

of legislation as shall insure the maintenance of the parity of the metals were by a breath strewn to the winds. Neither the traditions of the party were preserved nor the precedents of the past obeyed. The teachings of Jefferson, Jackson, Benton, Tilden, Cleveland were repudiated and the heresies of Bryan, Altgeld and Tillman substituted. For the first time the doctrine of the free and unlimited coinage of silver was preached. Truly, strange gods are put up in the democratic sanctuary and false prophets are heard in the land. The platform reads:

"We declare that the act of 1873 demonetizing silver, without the knowledge or approval of the American people, has resulted in the appreciation of gold and a corresponding fall in the prices of commodities produced by the people; a heavy increase in the burden of taxation, and of all debts, public and private; the enrichment of the money-lending class at home and abroad; the prostration of industry and impoverishment of the people.

"We are unalterably opposed to monometallism, which has locked fast the prosperity of an industrial people in the paralysis of hard times. Gold monometallism is a British policy and its adoption has brought other nations into financial servitude to London. It is not only un-American, but anti-American, and it can be fastened on the United States only by the stifling of that spirit and love of liberty which proclaimed our political independence in 1776, and won it in the war of the Revolution.

"We demand the free and unlimited coinage of both gold and silver at the present ratio of 16 to 1, without waiting for the aid or consent of any other nation. We demand that the standard silver dollar shall be a full legal-tender, equally with gold, for all debts, public and private, and we favor such legislation as will prevent for the future the demonetization of any kind of legal-tender money by private contract.

"We are opposed to the policy and practice of surrendering to the holders of the obligations of the United States the option reserved by law to the government of redeeming such obligations in either silver coin or gold coin.

"We are opposed to the issuing of interest-bearing bonds of the United States in time of peace, and condemn the trafficking with banking syndicates which, in exchange for bonds and at an enormous profit to themselves, supply the Federal treasury with gold to maintain the policy of gold monometallism."

When the history of this country will be written, the Macaulay of the future will point to the silver agitation and the presidential campaign of 1896 and the last stand made for silver in the two or three years following, as one of those unexplainable political conditions recurring from time to time. History repeats itself where a people carried away by ignorance and prejudice, hysteria and commercial depression, stand in the way of their own civilization, industrial development, progress and happiness.

The same perversion a hundred years ago incited English workingmen to tear down factories and destroy labor-saving machinery. The prejudice of the Chinese to the steam engine and modern

appliances is the same temper intensified in the Orient. Will the historian of the future compare the free silver party with the misguided Englishman of the early century or with the half-civilized Chinese, neither of whom had any use for the better tool of modern industry?

CHARLES S. ELGUTTER.  
Omaha, September 15, 1898.

There is left still some idealism, some of the spirit of doing a thing because it is right to do it, and not because it promises profit. Imagine a paper called THE CONSERVATIVE, published in Nebraska City, Neb., in the home and haunt of Mr. Bryan, and the heart of the political "bad lands;" yet there it is, in something the same form as The Nation of New York, with much of the same spirit, but without, I regret to say, the New York paper's excellence of make-up, and without, I am glad to say, that tinge of yellow, which is as wearisome in ultra reactionism as it is in the *dewance* journalism of the new school. THE CONSERVATIVE is for the gold standard, for merit as the test in the civil service, for free trade and for free shade, for it has the excellent forestry hobby, for municipal reform, for the rights of the rich as well as the rights of the poor, for law and order, for high-class, intelligent common sense—it stands, in a word, for American, social, industrial, economic and political sanity. It is not a "plutocratic" paper. It is edited by a man long known as the friend of the farmer, an agriculturist, an aboriculturist, a horticulturist, and a gentleman who happily combines with all these cults of the open air the culture of the library and the study. His name is J. Sterling Morton. He was a member of Mr. Cleveland's second cabinet and a most puzzling individual to the misunderstanding many, who could not reconcile themselves to the blend in him, as vulgarly phrased, of "the dude and the jay." Mr. Morton has the romantic, roccoco sympathies of a populist tempered by the eminently hard-headed and stiff-backed rationality of Mr. Cleveland. And so he represents, in a double-barreled fashion, what Henri Labouchere has called "the new chivalry" of the United States, in which there are intermixed Quixotism and shrewdness, imagination and reason. THE CONSERVATIVE is a paper that should focus and render effective for good, in national affairs, the saner sentiment of the West as against the ever-recurring *mania* in politics, which seems to be generated in Kansas, like the cholera in India. Mr. Morton is just the man to take a tilt at the windmills of the West, being touched with the spirit which, in varying forms, may be incarnated in such dissimilar entities as John J. Ingalls and William Jennings Bryan. We may expect Mr. Morton to make himself as picturesque a personality in

behalf of conservatism as the men against whom he enters the lists. Mr. Morton will give us the romanticism of Charleseliotnortonism and Larrygodkinism, and we shall owe him much gratitude if he shall succeed in making entertaining those things which are now an affliction. So much for Morton. His paper is packed full of good matter that must work, if it can be gotten into the heads of the pessimist population of the West, for the broadening of good citizenship, and for the disarming of the demagogues who have been a worse plague to the West than blizzards, prairie fires, grasshoppers, booms, mortgages and "bum" banking. Mr. Morton's paper should succeed; he has personality enough to bring it into national prominence. The Mirror calls THE CONSERVATIVE to the attention of the thinking people. Such papers are needed in the West, where the whimperers, the whiners and the whangdoodlers have had things their own way for so long that mental political health has almost come to be regarded as moral disease.—St. Louis Mirror.

## CURRENT COMMENT.

### Astronomy in the United States.

In no country has there been a keener interest in astronomical science and nowhere has there been more devoted and skillful research into the mysteries of the skies than here. We have the two largest refracting telescopes in the world, and in the possession of instruments of the next grade, we stand among the three foremost peoples in the world. In the number of important discoveries made during the last quarter of a century we compete favorably with any other. In that important branch of the science known as spectroscopy we are a little behind our contemporaries, but in all other directions, including stellar photography, our record is a magnificent one. Among the more celebrated men, the names of Newcomb, Harkness, Hall, Davidson, Langley, Young and Elkin are famous worldwide and among the younger aspirants such students as Pickering, Todd, Keeler, Barnard, Burnham, Comstock, Lowell and others equally deserving are almost as well known and honored.

An important step in the organization of astronomical work in the United States has just been taken in the formation of an astronomical society similar to the Royal Astronomical society of Great Britain. It is worth while that this great science should be represented with more dignity than as a mere branch of the American Association For the Advancement of Science. The special affiliation of men working in the same direction is in line with that differentiation of work so important for effective research. It will more effective-