

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 1, NO. 309.

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, MAY 5, 1901.

TWO CENTS.

EDITORIAL

A NEW AMERICA.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE despatches from the south about the President's tour are more interesting and valuable reading than the thrilling-enough-for-yellow-covers accounts of the simultaneous fire that devastated Jacksonville, Fla.

At all points, American history is betraying the fact that the old America is rolled off and laid by, and a new America is now on the world's stage.

Whoever reads the despatches from Texas, telling of the "wonderful enthusiasm that greets the Nation's Chief Magistrate" along his route, cannot—if he has intelligently followed the accounts of the circle-swingings indulged in by the late lamented Queen of England; the late Prince of Wales, now King; the Emperor of Germany; the Tsar of all the Russias; etc.;—fail to recognize the identical earmarks.

Time was when prominent figures in American history thought it advisable for a thousand and one reasons, to show themselves to the public in tours: in all such instances the circle-swinging partook of the nature of a propaganda tour; and he who says "propaganda tour" says all that thereby is implied: he says stump speaking, turmoil and opposition, and more or less success in overcoming that. Of such a nature was the circle-swinging of Gen'l Winfield Scott; it was notoriously so with the circle-swinging of Andrew Johnson. In all these cases the flavor of spontaneity marked the performance. Questions were fired at the tourist, he was hissed as well as applauded, and he gauged the success of his excursion by the degree of opposition that he encountered. So has it ever been in old America.

On the other hand, the circle-swingings in Europe have borne all the earmarks of official preparations. There detectives and claqueurs precede the "distinguished" visitor; all opposition is guarded against and all opposers are unceremoniously hustled away. The cheers and the enthusiasm are made to order. The tour runs smooth. Such are the characteristics of official circle-swingings in Europe. And such are the features of the performance that is now going on in Texas.

The old America is no more; the new holds the stage. As in all performances, the audience is an essential feature. The public must now be humbugged, and the

ruling class of new America is outdoing its European counterpart in the art.

McKinley is neither personally nor otherwise esteemed in the South, or any where else, for that matter. But the North must be made to believe that the Republican party is being ovated in the South. If this impression can be created, the Republican party, undermined everywhere in the public estimation by the farce played in the Philippine Islands, and by the foreshadowings of the crime contemplated in Cuba, might be able to keep itself afloat yet a little longer and secure a Congress favorable to itself.

And yet, it is all moonshine. The “new” America is the veriest monkey-trick. No more can these devices work effectively for any length of time here than the monkey can long keep on the clothes that he is rigged in to perform. There is wanting here in America a thing that is essential to the success of European political stage tricks:—illusions, bred through a long line of ancestry. In a country so young as this, it is next to impossible to stuff empty stomachs with notions so as to allay hunger. The “full dinner pail” may deceive once; it may deceive twice; but it cannot deceive forever: there is not here any hereditary national superstition to keep the stomach of the mind so full of wind as to deaden the pangs of hunger in the stomach of the body.

The “new” America is but a prelude to the rise of the True America.

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

Uploaded March 2006