

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 8, NO. 159.

NEW YORK, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1907.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

WHY FEDERAL TROOPS IN GOLDFIELD?

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THINGS are coming to a head in Goldfield. It is now about twelve months since the struggle started between the get-rich-quick mine owners and the mine workers. What such a struggle means, every intelligent man knows. While spouting “law,” “order,” “safety to property,” “safety to life,” “freedom,” etc., the mine owners were all the time intent upon violating each and every principle that their slogan implied. The law was being trampled under foot by them; order was set at naught; the property produced by the miners was confiscated ruthlessly; trumped-up charges threw innocent men into jail; “Paddy” Mullaney, now out on a \$2,000 bail furnished by the “law and order” brigade, fired four murderous shots at St. John, the central figure of the miners who knew their rights and dared assert them; finally, as the crowning act of respect for “law” and “property,” the mine owners demanded of their employees that they accept paper, or scrip, in payment of wages.

During this protracted struggle, in which Capital re-appeared in its natal blood-stained colors, with bloodshot eyes trying to ride roughshod over every law, human and divine, and sticking at no crime that would promote the pocketing of the large profits in sight—during this protracted struggle, when the A.F. of L. recognized its affinity in the mine owners, and aided, to the best of its ability, tho’ vainly, in introducing organized scabbery into the field—during this protracted struggle, when John M. O’Neill, the man with a record for murder at the time that he sailed under an alias in the North-West, sought to lend the support of the *Miners’ Magazine* to the mine owners by jeering at the working class, engaged in the work of organizing the forces of Labor’s emancipation, as “proletaire rabble” and “coffee and doughnut brigade,” and more recently could barely restrain his expressions of regret at “Paddy” Mullaney’s failure to murder St. John—during this protracted

struggle, when Mahoney, “Acting-President” of the W.F. of M. and a director of a bogus mine in Goldfield, still sore at every limb from the thrashing he received at the hands of the honest and intelligent representatives of Labor at the Chicago Convention of the I.W.W., endeavored to sandbag the Goldfield strike—during all this protracted struggle, the I.W.W., led, inspired and encouraged by Vincent St. John, stood firmly by the guns of its rights. No deed of provocation could drive them to acts that would give a handle for the charge of lawlessness; no temptation to drown their sorrows in whiskey, amply supplied by the foe, could lure them into drunkenness; no blandishments could coax them into a betrayal of the interests of their class. Maltreatment; false imprisonment; calumny; even murder, as attempted upon St. John,—they bore it all with fortitude.

What was the end to be? The two forces had locked horns and were at a standstill. Were both to bleed to death? Was it a contest of endurance? The Goldfield capitalist brigands, in lockstep with their fellow Wall Street cut-purses, had tried every trick known to the trade. The utter collapse of their neatly plotted game in Boise, Ida., made them lose heart. Then came the financial panic. The money stringency opened fresh and unbounded vistas of gains to the gold mine owners. Economic history was to receive cumulative evidence that capitalist opportunities spell affliction for Labor. It was so with the Cuban slaves, when the discovery was made of the large returns Cuban soil could yield in sugar,—the slaves, treated gently, until then, were thenceforward driven with rods of scorpions. It was so with the Southern Negroes, when the cotton gin touched the cotton fields with a magic wand of gold—the Negro, almost happy before, was then made to experience the horrors of the “breeding farms” and subjected to trials that matched any inflicted by Roman slavery upon conquered peoples. So now in Goldfield through the present financial stringency. As the passage from Dunning, often quoted in these columns, tersely expresses it, while capital is timid and flies from turbulence and strife, “a certain 10 per cent. will insure its employment everywhere; 20 per cent. certain will produce eagerness; 50 per cent. positive audacity; 100 per cent. will make it ready to trample on all human laws; 300 per cent., and there is not a crime at which it will scruple, nor a risk it will not run, even to the chance of its owner being hanged.” The gold mine owners are now beyond the “100 per cent.” and have arrived at the

“300 per cent.” mark specified by Dunning. Gold had been going down. Now, through the panic, that commodity has received a sudden boost. Gold coin is in demand, credit having fled. The commodity that the gold mine owners deal in can now yield profits—large profits—very large profits—provided it can be turned out promptly. “Make hay while the sun shines!” is the present device of the gold mine owners, and, true to the estimate Dunning makes of the capitalist, the gold mine owners are now so full of audacity, and are, now driven so recklessly by the psychology of their class, that they have even cast the pretence of “law” to the wind, and have invited the Federal troops to compel the miners TO ACCEPT SCRIP IN PAYMENT OF WAGES—in other words, to violate the federal law, which confers upon Congress only the power to issue money in any form.

Nothing goes by accident. It is no accident that the General who is to lead the Federal troops into Nevada, there to enforce by force of arms the violation of the Federal monetary laws, is the notorious swaggerer of Philippine Islands notoriety—Funston.

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Uploaded November 2009

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