

# DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 2, NO. 18.

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, JULY 18, 1901.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

## PLAYING LABOR FOR BASS.

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**T**HE National Glass Bottle Blowers' Convention held in Milwaukee, adopted on the 16th instant a certain resolution, so masterly, in its way, that admiration can not be withheld from it any more than one can withhold admiration from a fine specimen of rattle-snake.

Injunctions are just now pelting the heads of the workingmen like hail-stones, thick and hard. In Ansonia, Ct., in Cincinnati, O., all over Illinois, in the miners' regions of Pennsylvania, here in New York and in the Far West Washington, these injunctions are coming down forbidding the workingmen from boycotting, picketing, "addressing non-union men," supporting one another, and, in Ansonia, going so far as to attach the property of the men enjoined. The effect of this bold conduct of the capitalist class is felt by its Labor Lieutenants. The rank and file of the workers naturally resent such conduct; galled by these injunctions, they become restless and discontented, they begin to think, two and two are put together, and they begin to ask themselves ugly questions. Of what use is the economic organization of Labor if an arm of the political machinery of Government can scuttle it? This question leads straight to others, still uglier. How comes it that the workingman does not himself own and run the Government? He is 100 to the capitalist 1, why does not he wield the injunctions to smite his foes with? Needless to say that when the rank and file has reached this point in its meditations, the Labor Fakir, who has all along led the rank and file to vote for the capitalist parties, feels hard pressed. He has ever sung the song of "No politics in Unions," the "Trades Union is ample to protect the workingman," "Capital and Labor are Brothers," etc., etc. The injunctions that palsy the Union's striking arm, backed by the militias that blow the Union to splinters, bore a hole through the song. The rank and file begin to look askance upon their leaders. At such times something must be done, and done deftly. The Labor Fakir is equal to the occasion, how equal he proved at that Glass Bottle Blowers' National Convention.

Does he resist the popular indignation among his dues-paying dupes? Does he at such times stick firmly to his motto, “No politics in Unions,” “Capital and Labor are Brothers,” “The Trades Union is ample to protect the workers”? No! He plays the rank and file for bass. He slacks up the line; lets them have their own way. He joins them in the outcry, as he did in that Convention; denounces the issuing of such injunctions as an “arbitrary usurpation of power by the courts,” as “unwarranted abuse of extraordinary writs of injunction in disputes between employees and employer, which only result in the degradation of all that is best in American citizenship.” When the trusting, confiding rank and file, like the bass that imagines he is running away with the bait, thinks he is having his own way, and that its views are prevailing, the skillful hireling of the capitalist class, the Labor Fakir, gently pulls in the line and lands his fish. After all this denunciation of the injunctions, the resolution closes with a call upon all members to do, what? To knock out at the polls the class that fleeces them in the shop, and that protects its power to fleece with the public powers conferred by the ballot? Again, no! The resolution closes with a call

“To support an anti-injunction bill in Congress”

and the Labor bass is landed.

Certainly there is skill in this. Certainly it is no slight feat to turn the men’s anger against themselves, and getting them to decide, because the capitalist courts are guilty of usurpation of power, to give them some more laws to usurp powers on!

Fortunately, however, these conventions are more and more limited to Fakirs’ gatherings. The bass intended to be landed is not at these “labor” conventions. It is more and more conspicuously absent. Fortunately, also the S.L.P. is in the field, whose words, reaching the rank and file, are every day bringing more light to them, and urging on the day when Labor emancipated from the vile role of bass, will dump the Labor Lieutenants of the capitalist class.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.  
Uploaded April 2006