EDITORIAL

EIGHT LINKS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE New York Tribune of the 21st of this month admits that the demands of the trainmen employed on the eastern railroad lines for an increase of from 5 to 40 per cent. in wages “will not be received with dismay” by many of the roads; it explains why. Seeing that most of these roads are planning for a general advance in freight charges, they are only too anxious, says the Tribune, for an excuse, such as a demand for higher wages would furnish, to put their plan through.

This is rather frank language for a bourgeois paper to hold; and valuable is the light it throws upon some of the links in the chain of events on the economic field. Although the links lighted by the Tribune are not many, yet do they suggest quite clearly the links that precede and the links that follow:—

First link—instructions issued by the capitalist Colonel to his Labor-lieutenant to cause the Union to demand a big increase in wages;

Second link—thrilling address, held by the Labor-lieutenant to the Union, touching upon the men’s hard work, poor pay and wretched conditions, and upon the advisability of a rise in wages whereby, due [to] the reciprocal relations between Labor and Capital, Labor, being better paid, will be able to produce so much more profits for the employer;

Third link—unanimous resolution passed by the Union for a 40 per cent. raise in wages;

Fourth link—announcement to the public by the capitalist employer that, whereas he does not believe in non-Union Labor; and whereas his Union Labor has demanded an increase of wages; and whereas his profits would be wholly swallowed up if he granted the increase without, in his turn, raising his charges; therefore the charges are raised proportionally;

Fifth link—second interview between the capitalist Colonel and his Labor
lieutenant, accompanied by the tune of a metallic klink;

Sixth link—second thrilling address, delivered by the Labor-lieutenant to the Union, touching upon the employer’s undying love for his men as a sure pledge that he will yield to the men’s demands so soon “as the condition of business will allow,” and urging the men to agree to a friendly settlement under which they agree to wait;

Seventh link—the Union members look perplexed, but a number of the Lieutenant’s Sub-lieutenant’s take a hand, and the settlement is agreed to and signed;

Eighth and last link of all, that ends this strange eventful chain—the capitalist Colonel and his Labor-lieutenant toast each other at a National Civic Federation banquet.

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