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EDITORIAL

WANTED: ROBUSTNESS.

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“**I**NTOLERANCE of Socialists”—what an occasion for outpourings of ink and oratory on the part of some folks it is getting to be! Here for instance comes the *Jewish Spectator*, averring that in some places the Socialist Movement is “harmless enough, in the shape of lyceums, with popular lectures, co-operative stores, etc.,” but that in others it is bad and intolerant because “mutterings are heard against the established laws of the State.”

From this charge of “intolerance” let no Socialist flinch. Socialism means but one thing—the abolition of the wages system and the introduction of co-operation. The laws of the present State draw their origin and their mold from the basic conception of the private ownership of the means of production, in other words the wages system. Insofar as these laws protect and tend to perpetuate the wages system, they are pernicious, and must be not merely muttered against, but overthrown. If the fact of their being established is to be taken as an argument for their immunity from attack, then by the same token the class which now swears by them should have rested supine under their feudal overlords, and not have overturned the then existing laws, as they did. Since they in their day were law overturners, by all that actions speak louder than words, they have declared that the right of a law to exist depends not on whether it be established or no, but on whether or no it best conserve the interest of the race. To mutter against, and be “intolerant” of the existing laws is no reproach, but the highest commendation, provided those laws be bad: which is exactly the position of the Socialist.

Well may the *Jewish Spectator* and its fellow dancers on the “intolerance of Socialists” platform call lyceums, with popular lectures, co-operative stores, etc., “harmless.” Of course they are harmless to the class these gentry belong to and speak for. They nowhere touch the central point at issue, the wages system, and the

exploitation, consequent upon it, of the workers. But is it the object of the Socialist to be “harmless” to labor’s oppressors? On the contrary, it is his purpose to be just as harmful to them as he can, in fact to abolish them (by civilized methods, always understood) as a class from the earth. Loud would be the titters tittered by the ruling class in their sleeves, could they keep the workers’ attention forever riveted upon “harmless” palliatives. Then could the wages system, wage slavery and misery go on unremittingly, under the sheltering mantle of reform. But to attack the laws of the present plutocratic political State, to seek to do away with them and usher in in their stead the laws appropriate to an industrial republic, that’s a horse of a different color—that’s “intolerant,” that’s “corruption and pestilence”!

Let a man’s principles be never so correct, if he have not the robustness to uphold them he will lose the day. The principles of Socialism stand vindicated by the standards of logic and humanity. What is now wanted is the robustness to carry them on to victory.

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