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EDITORIAL

A VALUABLE TRUTH ILLUSTRATED.

By DANIEL DE LEON

WITH one sweep of the broom, the United States Steel Corporation, better known as the Steel Trust, has swept into the dust-bin scores of professors, lecturers and editorial writers, politico-economic charlatans generally. The Steel Trust has done even more, it has put the cover on the dust-bin, and has performed the valuable service of keeping the wind from scattering the dust again, and blowing it into people's eyes.

That the steel industry itself is thoroughly consolidated, consolidated in a way to dominate the world's market, is now obvious to anyone; what is less obvious and infinitely more important withal, is the fact that, along with the trustification of that one industry, and as an element requisite to such trustification, a number of other industries, seemingly wholly disconnected from steel, have been brought together with it and with one another, and are all virtually welded into one through the membership of the Board of Directors, that has been chosen to control the affairs of the Trust.

That "iron interests" be found affiliated with "steel interests" may seem natural. But what inherent connection can there be between "biscuit interests," "brass interests," "dry-goods interests," "oil interests," "coal interests," "express interests," "navigation interests," "glucose interests," "railroad interests," "sugar-refining interests," "coke interests," "Pullman car interests," on one hand, and "steel interests," on the other? The uninformed: the professors, lecturers, editorial writers, politico-economic charlatans aforementioned would quickly make answer: "None whatever!" The Socialist says: "A very important, inherent and essential connection!"—and the Steel Trust proves it by having all the above-named, seemingly unrelated "interests," represented, brought together and held together through the membership of its Board of Directors.

It is not a love for the beautiful that leads one capitalist to deal in oil, it is not a sportsman's fancy that leads another to deal in steamcars, it is not a gourmand's

weakness that makes a third choose sugar for his trade, and so forth and so on. These multiple occupations, or “interests,” are but external manifestations of one and the same underlying craving; of one identical interest. What the capitalist is after and gets, in one and all his pursuits, whatever name that occupation may take, is—THE HIDE OF THE WORKING CLASS. Consequently, be the capitalist engaged in railroads, sugar, steel, shoes, hairpins, beer, oil or what not, his real occupation is to exploit the workers, his real “interests” are to fleece Labor.

The politico-economic charlatans have denied the oneness of the Capitalist Class, and, like the vulgarians that they are, they drew their proofs from appearances. The external forms that the real capitalist interests of Labor-Fleecing assume—railroads, sugar-refining, oil, steel or cotton mills, etc.—were taken by the politico-economic charlatans for the real interests, and thus, building upon an error, the gentlemen concluded that no such thing was possible as “a consolidation of capitalist interests,” and as a further consequence, they roared loud guffaws at the Socialist principle that all the issues in the land were fought out along the line of the Class Struggle:—the whole Capitalist Class, along with its lackeys and its dupes, on one side of the line, the growing number of intellectually emancipated, i.e., class-conscious workingmen, under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party, on the other.

As capitalism develops along the logical line of its existence it contributes generously to the facts that the Socialist needs in order to silence the mouths of its spokesmen, overthrow it, and rear the Socialist Republic. The United States Steel Corporation, with the “haute finance” at its apex, and its broadening base holding in harmonious embrace so many seemingly un-harmonious “interests,” knocks out a serious error, and illustrates an important truth:

The real article that the Capitalist Class deals in is the Working Class.

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

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