

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 4, NO. 222.

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1904.

TWO CENTS.

EDITORIAL

“ALBANY, 1901.”

By DANIEL DE LEON

DELUDED by the belief that “Labor Laws,” left to capitalist governments to enforce, are a protection to Labor, the trolley-men of Albany struck in 1901 to enforce the law applicable to their case—just as the Buffalo switchmen, yielding to the same delusion, had done before in 1892, and the Brooklyn trolley-men in 1895; and just as the Buffalo and the Brooklyn men had fared, fared the Albany men. The Governor of Republican-Democratic capitalism called out the militia, and “settled” the strike in favor of the law-breaking capitalist owners of the roads and lines. The parallel is accurate in another and important respect. At Buffalo, at Brooklyn and at Albany, the militia, realizing that it was to exemplify the essentially lawless mind of the capitalist class, and not finding any “rioting strikers” to shoot, made targets of innocent spectators. At Buffalo and at Brooklyn two boys, wholly guiltless, were shot. At Albany an innocent shopkeeper, standing at the door of his own shop and peaceably looking on, was sent to his death.

Now, then, the Twenty-third Regiment, N.G.N.Y., the regiment that “helped along” at Buffalo and at Brooklyn and that was “the whole thing” at Albany, celebrated on last January 23 the forty-second anniversary of its foundation with a superb banquet at the Hotel Vendome, and there proudly, hilariously, amidst flowing champaign, sang the following song, composed by one of their men:

ALBANY, 1901.

Air: “Dolly Gray.”

Without warning came the call—Albany.
No one thought ’twould come at all—Albany.
Snatched from theatre, home or club,
Without time for even grub,
Marshalled by the junior “Sub”—Albany.
Fierce and warlike were the sounds—Albany,
Fortified by forty rounds—Albany,

Blankets rolled and ponchos too,
Some old timers, some quite new,
Good for service still with you—Albany.

CHORUS:

Good-bye, Strikers, we must leave you,
For we've not been asked to stay.
Something tells us we'll be needed, back again with you some day.
You're not weeping at our leaving,
But you learned a thing or two;
We'll be ready at your calling, for we're "dead onto you."

What a welcome you can give—Albany.
Such wit should always live—Albany,
Billingsgate you do not lack,
As your merry jests you crack,
We were butts—but butts hit back—Albany.
Do you think you own the Land—Albany,
And on your rights still stand—Albany?
Can't you find another name
Fit to print without such shame,
Still you didn't find us tame—Albany.

CHORUS

How you changed your first idea—Albany,
As our meaning was made clear—Albany.
When 'tis Gin-mill cleaning day
Or some streets are cleared to stay,
We mean just what we say—Albany.
"Tin Soldiers," we may be—Albany,
But it's "tin" to one you'll flee—Albany.
Thank the Lord we're home again—
From your mud and driving rain—
But our memory will remain—Albany.

CHORUS

The matter points the finger not in one direction only. Just now when Mr. Hanna's Vice-President, Gompers, despite the atrocities that are being committed at this very hour by the Colorado militia, is putting in good words for the militia, and declaring Labor and the militia "will draw closer together," the moral—to say nothing of the physical—debauch at the Hotel Vendome, on January 23, is a double-armed sign-post, that tells where the seemingly divergent roads of the Gompers-

Mitchell brigade and the capitalist militia brigade meet.

[N.B.—The neatly gotten up booklet of the Hotel Vendome affair, containing the song, the price-lists of the wines, the gorgeous menu and the list of strikes "settled" by the regiment, all fittingly put together, is in this office for inspection.]

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

Uploaded April 2007

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