

The People.

VOL. VI, NO. 7

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, MAY 17, 1896

PRICE 3 CENTS

SECOND EDITORIAL

Crash Upon Crash

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It is only a few months ago when a crash took place in the Garment Workers' organization, affiliated with the A.F. of L., and of which Messrs Reichers, White, Schoenfeld & Co. have been the sole beneficiaries. The first crash took place with the revolt of the Brotherhood of Tailors. Our readers will remember the long indictment drawn up and proven against the swarm of labor fakirs who brazenly robbed the union, brought up forged bills, trafficked upon the label with sweater bosses, and cruelly made merry at their drinking bouts over the patience and innocence of their victims. The scales having dropped from the eyes of these long suffering men, they rose in rebellion against the tyranny and exploitation of their leaders, they overthrew them, walked out in a body, adopted the platform of New Trade Unionism, and left their fakir leaders stranded.

Before these gentry could recover from the blow, they got a second one. Last week the Cutters' Union No. 4 got tired and knocked out Chas. F. Reichers literally and hyperbolically.

For some time complaints have been accumulating against the General Officers in this union. The men had begun to use their senses and to ask questions. The presence of the label in sweater bosses' hands and other abuses caused a call for explanations. The General Officers tried to cajole the men: they sent Harry White there, but all he gained was to have his falsehoods nailed upon his back, and to confirm the members in their opinion. Things went on getting hotter and hotter for the fakirs until these decided to "discipline" their rebellious subjects. Charges were preferred against one of them who had been most inquisitive in ascertaining what the fakir leaders were at. He was tried by kangaroo court and condemned. By the union's rules a decision against a member must be submitted to the union for approval or rejection. If a majority approves, the case is settled; if a majority does not approve the case is settled too, subject, however, to an appeal to the General Officers. The union rejected the decision of the "court" by an overwhelming majority. An appeal was taken, and the General Officers confirmed the decision of the lower "court." The right of the union at this stage remains the same

as in cases of decisions by the lower "court": the decision has to be submitted to the union. Only in case it ratifies the decision, does it become binding; if the decision is rejected; the question at issue remains in abeyance subject to final action by the National Convention. The General Officers knew full well that the union would not accept the decision, and they decided to concentrate in their hands all powers in this case too. They were very much in a hurry. The union had invited the Brotherhood of Tailors to come before it and state its reasons for secession. The General Officers had no time to spare. Reichers walked into the Cutters' Union; caused the decision of the "court" to be read decreeing the expulsion of the accused member; and forthwith, without submitting the decision to the union for action, ordered the accused member to withdraw. This high-handed procedure was immediately resented by a storm of protests. Reichers then tried the loafer's-bully act and rushed upon the accused member with clenched fists. He did not get very far. Force was met with force, and he received such a thrashing that he will not soon forget.

Since then the union reorganized with the fakirs on the outside, and planting itself upon that forward basis that allows no room for rascal leaders to traffic upon the label and sell it to bosses who sweat the workers, or otherwise superadd the tyranny of the labor leader to that of the capitalist boss.

That the Garment Workers of {the} A.F. of L. is now a defunct organization, there can be no doubt. Under the misleadership of its General Officers it has suffered three reverses within a month: in Baltimore, Cincinnati and Chicago, while right here the malfeasance of these rascals has caused two large divisions to withdraw. The treasury of the general union is bankrupt. Its monthly organ has not been able to appear. Contemned and mistrusted by the rank and file of the workers, and impotent before the bosses, these General Officers and the organization of workers which they used to enslave the workers with are now virtually things of the past. No wonder Gompers and his crew are in a rage!

All honor to those dauntless union men who are overthrowing the ramparts of capitalism: the pure and simple labor fakir.

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

Uploaded June 13, 2003