

Daniel De Leon

Editorial: The 68,110 Votes Did It

The Clothing Manufacturers' Association, who are now engaged in a bitter strife with their employes, tried a bluff game by applying for an injunction to restrain their men from boycotting them, i.e., from giving the boss a dose of his own medicine. The case came up last Wednesday before Judge Barrett, the identical Judge Barrett, who, 7 years ago rendered the wonderful decisions in the Theiss Boycott cases.

This year's decision denies the injunction asked for by the bosses. The grounds for this change of front are given in the usual involved, confused and, to the uninitiated, incomprehensible language. Translated into the vernacular it runs thus:

“In 1886 I and my capitalist paymasters put our feet into it. They by ordering me and I by obeying them and sentencing innocent workingmen, conjured up an independent political party of Labor in this city that scared us out of our wits. The Dick Crokers, Fatty Walshes, Hugh Grants, Gilroys, the Roosevelts, Vanderbilts, Goulds, Sages, all the boss class and their lackeys and would-be lackeys, the city politicians, myself among the lot, came so near being knocked out by Labor that it was no fun. The worst of it was that our conduct was unnecessary at that time. The Theiss people did not need the aid of the Court to knock down Labor; they could have done the job nicely and neatly without forcing us to show our claws to the working class, and thus enlightening the workingmen upon the fact that they cut their own throats every time they vote for a Democrat or Republican politician. The case this year is of

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the same sort. There is no need as yet of our doing the work for these bosses; they will be able to do it quite alone. We don't want a repetition of the affair of 1886, if we can avoid it. So long as it is not made clear to the Court that the boss will go down and the workmen prevail unless the Court step in, we shall keep our hands off. The outlook is threatening enough all over the country: in this State alone, 18,000 Socialist votes were cast last year. There is no need of hastening events. Bosses sometimes are injudicious. They were so in 1886, so is this Clothing Manufacturers' Association. It should avoid doing things that will cause the scales to drop off the eyes of its wage-slaves; it should conceal the fact, as long as possible, that the Court and all the departments of Government, whether Republican and Democratic, are one with the boss class. In that way we may at least extend our lease of life, and, trusting to luck, may yet be able to finally subjugate the working class by taking it unawares. In 1886 these workmen cast 68,110 votes; this year they may cast 168,110. Where would we be then? The injunction is denied."

Foolish Judge Barrett, you are reckoning without your host!

The People, Vol. III, No. 2. Sunday, April 9, 1893

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*A De Leon editorial transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the
Official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.*

Uploaded August 2002