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EDITORIAL

WHAT THE ANTHRACITE MINERS GOT.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE *United Mine Workers' Journal* is a sapient publication. It acts on the principle that man walks on a wooden leg, and that one single doctored fact makes a good case. That a man must have two sound flesh-and-bone nether limbs to be whole, and that a case is made up of solid facts that must be considered in their entirety, is not a part of the mental philosophy of the genius who presides over its editorial destinies. Consequently, in its issue of August 27, it gives vent to the following wholly fraudulent diatribe:

“They Got Nothing.

“The decision of Statistician Naill that anthracite miners' wages shall be 2 per cent above the basis for August means an increase of \$450,000 for the month for employes at the mines, provided there are no unexpected suspensions—*Hazleton Plain Speaker*.’

“The increase, taken with that which they received last month, will make nearly \$1,000,000 in increased wages which the 80,000 adult mine workers will receive. That is to say, each man will receive over \$12 a month more than the scale wages. And yet with these palpitating and tangible facts before their eyes a few malignant slanderers assert that ‘John Mitchell betrayed the anthracite miners—they got nothing.’

“With hearts cankered with hatred and minds warped by hallucinations, these petty and puerile insects repeat and revamp their slanders.

“But those most affected, the mine workers themselves, simply laugh at the crude work of the emissaries of Post and Parry.”

Admitting the correctness of the per capita deductions made by the *Journal* (deductions that experience has proven to be wholly misleading, as the proviso of the *Hazleton Plain Speaker* clearly intimates), is there naught else to be said? What of the miners who have been “blessed” with that increase of “\$12 a month more than the wage scale” and yet have deserted John Mitchell to such an extent that he must rely upon the prestige of Father Curran and President Roosevelt to help him draw them back into the fold again? What of the continued appeals to them to return that

Mitchell is perforce compelled to make even after the great aid rendered to him by Church and State? Are the anthracite miners fools and idiots, who, for the sake of a few dollars annual dues, will let a monthly prize of far greater monetary value slip through their fingers without any counter effort on their part? The heroic struggles for better conditions at all times, and at great sacrifice to themselves, on the part of the anthracite miners, should leave no doubt on that point.

These men are rational men who realize that the “victories” of John Mitchell are barren of actual improvement in their condition. They are men who see their “increased wages” lopped off by increased oppression, rent, prices, discrimination and labor. Guy Warfield, in an article in *The World's Work* for March, 1904, entitled “What Has Followed the Coal Strike”, shows how the rulings of the arbitration board permit of wholesale blacklisting. This cause alone has compelled hundreds of miners to flee the anthracite regions. Warfield also reveals how the ten per cent wage increase is offset in various indirect ways. First, the companies increased the cost of rent and coal sold to employes. Secondly, they established a system by which the non-unionists were permitted to monopolize the mine cars to the detriment of the unionists. Thirdly, the system of excessive dockage cuts down the day's pay all the way from two to ten per cent. Fourthly, the increased price of commodities bought at the stores rose out of proportion to the increase in wages; so that, finally, the increase of ten per cent was actually a decrease. Warfield further demonstrates that the nine-hour day is so intensified as to be actually longer (in its effects on the workers) than the ten-hour one.

Couple these comprehensive facts with the fact that Reading (Coal Trust) stock is selling now at an unprecedentedly high rate, and that it is reported to be “earning” a dividend of 17 per cent., and the fraudulent wooden-legged, one-doctored-fact method of reasoning indulged in by the *United Mine Workers' Journal*, becomes clear; so also does the cause of the wholesale desertion of Mitchell by his quondam followers.

“THEY GOT NOTHING” and they can get nothing via Mitchell and the wise *United Mine Workers' Journal*.

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