

# DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 3, NO. 345.

NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 1903.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

## THE FEMALE UPPER TEN.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**W**HO, what element, is the most vicious, the most malignant, towards the working class?

Is it the plutocrat, the great international financiers? No. They are so far up in the clouds that they know little of the workingman personally. If they can be said to despise him, the expression is only theoretically, abstractly true: they simply think he is below notice, and they don't notice him.

Is it the capitalist individual proprietors of mills and yards? No. They are much nearer the earth, and consequently in contact with the workingman; not infrequently he makes them grind their teeth in rage with his "unreasonable" demands for better conditions, often advanced at unseasonable hours, and productive of serious derangements in his calculations on expected profits. For all that, there is no viciousness or malignancy in his feelings. He hates the workingman, but only in the way that two pugilists may hate each other.

Is it the crew of "intellectuals" in public office, or who seek to get there, and who find the workingman an element hard to understand and harder to manage? No. To these gentry the workingman is but a "nuisance."

Is it the shoddyocracy? No. Viciousness and malice enter somewhat into the composition of the feelings of these people towards the workingman, whose "exactions even on the smallest jobs in the house" interfere with their plans of making their slender purses defray the display that their credit requires. And yet, even here the particular element is absent in which viciousness and malignancy of feeling take their origin.

For viciousness and malignancy a sense of positive immorality is requisite. Viciousness and malignancy towards the working class spring up, accordingly, in

those quarters that are aware of their immorality, aware of the working class' essential morality, and aware of the{ir} leading a life of sham, false pretence and turpitude. And what element is that? It is the female sex of the upper ten. Nothing can equal in introspective eloquence the curl of the lips, or the twist of the nose on the faces of our "ladies" in sight of a workingman; and the refined insultingness with which these "ladies" pick up their skirts, and even shake them off at sight of a workingman tells volumes of Babylonian secrets. Occasionally the "secret" of it all leaks or breaks through. Such an instance was the scene enacted at a "bucket shop" last Monday in this city. The following account, taken from one of the morning papers, tells the tale in a nutshell:

Panic, tears, pleadings and promises of "never again" were hurled at Inspector McClusky, of the Detective Bureau, by a crowd of one hundred fashionable women caught in a raid upon an alleged bucket shop at 101 West Forty-second street yesterday afternoon.

The women were plainly persons of wealth, for private carriages were waiting for several of them, and all wore valuable jewelry.

Acting upon evidence gathered by two women sleuths, Inspector McClusky yesterday entered the rooms occupied by "J.H. May & Co." and took the two men who seemed to be in charge into custody.

When the Inspector's gold shield flashed upon the hundred or more patrons of the place, a panic resulted. A score fainted outright, a few attempted to escape past the detectives at the door by main force of arms and everyone screamed in fright.

A dozen or so, in deadly fear of arrest and police court notoriety, fairly begged on their knees to be allowed to go, and when the Inspector explained that he was interested only in the proprietors, and that after these had been located everyone else would be at liberty, wept with relief.

After giving names and addresses each woman was permitted to leave.

Is not the secret, a whole bunch of secrets, out? The secret of the attitude of these "ladies"; the secret of the affluence of Police Officers with such secrets in their possession as the names of these female "law-and-orderites"; the secret—but space will not allow the enumeration of the long list, and shame and indignation at the working class' being "upper-tenned" by such creatures chokes further utterance.

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

Uploaded December 2006