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REPORT

## GLEANINGS 'LONG THE ROAD. {9}

By DANIEL DE LEON

**P**ADUCAH, KY., MAY 7, 1907.—It is over a week ago since my last letter was written to *The People*. These letters have come so irregularly that I trust the readers of *The People* have made about me the shrewd surmise made by the fond aunt in James Barton Adams' neat little poem—

“His letters came so seldom that I  
somehow sort o' knowed  
“That Billy was a-tramping on a  
mighty rocky road.”

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Since my last writing I met in Milwaukee Comrade Robert Mackenzie, a pattern-maker. A story told of him reminded me of the parallel I drew several years ago in my Boston address “Reform or Revolution” between Capitalism and the Empire of the Incas—both being alike in their inherent weakness and the bluff-strength of their position. It is exactly so with that admittedly “bulwark of American capitalism,” the A.F. of L. Mackenzie works in the Chalmers' Pattern Shop, said to be the largest machine shop in the world. One day he was approached in the shop by the Secretary of the Pattern Makers' Union, an A.F. of L. concern, whereupon the following short, sweet, terse and pictorial dialogue took place:

Sec'y.—“Have you a card?”  
Mack—“What kind of a card?”  
Sec'y.—“A union card.”  
Mack—“Yes,” and going down into his pocket produces an up-to-date paid up card of the I.W.W.  
Sec'y. (Bluffingly and swaggeringly)—“That's no good here.”  
Mack (Cool as a cucumber)—“Doggone ye, can you show me a better? If any one of your tribe molests me here, I'll use no 'moral arguments' but knock his block off!”

The bluff was called. The Secretary of the Belmont-Gompers combination withdrew with a shiver. Mackenzie never told the story. The conversation had been overheard, and went around the shop, and then from shop to shop. Mackenzie was left “unmolested.”—Like Capitalism, the “fortress” itself, its outwork, the A.F. of L., needs but be firmly faced and the two swindles collapse.

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In Moline, Ill., a pretty manifestation may be studied of the “equality” between Bro. Capitalist and Bro. Labor. Plows are a staple product of Moline. The employers, all Companies, demand from their employes the signing of “individual contracts.” The scheme kills two flies with one slap. First, the “individuality” of the workingman’s contract bursts up any Union combination, secondly, the individual workingman stands exposed to a suit for breach of contract any time the employer chooses, and, seeing the workingman has no spare cash for lawyers’ and court fees, he must cave in and submit to judgment against him. Thus the “equality” is doubly exemplified—the individual workingman is forced to contract with a COMPANY of capitalists: were he to suggest either that his individual contract be entered into with an individual member of the firm, or that, seeing the other contracting party is a combine, he also be allowed to combine and that his Union make the contract, he would speedily be decried as an “undesirable citizen.” Furthermore, the feudal inequality of the weapons of warfare—the large bank accounts of the firms and the worker’s empty pockets—leaves the latter unarmed on the “legal” field of battle.

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In Peoria I almost, for a moment, believed myself to be Christian of Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*. If a certain Socialist Party man, James Lofthouse by name, is not the reincarnation of Talkative, one of the worthies whom Bunyan’s pilgrim had to deal with, then the theory of incarnation is a myth. That Talkative, it will be remembered, was a great fellow—for TALK. He talked beautifully but acted the other way. He is compared to that class of folks “who cry out against sin, even as the mother cries out against her child in her lap, when she calleth it slut and naughty girl, and then falls to hugging and kissing it.” James Lofthouse of the S.P. must have stood for that picture before the camera of photographer Bunyan. Even as the mother who cries out against her child in her lap, Lofthouse cries out against the A.F. of L. and calleth it slut and naughty girl; and even as the same mother

then falleth to hugging and kissing her pet, Lofthouse stands for the A.F. of L. and meekly obeys the biddings of his A.F. of L. party members in the matter. He at first denied to me that his party's press opposed the I.W.W. Challenged to quote two of his papers who were not rounders for craft Unionism and bruisers against the I.W.W., he, Talkative-like, quickly shifted his ground and said he meant that "no S.P. man opposed the I.W.W."—the gentleman once was in the I.W.W., to-day he is not. His S.P. local, of which, according to him, no member opposed the I.W.W., ORDERED HIM OUT OF THE I.W.W., and he meekly obeyed.

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The arrest of St. John in Nevada on the pretext of his having conspired to kill the restaurant keeper Silva in Goldfield is being gradually interpreted in its proper light. The close parallel between that arrest and the arrest of Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone is rising to view. The latter were kidnapped in Colorado on the pretext that they participated in, by being personally present at, the blowing up of ex-Governor Steunenberg in Caldwell, Idaho,—notwithstanding the well-known fact that none of the three was in Idaho on that date, that all the three were about a thousand miles away, and that none had been in the State for from three months to several years previous. That the real crime of these men was their being "undesirable citizens" is now well established. They opposed the craft Union system of the A.F. of L. of which Roosevelt is an honorary member. It is likewise, perhaps even more pointedly so, in St. John's case. The restaurant keeper Silva was shot dead by Preston because Silva rushed out of his restaurant with a gun in hand and stuck the muzzle thereof in Preston's face. There was nothing for Preston to do but to fire. The affair happened before dozens of eye-witnesses. The facts are public, undisputed and indisputable. Now, then, if Silva was "murdered" as the result of a conspiracy on the part of St. John, Preston and others to kill Silva, THEN SILVA MUST HAVE BEEN IN THE CONSPIRACY HIMSELF. Without his having assailed Preston with a gun he could not have been "murdered." The "conspiracy to murder" theory must, accordingly, presuppose Silva a fellow conspirator, the star one, at that; the one without whose act the "conspiracy" could not be carried out. He must have conspired to have himself murdered. No one imagines that altruism among the lackeys of capitalism has attained such perfection. Of course, the conspiracy theory is a pretext—as silly and shameless as the theory of the

complicity of absent Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone in the killing of Steunenberg. But St. John had been a leading figure in the recent I.W.W. struggle against the Mine Owners' Association in Goldfield. That the present settlement is not the victory, which the Mine Owners' Association claim, there are many proofs of. For instance: Senator Clark's paper, the *Butte Miner* of April 24, reporting my address on Industrialism delivered in that town the previous evening, contains this passage: "He [that is I] referred briefly to the present clash in Nevada between the mine owners and the Industrial Workers, DEPLORING THE FACT THAT THE ORGANIZATION WHICH HE REPRESENTS HAD FAILED TO GAIN A FOOTHOLD IN GOLDFIELD." Now, this whole passage is a fabrication of the whole cloth. I referred not to Nevada or Goldfield; I deplored nothing in the premises; not by name or otherwise had I alluded to that clash. Why the lie? Obviously the putting into my mouth of words I did not and could not have used was intended to convey, upon authority, a certain impression in the matter. When an impression to be conveyed needs deliberate falsehood for its conveyance, that impression cannot be other than the opposite of the truth. The arrest of St. John upon the pretext of having conspired to murder Silva—that arrest so quick upon a settlement which the Mine Owners' Association are heralding as "a crushing defeat for Industrialism and for the Anarchist St. John"—that arrest not only tells a different tale, it also betrays the capitalist conspiracy to do away with one of the foremost champions and sturdiest leaders the wage slave class of America has produced. The capitalist conspiracy of fourteen months ago to murder Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone having suffered shipwreck, the buccaneers are now trying another scheme—the scheme to murder St. John and his associate stalwarts.

The gods are rendering crazy the crew that they wish to undo. The buccaneers are to-day rendering valuable service in the work of popular clarification.

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