

COMMONER COMMENT

Timely Topics Intelligently Discussed By Bryan.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT ON DUTY.

Something About the Prosperity of Some Sections of the Country—Prediction of Panic By United States Investor—Notes.

Roosevelt on Duty.

The vice-president delivered a speech a few nights ago before the Home Market Club of Boston. A perusal of his remarks convinces one that he shares with the president the tendency to apply the term "duty" to those things which he desires. He says:

"For good or for evil we now find ourselves with new DUTIES in the West Indies and new DUTIES beyond the Pacific. We cannot escape the performance of these DUTIES. All we can decide for ourselves is whether we shall do them well or ill."

The fact that these "duties" were self-imposed and are clung to in spite of the fact that they involve a violation of American principles, cuts no figure. It is all in the definition of duty. According to republican logic it is very wrong to steal unless you find something which is very valuable—then larceny becomes a duty. The fact that you may be compelled to take human life in order to get the thing desired is immaterial—call it duty and sin becomes a virtue.

A little later on in his speech the real secret of the Philippine policy leaks out. Mr. Roosevelt says:

"In developing these islands it is well to keep steadily in mind that business is one of the great levers of civilization. It is immensely to the interest of the people of the islands that their resources should be developed, and therefore it is to their interest even more than to ours that our citizens should develop their industries. The further fact that it is our duty to see that the development takes place under conditions so carefully guarded that no wrong may come to the islanders, must not blind us to the first great fact, which is the need of development."

The reasoning is complete. Business is a civilization; the Filipinos need civilization, and we are nothing if not business-like. Therefore, it is to the interest of the Filipinos that we should develop them for their good. This is strenuous life, and lest some might be restrained by conscientious scruples, the Vice President felt it necessary to impress upon his hearers that "the first great fact" is the "need of development." The "duty to see that the development takes place under conditions so carefully guarded that no wrong may come to the islanders" is simply a "further fact"—and, "must not blind us" to the principal thing—"the need of development."

Nowhere does Mr. Roosevelt discuss the effect of the new policy upon our theory of government; nowhere does he attempt to explain why a colonial system was wrong in 1776 and right now. His whole argument can be summed up as follows: We are in the Philippine Islands—no matter how we got there, we are there; whether there for good or evil, we cannot get away; it looks as if it were providential for them—and, besides, there is money in it for us.

The President Contradicts Himself.

At Decatur, Alabama, the president took occasion to defend the administration against the charge that it favored militarism and viewed blood and carnage with indifference. But in his anxiety to make the defense complete he found it necessary to contradict what he had said during the negotiations of the Paris treaty. The conflict between the speech made at Decatur and the instructions given to the peace commission can best be shown by presenting the two:

DECATUR SPEECH.

We have never gone to war for conquest, for exploitation or for territory, but always for liberty and humanity, and in our recent war with Spain the people of the whole United States, as one man, marched with the flag for the honor of the nation to relieve the oppressed people in Cuba.

INSTRUCTIONS.

United States Peace Commission, Paris, Nov. 3, 1898—10 a. m. (For the president.—Special).—After a careful examination of the authorities, the majority of the commission are clearly of the opinion that our demand for the Philippine islands can not be based on conquest.

DAY.

Department of State, Washington, Nov. 3, 1898.—The president has received your dispatch of this date and awaits your letter. Meantime, however, the question may be ultimately determined. He assumes you have not yielded the claim by right of conquest. In fact the destruction of the Spanish fleet on May 1 was the conquest of Manila, the capital of the Philippines.

HAY.

Extract from correspondence between Day of the Peace Commission, and Hay, Secretary of War.

All the protection that an American industry needs when backed by American skill and ingenuity is protection against the rapacity of modern jugglers of financial stocks.

A London paper calls J. Pierpont Morgan the "Bonaparte of trade." Napoleons of finance have existed before, but the St. Helena of bankruptcy is covered with their bones.

The soundness of Senator McLaurin's democracy may be measured by noting that it is receiving the plaudits of the men who have opposed democratic principles all their lives.

Is This Prosperity?

The Philadelphia North American in a recent issue gives a discouraging description of the depression which prevails in the textile trade. The facts and causes are condensed by it into the following brief statement:

Total number of textile employes in Philadelphia..... 75,000
Number at steady work..... 30,000
Number on "half" or "three-quarter" time..... 25,000
Number idle..... 15,000
Number unaccounted for..... 5,000

- CAUSES OF DEPRESSION:
1. Overproduction during prosperity.
 2. Underconsumption due to low wages.
 3. The war in China.
 4. Competition of "substitute" commodities.
 5. Change in styles.
 6. Change in centers of textile industry.

If we had a low tariff protectionists would recommend a high tariff as a remedy; if we had bimetalism the gold standard would be proposed as a panacea, but as we have a high tariff and a gold standard this depression will be explained as one of those natural and necessary conditions which cannot be prevented by foresight or remedied by legislation. It comes, too, at a time when the stock markets are booming and when the speculators are boasting that railroad stocks have gained more than five hundred millions in market value within a few months.

The North American gives interviews with employers and employees. Here is a sample from each side. John Hamilton, proprietor of the Montgomery carpet mills, says:

"This thing is all a scare. The business is bad for some, and other manufacturers are running about the same as usual. We are running short handed, but that is because it is the end of our season. The talk about people starving is only the vapors of labor agitators. There is no necessity for people starving. If they can't find work in the textile trades, let them get to work at something else. I have no reason to offer for the 'depression,' because there is no depression."

Mr. Hamilton is not worrying about the lack of employment or the lack of food complained of by some of the others. It is evident that his salary is paid regularly.

Edward Thornton, business agent of the allied textile trades, is quoted as saying:

"The 'busy season,' so long expected, has not come. Since November there has been no season at all. In the upholstery trade not seventy-five per cent of the thirty-two mills are running on anything like full time. A weaver in this line of work could make \$13 a week, but now the most skillful barely average \$5 a week. The weavers can make a fair wage as long as there is work, but the periods of idleness are disastrous. There has been a great overproduction and a tendency to lower the quality of the goods manufactured. The tariff on wool has played havoc with the ingrain trade and has created a field for Japanese and Chinese matings. In fact people are not buying carpets as they did at one time. As yet there have been few appeals for help, but this will come later if the depression continues. Our men are living on credit to a great extent, but this is bound to end."

Predicting Panic.

A marked degree of pessimism concerning business conditions is noticeable in many republican papers. This is particularly true of great financial journals. The United States Investor, one of the leading financial publications, appears to be particularly blue. The Investor points out that the conditions at present are very similar to the conditions of 1893, immediately prior to the great panic of that year. It says: "The whole industrial and financial structure in this country may be likened to a man in mid air on a tight rope, and it adds that the conditions 'might very well suggest to Wall Street the advisability of getting things in snug condition.'"

The United States Investor informs us that trusts are the agency which will produce the next panic in this country, and the Investor is of the opinion that "the wreck will equal any that have preceded it." How does it happen, then, that the financial journals, like the Investor, that were so anxious for the repeal of the purchasing clause of the Sherman law; that were so bitterly antagonistic to anything in the form of bimetalism; that held out to us such alluring promises if we would but adopt the single gold standard—how does it happen that these publications have no word of protest to utter against the system which they now openly declare will be responsible for a disastrous panic? When they thought, or pretended to think, that silver was responsible for our ills, they didn't hesitate to speak out. When they thought, or pretended to think, that the prospect of bimetalism aggravated our conditions, they did not hesitate to protest against bimetalism. When they thought that the single gold standard would provide a remedy for our financial evils they did not hesitate to urge the application of that remedy. How does it happen that at this moment they are content with making dire predictions as to the result of the trust system without entering any protest against the encouragement of that system?

The North American is a republican paper and is owned by a son of ex-Postmaster-General Wanamaker. Its portrayal of the industrial situation in one of the great trade centers will be profitable reading for those republicans who believe that universal prosperity is the constant and necessary attendant of a republican administration.

Scientists are trying to frighten the people by predicting the exhaustion of the fuel supply, but it has no effect on Messrs Carnegie, Morgan and Rockefeller. They have money to burn.

APPALLING FACTS.

OUR TENANT FARMERS HAVE INCREASED.

Landlordism in Agricultural Districts of America as Shown by L. G. Powers, Chief Statistician Division of Agriculture, U. S. Census Bureau.

The interest aroused in the subject of farm tenure by the census statistics of 1880 and 1890 will without doubt be increased by those of 1900. No formal reports for the latter year have been given to the public as yet, but the census authorities have published sufficient facts to enable one familiar with farm tenure to make a fairly correct forecast of the conditions existing in the nation. The facts referred to are found in the bulletins of population by minor civil divisions and in the number of farm schedules returned by the enumerators and special agents.

The number of farm schedules is 5,786,907, which is two to four per cent in excess of the actual number of farms that will be tabulated. The number of farms in 1900 will, therefore, somewhat exceed 5,700,000. In 1890 the census reported 4,564,691 farms and 4,767,179 farm families. Accordingly in ten years from 940,000 to 1,140,000 farms have been added to those enumerated in 1890.

North Atlantic States.

In the north Atlantic states—Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania—the farms in 1890 numbered 696,139, and in 1890, 658,569. In the latter year the farm families numbered 660,407; in 1900 the farms are, approximately, 670,000. The figures quoted make it clear that the number of farms in these states, and hence the number of families of farm proprietors—that is, of owners and tenants—has not suffered diminution in the last ten years; but while the number of families in these two classes did not become less, the total rural population, including also the families of wage laborers, in nearly all of the states decreased. The decrease has consequently been in families whose heads or chief members gain their support by working for wages on farms.

Such a decrease indicates a shifting of farm population. Some families have moved from the country to the city and some have left their native states for other sections of the nation. These removals also have been accompanied by an economic readjustment among the families remaining. The net result of that readjustment is the rise of a number of families from the position of wage earners in 1890 to that of farm owners or tenants in 1900. Of those thus rising, it is certain that a larger actual and relative number have become farm tenants than have attained to the more independent position of farm owners. Under these circumstances it can be declared with a large degree of certainty that the actual and relative proportion of farms operated by tenants in the north Atlantic states will be found when all data are tabulated to be greater than it was ten or twenty years ago. The percentage of farms operated by tenants in the states in 1890 was 16; in 1890, 18.4, and we may confidently expect that in 1900 it will be in excess of 20.

South Atlantic States.

In the south Atlantic states—Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida—the schedules returned indicate the existence in 1900 of substantially 950,000 to 960,000 farms. The corresponding number of farms in 1890 was 749,600. At the same time 772,596 farm families were reported. The number of farms increased in ten years between 190,000 and 210,000, or from 24 to 27 per cent. Exclusive of cities of 25,000 and over, the population of these states increased in the ten years only 18 per cent; but since 1890 the population in the smaller cities and towns has increased relatively much faster than the agricultural population proper. The percentage of increase of that population cannot exceed 13.

These facts make it certain that the increase in the number of farms has been much greater relatively than that of the population engaged in tilling them. The farm proprietors, owners and tenants as reported have, therefore, increased faster than the farm families. They have been recruited in part from the ranks of former families of wage earners. Among the farm families of the south, whose number includes very many negroes, fewer relatively than in the north have risen or are rising from wage service to farm ownership, and hence there must be a large relative increase of tenant-operated farms.

In the "Black Belt."

The percentage of farms operated by tenants, which was 36.1 in 1880, rose to 38.5 in 1890, will doubtless be found to have increased still more in 1900. In that year it will probably exceed 45. This great relative estimated increase in farm tenants is predicted upon the number of farm schedules and the population. Many of the 200,000 additional farms in these states are unquestionably small places cultivated by the members of the families of wage-earners, and used by them as homes. Others are small tracts of land, without buildings, tilled by unmarried men or women who work as wage earners a portion of the year. If this is not the case then we have a substantial elevation in ten years of over 100,000 farm fam-

ilies to positions materially above those held by them in 1890. It is hardly probable that such a number of negro families have realized such a great advance. But, after making due allowance for the small tracts of land of the character mentioned, it is almost certain that the final figures of the census will show a substantial raise of a large number of former wage earners to a higher industrial station in life, and one of the most prominent indices of this social uplift is the relative increase of tenant-operated farms.

Among the Prairie Farmers.

In the north central states—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota and North Dakota—there were reported in 1890 1,978,659 farm families and 1,923,822 farms. Judging from the schedules the corresponding number of farms in 1900 is substantially 2,190,000 to 2,200,000. More than one-half of the increase of from 200,000 to 275,000 is found in the newly settled parts of the various states, in which the increase keeps pace more or less closely with the reported increase of farms. The remainder of these added farms are located in the older settled sections, in which the rural population increases more slowly, or is stationary or decreasing in number. There will, therefore, in these north central states be a greater actual increase of owners than of tenants, and not the reverse, as was the case in the South Atlantic divisions.

The increase of farm owners is largely confined to the newer sections. In the older settled portions a different situation exists. There the relative changes in the population and number of farms give evidence of the uplifting of at least a few families from the position of wage laborers to that of tenants, and hence a relative increase of tenant-operated farms, the same as in the two specified divisions of states. In 1890 the percentage of tenant-operated farms in the twelve states was 20.5, and in 1890 it was 23.4. The data of population and the number of farms give evidence of a percentage in 1900 of more than 28.

Where Growth Is Rapid.

The settlement of Oklahoma, Indian Territory and the newer parts of Texas, Arkansas and Louisiana, according to the testimony of farm schedules, adds over 250,000 farms, carved out of the public or unused domain. The schedules also give evidence of a still greater number of new farms in the other south central states—Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi—produced by the subdivision of the older plantations. In 1890 the farms in the south central states numbered 1,086,772, and the farm families 1,185,932. In 1900 the farms will approximate 1,659,000.

A very large proportion of the farms operated by white men in the Indian Territory and on the Indian reservations of Oklahoma will be additions to the tenant-operated class, since it is very difficult for such men in this section to become owners. With the exception of the changes due to this anomalous condition of farms on Indian lands, the situation so far as it relates to farm tenure in the south central states, is intermediate between that described in detail for the south Atlantic and north central states. The percentage of tenant-operated farms was 36.2 in 1880, 38.4 in 1890, and will probably be over 45 in 1900.

Farms of the Far West.

The farms reported in the western states—Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Idaho, Washington, Oregon and California—numbered in 1890, 145,678, while the farm families numbered 169,585. The schedules reported indicate the probable existence in the same section in 1900 of 245,000, or an increase in ten years of from 75,000 to 100,000 new farms, all carved out of the public domain. The growth of rural population in these states has nearly kept pace with the increase in farms, and hence we can in general predict that there will be no great change in the relative number of those operated by tenants. The percentage of such farms in 1880 was 14, and in 1890, with the settlement of 62,155 new farms, it was only 12.1. In the same year the percentage of farm tenant families was 18.9. With the large reported increase in the number of farms in 1900 the relative number of tenant-operated farms cannot be greater than 20, and will not be less than 13 per cent. The data of farm population available are not exact enough to make a more definite estimate.

Summing up the foregoing estimates, the conclusion is reached that of the 940,000 to 1,140,000 farms that were added in the last ten years, substantially one-half will be tenant operated. This will be an increase of from 40 to 50 per cent, or nearly twice the increase per cent of the population for the nation, four times that of the purely agricultural population, and twice that of the farms operated by their owners.

Greatest Increase Recorded.

It is an actual and relative increase of tenant-operated farms that has never been equalled since statistics have been collected upon the subject, and yet this unprecedented increase is predicted on the basis of facts that show not a degradation of the rural population, but an uplifting that has raised not less than 100,000 families from the position of wage earners to the proprietorship of large tracts of tillable land.

The man who spends his money like water is supposed to liquidate his debts.

STOCK GROWERS MEET

Many Cattlemen Get Together at Alliance in Annual Convention.

TEXT OF SOME OF THE ADDRESSES

Russian Thistle and Sorghum as Forage Plants—Control of Contagious Animal Diseases—Education for the Stockman's Boy Discussed.

ALLIANCE, Nebr., May 15.—The Stock Growers' annual meeting is being held here. A great deal of interest is shown in this association from the fact that aside from the members of the association present, a large representation was here from South Omaha, Kansas City and other places.

Professor E. W. Burnett of the State university made the first address, more particularly cautioning the members against overstocking the range; the necessity of providing forage for stock during the winter and advising experiment to determine what forage plants could be successfully produced in this locality.

Discussion followed by Zed Goodwin advocating alfalfa to be raised on the lower lands and showing by his experience that this could be done. G. W. Hervey related experience with Russian thistle and also with sorghum raised as a forage plant and showing the latter's value.

Mr. Comstock, Mr. Joy and others took part in the discussion. Dr. Peters of the Nebraska experimental farm followed with a review of the advance made in the control of contagious animal disease in the United States. Pleuro-pneumonia, Texas fever, blackleg and calf cholera were touched briefly, after which an invitation was extended by the doctor for questions to be asked by any one in the audience touching on these topics.

G. W. Hervey asked the following questions:

"What is the period of immunity following vaccination for blackleg? How has this been determined? What is the effect of vaccination before the period of immunity has passed on the animal? Does the period of immunity close abruptly, or is its security gradually released? What evidence can we have that vaccination has taken effect?"

These questions precipitated a general discussion by the members. The subject of cattle lice and cattle itch was also introduced by Dr. Peters as a prevailing trouble among range cattle. The remedy recommended was the dipping of the cattle in disinfectants, such as an naphtholium and other vermicides.

The evening session opened with an address by E. Von Forrell, regent of the State university, on the subject, "Education for the Stockman's Boy." Words commendatory of the work and development of the State university as a means of general education for the Nebraska boy along the lines of mechanical and agricultural training were expressed by the speaker and the importance of elementary agricultural education in the common schools.

Test Small Pox on Calf.

BEATRICE, Neb., May 15.—City Physician Walden bought a six-week-old calf, and assisted by Drs. Roe, Fulton and Chief Ashenfelter, made incisions in the calf's ears and flanks and inserted the virus, which was taken from a pustole off a severe case of small-pox. Dr. Walden says that if the virus is from a person infected with small-pox the calf will die, otherwise the calf will live. There are physicians here who assert that a bovine cannot be inoculated with human virus.

Brothers-in-Law Meet in Prison.

BEATRICE, Neb., May 15.—Sheriff Waddington took John Lutz to the penitentiary at Lincoln yesterday. Lutz was sentenced to one year at hard labor for arson by Judge Letton. He is a brother-in-law of Reddy Huffman, who was sentenced to eighteen months at hard labor by Judge Stubbs at Wilber Saturday, and the two exchanged greetings.

To Finish His Long Fast.

BEATRICE, Neb., May 15.—Henry Cordes, who has been fasting for thirty-eight days, announced yesterday that he would eat Thursday. His time will be up Wednesday night, but he says he will not eat any supper, as he is not accustomed to retiring upon a full stomach.

Cuyler Schultz Released.

LINCOLN, Neb., May 15.—Cuyler Schultz, one of the oldest of the penitentiary convicts, was freed by Governor Savage and left for Hastings, where he has two married daughters. Schultz was sentenced from Howard county to a term of twenty years for murder in the second degree and entered prison in 1894. His crime was the killing of Hiram Farr in a quarrel over some of Farr's cattle, which he had impounded.

NEBRASKA DEALERS RALLY TO DEFEND DAIRY INTERESTS.

OMAHA, May 13.—The Nebraska Butter and Egg Dealers' association and the State Dairymen's association, representing practically all of the dairy interests in the state, will give united support to State Food Commissioner Bassett in his efforts to enforce the law against the illegitimate sale of imitation butter and other imitation dairy products.

Twenty-five members of the Butter and Egg Dealers' association met in Omaha in response to an emergency call issued by the president and secretary of the organization, and with one voice they agreed to stand by Commissioner Bassett in any step he might take toward the protection of the dairy interests. Mr. Bassett was appointed food commissioner by Governor Savage and it is said he will take charge of his office in a few days. He will work under the law enacted by the legislature of 1897.

Morris Friend of Lincoln, representing the Beatrice Creamery company of that place, said to a reporter:

"There is no reason why the law against the sale of imitation butter cannot now be enforced. The legislature of 1897 did not make proper provision for its enforcement, but this year the lawmakers remedied the evil committed two years ago, and, so far as we know, the law will stand the test of any court in the land. The trouble for years was due to the failure of the legislature to make appropriations for the salary of the commissioner and his assistants.

"In brief, the state food law provides a penalty for selling colored imitations of butter. It will allow the sale of butterine, but only in its natural color. This places both butter and butterine on an equal footing. What the dairymen object to is the sale of butterine or other butter imitations that are colored to resemble in appearance the pure dairy product. It is this deceit that we want to stamp out, and we are of the opinion that we have the means at hand to do it with. The law also requires restaurants, hotels and other public eating houses that serve butter imitations to give notice of the fact by posting signs in a conspicuous place setting forth that butterine, or whatever the imitation may be called, is served in the place."

The State Dairymen's association will probably follow the example of the butter and egg dealers and hold a special meeting within the next few days with a similar purpose in view. The officers of that association have already signified their intention of standing back to back with the food commissioner in his effort to enforce the law, but it is proposed to make the influence of the organization still stronger by calling a special meeting for the purpose of taking united action.

The present indications point to a clash with the imitation butter manufacturers. They object most strenuously to the restriction against the use of coloring, and it is possible proceedings may be instituted in the courts to test the constitutionality of the act. Mr. Bassett, in his official capacity, will demand compliance with the law, and if any violators are caught they will be prosecuted. He will have the moral support of every butter and dairy man in the state, and they together feel they can wield a mighty influence.

Fifth Marriage at 87.

NEBRASKA CITY, Neb., May 13.—The marriage of B. S. Hayden of this city to Mrs. A. Shupp of Omaha at Chillicothe, Mo., was a surprise to all. This is the fifth marriage venture of the groom, who is 87 years of age, and the second venture of the bride, who is 62 years of age. Both have been residents of this city for many years and have been engaged to be married before. The groom is well-to-do, but not immensely wealthy as reported.

Bankers Elect Officers.

GRAND ISLAND, May 13.—The Nebraska Bankers' association in session here elected officers for the ensuing year as follows: C. F. Bentley of Grand Island, president; F. M. Penny of Wood River, vice president; W. H. McDonald of North Platte, secretary; Peter Mortensen of Ord, treasurer; F. M. Rublee of Broken Bow, member of executive council of state association.

Fire Residence Destroyed.

WAVERLY, May 13.—An \$8,000 residence belonging to Miss Blanche Hines was destroyed by fire. The house had been closed preparatory to a summer trip. The origin of the fire is unknown.

Nebraska at Washington.

WASHINGTON, May 13.—Dr. R. M. Stone of Omaha, who arrived in Washington last night, called upon Commissioner Evans of the pension office, having one or two matters before the department in which veterans of the civil war are interested.

John Mallalieu and wife of Kearney are in the city on a short visit. Mr. Mallalieu called on Director Merriam, having been superintendent of the census for the Sixth Nebraska district.