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EDITORIAL

SCRAWNY CZARS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

NO doubt the “Labor Party,” started by Gompers, is more than ridiculous, it is disgraceful in that it places the working class aspirations in a light that can breed contempt only. No doubt the schemers who launched the water-logged concern are a despicable crew. Long hanging by the log of “No politics in the Union,” they have now turned a somersault side ways that kicks to pieces both their past and their present posture. Furthermore, it needs no deep penetration to foresee that the whole affair will heave a sigh and sink before the musketry fire of the approaching campaign has well started. All this is true, yet true though all this be, the language of the plutocratic press concerning the new political venture is the language, not of aristocrats but of shoddicrats, not of real Czars but of scrawny imitations of the article.

What the plutocratic press is indulging its humor on is not the thing that students of the Labor Movement know the Gompers affair to be. What the plutocratic press is poking fun at and heaping ridicule upon is Labor itself, seeing they believe the Gompers affair actually speaks for Labor. To these mouth-pieces of the arson-promoting Standard Oilers and the perjury-committing railroad magnates, the demand of the weavers, who clothe these idlers and their still idler masters, for a fifty-hours-week sounds as silly as the “Rights of Man” sounded to the Russian magistrate in the thrilling Russian story “Ansel’s Awakening,” recently published in these columns.¹ To these mouth-pieces of cheating Gas Companies and death-dealing Packing Companies, the demands of the machinists, who do all their engineering, for the abolition of “government by injunction” sounds as preposterously childish as the demand of the Roundheads that the Court of Charles

¹ [Not included here.—R.B.]

I cease slitting noses. The workingmen have never committed “appendicitis,” as the capitalists call the tragedies that result from the immoral family relations among capitalists; they never ruined whole communities, as the railroad owners have done; they never lived upon the sweat of other people’s brow, as the bourgeois does. The workingman, accordingly, looks supremely silly in the eyes of the capitalist whose privileges he would interfere with.

It is not so with feudal aristocrats. Their standard of glory, tho’ barbarous{,} implies bravery. Their subjects never having been afforded an opportunity to display the virtue are not supposed to possess it. When their subjects strike the attitude of rebellion, the feudal aristocrats naturally smile. The thought of subjects measuring themselves with knights is, to them, mirth-inspiring. With the upstart capitalist matters lie otherwise. His is the sneer of the pick-pocket; his is the contempt of the jack-daw strutting about in stolen peacocks’ feathers; his is the conceit of the inflated frog; his is the swagger, not of conscious superiority, but of conscious inferiority; his is the brag of conscious villainy, cynically believed to be for and of all time.

There is nothing more disgusting than the Gompers “Labor Party,” except it be the supercilious attitude adopted towards it by {the} strumpet Democratic-Republican press.

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