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EDITORIAL

FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

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PRESIDENT Taft's first message to Congress, entitled his Inaugural Address, contains matter enough to establish beyond peradventure the unconscious class-consciousness of the present Chief Magistrate of our Capitalist Society, together with the economic ignorance that is requisite for such class-conscious unconsciousness.

The President announces as his aim the assurance of "that measure of stability and certainty"—to what? to the toiling millions of the land, without whose toil with brain and brawn the country would collapse and dash itself like an exploded balloon? No! Stability and certainty are to be assured to "the life and growth of business," that is, to the existence of the capitalist class. To the President of our Capitalist Republic it matters not how uncertain and unstable the tenure of the proletariat's jobs and wages; it matters not how precarious their existence. The proletariat is a negligible quantity. It does not "count." There is no malice in his utterance, no special premeditation. As unconscious as the wolf is of any wrong, or of any consideration due to the deer which he falls upon and devours with unconscious race consciousness, just so unconsciously class-conscious is the President's view in this matter. It is merely nat'ral with the beast.

Not knowledge but ignorance, not Science but empiricism can be the foundation for such a monstrous position. The President's address furnishes the proof abundantly. In the same paragraph from which the above passages are cited occurs the President's conception of the Trust phenomenon. According to him Trusts are different according as they arise from two different sources. One set of Trusts consists of combinations, which, "aiming at the highest degree of economic efficiency," are therefore "based upon legitimate economic reasons," the other set consists of combinations "formed with the intent of creating monopolies, and

artificially controlling prices.”

All Trusts have the “intent of creating monopoly”; *all* Trusts “aim at the highest degree of economic efficiency”; *all* Trusts result in “artificial control of prices”; *all* Trusts “are based upon legitimate economic interests.” To distinguish between these qualities betrays hopeless confusion of the thought. It is to classify trusts, not by the economic reason of their being but by consequences that are not inherent in them, but that are the result of private ownership. As well classify knives into those that peel potatoes, and therefore “aim at the highest degree of economic efficiency,” and those that murder men, and therefore “artificially produce death.” The classification of knives does not depend upon the use they may be put to. Neither is the classification of Trusts.

All Trusts are a legitimate evolution that “aims at the highest degree of economic efficiency.” The blessings latent in such evolution are, however, turned into the curse of monopoly, together with all that thereby hangs, due exclusively to the method of ownership—capitalist ownership. Only public ownership can strip the Trust of its banefulness and leave it radiant with its blessedness. Without that “corrective,” *all* Trusts alike work evil, notwithstanding *all* alike owe their existence to the same benign evolutionary social impulse—the largest production of wealth, through the highest degree of economic efficiency.

Such bottomless economic confusion of thought, if not downright ignorance, furnishes, not the rockbed, but the quagmire subsoil of the sublimely unconscious capitalist class-consciousness exhibited by the Chief Representative of the capitalist ruling class in his First Epistle to his Corinthians.

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