THE FIREBRAND

For the Burning Away of the Cobwebs of Ignorance and Superstition.

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THE FIREBRAND

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THE WORSHIP OF MAMMON.

BY JAMES L. JONES.

PRIEST'S INVOCATION.
O Mammon! we adore thee! We worship now before thee; All rights in thee are vested. Thy will bind us earth to heaven! Oh, grant thy benediction, To us and all the world of men. Those at a righteous parent, Make me a worthy son.

Thou knowest whom thou choosest, Thine own thou never lessest; Than raisest up thy servants Thyselves to magnificence. But those in lowly stations That givest charity rations, Far driven from thy presence. Those hasten noabantly.

Thine own elect thou loveth, All power to them thou givest, Thy charity is lavish To them or to be gave not; But poor and hungry sinners May seek in vain for dainties. Those who make them no provision, Their names not in thy pot.

We know that we're elected, We're very much respected, We thank thee very muchly No wolf knocks at our door, No ghosts of shame nor sorrow, No fears of dread tomorrow, No gloomy phantoms casting Their shadows on our floor.

[Aside.] Beneath this towering steep ile. All these thy chosen people Selected for thy service, To slay or pray or serve; I'll never vex nor tease them, But always preach to please them; My salary't twenty thousand. I'd like five thousand more.

RESPONSE.
No rude, piebald donkeys, Not even pilchard foals, Can come within these precincts— Their prices are all so rare. It is most right and fitting A thousand-dollar sitting.

Should throw a hedge about us, Our divinity secure: Our laws are all adjusted, If not, they're, easily blurred— Divorce and marriage charges Are merely begateth! It only costs a trifle. The pigeons' nests to rifle; We play with hearts and diamonds, Our toys are pearls and belles. A fig for tender feelings! We want our honest stealings, Insisting on the privilege To utilize our own. Whatever's bought for money, From honor down to honesty, Belongs to him who buys it— The right is clearly shown.

Our peace is made with Mammon; We know 'twas only common, But we must not dissent, Though 'tis a deuced bore. We want a priest, we hire him; He don't keep mum, we fire him, For tools and tools are plenty Can get by them the score.

One of our choicest features Is filling legislatures: We do it indifferently— The people don't suspect. The Solons get their money, The people think it funny With all the careful fixing Protection the poor get. Our God is cold and stolid, But then he's good and solid (Gold yields no to affection), Of conscience he's bereft. The wires we pull with cunning, Our lines are always running, Who will may stand the change— Be sure we don't get left.

THE MAELSTROM.

The concentration of riches in the hands of the few, makes them arrogant, and makes a purposeless life for millions of poor people. The rich few are constantly working for the reprimand of the poor. 'Woe to the rich, said Christ! There is not enough riches to be acquired without the horrid spoil and oppression of the masses. It is the force of the waves to ascend towards a point and later on to descend to different directions.

The blind protection accorded to special privileges, the ways and means of acquisition of wealth, produces and maintains those unmeasurable anomalies. And from these inequalities result all the social evils. The honor cannot be suppressed in a body, subjected to excessive and persistent privations, cannot be supported in his self-consciousness, to endure all the unjustified inequalities and

inequalities. The dignity of man claims his share of shadow under the sun.

That is where it comes from, this undercurrent, the groaning struggle for equal rights to all and special privileges to none. It is an irresistible revolutionary movement, which torments all the civilized nations towards the sweeping hurricane for final justice. Everything goes toward this great problem, just as all the waters of the sea run toward the maelstrom.

What remedy, what means of preservation are we looking for, at this time, in advancing to the goal of the catastrophic, that we are already in the shadow of, as all horrible events dictate.

New means of production necessitate new ways of distribution, and it is useless for the swallowers of the old fashioned ideas to see a radical remedy without steering into three great G's, namely, Greece, God and Government.

A. KLEINMANN

FREE VS STATE CO-OPTION.

The Coming Nation, a Nationalist organ, in an article headed "Co-operation Notes," makes the remark: "Sentiment should be cultivated, for upon it depends the social pleasure. But economic success (meaning of a co-operative colony) depends not upon sentiment, but upon business principles—expecting obedience." What does it mean? The laying aside of all sentiment, of all that is high, noble and natural in man; to take advantage of your fellow man's necessities, to rob, to cheat, to defraud, as long as you stay within the pale of the law; to get the best of your fellow man whenever and wherever you can—that is business; that puts the hard-boiled stony expression on the faces of business men. Expecting obedience—to have no will of my own, to be simply a cog in a wealth producing machine. These are the allurements held out to men to join a co-operative colony.

Now I for my part prefer to take my chances in the outside world, where I can make a fool of myself whenever I want to; where I can give way to my sentiments and let business principles go to the dogs. Of course I will remain poor, but what of it? The pleasure of helping a poor fellow out of a tight fix, the happiness a person derives from making others happy, cannot be counted in gold; it makes him forget a whole lot of disagreeable features in our present society. And then, exacting obedience—why, if a
man, will practice business principles and be an exact, obedient slave of his masters, he can and will achieve economical success without joining a co-operative colony.

I hold, that such a colony will never be a success in the fullest sense of the word, which includes happiness, because the main factor of it is lacking, and that is, freedom.

The convict, condemned to a life sentence in the penitentiary, has the assurance that his material wants will be satisfied; he will not suffer from hunger, cold or from the denial of the few privileges granted him, as long as he renders exacting obedience, but lacking freedom, he will use the first opportunity presented to him, to leave this assurance behind him, and return a society, where he has at least some freedom, though the fulfillment of his wants are not guaranteed to him.

Every living being abhors restraint; catch a bird, put him in a cage, give him all the food he needs, he will not be content, but as soon as a means of escape is presented to him, he will use it and fly from his prison.

What does it matter, if I have a voice in choosing a master, whom I must render exacting obedience, or if he is chosen without my consent, I will be his servant, his slave in both cases.

I claim that co-operation will not be a success in every respect, until the overthrow of the present society, because until then the main element of success is lacking, and this seems to me is, freedom of association. The writer has, some years ago been a member of a co-operative colony in Central America. We had no laws or by-laws, no officers, but the majority of the members of the colony were not congenial to me, although I could not fail to see the advantages of co-operative labor. I seceded to be free, not to be compelled to work and live with people with whom I did not harmonize. I consider that the main reason for the failure of these isolated colonies, in order to receive the benefits of co-operation, you must associate with people who probably harmonize with them. Whenever the present restrictions have fallen away, when all men are free to do as they please, people who sympathize with each other, will by their natural affinity be drawn together, and happiness, which we have pursued so long, will then be within our reach.

Ezrah Slabs.

Then and Now.

In the old feudal days, in the "dark ages" you know, when the working people were simple and ignorant, they built castles to protect and entertain some noble, knight or lord, and got rubbed for their pains. Since that time we see how the human family has progressed. See now in the embers of the XXY century. We tax ourselves for the money, given to contractors, and then go and build armories in all the cities, and "em up and fill em full of guns and dynamite and wait for the time to come when we use them to murder ourselves." O. we've made great strides in intelligence since them.

Commercial colleges, institutions where the principles of business are taught, are taking advantage of another's misfortune in order to gain for self, are taught, have been established; and as the pressure of unequal opportunities and injustices conditions have become more harsh upon the rising generations, the boy who would otherwise have been a merchant, or a farmer, and who would have been happy while driving his plane or following his plow, has taken a course in the training of the commercial college and is a small merchant with the lines of care upon his brow and a look of anxiety in his eye, or else he is in some store at small wages and no hope of ever rising much above his present level in society. Far better it would have been for him he could have felt sure and safe of a living and a just reward for his labor, and could, therefore, have pursued the study of such subjects as he most desired; thus bringing him the joy of a contented mind and the happiness of a fulfilled desire, than for him to spend his time in studies and occupations which bring rather, discomfort and the disappointment of misplaced energy. Look into the face of almost any one you meet and it does not take a physiognomist to see the effects of a false education. Year by year the lives of the young and promising are blighted by this fatal error. Thousands who, with proper educational advantages, would have grown into noble men and women, are warped into useless beings from which the light of what they might have been, and the possibility of much that was once attainable is gone forever.

So, too, the insecurity which the present conditions breed has materially lessened the marriage prospects of a family. Many a girl who would have been glad to preserve over a household and contribute her share toward stocking the world with a race of superior people, is driven to learn many of the occupations and trades formerly followed by men only. But so they go on, and having learned to keep a set of books, go forth to battle with the world for their daily bread. Men are crowded out of the occupations for which these girls have been fitted, and the ever increasing number of unemployed still more reduces the security against want, and marriage and home building diminish in proportion. Don't understand me to deny the right of women to earn wages, for I hold that every one has a right to earn and spend. But it is a shame on our modern civilization and education that any girl with a fit hand for it should be driven to work eight or ten hours in an office over a typewriter, or twelve to fourteen hours behind a candy counter, is counted of greater worth to her than an education that fits her for the care of a home and makes it a pleasure for her to be surrounded with love and comfort, for which she was adapted from her cradle with the deepest affection by her family and friends, as well as by the world at large.

The proper education of both sexes will come in an alteration in domestic affairs that will free woman from drudgery and make it possible for her to develop all her faculties to the fullest extent.

So, in fact, nearly all education, so-called, at the present time, has but one end in view; that of making the student competent to become a wage earner in the field of business and enterprise, or of qualifying him to fill the place of an irresponsible man. In all this there is no provision for the cultivation of the ethical or the development of the spiritual.
Theological seminaries and schools fit their graduates for the occupancy of pulpits and grand churches, and usually succeed in inculcating whatever the humane and sympathetic, for the sufferings of the down trodden, the young aspirant may have when he enters upon his course of theological study. Thus the close and studious habits of study from which he graduated, and the struggle to succeed in the profession which required the cultivation of intellect and character, are usually the forerunners of the race; unsuited to true education and the attainment by each of such knowledge or mental development as they are best qualified to attain, or most desired. At present education, as it is called, is based upon authority. Natural selection, the will of the child and its natural aptitude for certain studies or occupations, are not taken into consideration.

The graded school system that is now established in all our towns and cities is a fair sample of this tendency. To a director fixes a course of study for children and grade the children according to their advancement in the studies thus arranged. No matter how bright a student may be in general or in some special studies, unless he or she can pass the prescribed examination in all those studies, they are kept back and not allowed to progress in those studies which they take the most interest in and learn most easily. This tends to reduce all children to an average or uniform mental development, thus tending to a fixed popular mental status, necessarily preventing much originality of thought, invention or other departure from the ordinary and commonplace.

A correct system of education must be founded upon natural selection, that is, the aptitude of the child for certain mental and physical exercise and development, in determining what studies and occupations are to be pursued, as has been already stated, education consists of the drawing out and development into dynamic force the latent powers of the person educated. A full and complete education is a lifetime of study and experience, and in the oncoming society, in which no one will ever fear that he or she, or theirs, will ever go hungry or cold, but wherein the absolute security will prevail, no one will ever have "finished" his or her education while alive.

The fear of want removed and the surfeit of abundance as well established as the coming of spring and fall; the fierce struggle for existence having vanished, a united, cooperative exploitation of nature for man's benefit; the hours of labor per day, and the drudgery of common labor having been reduced to the minimum by the rational use of machinery, this future society will practice a full and complete education; the higher and enobling faculties will be cultivated co-ordinately and thoroughly; the full rounded form, far more beautiful than any we see to day, will be the outward expression of the developed and beautiful character within. Music, poetry, art, the love of the beautiful, and the development of the spiritual, will become common to all, and every child born into the world will find before it the possibility of acquiring knowledge and developing its faculties to the full extent of its capacity. Any education short of this is partial and does not admit of its full spiritual growth for which each and every one is fitted and has an inborn and constant desire. So let us carry forward the work of true education, and do it all within our power to usher in "the good time coming" when education will mean, not mental stuffing and servitude, but the development of all that is grand, noble and lovable in the human race.

The foregoing is an extract from a lecture delivered by Henry Adkins, before the First Spiritual Society of this city.

The Simon-Corbett Charter.

It is an old maxim that, when thieves fall out honest men get their dues. We are disposed to think it true, for we learned by listening to Mr. Kerns at the mass meeting held on the east side last Saturday evening, that the Corbett-Simon charter was shown to the executive board of the Committee of One Hundred, among whom was Corbett, Scott, Strong and others. He went on to say that Strong and Simon fell out about some men's whose name I have forgotten, but not over the charter. By no means. You see, reader, Mr. Strong knowing of the corruption of the charter got back at Simon by making known to the dear people in a mass meeting, and asked their support in his efforts to defeat it. You see, if he had not had this side fight with Simon he would have kept silent as the grave on the main issue—the charter. Be we fools not to see this little game? If in the future he wants the trust of the people and calls attention to the time that he beheld the lift in his den, naming Simon, who, like him in his nature, springs upon his prey (the people) and devours the lamb before they are aware of their danger—Simons den meaning the executive board of the Committee of One Hundred, that surrounds him; such as Scott, Corbett and others. The people hearing nothing on that executive board had be not been of the same stripe? No, my friends! Birds of a feather flock together. Evidently Mr. Kerns is one of the same birds. We will call them owls, for I believe they come together at night (corruptly) and plot their damnable schemes against the people. And the biggest hoo-hoo-hoo-er of them all sits up in his own but his masters tower haloowing, "Hoo-hoo-hoo, what can I do? Anything, Lord, will do to humble the people," saying, "There was nobody at the nanseming but a lot of crazy popolists and Cozy arystoys. Mind me, Harvey, the people are getting in touch with each other and will keep an eye on you and your crowd, and everyone of you who comes with his tale of woe of your evil doing while we know it. We are not going to think that it would take a months reincarnation to cleanse them from you and your crowd's contamination. Mr. Kerns, one of your birds of the same feather, tried to convince 'the dear good people' how kind it was of Mr. Simon to make that speech in a public meeting, and he would save the city so much by authorizing the water com. to construct power plants at the Mt. Tabor and City Park reservoirs to generate electricity for the Arc lamps. When Mr. Teasdale called out and asked him who the city water works belonged to, he was answered, "To me and to you, if you pay taxes!")

This is the same old song and they have sung it loud and long to the dear, good, bash-like people. Many of them believe that unless they are property holders they have no taxes to pay. For God's sake wake up and think, and don't surrender your rights so easily when they don't even give you credit for it. Don't let them have your life's blood so easily. Suppose all the tenants in the city should form a union and refuse to pay rent. Where is the name of common sense and reason would they get their taxes from. Yes reader, it matters not whether you occupy a five cent bunk or a one hundred dollar rented residence, you pay the taxes, insurance and interest on money invested, and if we tenanters are the great landlords that we do pay the taxes should do such a thing, the police, the militia, and if necessary, the whole force at Vancouver would be called out against us, and we would have the same power or more, we are kept up, by paying taxes, turned against us, and if Martin Quinn was your governor he would see it was executed; judging from what he said in an open
Futility of Organization and Leadership.

Nothing is easier than the manipulation of large bodies of men by a few knowing. The leaders and for the most part without object. These things are left to the "leaders." It is only necessary for the leaders to cut dry their plans and "spring" them at the proper moment. It may be necessary for a few individuals but there are always those who are only too willing to be fixed. It is for these reasons that I have no faith in "organization." To be sure, I realize the benefits arising from association and cooperation. But herein lies just where the organization generally fails. It sets up a machine that can be, and always is, operated by the few, and invites the sharp fellows to turn the crank. In the first place there is drawn up and adopted a constitution and laws which assume that the body is in possession of all possible knowledge upon the given subject; establishes a dead line, in fact, beyond which there is to be no progress. The organizations become at once conservative. The political machinery is set in motion and there appears a head and a tail to the concern; in other words, inequality is established. For those in authority are possessed of influences, powers and privileges denied to the masses. If there is anything to be gained by these offices—and there is often money and always distinction and an opportunity to further personal ideas as against opposing ideas and to use the organization to further personal ends—the man who has an axe to grind will get the office. Ample illustration of these points will be found in organizations that have for their subject the betterment of the conditions of the working people. There is war and war of war between the different societies because one cannot admit that the other's ideas and methods are superior or even equal to its own; and the right of propagation would be denied the one. Upon this spirit of intolerance, in fact, depends all sectarianism, clannishness, and nearly all organization.

Two "leaders" recently turned down by their respective orders, have generally been given credit of being honest, great-souled, philanthropic men. But real character comes out in adversity. Since the retirement of these parties it is becoming apparent that their only interest in the organizations which have decided to transfer their titles, authority and salaries to others, is a disorganizing interest. Thus we know that all these years they have sought, not the public good, but their own ends.

When an assembly of the Knights of Labor was forming in Portland recently, one of those shallow-pated busy bodies that infest all sorts of gatherings and try to make them become the vehicles proper of occasions, opposed to the presence of an avowed anarchist, whose sincere purpose it was to join the assembly, and who had been, in fact, for years a Knight, in order to profit by the ideas of his fellow porters and impact his convictions in return. He was asked by the person in charge of the meeting as to his anarchistic views and readily admitted the fact. He was asked to vacate. He had stopped beyond the K. of L. dead-line and they had no use for him.

"But," says one man, "the Knights of Labor have done much good—they have set thousands of people to thinking." Very well. I don't at all object to the order "starting" people to thinking; my objection is to their attempting to stop them at a certain limit. When the dead-line has been reached the thinker must either stop or get out and go alone! In a free association this would not be the case. A free association would combine all the good qualities and avoid all or nearly all of their common wrongs and abuses. I love not association the less, but freedom the more.

Let us change the cry, "Organize, agitate, educate," to "Associate, agitate, investigate." J. H. Morris.

ATTENTION!

"Solidarity" is authority for the statement that R. Henson, 19 King Edward Street, Islington, London, England, desires information from all anarchists on the following points for use in his book:
1. Why are you a Communist and Anarchist?
2. By what means did you become one?
3. What is your age, profession, and place of residence?
4. Do you see any disadvantage in speaking with sincerity?
It cannot do any harm and may result in much good; let all comrades respond.

This First Spiritual Society meets Sunday at the First A.M. Progressive Lyceum at 12.30. Lecture and discussion at 8.45 P.M.

First Secular Church meets at Central Labor Council Hall, Sunday school 12:30; lecture 7:45 p.m., every Sunday.

Mt. Hood Assembly K. of L. holds open meetings on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 7:30 p.m., Central Labor Council Hall. Discussion of labor topics, free to all.

Academy of Socialism meets every Friday evening at Central Labor Council Hall, cor. First and Stark streets, followed by free discussion on social questions.

Central Labor Council meets every Sunday at 2:30 p.m. at their hall, Union Block, First and Stark streets. Public discussion. All invited.

Reform Books.

Wherefore Investigating Committee. By L. Waisbraker. This is a new book and strong story. It presents the labor and land question, in an entertaining and instructive manner. No one can read it without benefit. Price 50 cents.

Labor as Money, by John O. Yoder. This is a new work on the money question, outlining a new, just and practical wage system, without gold or silver, elastic enough to meet all demands of the people. Price 50 cents.


Why Government at all? A philosophical examination of the principles of human government, including a consideration of the principles and purposes of human association. By W. H. Van Ours. 12mo., 386 pages, half leather, red edges, $1.50; paper, 50 cents.

Not My Country, But Europe or an Epoch of Rest. No ideal picture of the coming society, by Wm. Morris, England's greatest poet. All that is interested in social questions should read this book. Price 50 cents.

We carry all the latest reform literature at the best prices and in the best order. We also call attention to our circulating library, where all standard works can be borrowed.

W. E. Jones, 391 Alder St., Portland, Or.