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EDITORIAL

A DAMAGING CONFESSION.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE capitalists who are back of the Steel Strike and those into whose stocks the strike is eating, or, to use Stock Exchange parlance, both the “bears” and the “bulls,” are indulging just now in odd language. They are talking about a strike

“that will deprive an indeterminate number of thousands of men of their wages, and bring privation to a great many homes.”

What, “privation” after only a few weeks’ abstinence from work!? Then after all, it is true that American Labor is but a few days removed from the Poor House? Accordingly, all the high-sounding phrases about the “large earnings” of the American workingmen were so much buncombe, and all the statistical tables “showing” them to be the depositors of billions of dollars in savings banks are so many forgeries.

Old is the warning to place no trust in him who “blows hot and cold.” Out of their mouths the spokesmen for capitalism stand convicted of mendacity. Either they lie now, or they lied then: billions in the savings banks and privation swiftly following a strike do not go together. This would suffice to throw the gentlemen out of court. But this were not punishment enough. Before throwing them out as unreliable witnesses they must be thrashed as double-dyed falsifiers.

It has been again and again proven, from the very figures furnished by the official statisticians, that the “billions of savings” imputed to the workingmen do not belong to the workingmen, but belong to the middle class and to classes that are parasites on the capitalist class. From reports innumerable the fact has stood out clear that all the allegations about increased earnings, set afloat by capitalist sources and retailed by the Labor Lieutenants of the capitalists, are pure fabrications, and it was shown that they could not be other than fabrications: absolutely and relatively, the earnings of the working class have declined. The

masses of the workers are poorer to-day than they were a generation ago.

The present lamentations of the capitalists on the score of the privations that stare the Steel Strikers in the face raise a monumental commentary on the drift of things. That industry, that has risen to the highest pinnacle of distinction, that has centered the highest wealth in itself, that stands defiant of international competition, and whose chiefs scatter millions in “bounties” with a profusion that dazzles the eyes of the world,—that industry, according to the testimony of the capitalist press itself, rests upon the backs of men only a few days removed from the Poor House; they have toiled and delved, in many departments stripped to the waist, and in all the departments under atmospheric conditions of heat and dust that consume life, yet all that notwithstanding, while the idle “directors,” “President and Vice-Presidents,” stockholders and stockjobbers are scattering around in luxurious living and ostentatious bounty the wealth produced by these workers, the workers themselves, as a matter of fact, remain in such close struggle with the wolf at their doors, that the instant they lay down their tools, the wolf leaps across their threshold, and privation jumps at their throats.

It needed not this strike to know the fact. What the strike has accomplished is to bring it out as damaging confession by the robber class itself.

And such is the plight that Capitalism and its Organized Scabbery or Labor Fakirs have brought these wretched men to.

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

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