

more extensive (the increasing number of the disinherited who must beg for work augmenting the value of locations, and the augmenting value of locations increasing in turn the number of the disinherited), so at equal rate the privileges of the privileged grow in magnitude and power. This process of economic action and reaction is at work within the very sight and hearing of the Chronicle. It recognizes it readily in business discussions, where questions of more or less in a bargain, and not of privilege or oppression in social life, are raised. Yet it gravely declares that privilege has been abolished and that the natural economic laws of distribution are effective!

Whether the Chronicle advisedly uses the term "acquisition" in asserting that men are now protected "in the free exercise of their faculties in acquisition," we of course do not know. But that the assertion is true we make no question, provided full meaning be given to that term "acquisition." Our laws do indeed aim to protect "acquisition." But that is not in harmony with the natural economic law. It is not the sanctity of acquisition, but of earnings, that nature is jealous of. Nature gives only to him who earns. The non-earner can acquire from the earner only by fraud, free gift, or privilege. To protect acquisition, regardless of whether the thing acquired has been earned, is therefore hostile to natural economic law.

In our country of "equal rights," as in all others, there are two classes. They may be divided and subdivided without limit, and there may be a great deal of overlapping; but two great classes there are—the class which, through legalized privileges, gets more than it earns; and the class which, therefore, has to earn more than it gets.

That truth, which the Chronicle ignores, Mr. MacVeagh appears to have apprehended: His designation of one as the contented and the other as the discontented class, is hardly a happy distinction. Contentment is not a characteristic of the parasitical class, nor discontent of the other. Neither is his distinc-

tion of a capital class and a labor class at all apt, unless we suppose the tendency he warns us against to have gone so far as to have divested the earning class of all the capital it produces, leaving it nothing by way of economic distinction besides its labor, in which case master class and slave class would be the better terms. But despite his defective nomenclature, Mr. MacVeagh has correctly indicated the conflicting classes, and, what is more to the point, has put his finger upon the cause of the conflict. He does this when, predicting that the plundered class, being in the majority, will obtain control of the government and "remodel the present system for the distribution of wealth," "upon bases wiser and more equitable than those now existing," he interjects, "unless we have previously done so." The whole class issue resolves itself into that question of equitable distribution of the products of human labor—not of past products, but of present and future products.

The only hope for society is, indeed, what Mr. MacVeagh suggests. Without listening to the fools who prate about the danger of disturbing existing institutions; without wasting time with the "scientific" drivelers who preach patience while evolution through aeons of human pain performs its perfect work; without giving way to the intimidation of the thieves who, to perpetuate their plundering privileges, denounce as "demagogues seeking to array class against class" the men who would expose and abolish those privileges—disregarding all this, we must, if we would truly serve society, adopt Mr. MacVeagh's advice and place the distribution of wealth "upon bases wiser and more equitable than those now existing."

But that would require no remodeling, as Mr. MacVeagh thinks it would. So far as existing accumulations of wealth are concerned, nothing need be done with them. Though earners have been robbed of their products in the past, that would make no great difference if similar robbery in the future were prevented. It is not what men have earned in the past, but what they earn now and are to earn in the future that need concern them. Let the laws that exact tribute from the

earning class be abolished, and the rest will soon take care of itself. Abolish taxes upon production (which comprehends trade as well as cultivation and manufacture), and do away with monopoly privileges in the earth, and no further remodeling of wealth distribution would be necessary. It would remodel itself in accordance with natural justice.

#### FOURTH OF JULY IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Dispatches from Manila tell us that the Fourth of July is to be celebrated in the Philippines with greater display than last year; while Washington dispatches announce that this natal day of the American republic is to be made the occasion of the establishment of American civil government in the islands under officials appointed by Mr. McKinley, whose power is absolute.

What may be the burden of the orations on this auspicious occasion is a riddle that eludes apprehension. One might suppose that a Fourth of July speech in the Philippines would challenge the skill of the most consummate orator who did not happen to be a grim practical joker.

But if that may be said of the orator, what shall we say of the reader of the declaration of independence? Who could possibly attempt to read that great liberty document in public at Manila in celebration of the Fourth of July, without succumbing to overwhelming shame? To be sure, Gen. Funston might. He has qualified himself by making a boast and a stepping stone of his success in forging a letter of introduction to an enemy's chief, and outraging an enemy's hospitality. But who with a less shameful record could bear up under this ordeal?

Before these words reach the reader, the Manila burlesque will be over. The speeches will have been delivered, and the declaration of independence, sorely ironical as it must sound, will have been read. It is too late, therefore, to offer a suggestion for this year's celebration. For future celebrations, however, we recommend that a new form of the declaration of independence, adapted to the actual circumstances at Manila, be prepared and substituted for the inspiring and

accusatory document of 1776. Though our country does imitate the crown policy of England, it should at least do so without hypocrisy.

Think of the reading of the American declaration of independence without modification at a public demonstration in Manila. What mockery could possibly equal that mockery?

The declaration declares in its outline of general principles, that it is self-evident that "all men are created equal;" but this principle is interpreted by our government in the Philippines to mean all men except Filipinos. The declaration asserts that all men are endowed with unalienable rights to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness;" but our government interprets this to the Filipinos to mean that Filipinos are entitled to such rights only as Spain or Spain's assignee may accord them at its own good pleasure upon its own arbitrary terms, and in the exercise of its own imperial power. According to the declaration of independence, governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed; but we have taught the Filipino people, by means of impressive lessons in military dynamics, that Filipino government derives its just powers from the consent of a foreigner of the name of William McKinley. With reference to these so-called "glittering generalities," the policy of the United States authorities in the Philippines is totally at variance with the terms of the declaration of independence.

It is equally at variance with some of the "glittering" specifications of the same document. The declaration charges George III. with creating a multitude of new offices and sending hither "swarms of officers to harass our people." The Filipinos could as truthfully make the same complaint of William McKinley. "He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies without the consent of our legislatures," is another complaint of the declaration against King George. Substantially the same complaint, only of worse behavior, could be made by the Filipinos against Mr. McKinley; for when the Filipino government was peaceable and prosperous, as our own officials testify, Mr. Mc-

Kinley threw a foreign standing army into their midst and ordered it to subjugate them. Another American objection to King George was that he "affected to render the military independent of and superior to the civil power" in America. Precisely what Mr. McKinley has done in the Philippines. One offense charged in the declaration of independence by the Americans against King George might be repeated, not only in substance, but in terms, by the Filipinos against William McKinley, namely: "He has combined, with others, to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our own constitution and unacknowledged by our laws." And what should we be able to say in answer if the Filipinos were to charge us as our forefathers charged George III., with "having large bodies of armed troops among us;" with "protecting them by a mock trial, from punishment, for any murder which they should commit upon the inhabitants;" with "cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;" with "imposing laws on us without our consent;" with depriving us "of the benefits of trial by jury;" with "suspending our own legislatures and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever;" with "waging war against us;" with burning our towns and destroying the lives of our people;" and with having "excited domestic insurrection amongst us"? What should we say if told that these offenses of Great Britain against the American colonies in the eighteenth century were being repeated by the American nation against the Philippines in the nineteenth and twentieth? What could we say?

If ever a people drew a damaging indictment against themselves, our people do so when they celebrate the Fourth of July by reading the American declaration of independence in the Philippines. By all means let it be suitably modified for future celebrations of American independence in American crown colonies.

## NEWS

A strike of the organized iron and steel workers of the United States against the gigantic steel trust, supplements the machinists' strike (pp.

90, 105), which is still unsettled. The iron and steel workers are not striking for higher wages or shorter hours, but for the union scale in all shops, those that are not organized as well as those that are. Negotiations preliminary to the strike were conducted, in behalf of the strikers, by a committee of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, appointed by that body at Milwaukee on the 8th of June. This committee was instructed to ask President Schwab, of the steel trust, to sign the new wages scale, upon the expiration of the old one on June 30, for all the mills controlled by the trust, whether union or nonunion. Many conferences between this committee and the trust were held, but they proved fruitless, and on the 29th the president of the Amalgamated association issued telegraphic orders to all union men in the sheet mills to strike at midnight on the 30th. To this notice 35,000 men responded on the 1st. Since then 15,000 more have gone out of the steel hoop mills. About 200,000 are involved. Officers of the Amalgamated association say of the strike that it will be a battle for supremacy, which will either bring the trust to the terms of the workers or break the backbone of the Amalgamated association.

Inspired by the hope of improving or abolishing the social conditions that foster these labor troubles, reformers of many different shades of opinion or schools of thought have been holding a national social and political conference at Detroit. It is the second conference, the first having been held two years ago at Buffalo (No. 65, p. 10; and No. 66, pp. 3, 8). This second National Social and Political conference opened at Detroit on the 28th, being called to order by Eltweed Pomeroy, president of the Direct Legislation league. Mr. Pomeroy characterized the conference as in certain ways absolutely unique, men and women having—

gathered from all over the United States and Canada with no organization to send them, only the merest shell of an organization to invite them, each one paying his own expenses, and with almost no personal motive behind their coming. We have members, but no delegates. We are not bound by a prearranged partisan feeling, religious belief, personal profit or class interest. No one's expenses are paid here, and that subtle but strong tie of money paid does not fetter a single mouth in this hall. We are not drawn from one class in