

EDITORIAL

GOMPERS'S "INDEPENDENT" PARTY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

HARDLY has the Gompers "Independent" party been launched than it is giving unmistakable signs of the unsteady banana-peel footing that A.F. of Hellism furnishes. Impossible to get any definite answer to any concrete questions put to its god-mothers. It is all flourishes, windy aspirations, lurid hints, vague demands. The only thing that sticks out and leaks out is the hint to endorse, or allow endorsements from, the very parties whose misconduct the "Independent" Gompers concern gives as its excuse for setting up shop. Somehow the tune is familiar. When was it last heard? Oh, yes—

It was the other day in Brooklyn. The occasion was a hearing on the charges against Mr. Coler for promises of patronage alleged to have been made by him during his campaign for Borough President. At the hearing, a gentleman whom we would take for a brother of Samuel Gompers, and may be, for all we know, although his name is Albert Keck, testified that his organization, the German-American League, would have endorsed some other candidate than Coler had he not promised them patronage. Being more closely interrogated, the following dialogue took place between Mr. Keck and the Committee:

"Your organization is in the game for what it is worth?"

"That's it. We're not in it for fun."

"So you would just as soon vote for a Republican or a Hottentot as you would for a Democrat, so long as you get a promise of patronage?"

"That's it. We're INDEPENDENT."

The question forces itself upon one's mind, For what reason does Mr. Gompers call his affair the "Independent" party? The story is told of an affected mother, who was given to reading dime novels, flying off in a rage one day at her ten-year hopeful and saying: "I shall give you a vapulation." When the brat recovered his

breath after being operated on, he remarked in a tone of disappointment: "What a big word for a common licking!"

What a big, four-syllabled, Latin-bred word—in-de-pen-dent—for the short, monosyllabic, Anglo Saxon "Sell-out"!

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