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EDITORIAL

Society Is Not Poultry.

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Those, whose contemplative turn of mind causes them to observe closely the performances of the “Reformers,” cannot fail to come to the conclusion that these gentlemen have of society a very poor opinion, an opinion, however, that is as silly as it is degrading.

Farmers with poultry yards resort to a certain device in order to make their hens lay. They place a glass egg, a “nest-egg” under their hens. The purpose of the glass egg is to encourage the hen to do business. Indeed, it has that effect. The brainless hen paws the glass egg, starts clucking, swells out—and lays a genuine egg. We shall not here go into an inquiry of what exactly the physical, chemical or psychic process is by which glass eggs are enabled to wheedle genuine eggs out of hens; it is enough here to record the fact that there is some such process, and to judge by the effect, that it is a successful one.

Now, then, the “Reformers” look upon Society just as these farmers look upon hens, and they treat Society in the same way,—but Society refuses to act like a silly hen.

The “Reformers” want something new—a reform, a revolution. How is that to be brought about by them? Do they start in to educate Society and thereby screw up her physical, mental and moral power to the sticking point, the revolution point? Not at all. They look upon society as poultry. “Hens can be induced to lay eggs by having a glass egg laid under them,” argue they, “why cannot Society be wheedled into laying a genuine Revolution by tucking a bogus Revolution-egg under her?” And they proceed accordingly. Thus speeches full of wind; papers and journals, and articles full of bombast; high sounding praises of nincompoops as though they were portents of sense, knowledge and bravery; organizations, parties, “movements” under blown and pretentious names;—these and many more such glass eggs are being turned out wholesale and retail, and are tucked under Society. Yet she budges not; and our

“Reformers” stand aghast, and surprised, and denounce Society as stupid, as ungrateful, as degenerate.

The stupids, the degenerates are the “Reformers.” Society is not poultry. The REVOLUTION cannot be wheedled out of her by glass eggs.

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