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EDITORIAL

## A CANVAS MUSTARD-PLASTER.

By DANIEL DE LEON

“ONE hundred thousand mothers, fathers and poor children could live comfortably during the summer months,” if the plan of Daniel W. Blumenthal, a New York lawyer, is put into practice, it is said.

Considering the wretched condition of the wage workers in summer, the plan sounds laudable. How is it to be accomplished?

By decentralizing that monstrosity, known as the city, removing the workshops to the open country, and thus allowing the operatives to come in health-giving contact with Nature?

By decreasing the hours of labor so that the bread winners will have time and strength to travel in and out to work, and thus keep their families in attractive seashore and mountain localities?

By raising wages so that a comfortable dwelling not less than ten miles from the limits of the hideous brick-bound city, and the means of maintaining it, shall be within the reach of all?

Or, best of all, is it to be by abolishing the system of wage labor altogether, so that each will receive all he produces, be relieved from the need of congestion and herding, and be enabled to rear his family roof-tree in the most ennobling and bracing surroundings his taste may select?

None of these. Lawyer Blumenthal's scheme is for real estate men owning unimproved property in the suburbs to the extent of \$10,000,000 worth of acreage, to give this land, rent free, to the poor to establish tents on during the summer, some other philanthropist to furnish the tents.

The idea of landlords, the blood in whose veins is rent, giving \$10,000,000 worth of acreage for use by anyone rent free, is droll. It is so droll that it is unthinkable.

But even if the idea were possible, nay, even if it were in actual practice, it would be of no more effect in lightening the workers' exploitation than a mustard-plaster on a wooden leg. What the workers want is not tent-city canvas mustard-plasters on the wooden leg of their exploitation, but a whole new flesh and blood leg of economic freedom.

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