing is more common than to hear gentlemen, whose consciences are stung by the very mention of “Socialism,” and who feel the ground shake under them at the mere thought of Labor’s supremacy, express the conviction that Barbarism steps close upon the heels of Socialism. They argue: “Society lives upon high thought; its Government must reflect that. Socialism, on the contrary, thinks of bread only; its proposed Government, made up of representatives of the trades in the nation, would be a Government fit for animals only. Man needs more than bread.” The impression herein attempted to be conveyed is that capitalist Government consists of representatives of the Sciences, of Art and Literature; the fact herein attempted to be concealed is that capitalist Government consists of representatives picked out upon the identical principle that would guide the Socialist Republic in its choice, in so far as its Government would consist of representatives of the industries that the nation needs to satisfy its needs.

Upon this point, let **Congressman Grosvenor** of Ohio, the right bower of the President, and certainly good authority on capitalist Society, take the stand and

give State evidence. Turning upon his associates at an unguarded moment he recently said in the House of Representatives:

“I can muster upon the floor of this House ten representatives of bituminous coal, where there is one representative of anthracite.”

And, letting his eyes wander over the rest of the House, he continued to enumerate the coarse wool sheep industry, the small sheep industry, the beet sugar industry, the dairy industry and the oleomargarine industry as being “represented” in the House. Congressman Grosvenor might, had he wanted, gone through the list of industries. He would have found all the leading ones directly “represented” among his colleagues.

“Government” is but a committee of the property-holding class. What is represented there are the interests of this class. When the social system was feudal the representatives represented the feudal system of production and distribution; now that the social system has become capitalist, the representatives represent the capitalist system of production and distribution; when the social system shall have become Socialist, the representatives will represent the collective system of production and distribution. As far as the representation of material needs is concerned, Socialism would, accordingly, introduce no change, could introduce none. What, then, are the changes that the capitalists are so much exercised about?

They are exercised about the fact that while now, as well as it will be under Socialism, the Government is made up of representatives of the nation’s material productivity, the present representatives represent the idle, the Fleecing Class, while under Socialism the representatives would represent the Working Class. While to-day the mining industry is represented, not by the miners, but by the idle mine-owners; while to-day, the sheep raising and wool growing, the beet sugar, the dairy and all other industries are represented, not by the class that works at them, but by the class that lives in idleness on the sweat of the worker’s brow;—while such is the present make-up of the “representatives,” under Socialism the representatives in Government would consist, not of the Idle Class, but of the Working Class.

And what that means Messrs. Capitalists have a very distinct idea of. Hence their fury. That is the corn that aches them, that is the subversiveness they dread. It is not any apprehensions on the score of man’s intellectual part that throws them into spasms.

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