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EDITORIAL

PARKHURST PILLS.

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THE Rev. Chas. H. Parkhurst, well known to fame as one of the quacks who is practicing upon the patient body of society, has come out with a new patent medicine for the ills with which the social system, on which he fattens and battens, is afflicted. Before commenting on the nostrum, it will be fair to allow the Rev. Quack himself the floor to introduce his stuff. Says he:

“I do not defend anarchy, and I do not criticize wealth, but I urge that it is simply the Christian obligation resting upon men of considerable means that they should refrain from so advertising the enormity of their accumulations as to accentuate in the mind of the poor man the poverty of his own condition.”

Evidently, the pill-box containing the Parkhurst pills is labeled “Hypocrisy.” The Rev. Parkhurst has not a word to say on “the Christian obligation” not to steal. “The Christian obligation,” according to him, is merely to “refrain from advertising the enormity” of the stolen goods; in other words, to put on the appearances common to all “fences” of seeming poor, and yet quietly, unostentatiously, slyly enjoy the luxuries of the affluence they have purloined.

The capitalist system is founded upon the plunder of the working class. Were not the workers plundered, the idlers, or capitalists, would have no “enormities of accumulations” to either advertise or refrain from advertising. The means that the idle class adopts to plunder is the capitalist system: the private ownership of the tools needed to work with puts the capitalist in a position to place before the workers the alternative, Starve or Submit to be Plundered. Still untutored as to the fact that there is another alternative; still kept with the blinkers on that deprive them from perceiving that the case is not:

“Starve, or Submit to Being Plundered!” but:
“Submit to Being Plundered, Starve or Kick the Capitalist System Overboard!”

the workers, rather than starve, submit to being plundered, and do so by themselves deliberately placing the club of oppression—the Public Powers—in the hands of the plunderer. No wonder that under such conditions, positive “enormities of accumulation” fall into the hands of the plunderers.

In face of these facts society divides into three sets:

One set, the set in power, the Belshazzars, blind with the wine of fruition, hold theirs to be a God-ordained social system, meant for all time, and proof against all shocks. These care not who knows what orgies they hold; they care not whether they thereby furnish a gauge to the depth and breadth of the enormity of their accumulation;—Bradley-Martin balls and Seeley suppers are the ostentatious manifestations of such a frame of mind.

Another set, the Socialist Labor Party men, is too well grounded to believe in impossibilities and too moral to desire a perpetuation of wrong. It knows that the reign of capitalism can not last. It preaches the reason why; and it thereby lays the foundation for the future social order.

In between these two is a third set. It is made up of a rabble-rout of apologists for capitalism. These deal in salves and plasters. The latest nostrum produced by this camp and the nostrum that most completely characterizes its make-up, is that furnished by Dr. Parkhurst. Dull beyond measure must be he who imagines that the awakening plundered Working Class will cease to feel plundered when the plunderers shall cease to “advertise the enormity of their accumulations!”

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