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EDITORIAL

THE VILEST OF PULLERS-IN.

By DANIEL DE LEON

The employees of the Coal Trust, known as the Pittsburg Coal Company, have been re-organized. We say “they have been re-organized,” which means, that a new organization, not started by themselves, but by their employers, and pushed through by the Labor Lieutenants of these employers, has been started.

In the pay envelopes of these employees a prospectus is given out informing them that they, the employees, have formed the “Pittsburg Coal Company Employees’ Association.” In the prospectus, which is neatly printed on first class pink paper, the employees inform themselves that they propose to avail themselves of the unparalleled opportunities to become rich; that one of such opportunities is to become investors in the preferred stock of the company; that they can do so by installment payments of not less than \$1 a month per share; and that dividends earned by such stock shall be added to the monthly payments of the subscribers.

After seeing to themselves, these prospective employee dividend-drawers considerately turn their attention to the protection of “their” company. The prospectus proceeds to provide several safeguards for the company, and thereby illustrates touchingly the fraternity of the relations that could, would, should and, in this case, do exist between Brother Labor and Brother Capital. These provisions are to the effect, first, that the company’s treasurer shall have discretionary powers to accept or reject applications from those who fall behind in monthly payments: he may give them permission, or he may not, and then their previous installments shall fall to the share of their Brother Capital; and, secondly, that subscribers who leave the employ of the company shall not receive back the amount of their previous payments unless the funds appropriated for such re-imburements warrant it: the company, of course, provides for these funds and decides upon their sufficiency. These are the leading features of the Association.

But, hold, there is still a feature, a characteristic one: the names of fifteen employees appear in fat type as the officers of this new organization. The fifteen are distributed into two sets: one set consists of five, the other of ten employees, who,

respectively, constitute the “Board of Directors” and the “Advisory Board”—both, of course, appointed by the company.

Between the lines peeps and blinks one of the vilest jobs yet put up against the workers, and launched with the aid of the Labor Lieutenants of Capital.

It is evident that the coal baron capitalists are getting tired of acting as collecting agents of dues, without pay, for the Labor Lieutenants, the Labor Fakirs. These capitalists now want to have some direct financial benefit. They are not satisfied with the dirty work their lieutenants perform by keeping the rank and file in tow of capitalism, in return for these collections of dues. The capitalists want more. As a result, we have “Pittsburg Coal Company Employees’ Association” STARTED WITH THE PAY ENVELOPES.

The eight pages taken up by the prospectus can be boiled into a few lines, a short manifesto to the employees, reading as follows:

“Henceforth you shall each contribute \$1 a month out of your wages to the company. Those who don’t, shall get no work. Those who discontinue shall be treated likewise.”

The “Pittsburg Coal Company’s Employees’ Association” should be promptly given a charter by Gompers’ Organized Scabbery; the Association even deserves an honorary membership among the devices to pluck the worker with the Labor Fakir as the necessary amanuensis.

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