

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 11, NO. 235.

NEW YORK, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1911.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

LOS ANGELES CHARITY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

LIKE all large cities—sore spots on nature—Los Angeles has her associated Charities. In common with other large cities also, Los Angeles has her bourgeois press. Occasionally the two help each other out.

The Los Angeles *Herald* of Feb. 5 has a gorgeous orange-bordered article. on the Charities. Accompanied by harrowing pictures the tale is told of how the institution “gives aid to about 25,000 persons” a year; how few of these are professional beggars, but “straightforward, hardworking men temporarily down on their luck”; how these willing workers come to Los Angeles, which prosperous city, “despite its 319,000 population, is unable to assimilate the large number of new applicants for jobs”; how, after serving “2,000 meals” and furnishing “750 beds” in the month of December, the Charities wound up a year in the course. of which “employment for 1,192 men was found by the free labor bureau”; and, finally, how “the month just past has been the greatest in the history of the organization from the standpoint of the number of persons helped.”

And both the Charities which issue these figures, and the press which prints them, lean back and say to each other, “Well done!”

It would be better done did the Charities and the press supplement their information with some more. They might tell, for example:

Why, in a land and a year of “unprecedented prosperity,” as Schwab, as Guggenheim and as Taft tell us, 25,000 persons should have to be helped.

How it comes, if those helped are straightforward, hardworking men, that they find themselves down in their luck and out of a job, and compelled to seek charity in order to live.

Why Los Angeles, a city of “opportunity,” and a center whence periodical cries over the “shortage of labor” are sent broadcast over the land, should not be able to

“assimilate” these eager applicants for jobs.

What the reason is that with foodstuffs wasting in the stalls and bedding mouldering in the warehouses, “2,000 meals” and “750 beds” must be provided free for the very men whose labor produced those foodstuffs and that bedding.

And, finally, how is it to be explained that with the “conditions of the working class growing better every day,” the month just past should be the busiest the Charities have ever had.

Information on this and kindred subjects would be entitled not to orange, but to crimson borders. Such information cannot be given without bringing nearer the dawn of Socialism, when all will enjoy what they produce, and there will be no need of Charity.

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Uploaded January 2012

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