

EDITORIAL

## GERARD'S SENSE AND NONSENSE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**O**UR newly appointed Ambassador to Berlin, Justice James W. Gerard, has been "letting himself out."

First, as to the Nonsense:—

It was unmitigated Nonsense for our Ambassador to say that he is going to the court receptions in knee breeches because, "in view of the court prejudices," knee breeches are more democratic and "we should not seek to impose our views upon people who do not understand them."

—There is nothing peculiarly democratic in knee breeches. As much aristocracy can be stowed away in long breeches as in short, if not more. The seat of the aristocracy, or of the democracy, as the case may be, lies, not in the dimensions of the breeches themselves, but in the dimensions of the pockets attached to the breeches.

Next, as to the Sense:—

It was a solid ingot of Sense for our Ambassador to declare that Congress should enact a law providing that Americans residing abroad should be made to contribute to the up-keep of the embassies and legations, and that the consummation should be attained by means of a tax on the said Americans abroad.

—Americans residing abroad should, by all means, be taxed for the up-keep of the embassies and legations. Nothing could be fairer. And the tax should be a graded tax—the more important the embassy all the heavier should the tax be. The tax would be of several-sided beneficent effect. For one thing, it would have the effect of freeing our embassies of much tiresome routine. Whereas now our embassies are pestered for introductions at court, and the ambassador has to stand sponsor for the clumsy courtesies and other monkey-tricks of our foreign residents at court receptions, the tax, if raised high enough, would act as a damper upon more than one

foreign resident aspirant for seeing his name in print on the list of “introduced to their Majesties.” For another thing it will teach our residents abroad the wholesome lesson of paying for what they get. Even among the richest of them, it is considered clever to play the dead-head.

The Sense on the part of Ambassador Gerard compensates for the Nonsense.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.  
Uploaded January 2016

[slpns@slp.org](mailto:slpns@slp.org)