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EDITORIAL

WHO SPOKE THROUGH THIS ASSOCIATION?

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE sixty-eighth annual report of the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor contains a passage that suggests the question, Did the Association officiate on the occasion as a telephone for Liquor Interests?

The passage in question not only does not enumerate drunkenness among the causes of sickness and poverty; it goes further; it expressly excludes “intemperance” as an “important cause.”

In these days when even so eminent a scientist as Prof. Koch of Germany, who denied the communicability of bacteria through cattle, is seen obviously succumbing to a capitalist Interest; in these days when professors of chemistry in our Universities furnish opposing “expert testimony” at hearings on food adulterations; in these days when the plastic arts bend to the necessities of manufacturers for fraudulent advertisements;—but why go through the long gamut of horrors?—in these days when Knowledge, Honor, Skill are all debauched by the Interests one can have no certainty that any utterance expresses reliable convictions. If the Whiskey and other Liquor Interests can control Senators, why not also agents of Charity Associations?

That intemperance, except in exceptional instances, is the consequence, not the cause, of sickness or indigence every observant man who is honest, every honest man who is observant, knows and declares.

It is for that very reason that when what amounts to such a declaration comes from such a source as a Charity Association—concerns that, notoriously, are schemed for the charitably taken care of attaches to the Interests with fat jobs—the question leaps to the mind and, from the mind, leaps out at the mouth, Did the Liq-

uor Interest “stock” the pockets of the concern?

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