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PORTLAND TUESDAY, JANUARY 2, 1912.

OUR NATIONAL SIN.

"There is no place," said Senator Borah, in his recent remarkable address before the Young Republican Club of New York, "where there is so much corruption as in the United States. Where the criminal laws are so ineffectually enforced, where corruption is so little condemned by public opinion, where defiance of law in the highest walks of business so generally prevails." The severe indictment of the eloquent Idaho Senator was against the entire people of the United States. The impotence of law-enforcement and the shameful indifference of the public toward the law he declared to be "our national sin, pervading all classes and fastening its demoralizing hold upon all our institutions."

HAIRY THAW'S INSANITY.

How farcical is the law under which a murderer's life is saved by the insanity plea! How ridiculous is the insanity plea through which Harry Thaw is expected to gain his liberty. Thaw was found to be a dangerous lunatic, liable at any time in a gust of passion to commit homicide, and as such was confined at Mattawan. His family has been intriguing ever since to get him out of the asylum. He is reported to have succeeded so far as to have brought about a change in the management of the asylum favorable to him and to have overcome the objections of Jerome, who prosecuted him for the murder of White, and of his wife to his liberation.

LEW SHANK, THE CONSUMER'S DEPENDENCY.

Low Shank—everybody calls him "Low"—Mayor of Indianapolis, has found the solution of the problem how to reduce the cost of living. He has actually demonstrated that high prices are due not so much to the increase of urban population with rural population, nor so much to short crops as to the middleman who uses his position to beat down the price paid the producer and to raise the price paid by the consumer that his rake-off may be larger. Shank enlisted the support of the conservative element of Indianapolis by frankly confessing his inability to run the city without their aid and he has now so completely won the support of all elements by his practical success in reducing the cost of living that he is talked of as a future Governor.

THE CITY OF IT.

Salicide, we are wont to say, is the act of an insane person, or a coward. In this latter diagnosis selfishness is often a prime element—selfishness of the type that shrinks from self-denial even for the sake of wife and children. This estimate is corroborated in the case of a man who committed suicide in this city New Year's morning, leaving his wife and six children, the oldest eight years and the youngest—twins—three months of age. Selfishness culminating in cowardice is unmistakable in this case. This charge is supported by the fact that his property was not sold, but was given away to a more stable man. He had a wife and six children, and he had a good job, and he was earning a good salary. He had a good wife and six children, and he had a good job, and he was earning a good salary. He had a good wife and six children, and he had a good job, and he was earning a good salary.

own hands the work begun by their Mayor. Housewives to the number of 300 have complained by the thousands of competitive bids for one year from the firm offering the lowest price, postoffice and railroad employees have combined in the same manner, and one such organization is buying hams, bacon and other cured meats at 5 cents less than the retail price. The Mayor is flooded with inquiries from officials of other cities and has been compelled to employ extra help to answer them. He is preparing to continue his campaign through the Spring and to buy vegetables by wholesale in the South.

Shank has proved that the remedy for high prices is in the people's own hands and he has shown them how to apply it. The remedy for a producers' or middlemen's trust is a consumers' trust, for if the consumers only hang together they can quickly bring the producers' trust to its knees. The remedy for the selfishness of the displaced middlemen in managing co-operative associations of consumers and the rest of them can join the back-to-the-farm movement. They will be better equipped as producers than as parasites on the community and their health and morals will be improved.

GOVERNOR STUBBS, INSURGENT.

Governor Stubbs, of Kansas, prefers his personal success to the integrity of his party. Rather than have direct primary law under which he cannot secure the Republican nomination for Senator by means of Democratic vote he will have no direct primary at all. When the demoralization of the Republican party by the intrusion of Democrats will help his ambition, Stubbs welcomes such deadly injury to his party.

This peculiarity is common among insurgents. They seek personal success, not through the success of their party, but by courting the aid of members of the opposite party at the expense of their own. They are Republicans only so long as it pays in results for themselves. When the rules of the political game are changed, they are ready to change sides. They are not in school. The good they do is of a sort that it is hardly discriminated from evil, while the undeniable evil is manifest.

A BEATIFIC VISION.

Senator Bourne's article in the January Atlantic on "The Initiative, Referendum and Recall" may, for the sake of profounder study, be divided into two parts. The first, as the reader would naturally expect from the philosophical bent of the author, is theoretical. The second is practical. Let us dispose of the latter first in order to get out of the way of the abstract metaphysical beauties of the former. The second part of Senator Bourne's learned disquisition deals with recorded facts, and inasmuch as anybody can go to the documents and look them up for himself, it follows naturally that most of the statements are naturally accurate. While wandering with stately step through the flowery wilderness of philosophy, a Senator may say almost anything that happens to pop into his head, but in dealing with facts his exalted station does not relieve him entirely of his obligation to be true. He is not to be taken in by a poor theatrical fragment of bone pressed upon the brain at the point where English speech is controlled. It is reasonable to expect complete relief by a simple operation.

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such a comfort. It relieves one of any necessity to study public questions, to pore over initiative measures, to ponder upon the effect of proposed laws. Since we cannot vote against the general welfare and are compelled by inevitable necessity to vote for it in spite of all we can do, it is well to let the best articles on the subject that I have ever seen. But it does not seem to me that you get quite down to the real cause of the disease.

The steady increase of large fortunes and a corresponding decrease in the standard of living of the working class is no doubt the real cause of the trouble. This condition has always been fostered by the fact that the big majority of people have commenced to inquire. This is a natural sequence of development caused by the exhaustion of the public domain. As long as there was free land for the exploited and dispossessed part of our people to exist upon, the crisis was avoided. All of our commercial fight and, in fact, all of our business turmoil is over and for the possession of surplus value. The surplus value is defined as the difference between what labor applied to the raw material creates and what it gets in the form of wages. It is out of this surplus value that Anna Gould buys her diamond necklace to the value of \$500,000, and it is out of this surplus value that she buys her fur coat. It is also out of this same surplus value that cities are built; in fact, all of our boasted improvements and evidences of civilization are built from the same source.

FRATERNITY INFLUENCE.

It would be interesting to learn the exact number of young men who are killed year after year at their initiation ceremonies into the Greek-letter fraternities. Of course, the greatest pains are taken to conceal each year's "accidents," or explain them away, but now and then the real facts come out in all their hideousness. The youth who was burned almost to death at a fashionable Philadelphia academy last Fall and Winter. There must have been many more. Loyalty to the class, to the college or school, to the Greek-letter fraternities, to the fraternity, naturally closes every mouth as a usual thing. It is only in cases rarely exceptional that the truth leaks out in spite of the censorious efforts of the Greek-letter societies. They are all imaginary. The lofty principle of the "composite citizen" demonstrates that those things cannot be.

It is with a wretched reluctance that we leave this engaging theme. The more one dwells upon it the more it seems full of grace and spiritual sweetness. One parting word and then we shall sorrowfully compel ourselves to let it vanish like a blessed vision in the twilight cloud. Whenever you think you are cheated, or oppressed by an evil law, or hounded by a detestable neighbor, remember that you are part of the great composite citizen and that as such you can neither do nor suffer anything unpleasant or injurious. Then a blessed peace will suffuse your soul.

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socialism gains as a result of displays by Idle Owners, says writer. CHIEF CLERK, Wash., Dec. 31.—(To the Editor.)—The editorial in The Oregonian, December 26, under the caption, "Socialism and Its Remedy," is one of the best articles on the subject that I have ever seen. But it does not seem to me that you get quite down to the real cause of the disease.

The steady increase of large fortunes and a corresponding decrease in the standard of living of the working class is no doubt the real cause of the trouble. This condition has always been fostered by the fact that the big majority of people have commenced to inquire. This is a natural sequence of development caused by the exhaustion of the public domain. As long as there was free land for the exploited and dispossessed part of our people to exist upon, the crisis was avoided. All of our commercial fight and, in fact, all of our business turmoil is over and for the possession of surplus value. The surplus value is defined as the difference between what labor applied to the raw material creates and what it gets in the form of wages. It is out of this surplus value that Anna Gould buys her diamond necklace to the value of \$500,000, and it is out of this surplus value that she buys her fur coat. It is also out of this same surplus value that cities are built; in fact, all of our boasted improvements and evidences of civilization are built from the same source.

ARGUMENTS EVADE REAL ISSUE.

Real Question is Whether Governor Has Right to Usurp People's Sovereignty. PORTLAND, Jan. 1.—(To the Editor.)—The various comments upon Governor West's prison policy that have appeared from time to time in The Oregonian, and the Council on Socialism, are all so full of sophistry and evasion that I note on this interesting subject is a communication in The Oregonian December 24, from John A. Jeffrey, which was led to pursue through the aid of enlightenment, but through a feeling of curiosity as to how far an exaggerated idea of a man's intelligence and learning could lead. The language in the vain belief that it constitutes a most effective and conclusive argument.

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