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EDITORIAL

KINDRED SOULS—AND SMILES.

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THE note of cynicism in the language with which the duller samples of the pure and simple political Socialists and their reverse, the pure and simple or craft unionists, express themselves upon the I.W.W. can not have escaped even the most casual observer. Neither, as a consequence, can the kinship of thought between these two elements and dull bourgeois fail to be perceived.

“What,” says the bourgeois, “the workingmen expect to emancipate themselves!” The different tones in which this is said mark the different brands of bourgeois. The more intelligent make the exclamation in anger and rage. The higher the development of the physical organism, the more sensitive is it to pain. It is so with the more intelligent bourgeois. His higher grade renders him keenly alive to possibilities. He does not sneer, no note of cynicism drops from his lips concerning Socialist aspirations of Labor. The very thought irritates him. It is otherwise with the common type of the bourgeois. Theirs is not an organism sufficiently developed to be quickly sensitive to outside impressions. They think and say: “The workingmen expect to emancipate themselves? A good joke! Why, they haven’t got the ‘dough’; they haven’t got the Government and can’t get it, we’ll count them out; they haven’t got the courts to enjoin us from walking over them; they haven’t got policemen to club our heads, nor militias to shoot us down. They expect to make us get off their backs? Ha, ha, ha!”

Along similar lines of reasoning and with a cynic smile of similar caliber does the thicker-skinned pure and simple political Socialist and the thicker-skinned pure and simple craft unionist grafter arrive at the comfortable conclusion that “the I.W.W. is all bosh.” Why, the workingmen are too stupid to understand their class interests; they are too corrupt to stand up; too childish to resist being drawn aside by a rattle; some of them are better and they expect great things from their fellow

wage slaves, but these better ones indulge in pipe-dreams; the cigars they smoke are soaked in opium; they see ghosts; the I.W.W. is pretty enough in principle, but it won't work; the capitalists can scuttle any Union; therefore no Union can survive that declares war on capitalism and won't allow itself to be run by some of us fakirs—so runs the reasoning.

This tune is old, only it has a modern variation. It is the tune that the Tammany heeler Fatty Walsh twittered when, in 1886, the workingmen of New York City decided to go into politics. “What are them Labor men thinking about,” said Fatty, “they have no election inspectors, how can they win?” It is the tune that the evil genius of the Volkszeitung Corporation, Alexander Jonas, gurgled when he encouraged the Corporation to fight the S.L.P. “Without *The People*,” correctly argued Alexanderleben, “the S.L.P. can not live,” and he proceeded to reason: “*The People* can not live; it has no cremation or pinochle clubs from which to raise money; it has no craft Unions that need its support to enable them to deal and dicker with the employer; it must die.” Such, essentially, is the tune that every dull parasite, long accustomed to parasitism, from the Czar down to the thick-skinned bourgeois trafficker, warbles when the body parasited upon moves to scrape off the barnacles on its body—and such is the tune that those parasites on the parasites who drain the Working Class, the barnacles on the Labor Movement, the pure and simple political Socialists, together with their counterparts the pure and simple craft union grafters, are cynically consoling themselves with to-day.

There is another smile, besides the one on the advertisements of Quaker Oats “that won't come off.” It is the cynic smile that hardens on the face of the corpse from which life is shocked by some would-you-have-thought-it, unexpected jerk.

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