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EDITORIAL

A MOTTO THAT IS NOT PRINTED.

By DANIEL DE LEON

MCCLURE'S for the current month has the first of a series of articles on sales-girls, and working women in New York.

Of itself the article should be welcome. The long hours and small wages that the article exposes raise the curtain over conditions that even the most near-sighted must perceive are destructive of society. Such revelations, one should think, do good and are meant to do good, and would seem particularly promising of good when proceeding from non-proletarian sources and published in non-proletarian magazines. It is, however, exactly the opposite with articles such as the one in *McClure's*. They are periodical occurrences—tiresomely periodical. They are made to sell. Hence their manufacturers are the last to wish the perennial source of their money-begetting efforts to dry out, to wit, the distress of the proletariat.

A story is told of a gentleman at a banquet who, in the midst of the revelry, rose and addressed his fellow revellers as follows:

“Ladies and Gentlemen—I hope it will not be taken ill if I, for a moment, interrupt your gayety with a sober thought. Duty drives me. When I see this board groaning under the weight of choice viands, sparkling flagons and sweets that could feed thousands who are now starving; when I look around and contemplate the costly costumes of broadcloth, silks and velvets and laces that could clothe thousands who are now barely clad in rags; when I hear the sound of cheerful voices enjoying all this wealth while thousands are weeping in distress;—ladies and gentlemen, when I see, contemplate and hear all this I can not but ask you all—not one, not two, not three, but all together to join me in shouting: “Three cheers for the poor!””

The periodical articles, speeches and sermons, that periodically proceed from capitalist quarters upon the distress of the working class, have one and all for

the{ir} motto—“Three cheers for the poor,”

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