

EDITORIAL

FIRST MOAN OF THE LASSOED.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE Milwaukee, Wis., *Social Democratic Herald* of the 8th inst., comes out with an article entitled "Roosevelt's 'Labor Representative' Clark," in the course of which occur the following passages:

"Who is Clark? . . . A flood of light comes to us from Denver, where the Switchmen's Union is on strike. Thirty-six men quit their work. Now, note what happened according to the Denver newspapers:

"The places of the men have been taken by members of the Brotherhood of Railway Conductors and Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, and it is asserted by Railway Superintendent Egan that all business is being handled easy' . . .

"More than this, Clark is proved to have a standing agreement with the officials of the Denver and Rio Grande Road whereby a strike of the switchmen is sure to fail. . . .

"And let's look a little further. What was Clark doing in 1894, at the time of the Pullman strike? He was in session with the General Managers' Association during the strike, and actively aided them in filling strikers' places.

"A great Labor man is Clark! Roosevelt's man Clark, through whom Teddy expects to command Labor votes when he is up for election in 1904!"

What may all this music mean?

It is the first moan and contortion of agony of the lassoed.

1. It is not true that E.E. Clark is "Roosevelt's man": he is Mitchell's man. Mitchell has boasted of having secured Clark on the Arbitration Commission, and thereby securing "Labor a Representative." In his letter to Roosevelt, accepting the arbitrators, he speaks of the Commission, originally proposed by the operators, as not a "thoroughly impartial tribunal," while now, with Clark on, the objections have been removed "by securing from the operators assent to a broadening and strengthening of the Commission." [See *United Mine Workers' Journal*, October 23, 1902.]

2. Mitchell, and all other officers of the United Mine Workers' Union, have never objected, not even during the Pullman strike, to their men furnishing coal to trains operated by scabs. He emphasizes the point by still declaring that he aims to establish "sound and harmonious business relations" between his men and their employers,—just as Clark is doing.

3. The Social Democratic party everywhere, during and after the strike, praised Mitchell to the skies as a "Champion of Labor."

4. The manipulation of both the strike and the Arbitration Commission was merely a political duel between capitalist politicians. The Social Democracy allowed itself to be played upon at each step so as to aid the cruel farce. It finds itself now lassoed. The "drawing powers" of Mitchell, and through Mitchell, Clark, as pullers-in for capitalism and its politicians, has been a thousand-fold increased by the Social Democracy. Not Socialism, but Mitchell did it promote: not for Socialism but for Mitchell was the vote cast that fell to that party.

Is it any wonder that the lassoed now set up a moan and begin squirming?

Not to a party, that—for whatever reason—can perceive the lasso only after its neck is caught tight,—not such a party can the Working Class of America look to for guidance and deliverance. The political party that will emancipate the workers from the thrall of wage-slavery, can be only that party whose sight is too clear to fail to perceive the lasso in the air, and whose virility will steel it to make front, at whatever cost, against all waves of popular superstition that tend to conceal the lasso.

That party is the Socialist Labor Party. All along, it saw and warned against the lasso; nor was its voice to be choked by the volleys of calumny that the silly and the designing sought to choke it with.

The neck of the S.L.P. is accordingly free from the lasso of the late coal strike. With malice toward none, and with charity for all, it calls upon the working class of the land to observe well and take warning from the moans and contortions of the lassoed Social Democracy.

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

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