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EDITORIAL

## EXPLOITING BLUNDERS.

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**T**he following squib occurs in the New York *Evening Post*:

“By actual experience the Ruskinites, a colony of Socialists, which was transported some time ago from Tennessee to a site near Waycross, Ga., have demonstrated what is probably the lowest possible daily cost for food. They live at an actual cost per capita of less than ten cents a day.”

Time and again lovely people have risen and lectured the Socialist Labor Party on its severity and intolerance. These lectures were especially reproachful on the subject of the Party's attitude towards the so-called co-operative colonies, the Ruskin colony among the rest. The above squib, published in a capitalist paper—a “rifle-diet to the workers” paper—should serve as an ample justification to the Party's attitude.

Colonies are actual denials of Socialism: Socialism is banked upon integral co-operation,—Colonies build upon a basis so narrow that their co-operation is a caricature of the term; Socialism builds upon collective work and individual living,—Colonies build upon collective living; Socialism builds upon full enjoyment of material and intellectual wealth, and enjoyment abreast of the racial needs of the Nineteenth Century,—Colonies, as the above passage sneeringly imputes to Socialism, build upon stunted enjoyment of material and intellectual wealth, an enjoyment far behind that of the present racial needs, and resembling that of the days of the infancy of the race.

The first two points have been frequently taken up in these columns. The third may as well be dealt with now.

It is a feature of sentimental Socialism to make the “cheap John” argument. Every one who approaches Socialism, not from the class struggle side, but from the sentimental side; not from the practical side of production, but from the bourgeois side of consumption;—every such person inevitably slides back and down into a position where, instead of aiding, he hampers Socialist thought; instead of

weakening, he strengthens the arm of the spokesmen of Capitalism.

At this season, when the conquest of distant lands with cheap labor is being accompanied at home with articles of how cheaply man can live; at this season, the coolie condition to which the Ruskin colony reduces its colonists can only serve to strengthen the Atkinson School of Starvation. The capitalist cares not how he contradicts himself. On one side, he argues that the workingmen are too luxurious; and then he proceeds to prove with Atkinsonian cooking stoves and *Journal* game-reporters on how little man can “live, love and enjoy life.” On the other hand, he will use illustrations of bogus Socialism, such as the Ruskinites furnish, in order to discredit Socialism by giving it a coolie appearance.

The Socialist Labor Party is severe and intolerant,—as severe and intolerant as science. It stands, consequently, for the only methods that can bring that about, to wit, the uncompromising warfare upon the capitalist class conducted upon the clean-cut interests of the working class.

Such a warfare excludes all “samples;” it excludes all sugar-coating; it excludes all trimming;—and along with that excludes the intellectually “knock-kneed” to whom the erect posture of manhood is as impossible as it is incomprehensible.

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

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