

EDITORIAL

“BUSINESSMEN AND CLERGY” OF ST. JOSEPH.

By DANIEL DE LEON

AMONG the people, in the name of whom Mayor A.P. Clayton of St. Joseph, Mo., as previously commented on in these columns,¹ welcomed the delegates of the Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers’ Union in convention assembled in that city on last January 8, were “the clergy and businessmen.”

Here is the opinion of a clergyman of St. Joseph, regarding the “businessmen” of that city, and also his own fraternity, and published in a paper of St. Joseph itself, the *Observer* of January 13:

“Here preachers fill the pulpit that make the highest bid, and few there be who preach the truth—they’d arrest them if they did. Commission men form combines, that they might rob the poor, on potatoes, eggs and poultry and necessities galore. They pay ten dollars license while the man must go to jail, who dares to place potatoes at less than they, on sale. Fifty dollars is the license a man like that must pay to reduce the cost of living in this ‘vice investigating day.’ Now nations are so civilized and it costs so much for ships, likewise to buy pure silver spade and pay for junket trips; to build great towering monuments to some departed shade who slaughtered men he never knew, that markets might be made. It costs so much to buy all these and please the idle few, there’s not much left for such as we, who produce the wherewith, too. We labor in all kinds of minds, we fight the wars and bleed, that they might find a market for the things we make and need. For we have no gold to buy them; we produce them, gold and all, but we are so highly civilized we work and starve and fall. Thank God the slaves are waking up, to war they will not go; to kill the sons and fathers of sisters they do not know. For the very self same reason the Italian fights the Turk to make them eat spigetta, and give their slaves more work. When Christ was here upon the earth he taught the Golden Rule; if one attempts to teach it now you class him as a fool. Christ called such people vipers, and there the secret lies of his many persecutions by the worldly wise.

¹ [“At the Bricklayers’ Convention,” *Daily People*, January 23, 1912—R.B.]

If you are looking for a temple white, and a vice committeeman or so, with lots of noise and a great big fuss, get a ticket to St. Joe.

"Moral.

"If you must preach and don't want to go to jail, demand a White Temple and a big salary; if you sell potatoes remember the cheaper you sell, the higher the license.

"E.W. Brink,
"Pastor of the People's Church,
"(The Universe)."

It should not be difficult to imagine the looks of the spider-in-his-web inviting the fly to his parlor that the "businessmen and clergy" had as they licked their chops while Mayor Clayton welcomed in their name the delegates to the Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers' Convention.

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