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EDITORIAL

TRAUTMANN'S SECOND OPEN LETTER.

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ELSEWHERE in this issue will be found the second open letter of Wm. E. Trautmann, against the Executive Board of the United Brewery Workers' International Union, and the Gompers' form of unionism, addressed to the Brewery Workers and the working class.

As is well known, Trautmann was the Editor of the *Brauer-Zeitung*, the organ of the United Brewery Workingmen, an organization that endorsed the so-called Socialist party; he took part in arranging for a call to organize the Working Class of the land into a Union that he considered superior to the Civic-Federated American Federation of Labor of Gompers; for doing so the Executive Board of his organization—at least one of whom, Priesterbach, is a member of a St. Louis Democratic Club—demanded his resignation; he refused, and the question was sent to a referendum vote, both sides publishing their statements; by a majority of over 1,000 votes the rank and file sustained Trautmann; but the Executive Board—the accusers in the case—resolved themselves into a “Board of Review,” and with the Democratic politician Priesterbach, for one, among them, counted out enough votes favorable to Trautmann, and thus gave themselves a majority, and turned Trautmann out of his office. Thereupon Trautmann issued his first open letter. Therein the above facts were set forth. Later appeared an open letter from one of his witnesses at the count of the referendum, Leo Steinbach, relating the brutal assault committed upon him by members of the International Executive Board of the United Brewery Workers. Trautmann's and Steinbach's letters were followed by alleged answers in the *Brauer-Zeitung*, to which Trautmann's second open letter gives reply.

No workingman who is a union man, and no union man who is a workingman, should fail to read this letter. Written with a confidence that knows truthful

contradiction is impossible, Trautmann's second open letter is not only a close, intimate recital of the corruption inherent in the Civic-Federationized American Federation of Labor of Gompers, for revolting against which it is sought to punish him—it is not only an exposé and a declaration of war to the knife upon working class organization in the interests of the capitalist class and the labor fakirs—but an array of fact showing the necessity for working class organization on correct principles, for a union by, for and of all the workers only. This is the point of all points in the second open letter of Trautmann. On its recognition in practice depends working class extrication from labor fakirism and capitalism. To resuscitate or revivify the old Capital-and-Labor-are-one-rule-from-the-top craft unionism, under the name of industrial unionism, is to give up the form and retain the essence of the “labor” movement that is now riveting the chains of Labor ever more firmly. Only in a distinctive, democratic organization of its class, based on the principle of the antagonistic interests of Capital and Labor, can the working class move forward to relief and emancipation. This is the lesson that Trautmann's second open letter conveys to the brewery workers and the working class. That they will learn it and apply it well, is the hope of every true workingman and well-wisher of the race.

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