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EDITORIAL

WHO ARE THE UTOPIANS?

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THE Milwaukee *Evening Wisconsin* shivers a lance for the Plutocracy in an extensive article, intended to dispose of Socialism with a shower of epithets and phrases; among these, “Utopians” and “Dwellers mid rosy fogs” are the gentlest and of most frequent recurrence.

What is the position of the Socialist? It is this:

“Private ownership in the instruments of production—in the land, tools, machinery, etc.—was at one time the basis of industry and of freedom; concentration of these instruments of production in the hands of a few, and the introduction of machinery establish a system of production upon so gigantic a scale that the individual small producer can not hold his own; he is stripped of his instruments of production, and becomes a proletarian, a wage slave, dependent for his existence upon the capitalist, who has concentrated in his own hands the things that are necessary for a living; this system fills the land with paupers, breeds crime, prostitution and sickness; freedom under such a system tends to disappear; civilization, on the other hand, tends firmly towards freedom; it is a force that must be reckoned with; on the one hand, therefore, Capitalism, or the Plutocracy, makes against, on the other, the spirit of the age makes for freedom; in this conflict, the reactionary tendency must down, the progressive one must up; consequently the present social system, the system of Plutocracy or Capitalism, cannot last, it is self destructive; it is bound to be supplanted by the Socialist system—a system by which the essentials to freedom shall be restored to the people, to wit, the ownership of their instruments of production.”

What, on the other hand, is the position of the Plutocracy and its candle-holders? It is this:

“Things are going to the dogs; we admit that; no self-respecting one among us attempts to deny that poverty, crime, prostitution, misery and its long train of other ills is on the increase; the chances to make a living are ever slimmer and slimmer; the rich are growing richer, the poor poorer; the dependence of the masses upon a few is ever intenser; freedom is on the wing; nevertheless, as things are so have they ever been; some men are born to be stout, others to be lean, so some are rich and others poor; there is no help for it; such is human nature, it can't be changed; the people know it, they are willing to submit and to drudge on; ESTO PERPETUA!”

Such was the fool's paradise in which the Republican plutocrats lived, and from which they were rudely awakened on the morning of November 9, 1892; such is the fool's paradise in which all plutocrats are still moving and dreaming.

There is no such thing as ESTO PERPETUA in the heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth; mankind does not stand still; as things are, never have they been before; man progresses; freedom, genuine freedom, is the aspiration that never lets him flag; he will yet snap the bonds of slavery; he will overthrow and trample under foot whatever bars his path in his onward march.

The true Utopians are those who ignore these facts; the “dwellers amid rosy fogs” are those who have drugged their senses into the belief that the volcano upon which they move is firm set earth.

Of all people, it is the Socialist who moves in the realm of facts, whose vision is clear, whose senses are sober, who knows what he is about and what is up.

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