

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 2, NO. 105.

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1901.

TWO CENTS.

EDITORIAL

ORGANIZED SCABBISM.

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IT pays to look back once in a while, and refresh one's memory. More than once one will stumble across incidents that in the hurry of the moment escaped unperceived, and that, looked at again, especially by the light of fresher occurrences, are peculiarly interesting. One such incident happened last September in connection with the late steel strike. The scene is the office of the Trust. The star performer is Mr. Samuel Gompers. He holds the stage. Addressing the officials of the Trust, he says:

“Is the talk that union labor must be put down in this country idle, or is the United States Steel Corporation at the head of a movement to attain such an end? Is the Corporation distinctly antagonistic to union labor as a whole or hostile solely to Amalgamated?”

Not Hamlet's great soliloquy, spoken with the trembling Ophelia as the spectator, could give stuff for as many commentaries as these few lines, uttered by the head of what pleases to call itself the “organized forces of American Labor” and the “unifier of the American workingmen.”

How grandly daring is not the poise of the man who, walking up to the head of the forces he is supposed to combat, hurls at him such a gage of battle! In the whole collection of gages of battle none can compare with this. Isn't it as natural as natural can be that the officers of the Steel Trust are individually and collectively engaged in downing union labor, also among the cigarmakers, the children pants-makers, the pretzel-varnishers, the egg-candlers, the encaustic tile-layers, the horse tail-scrubbers, and so on to the end of the list? Of course, it is. Being so, such a question, popped at the Steel Trust magnates, was well calculated to knock the starch clean out of them. It did knock the starch out of them. When they recovered enough breath to answer, the answer was, tho' weak, as coming from knocked-out men, “No, no, Gompers dear! Oh, dear, no! Our hostility is limited to the Amalgamated. We shall let all the others alone, we assure you!”—And another

glorious victory was added to the long string of Gompersian Union victories! Field Marshall Gompers can, with no great exertion of the imagination, be seen strutting off, his sabre clanking against his spurs. He had “compelled the Steel Trust magnates to raise the siege before all the other Unions.” Is not that a grand work for a grand army? Let only the carping, cantankerous Socialist Labor Party men and the never satisfied Socialist Trade and Labor Alliancemen find fault with the Amalgamated being left in the lurch. It is the business of these Socialists to wreck Unions by always pointing out defects. The true Union man keeps quiet,—and pays his dues to foot Gompers’ rum bills, and quietly waits for his turn, when his Union will be offered up as a sacrifice “for the greater glory of Pure and Simpledom.”

Again, how well exemplified is the Gompersian claim that the A.F. of L. is the consolidator of the Working Class! Can a better illustration be furnished than the above of how the A.F. of L. teaches the workers the great lesson of the solidarity of Labor? No, indeed. You have here the lesson of solidarity taught in the abstract and practised in the concrete, the whole put into a practical nutshell and not as a “visionary Socialist idea.” The Amalgamated is sacrificed. True, but don’t you see that as the result of that the rest of the four hundred Unions are thereby saved? What is more, 1 or 399? It is a plain proposition in arithmetic. Is not the lesson of solidarity thereby taught to the 1 and to the 399? To-morrow it will be taught to another 1 and to the remaining 398; and then to still another 1 and to the then remaining 397; and so on till it has been drilled into all, backwards and forwards. Of course, the pestiferous Socialists will nag and carp at this policy. What do they know of the intricacies of Unionism? Moreover, are they not “Union Wreckers,” while Gompersism is the “Union Builder?” Let the wicked Socialists yell; “genuine Unionists” will whoop it up enthusiastically for Gompers, and, like soldiers, well disciplined and drilled in solidarity, march in successive battalions to slaughter.

Oh, Allah, Allah! Great is Organized Scabbism, and Gompers is its Prophet.

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