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REPORT

GLEANINGS 'LONG THE ROAD. {4}

By DANIEL DE LEON

EN ROUTE TO LAS VEGAS, NEV., 11 A.M., MARCH 27.—With the prospect of five restful, peaceful days in Los Angeles where I expect to arrive before this hour to-morrow, I feel as if I could at last begin to catch my breath. Since leaving Denver, twelve days ago, life has been strenuous. It surely was that since moving west and south from Ogden, Utah. What with wash-outs that, in one instance, caused us to have to walk two miles on the slope of a hill skirting the inundated tracks; what with constant delays that tried one's patience; and finally, what with the surcharged electric labor atmosphere in the region of Goldfield, Tonopah, Rhyolite, at the latter of which places a "labor" deputy sheriff, Casey by name, upon whose crooked horns I had stepped during my address last night, tried to arrest me this morning in order to prevent my speaking at an improvised miners' meeting in Beatty at 10 A.M. to-day;—what with all that behind and Los Angeles before me, I actually feel at leisure now.

For all the thorniness of the tour since Ogden, it bore in some respects a "home" aspect. At Hazen, Nev., where cars are changed south for Tonopah, my eyes alighted upon a freight-handler with the *Weekly People* sticking out of his pocket, and upon a miner-looking passenger carrying a bundle wrapped in a *Daily People*! My first impulse was to accost them both. I refrained. Numerous warnings from W.F. of M., and I.W.W. western friends, that, as one of these put it, "there are folks who would like to see this tour cancelled," decided me to preserve my incognito. As I traveled southward, *The People* became an increasingly frequent sight. At Tonopah, Goldfield and Rhyolite it was a common thing. At Springdale, a stage station on the road to Rhyolite, a baker who works in the "boarding car" moved briskly and with inquiring eyes among the passengers with a *Weekly People* in his hand. It was his way to find me out, and introduce himself. The *Weekly* posted him on my itinerary.

He knew I was due then and there. He was an I.W.W. stalwart—one of the “fanatics,” as the pin-head of a Sherman has “incidentally” dubbed the bona fide Industrialists. At Beatty, yesterday within an hour’s stage ride of Rhyolite, I experienced a friendly “hold-up” by W.F. of M. men at work in the place—due again to *The People*. They wanted a meeting there. The only plan feasible was soon perfected. At eight this morning a rig was to fetch me from Rhyolite. That was to put me back in Beatty at 9 A.M., and I was to address a meeting until the arrival of the train from Rhyolite to Las Vegas, Los Angeles, 10 A.M. The unwarranted arrest this morning in Rhyolite of my escort from Goldfield, Wm. Jurgens, by the “un-fanatical” deputy-sheriff Casey, and Casey’s attempt to complete the job by arresting me also, caused a delay of fifteen minutes in the Beatty program. For the rest, the “fanatical” Beatty program was put through successfully, and I boarded my train where I am now writing.

I had two packed meetings at the big Miners’ Union Hall in Goldfield, and one in Tonopah. The Tonopah, Goldfield, Rhyolite situation, with Goldfield as storm center, is simply indescribably magnificent. From as far east as Denver, and all the way west from Cripple Creek, Florence, Grand Junction, Salt Lake, Ogden, Hazen, and then south to Goldfield, Tonopah and Rhyolite discussions upon the I.W.W. and Socialism are not only frequent, but common in the cars. Eugene Engley, the well known radical lawyer of Cripple Creek, Colo., with whom I spent three hours in Cripple Creek on my way to Grand Junction, amazed me with the profundity of an observation that he made. We all know how common the remark is: “Socialists should not fight,” or “the workingmen are always quarreling.” We know these remarks are born of the superficial knowledge of Utopianism. Engley is not afflicted by such superficiality. He is not merely a lawyer. He is a jurist. The vast library he owns is not owned for show; nor has the equally important library of contemporaneous events been sealed to him. He said to me shortly before we parted: “I see it. The real issue during the next ten years will be the struggle of labor within its own camp to settle the question of the proper economic organization that is to reflect their political party and furnish the same with the physical power wherewith to enforce the principles proclaimed by their ballot.” This is a profound observation. Indeed, the whiners over the “splits” in the camp of labor, the recent I.W.W. “split”

included, attest their Utopianism with their tears. Not from victory to victory marches the labor or Socialist movement to final triumph. The march of the labor movement is from disruption to disruption, from defeat to defeat—every defeat being suffered upon the higher plane of more perfect organization, more perfect construction. The struggle to attain the finally perfect, that is, fit organization, marks the process of unification—the industrially organized working class, ready, through their industrial organization, to supplant the political and establish the Industrial or Socialist government of the nation. Labor will win but ONE triumph—that triumph will be the Waterloo of the capitalist class. That triumph will be won without striking a blow at capitalism, so to speak. Capitalism will drop like a scab on the body social. That triumph will be won the instant labor has settled to its own mind the question of the economic organization which its class mission demands.

Not without this truth is fathomed and grasped can the struggle of our days be understood, and the proper attitude be taken towards it. Of that struggle, the present conflict, with Goldfield as the storm center, furnishes an unprecedented illustration.

The present struggle in and around Goldfield is in reality the wrestling of hostile economic organizations, of economic organizations of different degrees of structural perfection. The feature of the season is that, despite itself, capitalism has enlisted its services in the work of mightily helping clarification. The Goldfield-Tonopah Mine Owners' and Citizens' Alliance press is just now classical. Every issue should be preserved as a valuable specimen in the collection of what may be called the geological stratification of the Social Revolution. It would take me too long to quote its numerous choice utterances; moreover, I am writing on the backs of letters received on the road; the supply would give out before I have rounded the subject; this sleeper furnishes no stationery. An approximate idea may be formed by saying that this Mine Owners' press cries with and out-Herods even the pure and simple political Socialist party press in "Neutrality." The praises of Gompers and of Sherman are sung from basso profundo up to high treble; the A.F. of L. is pictured as the haven of labor's refuge; and, lest the valuable educational work of such propaganda be in the slightest way lost, the bogus I.W.W. of Sherman is editorialized upon in strains of fondness such as Romeo indulged while scaling the

window of his charmer's apartments. Nor does that press omit to complete its educational work with fervid oratory against the "Trautmann-De Leon faction" of the I.W.W.; against "the pestiferous St. John"; against "the Anarchists who are checking the prosperity of our beloved town," whose "Anarchy," by the way, consists in having armed themselves against the "Diamondfield Jacks" and having thereby kept these nasty vermin, together with their nastier breeders and pay-masters at positively respectful distance, to the saving of the situation,—all of which fervid oratory is forthwith rendered queerly superfluous by heated assurances to the effect that "the I.W.W. is dead" or "the I.W.W. is on its last legs." Such suicidal conduct, such dementia on the part of the Goldfield-Tonopah capitalist press, on the part of the press of a class that is thoroughly known to live through arson and murder upon the plunder of the workers, and through swindle and perjury upon the gudgeons in Wall Street whom it sticks with its usually worthless mining stock—such dementia is the real feature of the season. It is the feature of the season in that it marks that advanced stage of "social stratification" which consists in the circumstance that the capitalist class finds itself driven to come from cover, openly ally itself with one form of labor organization, and thereby itself utter the strongest possible recommendation of the form of labor organization which it assails; plainly exposed by their admiration the "virtues" of the "conservative" labor leaders, and as plainly recommend by their condemnation the "vices" of the "fanatics"—the Mine Owners have learned and borrowed the epithet "fanatic" from Sherman. All this printed matter is surmounted conspicuously by the "tamales label," the name given in and around Goldfield to the label of the I.T.U., the imprint of which was equally conspicuous on the printed court injunctions recently issued in Chicago against the members of the I.T.U. themselves on strike against the Typothetae. [Tamales is a Mexican sort of pie resembling in shape the I.T.U. label.]¹

On the 24th instant Vincent St. John sent to *The People* a sketch of the situation and the history that preceded. From that history it will be learned that the Goldfield Mine Owners find themselves caught on all sides by the swelling tide of the "fanatics." What ever scheme the capitalists devise turns against them. They tried the political gerrymander on the industrial field. Imagining from the language

¹ [Brackets in the original.]

and conduct of the O'Neills, Mahoneys and Kirwans that the miners were "unfanatical" and readily cozened, and knowing that the miners were more numerous than the "town workers" [non-miners at work in the town and mainly I.W.W.]² they manoeuvred to have the two sets consolidated in one Union. Thereupon that happened which was the exact opposite of the expected. The supposedly "unfanatical" miners were expected to outvote the "fanatical" town workers. What happened was a development and demonstration of "fanaticism" that set the "Citizens'" hair on end. Despite the agents and spies [utterly "unfanatical"]³ kept by the capitalists in the consolidated Union, the "fanatics" had the overwhelming majority. The economic gerrymander having failed, the capitalists now are bent upon segregation and the simultaneous "watering" of the "fanatical" membership with expectedly "un-fanatical" importations from the A.F. of L. They paid \$2,700 for a special car to convey a load of A.F. of L. crooks and waiters from Denver to scab upon the I.W.W. The chord of working class interests being touched by the "fanatics," and the touch being emphasized by the demented articles of the Mine Owners' press, the anticipated scabs—all but four—joined the "fanatics." The Mine Owners' rage knows no bounds, but it vents itself in barking. It knows what it is up against in Goldfield, and keeps its horns well in. Only the special agents of the Mine Owners now and then, being more witless than even their masters, indulge occasionally in a little clumsy "un-fanatical" outbreak. Such was the nature of the outbreak by the "labor" deputy-sheriff Casey this morning in Rhyolite. He and a pal of his, Kelly, both enthusiastic Mahoney-Shermanites, had intrigued their level best to prevent my Rhyolite meeting last evening, and in that way keep the rank and file from hearing the gospel of Industrialism. They failed signally. The "fanatics" hired the largest hall in the place—the Unique Hall. Though the hour was late, lamps, candles, benches were quickly procured, criers were sent through the camp and town announcing the meeting, and the place filled. Active in this work was Wm. Jurgens of the Goldfield Miners' Union, whom the Goldfield men thought wise to delegate as my escort against possible mad dogs. Jurgens informed the meeting of the language Kelly had used that same afternoon

² [Brackets in the original.]

³ [Brackets in the original.]

towards St. John. That language had all the earmarks of the language used by the Mine Owners' Association press. The meeting hooted Kelly. After the meeting adjourned Kelly, together with another, tried to assault Jurgens. Jurgens pulled out his gun, and ordered Kelly to move. This morning, just as I was about to enter my rig to Beatty together with Jurgens, Casey arrested Jurgens on the charge of "carrying concealed weapons." I accompanied Jurgens into the Court House, where he was let out on bail furnished by Comrade Jensen. In the meantime, as I was telling Jurgens that a lawyer would be procured for him, Casey jumped at me, seized me by my overcoat and yelled something. The man looked demoniacal. I ordered him to let go my overcoat, or I would swear out a warrant against him for false imprisonment. He thought discretion the better part of valor—and "discreeted." I bade my stalwart escort Jurgens good bye at Beatty, and thus the roughest portion of this tour, so far, closed with the complete rout of the "unfanatics" with the "fanatics" on top—morally, intellectually and physically. What the concrete and immediate issue will be in Goldfield I cannot tell. Whatever that issue be it will mark a step forward.

I wish to mail this letter at Daggett and have it off my mind. But there is one more incident I should record. It is one of numerous ones of the kind. This one occurred about half an hour ago. Shortly before my train entered Las Vegas, a man entered the sleeper where I am writing, called me by name, shook my hand warmly and introduced himself as C.E. Payne of North Dakota, now working along the road of the Las Vegas line. He knew I was due on this train and hunted me up. We had a delightful chat of about half an hour. Payne is an S.P. man. The "un-fanatics" in his party call him a "De Leonite." He tells me "the woods are full of them."

The campaign of calumny against the S.L.P. by the pure and simple political Socialists is rolling heavy upon the heads of the "un-fanatics."

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