

gestion that birds were sometimes painted for the purpose of giving variety in color. Sufficient time has elapsed, however, to show that in this case the hues were put on by nature's brush and made indelible.

I found that the people of Mexico were discussing the money question. I did not meet a single person in the republic who declared himself in favor of the gold standard, but some were alarmed at the possibility of its adoption. Statements emanating from the United States financiers have been quoted in Mexican papers and some of the local financiers have adopted the policy that has everywhere been pursued by those who sought to make a change in the financial system against the interests of the people. These financiers, while declaring themselves averse to the gold standard, were suggesting the fixing of a new ratio between gold and silver with the idea of preventing the fluctuation of exchange.

All domestic business is transacted with silver, and when the people buy home products the question of exchange does not enter in, but the importers are embarrassed by a fall in silver. If they agree to sell to retailers at a certain price in silver their profit may be entirely extinguished by a rise in exchange. This has a tendency, however, to make them buy domestic-made goods, and the domestic manufacturers have not been heard to complain. The better informed of the Mexicans understand that a change in the ratio is only an indirect means of securing a step toward the gold standard, for the adoption of a new ratio—30 to 1 having been suggested by one local financier—would not prevent the fluctuation in exchange unless the government should undertake to exchange gold and silver coins at that ratio. If the new ratio was established and the government assumed no responsibility for the maintenance of that ratio in the market, the fluctuation would go on every day just as now, with this additional disadvantage that the change, as soon as it was recognized to be a blow at silver, would probably still further depress the price of that metal. If, on the other hand, the government undertook to maintain the parity by exchanging gold for silver at that ratio it would have to bear the losses now borne by the import trade, but it would not have the same means of protecting itself that the importer has. The importer can protect himself by buying at home, but the government could only protect itself by collecting taxes enough to cover the loss. The danger about this experiment is that the financiers, having secured a new ratio would, if it proved unsatisfactory, as it certainly would, insist that having taken that step a further step would have to be taken. If the ratio was changed and the government did not make the metals interchangeable at that ratio the next step would be a demand that the government assume this responsibility and if the government did assume it the expense of it would be used as an argument in favor of abandoning silver entirely.

Silver is Mexico's largest export, and her public men understand that legislation against it would not only reduce the export price and thus lessen the ability of Mexico to pay her debts abroad, but if it finally led to the discarding of a money which she produces herself, would compel her to mortgage herself to foreign financiers to secure the money necessary to do the business of the country.

Mexico's leaders, from the president and members of his cabinet down to the members of congress, governors and lesser officials, are much better informed than the outside world gives them credit for being, and they know that Mexico, a great silver producing country, could not discriminate against silver and join in the scramble for

gold without immediately increasing the gap between gold and silver, a sufficient evil, and without ultimately aiding to drive other silver using nations to the yellow metal. It is likely, therefore, that Mexico will adhere to silver in spite of the inconvenience caused by a fluctuation in exchange rather than invite the greater perils that would come from an adoption of the gold standard.

It is evident from what is going on in the United States and in the great money centers that the financiers are determined to take from the people any advantage that might come from an increased production of gold.

Schemes are being constantly devised for increasing the demand for gold, and the strain upon it. If the money-changers have their way the demand will not only be made equal to the supply, but enough greater than the supply to insure an era of falling prices, a condition beneficial only to the owners of money and fixed investments.

The quantitative theory of money is now generally admitted. It is a well recognized fact that a doubling of the population without any increase in the supply of wheat would raise the price of wheat, and it is also understood that a doubling of the gold using population without an increase in the supply of gold would raise the purchasing power of each ounce of gold. The director of the mint is already discouraging the production of gold, and the financiers are doing what they can to increase the demand for it. These efforts cannot be successful without serious injury to the producing classes of the world. The people in gold-using countries ought to be grateful to Mexico for standing steadfast in her determination to keep silver a part of the currency of the world, for, to the extent that silver is used, the strain upon gold is lessened.

In conclusion I may add that Mexico furnishes a complete answer to the arguments of imperialists. In the first place, those who say that we cannot haul down the flag when once it has been raised will find that our flag once floated over Chepultepec, the rocky hill that rises abruptly from the plain of Mexico and which was for ages the citadel of the Montezumas. When the treaty of peace was signed our flag was hauled down and brought back more than 800 miles to the Rio Grande. This not only proves that the flag can be hauled down, but subsequent history shows that it was better for the flag of the Mexican republic to float over the Mexican people than that the character of our government should have been changed in order to make our flag wave over a subject race. Mexico has made more progress under the stimulus of self-government than she could have made under a carpetbag system such as is employed in the colonies. Her officials are of the same race and blood as her citizens, and they are knit together by bonds of sympathy that are impossible when a foreign master rules a conquered people.

Sometimes the imperialist attempts to appeal to a patriotic sentiment and argues that our flag must float over the Philippines because Americans lie buried there. If he will visit Mexico he will find in the suburbs of the capital an American grave-yard where the stars and stripes are raised at sunrise and lowered at sunset. In this ground, owned by the United States, the soldiers of the Mexican war, known and unknown, are buried and an American citizen, an appointee of our government, sees that their graves are kept green. Here on Decoration Day flowers are brought, and the sleep of these soldiers is none the less sweet because their companions in arms and their country's officials preferred to observe the principles of the Declaration of Independence rather than

convert a republic into an empire.

Again, the imperialist will find in Mexico more progress made in the last thirty years than he can find in India during the hundred and fifty years of English rule. And in Mexico the imperialist will find more great men developed by the inspiring doctrines of civil liberty and inalienable rights than England has ever sent to India to conduct her colonial government.

All things considered, Mexico's experience is illustrative of the growth of democratic principles and can be studied with profit by Americans. The friendship existing today between the United States and Mexico is based upon an identity of interests and upon a growing identity of ideas. If any conflict arises between the United States and European countries in respect to the enforcement of the Monroe doctrine, Mexico is likely to be our staunchest and most valuable ally.

Stop the Lottery.

On another page will be found a copy of the bill introduced by Senator Jones of Arkansas, amending the anti-lottery law so as to prohibit the guessing contests which are springing up all over the country. It is appropriate that the chairman of the democratic national committee should take the lead in this effort to take the government's support away from a money-making scheme that is as demoralizing and corrupting as the old Louisiana Lottery. The guessing contest was started some months ago and has spread until in all sections of the United States publishers, whose scent for money outruns their sense of propriety, have taken it up and if the mails can be made the vehicle for the advertisement of such contests there will soon be one located in every town.

Let every reader of The Commoner who is opposed to the gambling principle involved in the guessing contests send a letter to his member of congress and to his senator urging the support of Senator Jones' bill. These letters will show that public sentiment is aroused and an aroused public sentiment is all that is necessary to secure the passage of the bill.

Other papers, daily and weekly, are requested to bring this matter before their readers and to urge action. Even the republican ministers who were a few years ago so solicitous about the nation's honor can find in this movement a field for the employment of their energies.

Push the Jones bill and kill the guessing contests.

A Real Trust Fighter

The Globe-Democrat in a recent issue tells how President Diaz of the Mexican Republic thwarted the Standard Oil company. According to the Globe-Democrat the oil trust got control of a Mexican railroad and attempted to freeze out a rival by putting a prohibitive rate on oil from the competing well. The matter was brought to the attention of the president and he at once put the legal machinery into motion and the railroad soon had to choose between the restoration of the old rate and a forfeiture of its charter. The result was that the railroad reduced its rate for carrying oil and the Standard Oil company had to meet the competitive price of oil.

Our president could do the same thing in effect if he desired to do so. If he was really anxious to exterminate the trusts he could do so in short order. He could prepare a bill making it unlawful for any corporation to use the mails, railroads or telegraph lines for interstate commerce until that corporation showed that its stock was not watered and that it was not trying to monopolize any branch of business or the production of any article of merchandise. His power to appeal to the people and his ability to focus public attention upon a question would enable him to secure the passage of a really meritorious law—but such action would antagonize the money power and bring a fight in the next national convention.

Still Scheming for Gold

Our Soldier Dead

Silver Is The Largest Export