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EDITORIAL

A WORD TO THE SENSIBLE.

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THIS year's convention of the A.F. of L. has come and gone. The obvious net result is that the body has committed itself more emphatically than ever to the ignominious role of tail to the capitalist kite—of steadier and supporter of a social system which lowers the earnings of the working class, saps their health and slaughters them into premature graves, and is steadily reducing them to cooliedom. That this was to be thus every intelligent and honest man perceived and declared long in advance. But there is another, less obvious result, that might escape the notice of the hurried workers. The “Socialist” resolutions, which last year received 4,171 votes out a total of 9,058, that is, only 717 votes short of a majority, were this year beaten down to one-half and snowed under an adverse majority of 9,097. And, as if to clinch and cap the point, from the presidency down, the national offices were refilled with Gompersites, Gompers himself, the head and front of anti-Socialism and of the labor-lieutenancy of capitalism, being re-elected with an unprecedented vote. What does that show the net result of?

For a whole year—since last year's convention of the A.F. of L.—the so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic, party, press, have been strenuously asserting the victoriousness of their march towards the “capturing of the A.F. of L.” They advertised the resolutions of last year as “straight up and down Socialism”; they descanted upon the vote polled by the resolutions and the almost victory then gained; and they prophesied in lengthy, labored articles this year's downfall of the unspeakable Gompers and the annihilation of pure and simpledom. Gompers' defeat was positively predicted by the *Worker*; across the continent, the Los Angeles *Socialist* of Nov. 29, 1902, summing up the situation, declared:

“These men (Gompers and his fellow officials then just re-elected) hold the leadership for one more year, but unless they swing into line and accept

the new program, the Boston convention of 1903 will seal their doom. The next annual convention will sound the death knell and destroy the last vestige of pure and simple trade unionism”;

and as late as the 21st of this November, 1903, the Cleveland *Citizen* publishes an “editorial correspondence” from Max S. Hayes, dated Boston, Nov. 16, with the convention then in session, adhering to the above predictions to the point of saying:

“The complexion of the official family will be materially changed. . . . President Gompers and Secretary Morrison and several members of the council will be defeated for re-election.”

Well, the “Boston convention of 1903” came; whosever{,} death knell it sounded was not pure and simpledom; the “Socialist” vote dropped from last year’s 4,171 to 2,185 this year, while the anti-Socialist vote rose from last year’s 4,887 to 11,282 this year; as to Gompers and his official family, they ride the wave triumphant; and all this is done under such blows from the shoulder, given to the “Socialist” delegates in the debate, that their faces must have been fit for the professional eye-painter, and their noses for the surgeon. However hurried the worker may be, nevertheless when reminded of this series of facts, he can not be long in perceiving that other and somewhat less obvious conclusion pointed to by the Boston convention of the A.F. of L.

To err is human, but not to blunder. The facts were known and preached all along, pointing to the inevitable happenings at Boston. Unpardonable is the error of those who ignored these facts. If they simply did not understand them, what a commentary on their intellect! what an indictment and conviction of those “Socialists” for moon-calves! If, on the other hand, they did understand the facts, then they stand convicted of dealing in sawdust. Nor is this all.

The crushing kick the “Socialists” got at Boston tells more. Facing the Hayes, Hoehms, Barnses, etc., Gompers and Duncan knew they were facing a gentry that had allowed their party to act as the resounding board for all the slanders spewed by pure and simple unionism against the S.T. & L.A. What is more, Gompers, Duncan and their train knew that the Bogus Socialists knew they were known for what they are. With these Boguses’ heads thus held “in chancery,” Gompers,

Duncan and the rest felt free unmercifully to punch their noses for their treason to the A.F. of L. in the matter of their double-dealing on the A.L.U.

The merciless whipping received by the so-called Socialists in Boston is the sure reward of faithlessness mingled with imbecility. Socialism has nothing to expect from either quality, or a combination of them. Socialism can progress only by keeping its skirts clean of all alliances, ignoble ones in particular, with the labor-lieutenants of capital; it can progress only by standing out in the middle of the road and fighting all the foes of the working class.

The leading result of the Boston convention of the A.F. of L. is the death knell sounded of Socialist fakirism,—and that fact the sensible on-looker will profit by.

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