

## The Commoner.

bond deposit made by bankers in order that they might issue national bank notes. Prior to 1896 the banker could issue national bank notes only to an amount equal to 90 per cent on the amount of bonds deposited. He was enabled to use that 90 per cent in his business, loaning it out and investing it, and at the same time he was permitted to draw interest on the bonds deposited. Since the McKinley administration came into power the law has been changed so that the national banker may issue \$1.00 in national bank notes for every dollar in government bonds deposited. In this way the national banker is permitted to draw interest on two dollars for every dollar invested by him in bonds (not counting the premium). Perhaps in the contemplation of the national bank politician that is not "getting something for nothing" but the American people will have to go through the primary class again before they can be convinced that this is not a very bad case of "getting something for nothing."

One of the banking bills introduced in congress and a bill which has very general support among national bankers and will again be urged, is that after national bankers shall have deposited a certain amount of bonds and issued bank notes to the full value thereof, they are to be permitted to issue notes to a certain amount, without any bond deposits—notes for which the government would of course be responsible; and the only security the government would have would be the so-called assets of the bank, or the faith, the honor and the integrity of the bank officials. In the contemplation of the national bank politician this would not be regarded as a case of "getting something for nothing." Yet it would take considerable effort on the part of the most ingenious of these politicians to convince the average man that it is not really an aggravated case of that kind.

### Mr. Long's "Precept."

There is considerable criticism concerning the form of the "precept" issued by Secretary Long for the guidance of the Schley court of inquiry. It is charged that this "precept" has been arranged to the disadvantage of Admiral Schley, and it is not difficult to see that the form of some of its provisions, instead of laying the groundwork for an impartial inquiry assumes at the outset that Admiral Schley is on the defensive.

THE COMMONER does not believe that the present form of the "precept" need be seriously criticised. Not that the form is not open to criticism, but it is not really material that the men who have so long pursued the hero of Santaigo Bay have so arranged this "precept" as to place Admiral Schley in the attitude of a defendant. It will all finally depend upon the intelligence and the fairness of the commission before whom this inquiry will be had. If that commission will permit all the facts pertinent to this controversy to come to the front no one can offer serious objection and exact justice will be done all parties to the controversy.

While it has been said that no serious criti-

cism could be made of the present form of the "precept" THE COMMONER would say that one very important omission is noticeable. Admiral Schley's purpose in demanding this inquiry was that he might obtain justice. That "precept" should have provided that the commission inquire whether or not there was a conspiracy among naval officers and attaches of the naval department for the purpose of injuring Admiral Schley.

Admiral Schley is not the only man on trial in this controversy. In fact so far as Schley is concerned a trial is not necessary because the history of Santiago Bay, not as given by Maclay and historians of his stripe, but as given by eye witnesses to that great battle, has placed Admiral Schley beyond all necessity of trial in the estimation of the American people.

But this inquiry will have been a failure unless the commission has the power to investigate the oft repeated charge that a conspiracy has existed in the naval department having for its purpose the destruction of Admiral Schley's reputation. Because the "precept" has failed to provide for an inquiry on this point the "precept" is incomplete.

It is to be hoped that the omission will be provided for. It was humiliating to the American people that so brave and capable an officer as Admiral Schley was forced to demand a court of inquiry. It will be disappointing to the American people if by reason of technicality the commission is unable to investigate the charge that Admiral Schley has been the victim of a naval conspiracy.

### Cervera on Schley.

Admiral Cervera who commanded the Spanish fleet in Santiago Bay has been interviewed by the Chicago American. Admiral Cervera declined to express an opinion concerning Admiral Sampson, saying "I do not know Admiral Sampson; I have never met him; he was absent conferring with Shafter when the fight took place." This gives emphasis to the absurdity of a situation wherein the Admiral whose face appears upon the medal to be worn by the participants in that fight had never even met the commander of the enemy's forces, and who was "absent when the fight took place."

It seems, however, that Admiral Cervera does know Schley. In reply to questions as to Schley's conduct, the Spanish Admiral said: "Actions speak louder than words; why not apply it to admiral Schley."

Then the Spanish Admiral added:

"Admiral Schley accomplished fully the work allotted to him, and therefore it does not seem to me that there is any room for adverse criticism—at least from the American side.

"Understand that what I say is in light of this distinction. As a Spaniard I looked upon that war as being as unjust as the war which England is now waging against the Boer republics. Personally, I shall never forget the generous and courteous treatment that was accorded to me by the Americans, and particularly by Admiral Schley.

"He impressed me as a gallant officer and a high-minded gentleman to the fullest sense of the phrase.

"A priori, I should say that a man of noble

principles and generous impulses cannot be a coward. To such men I would look rather for Castilian bravery.

"The naval battle of Santiago was short and decisive—so short that there was no time for any exchange of compliments; so decisive that I can hardly believe that cowardice was thinkable. The fight was over in about three hours and three quarters.

"Had I been captured in the days of ancient Rome my back might have been used as a stepping place for the conqueror mounting his horse.

"Admiral Schley treated me on terms of absolute equality.

"His flagship, the Brooklyn, was west in the blockading line, and was, therefore, the most exposed. She was engaged in a running fight with the Viscaya and the Colon. When the Brooklyn and the Oregon got within range of the Colon they opened fire, and the latter was compelled to run ashore. The Christobol Colon also struck her colors to the Brooklyn and the Oregon.

"The Brooklyn, holding the westward blockading position, was within range of our ships and batteries all the time, though our ships lacked certain things necessary for full effectiveness.

"Admiral Schley showed ability and thoroughness.

"I have never met Admiral Sampson. He was absent conferring with Shafter when the fight took place.

"If any one should grumble, it is I; but I have said my say in the document published under the title of 'Guero Hispano-Americana.'

"Physical and moral courage are two different qualities. There is no need of using a microscope to discover both in the action of Admiral Schley."

### Grave Perils For England.

A London cable to the Chicago Tribune states that England is facing a grave peril in a threatened war in India, the fact of which has long been kept secret from the public. In this cable it is said:

"It is remarkable how successful the British government has been in keeping from the general public knowledge of the threatened peril which has given it the greatest anxiety for several weeks past, and which was alluded to vaguely a week ago. While those on the inside are able now to speak with more definiteness, they still are under obligation to maintain a certain reserve. The facts are these:

"The government felt itself compelled nearly a month ago to arrange for the early withdrawal of 70,000 troops from South Africa. Much to the annoyance of the war office, the fact became known and it was hailed at first as a peaceful omen. It was the purpose of the government, however, not to bring the men home, but to send them, if necessity dictated it, to India."

It would indeed be a surprise if troubles did not multiply upon Great Britain. It is not in the least surprising that after Britain's offense in South Africa it has been required not only to pay the penalty of humiliation in its effort to conquer the Boers, but is also confronted by new and even graver difficulties in other quarters.

When Paul Kruger said that if Great Britain conquered the Boers, it would be at a price that would stagger humanity, he was a prophet.

The price already paid by Great Britain in South Africa has staggered humanity. The British taxpayers are already tottering under the load and the indications are that new and greater burdens will rapidly fall upon British shoulders as a result of British wrongdoing.