

EDITORIAL

## DUPERS DUPING DUPERS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**A** PLANK proposed for the Republican national platform by Wade Ellis, Attorney-General of Ohio, and spoken of as the anti-injunction plank, declares in favor of “an amendment of the statutes of procedure in the Federal Courts” that shall “prevent the summary issue” of writs of injunction “without proper consideration.” The plank is reported from Chicago as “meeting the wishes of Mr. Gompers.”

The two clauses of the proposed plank are at fisticuffs with each other.

The first clause proposes to amend the statute. If the statute needs amendment, then it follows that the conduct of the Courts that is complained of is not now, before the amendment, illegal, but is and has been perfectly legal.

The second clause—to prevent the Court from issuing writs of injunction “without proper consideration”—is an admission that the Courts have done this very thing. That thing is a violation of their oath of office. And that is illegal now, without the need of amending the statute.

If the first clause is sound, then the second one is a gratuitous libel upon the Courts; if the second clause is just, then the first is—?

The fact is that Gompers and Ellis—each representing a set of grafters upon the working class—are like two card sharpers sitting at a gaming table, each a duper, and each duped by the other.

Mr. Gompers—the labor lieutenant, who, like a “hand-down” in a family of many children, has been handed down successfully as Vice-President of Hanna, then of Belmont, and now of Seth Low on the Civic Federation—is a duper of no mean qualities. Without his skill as a duper, craft Unionism would long ago have ceased to be what the *Wall Street Journal* justly called it, the bulwark of Capitalist society in America. Having to dupe below him, Gompers is compelled to dupe above

him. His market value would vanish if he did not seem to have something to sell; today he has, to wit, the pure and simple Unionists who still believe in him. They are enraged at the arbitrary injunctions issued against them. He must give them something; he must frighten those above him into some concession. Hence the clause that injunctions have been issued “without proper consideration.”

Attorney-General Ellis, on the opposite side of the table, the representative of the ruling class that needs the aid of summary injunctions (with the bayonet gleaming between the lines) in its struggles against the working class, is likewise an expert at the game of duping. Whatever the ruling class does it must be careful, and, as a rule it is, not to show its claws too clearly to Labor. It must keep up the false pretence of a “square deal,” “even-handed justice,” etc. The moment the ruling class quits this policy the jig would be up. Hence the concessions that injunctions have been issued “without proper consideration,” and, immediately preceding that, the clause which takes in advance the sting from the admission, and promises “amendments” to the statutes.

No amendment can stand where judges violate their normal duties by issuing injunctions without proper consideration. Ellis duped Gompers by transferring the subject from impeachment proceedings to amendment proceedings. Gompers duped Ellis by wringing from him an admission that the Courts had been derelict.

Each duper duped the other and rubbed his hands. But the day is approaching when the process of dupers duping dupers will stand neither set.

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

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