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The gridiron hero is often the class idiot, but the pretty girl with a head with nothing in it, does not lessen her admiration on that account.

Speaker Henderson will not have things his own way during this session of congress. He is a played-out czar and there are none to kneel at his feet and plead for his favor.

The railroads bought the elections in Nebraska and several other states. Immediately afterwards rates were raised everywhere. Walk up, Mr. Mullet Head, and vote 'er straight again.

J. J. Hill, of merger fame, is the first great magnate to give unqualified endorsement of Teddy's plan for crushing the trusts. Hill says: "President Roosevelt is all right, and his remedy for what are called trusts is all right." Now let us all wait and see the trusts lie down and die.

Rich, powerful and benevolent monopolists are to be the salvation of this country and lead it on to wealth and happiness, seems to be the underlying principle of the president's theory of political economy. The "bad" monopolists he is going to kill.

To bear the odium of the saloon and lose its vote is the game that has been played against fusionists in the last several elections. The letter of Jonathan Higgins in the last Independent shows to what extent the whisky interests went in its effort to elect Mickey.

Football scored eleven deaths during the last season, besides the permanently disabled and slightly injured sixteen New York dudes shot each other for deer in the hunting resorts of the Adirondacks, Michigan and Wisconsin. One woman was dangerously wounded, being mistaken for a bird by another city hunter.

The Chicago Record-Herald is greatly mistaken when it says: "The right under international laws to torture Christians is one of the rewards of being a Turk." It would seem that the United States has the same right to torture Christians as has the Turk. At least no nation has entered any protest against the torture of Christian Filipinos, not even after the facts in the case of Father Augustine were made public.

According to the official statement of the treasury department, the increase in the volume of money from December 1, 1901, to December 1, 1902, was \$102,453,928. The total amount now in circulation is \$2,352,710,158. It seems to The Independent that it remembers a time not long ago when populists were called repudiators, anarchists and several other names of like character for saying that the volume of money ought to be increased.

**TEDDY'S ARTICLE**

The president's message will probably be read by a larger number of citizens clear through than any other message in recent years, for it is more like a magazine article than a state document. No message ever sent to congress perhaps ever contained so many recommendations to which all the people will agree and every message has things of that sort. Yet the message does not touch one fundamental economic question except that of money. All the remainder of those questions which have occupied the thought and time of the learned, are utterly and completely ignored. He shows his tender feeling for animals by recommending that the worn-out cavalry, artillery and draft horses of the army should be cared for and not sold in their old age or turned out to die. He recommends the preservation of game on the government forest reserves, but for the toiling masses—the thousands who in their old age after a life of wealth-creating toil—suffer for want of food and warmth, he has no thought. He is proud of the military exploits of our army which succeeded in bringing into subjection an oriental race of home-loving, peaceful Christian people, greatly inferior in numbers and scantily supplied with weapons of war. He says nothing about the horrible condition those people are now in, after 300,000 of them were slain, the country ravaged by war and their beasts of burden destroyed by the rinderpest, after cholera and the plague has swept away more than a hundred thousand more of them and still thousands more starving while the government is trying to feed them upon imported rice.

He gives the Iowa republicans an awful whack for their tariff shelter plank by denouncing the repeal, or any attempt to repeal, the tariff on trust-made goods. He wants the silver dollars made redeemable in gold and talks about putting the "burden" of redemption upon the national banks while advocating a law that would enable a national banker to go to the treasury of the United States and demand gold, not only for redemption purposes, but for export or any other purpose. He favors the concentration of wealth in few hands as far as he touches upon the subject at all.

Concerning the "merging" of railroads and rebates to the Standard Oil company and other favorites, he has no remarks to make. After all, Teddy's article is a very good one and The Independent would have printed it entire if it had had the space. It took the reading clerk an hour to read it, while it was shorter than most messages are. It is principally remarkable for what it don't say. The new constitutions in the south and the whole mass of colored people are not even referred to even indirectly. He approves of the report of the secretary of the treasury, and the secretary wants an asset currency and silver eliminated from the standard money of the country and made redeemable in gold like copper cents and nickles are. He wants to "strengthen" the financial position of the government by adding a billion dollars to its present liabilities. The Independent hopes that they will try it. The thing has to be settled some time and now is as good a time as ever. The void created by the contraction of a thousand millions of the money of this country cannot be filled by an asset currency, when the assets of the banks are now pledged for more than they are worth to the depositors. But The Independent says, Go ahead and try it. Don't be forever talking about it and never do it. Democrats and populists should put no impediments in their way.

**WHEAT, COTTON AND SILVER**

Commenting on the recent slump in the price of silver, the Louisville Courier-Journal remarks: "We used to be told that India and China would take all the silver that could possibly be produced, but events have demon-

strated that this is as untrue as the famous statement that the market price of wheat and cotton fluctuated directly along with silver."

The Independent is fully aware that many free silver advocates mistook a tendency for something mysterious or miraculous, and they doubtless made rash statements regarding the question of wheat, cotton and silver going hand in hand. It is interesting to note, however, that for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1902, silver-using countries could buy for 192 ounces of silver as many pounds of cotton, delivered at tide-water, as could be bought for 190 ounces of silver in 1873; and that 125 ounces of silver in 1896 would buy as much wheat as 132 ounces did in 1873. This may be only a coincidence, but it is a fact, well proven by statistics, that silver-using countries year after year give about the same weight of silver for a given article that they did years ago, before the price of silver went down.

The fact is, they give all they can; and if a bushel of wheat or a pound of cotton or a yard of cloth cannot be procured without giving a largely increased weight of silver for it, these people quit buying. That's the trouble today. The cry is going up that our foreign trade to the orient is being ruined by the slump in silver. That's true. When finally silver reaches the lowest notch it can at present, under the readjustment the Americans must be content to take the same old ounce of silver at its new price—or quit trading permanently. Which is only another way of saying that the American farmer and manufacturer must take lower prices named in terms of gold standard money. The manufacturer can probably stand it, as he has the tariff to help him; but what will the farmer do?

**NATIONAL BANK INSECURITY**

There is a notion prevalent among the mullet heads that a deposit in a national bank is safer than in a state or private bank, and the frequent total collapse of national banks fails to enlighten them. The Independent has often remarked that no system of laws ever enacted or that can ever be enacted will make a bank safe. The safety of every bank under any system depends entirely upon the banker. It is impossible that it should be otherwise. It is upon his honesty and business ability that the whole thing depends.

As is usually the case, the recent bank failure at Boston proves to be worse than was at first said to be probable. Some \$1,000,000 of securities, or about a fifth of its total assets, and twice the sum of its capital, are classed as doubtful. This means an assessment on the stock which may have to extend to the full limit of 100 per cent, and which may not then satisfy the claims of depositors. Investors in Boston national bank stocks have had some pretty sorry experiences of this kind in recent years, but the Bostonians do not seem to have learned anything in that costly school. The security for depositors that populists advocate is the government itself. Government saving banks have always been advocated by populists. Most other nations see to it that the savings of the poor are safe, but under the leadership of the old foggy republicans, this country is kept at the tag end of civilization trailing along behind even Japan in everything that effects the well-being of anybody except the millionaires and trusts.

President Roosevelt after long and hard study and hundreds of consultations with the leaders of his party, arrived at the conclusion and so stated in his message, that notwithstanding the trusts needed regulation and the tariff needed revising through reciprocity treaties, that if the trusts and tariff grafters would all be good, then we should all be happy. That is the sum total of all his ideas on the great questions that press for solution.

**GROPING IN THE DARK**

There has been considerable discussion in the World-Herald of late by the socialists and others who have made an effort to replying. On the part of the socialists the same old fundamental errors held in common by them and the advocates of plutocracy have been the foundation of all that has been said. It is the doctrine of overproduction. The socialists claim that four hours' work would produce all that the country would consume and every one would have plenty. How they arrive at such a conclusion is hard to tell. The vagaries of the human intellect are past comprehension.

At the present time all the population of 76,000,000, with the exception of the army and navy—about 80,000—and at the outside 200,000 of the millionaire class who do no useful work, is at work. Even many thousands of children who ought to be in school are at work. Hundreds of thousands of women and girls toil from ten to twelve hours a day at gainful occupations. When all are at work except the aged, the sick, the incompetent and a few thousand millionaires and have been at work for two or three years, still of most things produced the demand is greater than the supply. To reduce the hours of work to four hours per day would certainly reduce the supply more than one-half of what it is now. What would the condition of the world be, if there were only one-half as much wheat, corn, meat, clothing, fuel and the thousands of other things that people consume produced as there is now? No one can deny the facts in the case. They are as stated. The people who are able to work, with the exceptions named, and they are aided by all that science, invention and general intelligence can do to assist them, are at work at least eight hours a day. But there is no overproduction except in very rare cases. Nothing that it produced is allowed to go to waste. No wheat or corn lies rotting in the bins. No warehouses are stored with clothing for which there is no sale. No coal is piled up which the people do not want. All these are facts that no man has the hardihood to deny. Is not then the proposition to reduce production one-half, by reducing the hours of labor to four hours a day, one of the most unreasonable things ever advocated by men who are considered sane?

There is another fact that is recognized by all men. Some millions of people in the United States do not obtain as much food, clothing, or a good shelter and warmth as they ought to have. They do not have enough of things to make them comfortable. If they could get them, consumption in many quarters would be doubled. They certainly cannot get them by reducing production one-half. It therefore appears that the socialist remedy in this regard is a hundred times worse than the disease.

The evils of which the socialists complain are real. There are millions of people in these United States who cannot obtain enough nourishing food to sustain bodily vigor, who have insufficient clothing and miserable shacks for shelter from the cold. But this condition does not come about by the overproduction of these things and the reduction of production one-half would not relieve the want and suffering. It is groping in the dark—following the blind leader into the ditch—to seek relief in that direction.

These evil things come from the fact that the wealth produced is not more evenly distributed. Some have more than they can use and some have not half enough. It is the result of the concentration of wealth in few hands—a condition that produced the populist movement.

The great concentration of wealth has come about from three causes: First of all, the giving of public property in vast amounts to a privileged few. Among these gifts have been millions of acres of the public lands