

EDITORIAL

HOW HE WORKS AT HIS TRADE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

READERS of *The People* are not unfamiliar with the name of David C. Coates. As early as the early nineties his name frequently occurred in these columns in reports from Colorado, where the gentleman never appeared but in the capacity of a barker for capitalist thought, and, of course, bitter against the S.L.P. More recently his name occurred in the galaxy of names collected in the pamphlet *Behind the Scenes*, in which autograph letters appeared, from governors and judges down, asking the railroad law firm of Teller and Dorsey for passes, and in which, over the signature of Teller and Dorsey, the granting of the passes asked for was recommended in consideration of “valuable services” either rendered or expected from the office-holding applicants. One of these letters appears on page 46 of the said pamphlet recommending the issue of a “trip transportation from Denver to Omaha and return, good for 30 days, in favor of ex-Governor D.C. Coates, THIS ON ACCOUNT OF THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT.” Coates had just before been Lieutenant-Governor of Colorado, and had since become the chairman of the County Central Committee of the Socialist Party of Denver. Finally, and still more recently, Mr. Coates’s name appeared on the list of the delegates who assembled in 1905 at Chicago to organize the I.W.W. In the reports of that convention Coates’s name preserved its old associations. It was found in league with an ominous little bunch of pure and simple political Socialists, or A.F. of L.-ites intent upon doing mischief. Coates sought to undermine what he could not overthrow. It was refreshing to watch how he led only from defeat to defeat. For the first time in his experience he felt matched by the Revolution. He sought to throw cold water upon the revolutionary fervor by hinting at the prospect of emancipation being 2,005 years distant, and was made to bolt his words by coming down to “a hundred years” and even those figures were condignly exposed; he sought to hamstring the movement by the surreptitious introduction of craftism, was detected and baffled, and then seeking to

rehabilitate himself said: "I am a printer; I have been working at it all my life, and I will be when I get back and go to setting type." The stenographic report, from which this citation is made, does not reproduce the wave of ill-suppressed derision that met the brazen statement. Barely a year and a half has passed when events come to justify that wave of derision.

David C. Coates now appears as the "Business Manager" of the Wallace, Idaho, *Idaho Mines and Metals*. The nature of the gentleman's "setting type" will be gathered from the following passage in a signed article in the Butte, Mont., *Mining Review* of February 9, of this year, in answer to an attack made upon a certain mining concern by the said "type-setting workingman." The passage is as follows, literally:

"As to the reputation of Mr. Coates and the *Idaho Mines and Metals* ask any businessman of Wallace. Further than this I wish to say that before Mr. Coates made any attack upon us, and at a time when he knew fully as much as he does now about the property,—and the supposed deal to which he objects—he approached Mr. McKinnis, who is interested with us, and offered to report upon the property and write two good articles, for which he asked \$100.00 each. His proffered services were declined. We will leave it to the judgment of your readers as to whether it was his sense of justice and his desire to protect the public, or his failure to receive \$200.00, which caused the attack."

No wonder that, as since the 1906 convention of the I.W.W., the Sherman Detective Agency became the apple of the eye of the capitalist press and of the press of the pure and simple political Socialist party, immediately upon the 1905 convention of the I.W.W., David C. Coates was the beau ideal of the identical folks.

No wonder that, at the convention of 1905, Coates was found struggling to the very end, in alliance with the "A.M. Simons, Editor," to prevent the taking, and, defeated in that, prevent publication of the stenographic report of the transactions of the convention. No wonder he and his allies, rolled into final and utter route, looked sick enough to be taken in charge by some physician, on the afternoon of July 8, 1905, when, at 1:20 p.m. the gavel announced the convention stood adjourned sine die.

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