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EDITORIAL

## IMITATING ARTEMUS WARD.

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**T**HE Boise, Idaho, *Statesman* is indignant at the “Socialist suggestion” that the Mine Owners’ Association may have employed Orchard to assassinate ex-Gov. Steunenberg. In the passion engendered by that righteous indignation that will come over every man who has been trained in the seminary from which the members of the Mine Owners’ Association have graduated, the *Statesman* at first seems to choke, and then, after recovering its breath, pours forth a torrent of questions, all intended to convey by logical inference the conclusion that the “Socialist Suggestion” is preposterous. The *Statesman’s* reasoning matches the reasoning of Artemus Ward, who, according to his own account, was on a certain occasion charged by “a ferocious-looking woman, brandishing a bloo cotton umbreller,” with being immodest. Whereupon Artemus, turning to her with *Statesman*-like naiveness or guile, said to and asked his assailant: “Madam, I should have you know that I was sent for by a artist in Rome to pose for a statue of Sweet Modesty. Do you think that artist would have applied to me if I were not modest?” From Artemus’s premises, the woman with the “bloo cotton umbreller” was certainly mistaken; in the same way, from the *Statesman’s* premises, the “Socialist Suggestion” must be groundless. But the “reasoning,” good enough as a joke, will hardly do in a tragedy.

What is there to militate against the “Socialist Suggestion”? Is there in the land to-day a decent man, if he is well posted, or a well posted man, if he is decent, who will deny that the Mine Owners’ Association is an organization of criminals who employ the off-scouring of the land to carry out their schemes? Is there an intelligent man in the land to-day who, if moral, entertains for the Mine Owners’ Association anything but the feeling of the human being toward a rattle-snake or a tarantula? Is there in the land to-day any well-read man who is not familiar with

the names of the McKenneys, the Scotts, the Beckmans, the Sterlings—self-confessed felons, each one, who were engaged at various sums, from \$2 up to \$1,000, to burn, kill, explode, and commit perjury so as to implicate the Western Federation of Miners? Who is there, at all informed upon the affairs of the day, who does not know the hand of the Mine Owners' Association, when not raised against the throat of workingmen, is raised against the throat of small holders, whom the Association "runs out," causes to be murdered, if necessary, and then confiscates their property? These are all matters of common report. They are part of the history of Colorado and Idaho. Is such an Association, which cares no more for the life of a human being than for that of a rat—is such a body above hiring assassins to rid it of an individual whose methods were their own, against whom they competed for plunder, and who, if they did not "do" him, would in all likelihood have done them? It is the story over again of Artemus and the woman with the "bloo cotton umbreller." If, indeed, he had been solicited to pose as a statue of Sweet Modesty, it would at least have been improbable that lack of modesty was his characteristic. So with the *Statesman's* crew. If, indeed, they were Saints, they could not very well be Devils. But seeing they are Devils, and seeing they are no Saints, and none, themselves least of all, take themselves for such, the conclusion that the "Socialist Suggestion" is preposterous looks like a huge joke; it would be one were it not a doubly vicious attempt to whitewash criminals and to befuddle the public mind so as to prevent the defects of the whitewash from being detected.

Judging from circumstantial evidence, not the least important of the links of which are the felon-like prevarications and contortions of the *Statesman*, these conclusions are sustained by reason—

Ex-Gov. Steunenberg, may and may not have been killed at the instigation of the Mine Owners' Association. His life and theirs justifies the belief that he was. The deed may, however, have been one of private revenge for which Steunenberg's bloody career laid up an ample store. At any rate, Moyer, Haywood, Pettibone are guiltless of the deed. They, not being members of the brigand association of mine owners, were free from the motives that could have animated the Association to encompass the act; on the other hand, they, being Socialists, are above the level where ignorance exhales the atmosphere that generates "private vengeance." The

Socialist does not expend his energies against individuals; he concentrates it against the system and the class. Consequently, the deed of Steunenberg's assassination does fit the Mine Owners' Association like "de bapper on de vall."

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