

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 3, NO. 144.

NEW YORK, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1902.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

THE CROP OF THE DRAGON'S TOOTH.

By DANIEL DE LEON

IN the course of his report to the convention of the A.F. of L., read by him in New Orleans on the 13th instant, Mr. Gompers said:

“Unless our affiliated National and International Unions radically and soon change their course we shall at no distant day be in the midst of an internecine contest unparalleled in any era of the industrial world, aye, not even when workmen of different trades were arrayed against each other behind barricades in the streets over questions of trade against trade.”

The report then goes on to denounce the “tidal wave of expansion madness” that, in the attempt of each body to extend its own jurisdiction, is arraying one affiliated union against the other in what he deploras as a “fratricidal strife.”

Mr. Gompers is not the first of the fatuous breed, that, knowing nothing of the orderly sequence by which the seed brings forth a crop after its own kind, feels horrified at the crop of monsters yielded by the dragon's tooth himself has sowed.

The “fratricidal strife,” that now shoots pangs of fear in Mr. Gompers's breast for the safety of his organization, is fruit strictly of the kind of the pure and simple Trades Union seed.

The pure and simple Trades Union seed recognizes rights to the capitalist class; it thereby subscribes to the capitalist system; nay, worse yet, it thereby pronounces itself of the genus capitalism. Capitalism means strife, every man's hand up against every other's throat,—and, “the devil take the hindmost,” or, in neater, more hypocritical parlance, “let the fittest survive.” As capitalism means strife, yet preaches “Christianity,” so pure and simpledom preaches the solidarity of Labor and perforce practises strife.

Built upon the foundations of capitalist economy; blind as a bat to the economy of Labor; stuffed with the illusions and delusions regarding the “progress of Labor through

the pure and simple unions” as a Pomeranian duck is stuffed with noodles; thus inevitably brought wholly within the vortex of the capitalist maelstrom,—what wonder that capitalist manifestations of “do others or they’ll do you” manifest themselves among the pure and simple Trades Union bodies? What wonder that these manifestations, having for their theater the oppressed of capitalism, are mere caricatures of the master’s pranks? What wonder that these manifestations work out disaster?

Poor, silly, stupid, pompous, crooked Gompers! The “internecine strife” that now alarms him is but the sheetlightning of the approaching storm. That storm will break out over his head jointly with his President Hanna’s. And the thunderbolt of the Socialist Movement, guided by the hand of the Socialist Labor Party and the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance, will make short work of the perverse mechanism of capitalist society, in which the Gompers pure and simple style of Trades Unionism is but one of the necessary wheels.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded October 2006