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EDITORIAL

EVOLUTION IN JOURNALISM.

By DANIEL DE LEON

WHEN *Puck* was started it took the arena as a champion of the workingman, and the distressed generally. Those were the days of its glory. To that period belongs the memorable “Ye Public Be Damned” cartoon, in which the Vanderbilt utterer of the expression was deservedly castigated; and the still more memorable cartoon representing Modern Feudalism,—the capitalist knight, armed cap-a-pie and on horseback, doing battle with the workingman equipped merely with the dull hammer of his trade wholly devoid of protective armor, and on foot, the Goulds, Vanderbilts and other capitalists sitting around the circus, and applauding the Knight’s prowesses against his virtually unarmed opponent, whom he assails with a terrific lance, inscribed “The Capitalist Press” or something to that effect. Those were the days of the paper’s glory, but also of its poverty.



PUCK, SEPT. 14, 1898

Since then *Puck* has become rich. It did not grow rich by pursuing its original course. Its wealth was acquired by abandoning it. The “development” then started. To-day, *Puck* is abreast of *Judge*, which from the start was capitalistic. How fully abreast *Puck* has come of *Judge* may be judged from two simultaneous and recent “jokes,” intended to promote the capitalist fraud about prosperity, and simultaneously ridiculing the workingman.

The first of these is from *Judge*:

In 1905.—Miss Smyth—“I suppose you find many cases of extreme want during your visits among the poor?” Miss Charity Worker—“Yes, I visited a family to-day and actually they hadn’t a drop of gasoline for their automobile.”

The second is from *Puck*:

Mrs. Kelly—"Does your husband get good pay, Mrs. Rooney?" Mrs. Rooney—"Well, he would, Mrs. Kelly, ef ut wasn't fer striking so often fer better pay."

Privately owned journalism ever develops as *Puck* did, until it grows into that lance, which *Puck* itself once pictorially described as the most powerful weapon for the Capitalist Class subjugation of the Working Class,—the capitalist press.

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