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EDITORIAL

GRAPE NO. 3 (FAKIR LOGIC).

By DANIEL DE LEON

From the raceme of scabby grapes, furnished by the document issued by a lot of "Borers from Within" in the International Cigarmakers' Union against their elder brothers, the Regular Fakirs, and from which two? grapes have been culled in previous issues, there is a third that we propose to take down now.

The 10th paragraph of the document authenticates the fact that:

"At the start, there were less than 5,000 persons involved in the strike and lock-out; at the same time, the bosses' combine had from the start at least 3,000 employed elsewhere; up to the eighth week, the combine had employed at least 4,000 hands."

From these facts, just one intellectually honorable conclusion is possible, to wit:

"WHEREAS, The International Cigarmakers' Union has, for nearly a generation, had the field in our trade all to itself;

"WHEREAS, During this whole period, both the theory upon which it is constructed and the Labor policy that it has pursued have been dominated by the Strasser-Gompers principle of Old Style, or British, or Pure and Simple, Unionism; and

"WHEREAS, The unemployed in this cigarmakers' trade are now, at the end of this long period, found to be so numerous, and the wages in our trade so low, that within a short time of less than 5,000 of our fellow-craftsmen being called out, the employer can secure 4,000 substitutes, and whip us; therefore be it

"RESOLVED, That the International Cigarmakers' Union has proved itself structurally and tactically worthless;

"RESOLVED, That none can favor its continuance without branding himself a Labor Lieutenant of our exploiters, bent upon keeping us, the rank and file, tied hand and foot at his mercy;

“RESOLVED, That the organization be, if possible, forthwith reconstructed into a bona fide, fighting Trade Union, intent on something more practical to the workers than the raising of the salaries of the officers, the furnishing of jobs to Strike Committees, or the deceitful promise of funerals and coffins to the deceased;

“RESOLVED, That, if decomposition has already gone too far and reconstruction is hopeless, the existing organization be smashed by abandoning it to the rat-Fakirs in control, who, deprived of the rank and file to traffic on, would soon be drowned in the wreck; and

“RESOLVED, That the rank and file be then called upon to organize themselves upon the only lines that do not render Trade Unionism infamous,—the lines of the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance.”

Did the “indignant purists,” resentful of “the great wrong done to the cigarmakers”; did the “Borers from Within,” pretenceful of their class-conscious agitation within the Union, take that stand, draw that conclusion, or anything remotely approaching to it? No. The 15th and 16th paragraphs, the closing ones in the document, indulge in the identical “banale” phraseology that the Organized Scabbery has held from time immemorial: “The dog was a dog, not because he was a dog, but because John Jones owned him”: the Union had acted stupidly, had practiced corruption and had sacrificed the men in the late strike, not because Pure and Simpledom is stupid, corrupt and unconscionable, in short, scabby, but because, well, because why?—because Mr. J. Mahlon Barnes and his set of disreputables are not the officers (read “beneficiaries”).

The Regular, the Organized Scabbery, that outspokenly fights for Capitalism and against Socialism, is the out-post of the Labor-fleeing Capitalist; the Irregular, the “Borer from Within,” who puts on the mask of Socialism, is the out-post of the Regular or old-time Organized Scabbery. ’Tis six of the one, half a dozen of the other.

Wipe them out!

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

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