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EDITORIAL

## CONSCIENCE.

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**I**T was Emerson, we believe, who observed that the ignorant would deny the existence of the sun when the sun was thickly concealed behind heavy rain clouds, and rain poured down; whereas both the clouds and the downpour were pre-eminent evidences of the sun's existence. It is similarly with Conscience.

What more plausible than the denial of the existence of Conscience when one contemplates the torrents of slander—"idleness," "drunkenness," "shiftlessness," "dishonesty," etc., etc., etc.—that the Capitalist Class discharges upon the Working Class;—the idle Capitalist Class upon the very Class that feeds and clothes and houses it; the drunken, numerically small Capitalist Class upon the huge Class, which, from year end to year end, does not consume the alcohol quaffed by the smaller Class at their "occasional orgies"; the shiftless Capitalist Class, upon the very Class, which, from its Ney-and-Sheridan posts down to the merest "private in the ranks," fights the capitalists' battles; the plundering Class upon the plundered. What more plausible, under the circumstances, than the denial of a Conscience to the Capitalist Class!

What more plausible than the denial of the existence of Conscience when one listens to, or reads, the volumes of calumny—"intriguer," "ill-natured," "Union-wrecker," etc., etc., etc.—that the Officialdom-and-Press of the Socialist party lets fly against the Socialist Labor Party;—the intriguing S.P. against the S.L.P., the rectitude of whose course alone has baffled all intrigues concocted to blast it; the ill-natured S.P. against the S.L.P. that serenely hews close to the lines; un-goadable into wrathfully bolting the path marked out upon the map of economic and sociologic Science; the A.F. of L. scabbery-shielding S.P. against the S.L.P., the only political factor in the land that makes for the Industrial Republic, hence, for Unionism. What more plausible, in sight and sound of that, than the denial of a Con-

science to the Officialdom-and-Press of the S.P.!

What more plausible than the denial of the existence of Conscience when one examines the envenomed darts—"dogmatic," "falsifier," "one-sided," "peace-destroyer," "misleader," etc., etc., etc.—that Capitalism fires at Socialism;—the Capitalism whose prop is the Dogma-betraying Mysticism, at Socialist Science, whose distinctive characteristic is the Proof Overwhelming; the Capitalism, which can not recite a maxim of Socialism without falsification, at Socialism, whose truthfulness is transparent; the Capitalism which claps the blinkers to the eyes of its incubatees, lest they hear what "the other side" says, at Socialism which urges acquaintance with "the other side"; the Capitalism that lives on strife, and whose clergy bless the instruments of homicide, arson and rapine, at Socialism the unfaltering Apostle of Peace; the Capitalism whose "education" stands the youth of the land on their heads, at Socialism that makes men rational beings. What more plausible than the denial of a Conscience to the pundits of Capitalism!

What more plausible than the denial of the existence of Conscience in the presence of the assertions—"domineerer," "quarreler," "Pinkertons," etc., etc., etc.—spewed at the Socialist Labor Party by the "I'm-a-bummery," or Haywood Anarchs;—the Bummery, which sought to lay down the law to the S.L.P. to the extent of planning to steal its publishing plant; at the S.L.P., which, being guided by the principle that the Union that can not paddle its own canoe is not worth paddling, has not enabled the Bummery, despite their advocacy of crime to compass their ends, to produce as much as a scrap of forged evidence that the S.L.P. ever tried to dominate the I.W.W.; the quarrelsome Bummery, at the S.L.P., the record of which documentarily reveals a prolonged effort to avoid a fight, until the fight became unavoidable; the police-spy-breeding and strike breaking Bummery, even two of whose chiefs are already immortalized by a group on which they stand photographed in the company of an employe of the Newark, N.J., O'Brien Detective Agency, at the S.L.P. in which a Pinkerton could not earn his salt. What more plausible than the denial of a Conscience to the Bummery!

Nothing, in sight of the iniquities perpetrated by the four sets just passed in review, would seem more plausible than the denial of Conscience. It would be an error. The downpour and heavy clouds of iniquities attest to the existence and activity

of Conscience. Were it not for Conscience, the four sets of evil-doers would be guilty of only half their guilt. But Conscience pricks them at the first half of their guilt. Lacking the fibre of manhood, instead of turning over a new leaf, they seek to justify the first leaf by filling a second with slander. The volumes of slander which the foes of Socialism in general, of the S.L.P. in particular, indulge in is a homage—true, the homage of the weak, yet, a homage still,—that the guilty render to Conscience.

Conscience is not an unqualified good. It is a force at a point where the roads fork. It pushes the redeemably guilty to repentance, and the unredeemable guilty to still deeper depths of guilt.

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