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EDITORIAL

## THIEVES FALLING OUT.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**W**HILE there is said to be honor among thieves, an inequality or a sharp deal in the distribution of booty has often cast the apple of discord into the midst of a band of formerly harmonious plunderers. Of such a nature seems to be the present falling out of the capitalists of the Rocky Mountain slope.

In 1903 some veins of more {or} less valuable gold ore were discovered in Goldfield, Nev. Modeled on the great California boom of '48 and '49, but with nearly sixty years' additional training in capitalist chicanery, a miniature goldmine boom sprung into existence there. The descendants of the same flock of speculative harpies which a half century before fattened on the innocent 'forty-niners, swooped down on the Nevada sand hills, and conjured into existence mine after mine, of which but ten in the whole Goldfield region are legitimate, ore-producing leads. The money to float the promoters of these seductively christened, but worthless claims was drained from the pockets of—workingmen? No, for no more than they can have money with which to make savings bank deposits, can the workers have money to invest in gold mining stock. The money which flowed into the pockets of the Goldfield fraudulent mine promoters was drained from other capitalists. These, having dividends steadily accruing from their stock in railroads, steamships, steel, shoes or food stuffs, could afford to invest in mine stock. Gold being a steadily marketable commodity, occasionally, even, as in the recent crisis, running up to a high premium, the glittering prospectuses emanating from the champagne-enlivened brains of the members of the Goldfield Montezuma Club (the mine owners' swell private association) caught their gudgeons, and plenty of them.

Of course, the gudgeons got "stung." The poignancy of the "sting" may be judged from the editorial article reproduced elsewhere in this issue, under the heading

“Thieves Falling Out,” from the Los Angeles *Record* of December 30 last.<sup>1</sup> With but one inconsiderable change the same article appeared, on the same day, in the editorial column of the Spokane, Wash., *Press*, 1,500 miles away, at the opposite extreme of the coast country. In how many more of the capitalist sheets of the Pacific slope the same editorial voiced the pangs of rage and disappointment of the gudgeons, is not yet known. Its simultaneous appearance as far south as Los Angeles and as far north as Spokane points to a wide-spread and concerted move of “stung” capitalist investors to get back at their dupers. As long as the victims of the Goldfield sharks thought that they were in on the plunder of the Goldfield mine workers, all was harmony. Now that they have discovered that in this case they are the only ones to be plundered, with their supposed fellow brigands figuring as the sole beneficiaries of the brigandage, they are laughing on the other side of their mouths. Thus comes about the masterly exposure of the Goldfield mine swindle herewith reproduced. It is another case of “When thieves fall out——.”

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

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<sup>1</sup> [To be appended—R.B.]