AN ARISTOCRAT.

Honor to bankrupts! ever righteous on the great scale, though in detail it is cruel. Under all falsehoods it works, unweariedly mining. No falsehood, did it rise heaven high and cover the world, but bankruptcy, one day, will sweep it down and make us free of it. — Carlyle's French Revolution.

This King of Lies is Profit. Behold him youth and seer, He stands uncrowned before you. Satir, philanthropic tears; His colors never can whiten, Nor flowered college hide. This chief among corruption, By custom sanctified.

This mammoth, sleek and heavy, By exertion fed. On ignorance of the masses Who go to him for bread. He deals in corn and cotton, In mortgages and such; And all that is fair or wholesome He blackens with his touch.

Worldwide this slippery falsehood Has filled with sly wind. The light/1/2, the low, the common; His looks we all have conned. He chooses for disguises: The wars for equal rights, And missions for the heathen, Parades, and other sights. His humble, servile servants. We find, are Church and State. Shall we, on bended knees insist That poverty's from Fate?

Sure, bankruptcy is good fortune, Though won in strife and pain, If to the final battle. This monstrous lie is slain.

VIRGILIA DANIels.

Queen Margaret of Italy has been presented with a golden bicycle. — Coast Steamers Journal.

Of course when the Queen rides on this wheel she will be so busy enjoying her beauty that she can't think of the staring peasants of Sicily or the brutally treated quarrymen in Cornwall. But yet such cruelties go hand in hand.

CHUNKS OF WISDOM.

By the Sage of Dives' Hollow.

This single taxers show a great deal of ingenuity in their efforts to prove, that their method of raising government funds is superior to others, and that with it, land would practically become free to the homeseekers. But I am convinced, that government is a nuisance and ought to be abolished, and not only land, but the people as well will be free. Sir Thos. Moore in his book "Utopia" which was written about 1515, says: Government is a conspiracy of the rich, who, on the pretense of managing the public, only pursue their private ends. I agree with him, who else?

I hear somebody says: "I agree with you; government is a nuisance, it restricts the free play of our individuality, but we must first learn to walk, before we can run. We must go step by step in this funeral procession. We form, we must gradually evolve up to the highest attainable standpoint, in short, the people must be educated up to it; they are not ready for it at present."

Really now! They are not ready for it. Mind you, they do not include me and you, we of course sufficiently educated, we could live in a free society, but the other fellows, these common laboring people without any education to speak of, the low, the degraded, the wicked; just think of the criminal element, living in a lot of hobos, tramps and prostitutes, on a plan of equality in a free society without means of restraining their evil propensities; now you must admit, that would never do.

Of course not, that would never do, because it would never happen, and why not my dear sir? Because all classes you mention, are the natural result of our present social system. Do away with government and you do away with criminals. No law, no criminals; no property, no robber or thief; no enforced idleness, no hobos, tramps and prostitutes. See! Yes I see; but what about the fellow who wants work at all, how are you going to make him work without compulsion?

If a person is so constituted, that he has no inclination to employ himself a few hours a day at some useful occupation, why, he can eat and live just the same; of course, if he is a young man the girl won't look at him, and the rest of the folks will simply pity him as a man who don't know what is good for himself. We can well afford to support a few relics of barbarism just to show our children, that formerly there were millions of men, who lived without recompense on the proceeds of other men's toil. They'll soon die off.

We must go step by step; we must educate up to it; we must evolve; the people are not ready for it—to live in a free society, without government, without laws, without courts, without policemen. The reverse is true. It was step by step we were led away from the common ownership of the means of production, which in the first instance is land. The Highlander of Scotland found it so in the last century, after a desperate struggle, and the Russian peasants still hold the land in common. The Indians of our own country are fiercely resisting separate ownership. The five civilized tribes of the Indian Territory, although they have adopted all the other ways of the whites, still cling to the common ownership of Mother Earth, the land. It is only by gradual evolutions that man has submitted to government, to be ruled by his fellow man. It is only through persistent education for centuries, by the church, school and press, that man has submitted to laws and respected the "rights" and defended the institution of property as the essence of civilization. While on the other hand, all revolutions, revolts and strikes show us that all these ideas, which our masters have taken so much pains to instil in our minds, are laid aside, forgotten in a day, and people return to a contradictory, demolish the social inequalities, ignore the government, laws, statutes entirely in order to accomplish their ends, to satisfy their desire for freedom, for happiness.

And why have they never so far been successful? Because instead of trusting to themselves, instead of following their own inherent instincts, if I may so call it, as they did in the beginning, they afterwards put their trust in leaders, they delegated their power to somebody else, and as soon as they do that their cause is doomed. The French revolution, our own, the revolution of 1848 over Europe and the last uprising of importance, the Paris Commune, prove the truth of my assertion. The Commune, for instance, would have been successful but for that. After a simultaneous uprising which resulted in taking possession of the city of Paris by the proletariat, they delegated their power to an assembly, and instead of depending on themselves depended on the assembly, and
consequently were defeated. And why do workingmen, in spite of the bad experience they have had, still to some extent put their trust in leaders? I'll discuss that some other time.

The People, published by the Socialist Labor Party, in New York, has in its January 18th a splendid cartoon entitled, "Social Contrast—Night Revels." On one side is an overfed plutocrat enjoying an oyster supper with a good-looking waiter whom his money has purchased for the time being. On the other side are a few poorly dressed men trying to gain a few hours sleep on the benches in a park; and in an article entitled "Sermon: What Shall We Do to Be Saved?—Turn Foolish" shows very clearly the causes of these social inequalities. But instead of advising the people to rise up in their might and smite the plutus in the neck, as a fellow would naturally expect, they advise them to do what? Throw dynamite bombs? Oh, no!—nobody in the Labor Party will ever do that. What is going to eradicate all these evils, which beset us poor devils at present, in the sweet bye and bye. In another article headed "Is it accident?" they again prove to the satisfaction of every one that the plutus are preparing to resist any encroachment on their privileges or vested rights by force. But in spite of that, when the Socialist Labor Party controls the government—just think of it!—and waxes a little, there is no need for the plutus to lose most of its color, and issues its decree, that from this time on the all means of production will become public property, the plutus will consent to it readily and say, "Yes, gentlemen, with pleasure; here, take these!" Then they will have turned fools indeed and lost all their old time cunning.

Of course it would never do to advise the people to use force; that would be anarchistic and next to murder. And so the Socialists and the Labor Party man hates nothing more than an anarchist. It does not matter that they, as well, want to substitute coop operation for competition and combines; it does not matter that they, as well, desire the overthrow of the present capitalist system; but to bring this about by any other means than the ballot is high treason and deserves the severest condemnation, not to say denunciation. It does not matter that some of their own leading men in Germany—Bebel and Liebknecht, for instance—have said to parliament to compromise; it does not matter that history as well proves the futility of the ballot; let him read of the Grachus in the history of Rome, of all that doesn't matter. Though sane on any other subject, they have turned fools on the ballot. They will not discuss the merits and demerits of it any more than a good orthodox Christian will discuss the existence of God.

PROGRESSION OR RETROGRESSION?

A bill is to be presented to the New York legislature to reestablish the hanging post. The originator of this bill is said to be a man of extreme sensibilities. No doubt. It was a very tender solicitor for the well being of society in general and the individual in particular that prompted the torture of the Insurgents, and the tenderness and sensitiveness of the Puritans, who practiced whipping and hanging. The people, however, are still in favor of the whipping post and other forms of torture and murder were abolished by a great wave of indignation and uprising—of which tenderness and humanitarianism, or cruelty and fiscalism, that Charles Dickens' indictment against the whipping post was that it was harmful rather than beneficial, because it habituated the public mind to scenes of cruelty, thus becoming a means of degradation. We have been taught to look upon the discontinuance of these practices as a step in human progress, but daily we witness attempts at re-establishment, with alarmingly frequent success, of the same or similar institutions in the game of civilization.

The inevitable tendency of authority is toward tyranny. Every exercise of the governing power must in the nature of things be backed up by a stronger arm. The moral and social, unnatural habits follow a very similar line of progress. The only logical limit of government is absolutism. It is doubtful if our boasted democracy has slackened the pace one whit; it is really a question whether it has not accelerated the tendency, whether an aggregation of minds in each with the idea of his right to govern his neighbor, each bent on inventing a lawful means of getting the advantage of another, is not really destructive of liberty. And I suppose this in itself is well enough, on the theory that man's perversity will cause him to try every other expedient before the right one. Perhaps, too, democracy is an inevitable step toward universal and free- dom. I do not mean particularly to condemn democracy except that it falls short of the ideal society. It is one of those semi-truths that have a tendency to self-destruction. My purpose is rather to insist that it is time to lay aside infatuation for an institution that happens to belong to our age and begin to consider the next step forward.

The editor of the Oregonian is a long way from the scene of action in France and can afford to indulge in 'blood-curdling remarks about slitting the throats of the discontented proletarians. But let this would-be wholesale executioner reflect that this country is following closely in the wake of the French republic, and there may come a time for throat-slit ting here before his own is beyond the reach of the knife. The Oregonian is noted for its rabid utterances against those who do not see fit to submit to the dominion of corporate wealth; yet were these terms and threats directed against his class, the exploiters, by the exploited, he would be the first to cry "Treason!" "Dangerous character, sir!" "Unarchy!" Really, one hardly knows whether to give Mr. Scott credit for candor in thus giving voice to his philo-monarchic sentiments, or to attribute it all to the ravings of a maniac.

There all things we must be with the workingmen, fight with them and if necessary sacrifice ourselves for them."—Merlino.

This sentiment is in sharp contrast with some recent utterances of certain "Philosophical" anarchists, who wanted an authoritative declaration drawn up to the effect that they did not believe in and had no sympathy with violent methods of propaganda indulged in by workingmen. We must recognize the right of men to resist tyranny with the best means at their command; and if we have any sympathy at all for our fellow men we must at all times and in all places sympathize with this spirit of resistance, no matter in what form it may be manifested. Men do not use violence when they know a better way to gain their rights. If men has any rights one of them is the right of self-preservation; and this right is not limited by his lack of knowledge of any particular method of securing it, or his fear of the law of resistance. I may regret his ignorance of the better way of securing his rights, that my way is not plain to him; but if he knows his rights and shows a disposition to fight for them he has my sympathy. A man with such a disposition man would be a sorry creature and unworthy of any one's interest.

Stupid and short-sighted as our rulers are, they have learned some lessons from history. Newspaper accounts of the great Brooklyn strike read like passages from Victor Hugo's "History of a Crime." At the time of Louis Napoleon's coup d'état the city of Paris was invested with troops and on a certain day, by preconcerted action, fire was opened upon every living being in sight—men, women and children were killed and left in heaps upon the pavement. The reign of terror thus instituted at this coup d'état was maintained for some months. But the dictatorship was dissolved and the man who was the dictator and he won the day. So in Brooklyn the soldiers fired into open windows along the car line, killing people while quietly at work on their own premises. So it is with mobs. The mob, thus strik- ing at the dictator, won the day. But Washington a few years ago, as a trainload of militiamen passed near the miners' huts, situated in a ravine below the railroad track, the order was given and a volley crashed through the wretched roofs, killing them and killing innocent women and children. For what? To terrorize the people into submission. And yet there are those who pretending to sympathize with the oppressed, are quick to condemn any act of violence against the authors of these horrors. And what do such wanton acts indicate? That the ruling class is fixed on a certain end; that it is as corrupt and cowardly as Louis Napoleon ever was, and that, as against its ultimate object, human lives are but soap bubbles.

Horrible as such a thought must be to a sensitive mind, the fact is not to be wondered at. Under a social system in which the central idea is the sacredness of property, human life cannot be sacred. Property in natural opportunity is in its final analysis property in men. Who owns the land owns the men who work it. This is a sermon more
fiendish than chaste slavery. Life is not and cannot be secured under any system of slavery. The horrors we behold today are but a foretaste of what awaits us in the future if our social system is not changed.

THE RED FLAG.

The red flag is the emblem of universal brotherhood. It is recognized all over the so-called civilized world. It signifies, that there is no distinction in blood, all blood being red. For centuries people were taught that some persons had blue blood and were better and entitled to privileges which were denied all others on that account.

The red flag stands as a protest to this lie and as an everlasting anthem of the truth that no such distinction exists in nature.

The red flag is an emblem of the right of all persons to the pursuit of happiness in terms of absolute equality. If we are all brothers, then we are all entitled to the right to property and the bounties of nature. Nature is no distinction between persons on account of color, race or creed in her works. The "red flag" can raise as many hopes to the ass as the native Oregonian, and we find everywhere and at all times, that success of the producing industry depends upon the intelligent application of energy and the conditions under which each effort is made.

Misconceptions concerning the red flag has been instilled in the minds of the uninitiated and many persons have been subjected to so much excitement upon the看见 of a red flag, as a scarecrow or a country ball is at seeing a red petechy.

It calls up to the minds of some persons thoughts of horror, blood and blood. Officers usually treat the bearer of a red flag as though he were some wild and ferocious beast, just escaped from the cage of a menagerie and show their cowardice by prohibiting its use.

Statesmen, those who are interested in keeping the people of one part of the globe suspicious of, and hostile toward the people of all other parts of the globe, are, in matter of logical necessity, very much opposed to its use and to the teachings that accompany it. For when the idea of universal brotherhood is accepted, the political action of all the masses of the world, patriotism and its twin sister, war, will fade forever from the earth. Such array of foes, it seems, is enough to prevent the spread of any form of political union.

This paper, the official organ of the Socialist Labor Party, desires the right of any one to use the red flag, repudiated by the red flag, and said the black flag was their emblem — it emblem of their inhuman creed. I am not aware that the anarchists held the red flag in all other than the sense represented by the red flag — universal brotherhood, or the black flag in all other than the sense, however he will, provided he observed the equal liberty of another. The black flag means "No quarter." No quarter, and I must say, who shows the flag "No mercy" and sometimes in war when it is desired to warn the enemy that except upon immediate surrender, the garrison will be destroyed. This flag, I must add, have not far from showing such a spirit, and are always willing to hear the arguments of those who differ, and who regard me as much more, is the only opinion I have heard, than is shown them.

Unquestionably the final dissolution of national and governments, and hence, the discontinuance of national and race hatred and wars. Then peace, general and plenty smile on all.
special announcement.

The publication of The Firebrand is undertaken by a voluntary association of a number of persons of radical ideas in this city, who have found it necessary to form a "firebrand" committee to furnish the công for its publication. The Firebrand is not, even an editor, in the ordinary sense. No person is vested with the power to exclude those ideas which he holds, or to agree with, his own. We do not believe in a censorship. We have aimed at maintaining an untrammeled press. The pernicious men, are of very limited means—working people—and few in number. Therefore we appeal to all who see in it an opportunity to further the great cause of human freedom and happiness, not only to become subscribers, but to donate the money which they can toward increasing the circulation by free subscription. Such persons as do this will be regarded as members of the association, on an equal footing with every other member, and we assure them there will be no further incentive or opportunity to trim their literary contributions to fit any particular column. All monies received will be accounted for in these columns.

The Committee.

A New Island Story.

The printer has an apology to make to both the author and the readers of "A New Island Story," published in last week's issue, for having omitted the editor's signature. The story is frequently commented upon without any one all who are interested want to know who the writer is. Lizzie H. Holmes, of Chicago, known to most of our readers as an able worker on social and economic questions, is the author.

The People and the Politician.

Wherever the politicians quarrel among themselves the weaker faction appeals always to the people, and the poor people are yet simple enough to be deceived by their talk. About a year ago some workmen in Portland came to the conclusion that the bickering in the municipal administration had been so great that a scale to be tolerated any longer and demanded an investigation. The parasites of the city saw very soon that something had to be done, to order to quiet the noisy chattering and that it would neither do to leave the investigating to the workmen who do not understand anything about it anyway. A committee was formed, consisting of a hundred of the "best" citizens, and in order to pacify the workforce entirely they did not know anyone except the social question than a big amount of a holiday was, magnanimously admitted to the committee, wherein they showed that the wisdom could act as the fifth wheel on the cart of reform.

The committee raised a great hubbub about the dreadful corruption and thieving which had been discovered at the start and the people were led to expect that something great would be done. But much fuss and very little ability to form a committee to investigate the coolmuth of one hundred. In short, the republicans have gained the upper hand in the persecution committee, and of course the democrats are mad as a wet hen about it and appeal to the people. A mass meeting to protest against such a state of things was called by the defeated and the speaker, a lawyer by profession, and a democrat in his politics, insisted, the workingmen present at the very beginning, by saying that a republican had told him not to attend the meeting, because he would find the workingmen and organized the workmen; but instead of that he saw before him a well-behaved, intelligent audience. It is plain enough said that he did not consider working people orderly and intelligent beings. But in spite of that did the working people rouse themselves, because every one that I met himself that the speaker clasped his hand upon the well-behaved and intelligent.

When will the working people go back to the people? the sacred rights of the plunderers must go back to the people.

John Lawson.

Central Labor Council meets every Sunday at 3:30 p.m. at their hall, Union Block, First and Stark streets. Public to be invironed. All are invited.

reform books.

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