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EDITORIAL

## SOME MORE FLASHES FROM THE BONFIRE OF THE PHILADELPHIA STRIKE.

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**T**HE fourth week of the strike against the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company opens with the bonfire in still brighter blaze, and throwing up new tongues of flame that flash new light into dark corners.

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The cry for a “straight Labor Party” is going up from all parts among the Philadelphia Unions.—By the light of this flash two figures are seen. One is the figure of Samuel Gompers, the father, or echoer of the dogma that “the economic organization, ‘pure and simply’ economic, is all-sufficient to meet all the demands of Labor.” Like the hen that hatched out ducks’ eggs, Mr. Gompers may be seen by the light of this flash clucking nervously on the banks of the waters into which his ducklings are threatening to plunge. The other figure is Mr. A.M. Simons, the bull in the Socialist party china shop who declared last November 19th that his party “has become a hissing and a byword with the wageworkers of America.” By the light of this flash from the Philadelphia bonfire Simple Simons may be seen making faces at his partymen who jumped on him for telling the truth. He may be seen (and heard too) saying: “If our party did not, as *The People* so often declared, prostitute itself to the labor fakirs of the A.F. of L., would the rank and file of that body ignore us and propose starting a party of their own?”

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Pratt and Murphy are beginning to account for the comparatively small response their call for a general strike has met by the theory that “there are too many unorganized workers.”—Blinding is the luminousness of this flash. It should be enough to bring home to every A.F. of Hellite the near-sightedness their policy of making admission to their bodies difficult. Improved machinery eliminates skill.

That breaks down the one-time walls that protected the crafts. The Union's doors should be thrown wide open, initiation fees or no initiation fees, dues or no dues—even tho' thereby the salaries of the officers may have a smaller fund from which to draw.

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The Union printers decided not to walk out, neither did any but very few of the waiters respond.—A flash that throws into relieve the motto "History repeats itself." When the Paris Commune was butchered out of existence all the trades were crippled, except two,—the trade of compositors and the trade of waiters.

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The fight in Philadelphia is between the bondholders and the stockholders. The stockholders are centered in the politicians holding the leading municipal offices and the present Board of Directors of the Company. These are pretending to be opposed to the strike but actually instigated the same for the purpose of having a good pretext to throw the Company into the hands of a receiver and cause a "reorganization," with themselves in, others out. Hence the booming of the strike by the *Evening Post* and other journals in the railroad-wrecking business. The bondholders, on the contrary, mainly represented by the Morgan Interests, have exactly opposite "interests." Hence they sent Miss Morgan and their poodle John Mitchell to Philadelphia to decry the strike.—Flash! Such is the ignoble position Gompersism has presided its "Organized Labor" into—a football for capitalist contestors, whichever of whom wins Labor comes out battered.

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The "loyal" and "contented" employes took a hand in rioting against the police. AGAINST the police? Yes. A squad of colored policemen having been sent for the protection of the "loyal and contented," these received them with "a shower of broken rails and whatever other missiles they could lay hands on. They would not have colored protection."—And the flash throws a dazzling light across the cut-up, fractured, dislocated body of the otherwise Giant Labor—dislocated, fractured and cut up by cunning A.F. of L. contrivances, among which race and color hold proscenium seats.

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“The brewery workers did not join the strikers.”—This flash acts in the double capacity of a sponge and an illuminator. The Brewery Workers is the Union that pro-A.F. of L.-ites ever cite with predilection in proof, in proof positive, in proof that is to admit of no discussion, let alone denial, that the A.F. of L. is “rapidly organizing on the Industrial System plan.” The flash wipes out the bogus claim and brings out the opposite fact in all its glaringness.

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“In the event of the power-house employes joining the strike Chief McLaughlin, of the Electrical Bureau, says at the order of the Mayor he will fill their places with city employes.”—Humph! How that flash shoots up into the air and scatters luminous sparks by which to read the status of municipal employes of municipal plants under class rule. Under private employment they have a choice whether to become strike breakers or not. Under the municipal ownership idea, strike breaking is part of their duty, if so ordered.

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And so the bonfire continues to spew up flashes that illumine the field for miles and miles around.

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