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EDITORIAL

THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM.

By DANIEL DE LEON

NILE'S *Register* and the Pulitzer's *New York World*. Here are two landmarks. The period that separates them is barely ninety years. And yet the chasm or cleft is deep—how deep may be judged by the event of a \$2,000,000 fund offered by a Joseph Pulitzer to establish a school of journalism. The interval marked by *Nile's Register*, at one end, and the *World*, at the other end, virtually spans the nation's history and points to a development such as is seen in the life of man from the day of his birth, when his robustness gives promise of great things, and the day when he shuffles off this mortal coil, and is supposed to be ready for the higher spheres.

Niles's Register may be said to have been born with the Republic. Journalism, as then conceived and possible, was a truthful recording of events. With the qualification that telling the truth is not so easy a thing as it seems, even with the best of will, the journalism that gave birth to *Nile's Register* needed no "school." Those were the days of the youth of American capitalism, an exceptional youth. Youthful American capitalism, with unbounded natural resources at command and the tool of production in its infancy, was open-faced, ingenuous, veracious. So was its journalism. It had nobody to trick, and it did not seek to trick any. Tricks of the trade there were none, could be none, and none was to be learned. Thus stood matters when *Nile's Register* started.

Then also started the development. Its acme is reached in "yellow journalism," of which the Pulitzer *World* is an acknowledged type. The old days are gone. Capitalism having blossomed forth immensely, with all its quips and quiddities, its swindlers and swindled, its dupes and dupers, its blackmailers and blackmailed, its farce of advertisement, its circus features, its false news for speculations, its so-called "public ministry" pretensions; in short, having developed into a sink of

unspeakable enormities, the face of journalism changed. It needs to be taught, just as the Fagin profession had to be carefully inculcated in his disciples. Such is the “journalism” for which a Pulitzer now feels the need of training its priesthood.

The only thing surprising in this move is that, for once, the suggestion comes from the right quarter, and thus carries its commentary with it.

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