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EDITORIAL

## WHAT THEY COME TO.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**T**HE only quarter from which the Socialist Labor Party is ever charged with “Union-smashing” is the quarter of the Gompers A.F. of L., a cardinal article in whose creed of “Unionism” is the propriety of State militiamen in the trade councils of his organization—a propriety that Mr. Gompers’ associate on the Hanna National Civic Federation, Mr. Ralph M. Easley, loudly applauds as “so obvious that it ought not to be open for discussion at all.” All the other cardinal principles of Mr. Gompers’ organization, together with the minor tenets that flow therefrom, are of a piece with the one named. They all spring enough naturally from the body’s fundamental principle—the Brotherhood of Capital and Labor. It is natural enough that people who hold such views should believe the S.L.P. is a “Union-smasher”. And people who know better than to hold to such views on the relations of Capital and Labor, and still train with those who do, are still more naturally the loudest echoers of the charge against the S.L.P. Non-Parisians and admirers of Parisian levity are proverbially more Parisian than the Parisians. The sorry figure often cut by the non-Parisians, who are more Parisian than the Parisians, is a not infrequent subject for French cartoonists. An American cartoonist could vie with his French colleagues if he were to take in well the figure cut by the Milwaukee *Social Democratic Herald* of last week.

The Editor of the *Social Democratic Herald*<sup>1</sup> is back home fresh from his escapade as a delegate to the recent San Francisco convention of the A.F. of L. The gentleman is black and blue all over; court-plaster criss-crosses his ample proportions; and bandages innumerable hold his contusions in check. He is so disfigured that his own friends find it hard to recognize him. He bears all the marks

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<sup>1</sup> [Victor L. Berger.]

of rough treatment. Indeed, he had a rough experience at the convention. He went thither as a Marxist, accordingly, as an adversary of the “Brotherhood-Between-Capital-and-Labor” theory. What was more, he tried to express his views. He got no further than to try. The Gompersites threw him down. They trampled all over him; and when they got through, they walked over him some more. There was not a square inch of his anatomy that their heels and spiked soles did not cruelly lacerate. Not satisfied with that, they dropped salt and pepper into his wounds: in parliamentary language they called him a liar; in parliamentary language they called him an ass; and most fiendish of all, they called him point-blank a “Union-smasher”!

One should think that, after such treatment, the Editor of the *Social Democratic Herald* would fight shy of the term “Union-smasher”; one should expect that, after such experience, he would think twice before echoing against the Socialist Labor Party the “Union-smashing” charge that his militia-loving Gompers associates invented in order to create confusion and trouble the waters in which they are fishing. Not he! Why, if he did, if he ceased to out-do his militia-loving A.F. of L. associates in slandering and misrepresenting the S.L.P. Trades Union Attitude,—if he did that, then they would not rest content with beating him, they would then bodily fire him out, as utterly useless to them. Now, of all consummations, it seems, that would be the direst, that, in the opinion of the Editor of the *Social Democratic Herald* could happen to him. Sooner would he die than cease to be of them. So, therefore, he is willing to continue and does continue in his lowly mission of a beast of burden to the anti-S.L.P. slogans of the Gompers crew, towards whom his attitude is: “Beat me not, I beg you; but if you will, why, I am your ass.”

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

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