CONFLICTING VIEWS

Differences of Opinion Regarding Independent Articles-"One Man's Meat Another's Poison"

The Independent will not knowingly publish anything containing a misstatement of fact. It will not publish communications containing indecent language or calculated to arouse indecent thoughts. Questions of opinion are quite another matter.

The Independent's mission is to teach the soundness of populism as expressed in the national platforms of that party, and its own interpretation of the meaning of those platforms is to be found in the editorial columns. Naturally the members of any political party cannot be expected to fit exactly a Procrustean bed of political economy. On matters of minor importance, of method, or even as to the best statement of a fundamental proposition, populists can differ widely-and still be populists. Further than that, many of The Independent's subscribers have never affiliated with the people's party, and among the twenty thousand of them it is not surprising to find "many men of many minds."

The business manager and the editor and his associate are all doing their level best to make The Independent each succeeding week a better paper than it was the week before. How well they succeed can only be known by watching the subscription list grow. Its columns, as far as space will permit, are always open for expressions of opinion by its subscribers. Publication of a communication does not mean that The Independent indorses the opinions therein, but rather that as no man can know all the truth, there is wisdom in the counsel of many.

Amusing incidents grow out of the publication of communications. For example, some weeks ago we advertised in eastern papers for short term subscribers and asked each to write his views on the cause and cure for trusts. Many of these have been published and more will be. In our issue of January 29, under the head of "Trusts-The Cause and Cure," Mr. Walt Cronacher of Boston advocated the issuing of paper money as the cure. His idea was to allow any individual to issue and circulate his own notes as a medium of exchange, but without the aid of a legal tender feature added by the government. Of course, The Independent had no notion of approving Mr. Cronacher's scheme, believing it to be absurd and impractical. Yet, for all that, it forcefully calls attention to the great wrong done by making national bank notes even a partial tender. If government endows John Doe's note with power to perform certain services, why not do the same with the note of Richard Roe? Indeed, why? "Equal rights to all, special privileges to none" cannot be secured by making Doe's note a fegal tender and Roe's note a mere evidence of debt.

Our good friends, The Cambridge Encyclopedia Co., who publish the excellent works of Alexander Del Mar on the money question were much shocked by the publication of Mr. Cronacher's letter, as the following letter will show:

"Editor Independent: We are afraid that if you open your columns to propositions of this sort (to flood the country with a paper currency of forty thousands of millions of dollars) you will discourage any person of real ability from contributing to your columns. Sane men do not care to be seen in such company as that of Mr. Cronacher, the author of this wild proposal.

We congratulate you upon the improved appearance of The Independent and the general excellence of its con-

CAMBRIDGE ENCYCLOPEDIA CO. New York, N. Y.

Sometimes the very absurdity of one proposition best calls attention to the absurdity of another. A majority of the American people seem to think that Mr. Del Mar's views are little else than "wild proposals," and doubtless some gold standard metallist "of real ability" might hesitate about being seen in the company of a man who, knowing that free coinage of any metal renders it impossible for congress to regulate the value of money, nevertheless will advocate the free coinage of both gold and silver. One's sanity is difficult to determine absolutely. Copernious was undoubtedly insane in his day-but we don't believe so now.

"Who 'in thunder' do you suppose," writes James Bartley, proprietor of the real estate exchange, Amsterdam. N. Y., "is going to wade through the interminable 'argument' and befuddled attempt at philosophy published to whom was entrusted the execu-

on your last page every week under the head of 'Money and the Taxing Power?' If you want to get at what the writer there is so laboriously trying to present you can get it from a book published in New Haven, Conn., where the author, John Philip Phillips, resides. The title of the work is 'Social Struggles.' It presents in a clear, crisp, lucid and forcible style all the truth this wearisome Mr. Ashby thinks he sees. For God's sake have mercy on your readers and send for it.

"If instead of the busy times we live in and the heavy cost per minute and per hour of standing room on the earth, a fellow had forty years to wander in some vast wilderness, he'd hardly have time to read these wordy lucubrations. (Then don't read them -if you don't like the meat, help yourself to the mustard.-Ed. Ind.)

"The fellow who thinks he sees any important truth and can't present it any more briefly and clearly than Mr. Ashby, is only fooling himself. The people are sick of these occult 'definitions' of value, which every fellow who thinks he is a political economist undertakes to give. It is amusing to look under that head in every 'Political Economy' written since Adam Smith's time. About every one of these writers gets his worst attack of swelled-head right at that point and the result is wonderful as well as amusing.

"I refer to Phillips as an authority and a clear reasoner on his specialty -money and exchange. But like a born painter undertaking to excel also in music, the minute he leaves the realm of exchange and ventures into the department of production, he is forty miles behind Henry George."

Just as Henry George, when he entered the realm of money and exchange, was about "forty miles behind" the crudest thinker on that subject. The man with a formula which fits every case, or the man who thinks he can please everybody, would be about the most miserable chump alive if he had "some power or giftie" to see himself as others see him. Mr. Phillips is welcome to this free advertisement of his book-but The Independent is not in the habit of squandering its "surplus value" purchasing every book on political economy because some subscriber thinks it is the

Captain Ashby is writing for those who are beginning to taste the pleasures of political economy-not for those who have become blase. Perhaps he sacrafices brevity for exactness of expression-but one can't have his cake and eat it. "Money and the Taxing Power" is his-not The Independent's, and we are chiefly interested in seeing him demolish the absurdity of "intrinsic value."

HELL ROARING JAKE

Mr. Sampson Writes to the Washington Post but is Turned Down Cold

Our contributor, Mr. Sampson, writes us that some time since he addressed the communication below to the Washington Post, but that paper declined to publish it. He says: "In view of the present trial of Major Glenn in the Philippines this communication may not seem inopportune." It is as follows:

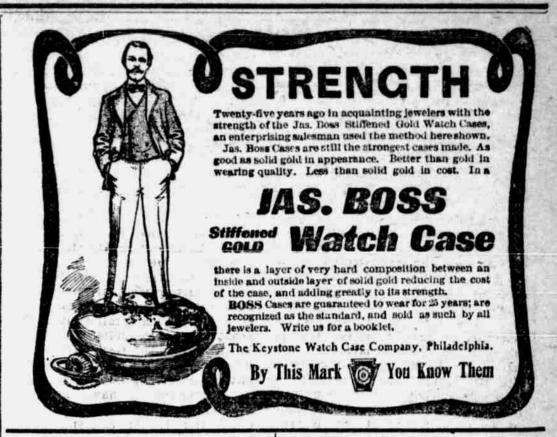
Dear Sir: Radical as has been the writer's dissent from the attitude of the Washington Post on the whole Philippine question, he was not prepared for its attempted defence of a policy whose infamy has been equalled only by its folly. The reference is to an editorial therein on General Jacob H. Smith.

According to the lachrymose Post. the general, on return from the Philippine shambles, was "broken," "sadly worn," "practically an invalid," etc. Unfortunately for the Post, however, the Associated press reported the general himself as saying on that occasion. "I am feeling first rate; never felt better in my life."

Again, the Post, speaking of the president's order retiring him from active service, laments that "blow in his gray and sad old face!" What a strange sun that must have been in tropical Samar to turn his face gray!

The first excuse essayed for this modern Duke of Alva-that his "kill and burn" order was not written- is on a par with the usual puerility of the administration's excuses, and may be dismissed with the observation that if only written orders are to be obeyed in the army, the sooner the army regulations are revised the better.

Then it is said (not by the Post, but by the secretary of war) that the order was not carried out. Of a system of morals by which a military order is judged according to the extent to which it is obeyed, the less said the better. But, fortunately for the secretary of war, Major Waller,



tion of General Smith's order to "make Samar a howling wilderness," was reported by the Associated press as saying, on his return to this country, that Samar had been made a "howling wilderness."

The specific reason which has been assigned for General Smith's order is the "massacre" at Balangiga. But how convenient it is to forget the testimony before the senate committee on the Philippines that this "massacre" was simply an act of retaliation for cruelties wantonly inflicted on the same Filipinos, a few days before, by American troops. And, apropos of massacres, it should be remembered that in the several thousand engagements fought in the Philippines, about twenty Filipinos have been killed to every one American, and that, reversing the rule almost universal, the number of Filipinos killed has largely exceeded the number of wounded. Before much is said about the Balangiga "massacre," decency would suggest a reference to these several thousand massacres of Filipinos by Ameri-

But it is the alleged character and mode of warfare of the Filipinos that constitutes the Post's chief excuses for General Smith's order. The records show, however, that during the early months of Philippine hostility, our 'savage' opponents conducted themselves quite as much in accordance with the rules of "civilized warfare" as did the American troops; that is was only when the Filipinos' determined resistance occasioned the substitution of brutality for decency, in our military operations that the Filipinos retaliated with cruelties-in a word, the records show that, if there have been any cruelties in the Philippines, they were first practiced upor the Filipinos by the Americans.

But did it ever occur to the editor of the Post that the sole authority for his reckless libel of the Filipino patriots as "traitors," "murderers," 'devils," etc., is the ex parte testimony of men who have every motive to exaggerate, if not falsify, the character and actions of their opponents? The Post is mistaken if it imagines that its patrons will believe testimony that would be far from conclusive in any court in Christendom.

The Post complains that General Smith's punishment was much too severe. In the writer's humble opinion, the proper punishment for the author of an order which will forever disgrace the American military annals would have been his execution.

And if the natives of Samar had been able to "welcome with hospitable hands to bloody graves" every officer and soldier in General Smith's command, what opinion would General Smith's great state have expressed, could she have spoken again

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on the floor of the United States senate through her illustrious son, Tho-JOHN SAMPSON. mas Corwin? Washington, D. C.

T. F. Neal, Halfway, Mo.: I desire unadulterated truth. Am a dyed in the wool Bryan democrat, and think he is the greatest statesman beneath the sun; but fail to see why men with identical views keep apart. I still hope the leaders will get in harmony under one banner. Am 63 years old; was born in Bath county, Kentucky, in 1839; came to Cooper county, Missouri, in 1856; was there until 1866; have lived here since. Cast my first vote for Bell and Everett on account of division in the democratic party, and today am confronted with grave apprehensions as to the destiny of democracy, with traitors like Cleveland and Hill.

Albert J. Allen, Salisbury, Md.: I had rather do without my supper than to miss getting The Independent or The Commoner on the days I receive them. If I had as much money as John D. Rockefeller, I would have you and Mr. Bryan publishing Independents and Commoners night and day for about three months, so everybody could have a copy to read.