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EDITORIAL

## GOMPERS AND THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT.

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**B**ETWEEN the Secretary of the Treasury and Mr. Samuel Gompers a quarrel is on that should be of intense interest to the political Socialist.

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing has hitherto used hand presses by express provision of law. The Department having made representations to Congress that the increased business of the Bureau outstripped its equipment; that, if hand presses were to be preserved, the building would have to be expanded; and that, if the building was not expanded, then power presses would have to be installed; Congress repealed the provision of the law making mandatory the use of the hand press. This freed the hand of the Treasury Department. Power presses could thenceforth be used.

So soon as the work of installing the power press began, Gompers began to bristle up and growl.

Nothing can accrue to the interest of the Working Class that makes against progress. Progress demands the best means of production, and none too good. Only with such tools can production be as ample and toil-less as civilized conditions require. The hand press belongs to "Antiquity." It was relegated thither by the up-to-date power press. Improved machinery tends to displace Labor. True. Nevertheless, to fight it is to fight Progress. Such was the posture of Labor in its infancy, when it labored under Ignorance, and Ignorance failed to quicken its sense of Dignity. That Age is gone by. Enlightened, therefore, militant, Labor parries the evil of displacement with the demand for shorter hours. Accordingly, enlightened Labor is draped in the dignity that hails and promotes Progress, and it has for its device not "Resistance" only; that is the device of the mule; but "Aggression," with "Resistance" only as an incident. With his understanding of the Labor Movement cramped by the sinister influences of National Civic Federation and Father Peter E.

Dietz “Militia of Christ” contrivances, Gompers strikes (in the name of Labor!) a posture that covers Labor with disgrace. Gompers bristles up and growls against the installation of the power press: it will “displace labor.”

Evidently, thoroughly posted upon the fact that what Gompers calls “Labor” is not at all the Working Class, but only the small fraction thereof which Gompers “Unionism” organizes into “Job Trusts” at the expense of the rest of the workers and under the motto of “Brotherhood of Capital and Labor,”—evidently thoroughly posted on that fact, and, of course, in full sympathy therewith, the Treasury Department promptly parried the Gompers objections with a masterly maneuver. The maneuver consists in a series of announcements pivoted upon principles that are cardinal in Gompers Unionism:—

1. As to the number of employes, when the power presses are installed, it will be no larger. True. But what of that? “To hell with the masses of the workers!” Only those employed through the “Union” need be cared for;

2. As to the workers now employed through the Union, such is the large increase of business in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, that not one will be discharged;

3. Not only will these Job Trust favorites retain their jobs, but they will work under more favorable conditions. Work with power is much less of a strain, and much safer to life and limb; and

4. The installation of the power press will save the tax-payer at least \$700,000 a year.

Each of these announcements—culminating with the false facts and theories that work is done to-day under materially safer conditions to the worker’s life and limb, and that Labor is a tax-payer—is an arrow taken from the quiver of Gompers “Unionism.”

In Aesop’s fable it was the noble eagle whose heart broke to see its body pierced with an arrow feathered with a plume plucked from its own wings. In the present instance it is an obscene carrion crow that smarts under the affliction.

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