

# Commoner Comment.

Extracts From W. J. Bryan's Paper.

## "What About Next Week?"

When President McKinley was addressing the laboring men at San Francisco and congratulating them upon their "prosperity" and "contentment," one brawny wage-earner arose and asked, "What about next week?" Of course, he was guilty of some discourtesy in thus interrupting a meeting made notable by the presence of the chief executive, and his companions beckoned to him to be silent. But he could not have asked a more embarrassing question at a republican meeting. The administration is living in the present, with no thought or plan for the future. It might be well for the president to consider the simple question propounded by the California toiler.

The railroads are consolidating shutting out competition, issuing watered stock, and making worthless securities dividend-paying by the exercise of arbitrary power in the fixing of rates. They are having things all their own way now, but—"What about next week?"

The trusts are swallowing the industries, building up enormous fortunes, and levying tribute upon the entire country. They may be willing to contribute largely to the republican campaign fund today, but what will be the effect upon industry?—"What about next week?"

The money changers are in control of our finances, they can expand or contract the currency at will; they can make more out of the fluctuations of the money market than they can in legitimate business; they rule with a rod of iron, but what is the end?—"What about next week?"

Imperialism is rampant, speculators are planning forays against distant lands; carpet baggers are growing fat and respect for political principles and moral precepts is being lost sight of; some people are making money out of it, but—"What about next week?"

If the republicans are not too busy to think, if "prosperity" leaves them time for reflection, they will find it worth while to answer to their own satisfaction, if they can, that pertinent and perplexing question, "What about next week?"

## Consulting "Destiny."

It seems to be "destiny" that the United States should acquire the Danish West Indies. A treaty of sale is now being arranged between Denmark and the United States for the sale to this country of the islands, the consideration being \$4,000,000.

One consideration of the proposed treaty is that Denmark must have, in these islands, equal trade privileges with the United States. In other words, if the United States have free trade with the Danish West Indies, Denmark must also have free trade.

A similar concession for a period of ten years was made to Spain so far as the Philippines were concerned. The republican leaders have told us that a mighty principle was involved in the tariff question; and yet in the different arrangement the republican administration has made concerning our various "possessions" in the matter of tariff it would seem that no principle whatever is involved in this question, and that as one distinguished American said, the tariff is purely a local question.

If the United States acquires the Danish West Indies it will be interesting to observe the position the new territory and its people occupy with relation to this country. Will they be "citizens of the Danish Islands," and will they be denied constitutional trade privileges with this country? No one may safely make prediction on this subject. The fairvoant of the administration must first ascertain the decree of "destiny" on this matter, and by the decree the rights, privileges and immunities of the people of the Danish Islands will be arranged. "Destiny" has usurped the place of the constitution.

## Save the Echoes.

It is proposed to put a new roof on Statuary Hall, in the capitol at Washington, and the guides in that famous old structure express the fear that the result will be a loss of the echoes that have long been an attractive feature to visitors at the national building. The New York World says that the appeal of the guides is "Save the Echoes," and the World adds:

Now this is an appeal that the people might well take up in a broader sense. There have been many sentiments ringing in the legislative halls of the capitol that we should desire to have preserved. Let us save the echoes—

Of Bayard's voice, when he proclaimed:

"The oath I have taken is to support the constitution of my country's government, not the fiat of any political organization."

Of Webster's voice saying:

"I mean to stand upon the constitution. I need no other platform."

Of Sumner's voice, declaring that—"The true grandeur of a nation is to be found only in deeds of justice and the happiness of its people."

A man signing his name "A. Jenkins," shot himself at a Philadelphia hotel. Before doing so he wrote a note to his brother-in-law saying: "This is the ultimate result of gambling and a dissipated life and is a warning to young men." But will it be a warning? Or must each person learn for himself by bitter experience the penalty of sin?

The Earl of Cadogan announces that Edward VII is ready to aid Ireland. Edward must be preparing the ground for another call for Irish troops to serve in South Africa.

## Before and After.

During the campaign of 1900 the republican papers gave great prominence to those democrats who declared their intention of voting the republican ticket. On the morning of October 18, the LaCrosse Chronicle printed an interview with Mr. Albert Hirschheimer in which that gentleman gave his reasons for voting for the re-election of McKinley.

A few days ago Mr. Hirschheimer's company sold out to a trust, and the LaCrosse Republican and Leader of May 8 contained an interview with Mr. Hirschheimer in which he gave the reasons for selling. He began business in 1865—seven years before silver was demonetized—and the agitation of the money question never drove him out of business but the trusts have forced him to sell. Below will be found extracts from his two interviews:

October 18, 1900.—Said Mr. Hirschheimer: "I voted once for Abraham Lincoln, and for William McKinley four years ago, and these are the only exceptions to my voting for the nominee of the democratic party on national elections. I shall vote for the re-election of President McKinley. My reasons, you ask; I don't court newspaper notoriety, but I will give my reasons for voting for President McKinley. They are purely business reasons. We want stability in our financial affairs, as well as stability in our tariff laws. I do not consider that a high tariff or a low tariff makes much difference. The trouble comes from anticipating changes every two or four years. I submit that the commercial interests of the country should not be made the football in the game of the politicians."

May 8, 1901.—Said President Hirschheimer: "The Packers Package Company was forced to sell out to the trust. They control the tin output and they have been hindering us so during the past month that we have not been able to run our factory at one-half its capacity. They have refused to deliver us the tin ordered, shipping only one or two cars a week. Thus we either had to sell out to them or fight them. We could not do the latter thing, for we could not get the tin with which to make our product, and carry on the fight. Therefore, we simply had to sell out to the trust. It was either that or lose our money."

## Tillman and McLaurin.

The most important item of political news last week came from South Carolina. Senators Tillman and McLaurin have agreed to leave their political differences to a democratic primary and to that end have placed their resignations in the hands of the governor to take effect in November, after the primary has determined the wishes of the voters. It is an honorable course for the senators to pursue and beneficial to the state. At present South Carolina virtually has no voice in the settlement of public questions as the vote of one senator kills that of the other.

Senator Tillman has just been re-elected and thus risks the loss of a longer term, but Senator McLaurin really sacrifices more because he has less chance to win at the primary.

The readers of The Commoner will be kept informed as to the progress of the contest. It is needless to say that the editor of this paper hopes and expects to see Senator Tillman win a sweeping victory, because he represents the man, while Senator McLaurin represents the dollar. The vote will show whether the plutocratic idea is making any headway in the south.

## Should Apologize to Editor Rice.

The investigation of fraud in the government service at Manila has been developed that certain officers have been guilty of some most flagrant wrongs. Representatives of business concerns have testified to the payment of commissions to commissary officers in return for the purchase of their goods. It also developed that complaints of shortages in deliveries of goods have been silenced by the payment of liberal sums of money and that a shortage was covered by placing a number of fictitious laborers on the pay roll. Evidence accumulates each day that the administration owes to Editor Rice a large apology, even though it does not return him to Manila from which place he was deported because he charged the existence of fraud.

The machinists throughout the country are striking for a nine hour day with ten hours pay. No one can give an intelligent decision upon the subject of wages without knowing the conditions existing in the various sections where the demand is made, although it is only fair to assume that the demand is reasonable, unless the republican reports of prosperity are subject to heavy discount. As to the number of hours, however, that should constitute a day's work it is easier to form an opinion. A nine hour day is long enough anywhere. The Commoner is an advocate of an eight hour day and observes this limit among its employees. It hopes to see the rule adopted everywhere.

The Hereford Republicans (the white faced variety) are doing a little premature rejoicing in the south. When a democrat becomes a republican for office he is not apt to take many with him. A man's political influence is acquired by the advocacy of principles and is lost when he abandons his principles.

General Chaffee has issued a "farewell address" in China, which is more like Washington than any action on the part of this government for two or three years.

## LET THE PEOPLE RULE

### INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM IS LOOMING UP.

Will Be One of the Leading Issues in the National Campaign Three Years Hence—Several States Attain Justice of System—Dangerous to Oppose It.

Jefferson said: "I am not amongst those who fear the people," but how different is the case with the modern republican party. The effort to give the people a direct vote on important laws that are to govern them has been endorsed by the Fusionists in some states and will be forced as an issue in others and possibly be adopted as a national remedy as a check on much evil legislation that we are now suffering from.

First attempts at radical changes in the machinery of government always meet with obstacles, especially when favored corporations with vast means of corruption, such as railroads, are likely to have some of their special privileges curtailed or abolished. It is no wonder, therefore, that in one of the first states to adopt the reform it should meet with a rebuff at the hands of a republican court and legislature.

South Dakota's initiative and referendum, which was embodied in the state constitution two or three years ago, says the Springfield Republican, is thought to have been wrecked by a recent decision of the state supreme court. The referendum amendment limited the absolute power of the legislature to such special cases of legislation as were mentioned in the constitution itself. Now the constitution also provides, somewhat loosely, that whenever the legislature declares certain bills to be emergency measures, these emergency measures may become laws without being brought within the scope of the referendum clauses of the constitution. A test case was made up by the foes of the referendum in passing an act legislating some fusionists out of office, the act being pronounced an emergency measure by the legislature. The South Dakota court decides that it is impossible to consider the motives of the legislature in making any bill an emergency measure, and that any law which emanates from that body thus labeled cannot be referred to the people. It also decided that no act which the legislature chooses to pronounce necessary for the protection of the public peace, health, safety or support of the state government and its existing institutions, can be referred to the people. The right of initiative by the people in legislation was not passed upon by the court, but that remains of little service if the referendum has been emasculated. It is evident that any legislation under that decision can choke off final reference of its work to the popular vote by a simple majority declaration. The friends of the referendum declare that while the first attempt to substitute direct legislation for the representative system has apparently failed, the question will be a live issue, if not the controlling one, in the next state election.

LESSONS OF THE PANIC.

There are few things that have been exemplified by the late Wall street panic that is of enormous importance to the whole people and the most important object lesson is the vast power of money. When the panic was at its height and money was loaning for 60 per cent, a few bankers met and agreed to loan \$16,000,000 at 6 per cent, and thus aid the recovery of the market. The banks composing trust having command of hundreds of the clearing house are a kind of money millions of dollars, and if it suited the purpose of the managers they can make or mar the market for stocks and bring on or retard a panic at any time, as nearly all the transactions on Wall street are conducted on borrowed capital and mostly on call loans which can be called or foreclosed at any time by simply giving a few hours' notice.

This power has been used both ways and will again when it suits the money trust to do so.

It will be remembered that the great panic at the beginning of the second Cleveland administration was precipitated by the banks to force Congress to pass the repeal of the silver coinage act. It is probable that the money trust did not intend that panic to be so disastrous, as it imperiled their own stability and led to the downfall of some of their own associates.

There is, however, a prospect that these prices of finance may disagree over the division of the spoils, won from the people by the trust combinations, and although this would probably precipitate a panic which would involve the whole country, it may be made to bring good out of evil by opening the eyes of the people to the causes that allow such an abnormal condition of affairs. It may thus lead to national and state legislation that will curb the trusts and by the repeal of the protective tariff and other laws that now allow monopoly and with honest servants to execute the laws, and not as is now done, leaving to the banks the enormous sums without interest, at present amounting to over ninety millions of dollars, a reform may be inaugurated that will allow every citizen an equal show in his efforts for success in life.

As an instance that all is not lovely among the powers that rule in the financial world the financial correspondent of the Chicago Chronicle says: Morgan's ambition was held responsible for the panic. It was charged that he had tried to "hog" the railroad situation in the north and middle west, and ride rough-shod over such long established kings in the railroad

world as Harriman, Vanderbilt and Schiff without regard to the consequences in that financial district.

Bank presidents for other reasons denounced James Stillman of the National City bank, while the panic was at its height. One of them declared that Stillman's ambition to rule in finance to the exclusion of all others was intensifying the panic.

Another heatedly made the prediction that Stillman and his ambitions would one day engulf Wall street in the greatest financial disaster the world had ever known.

Another thing to note is that stock gambling has assumed such large proportions that no town or village is without its votary. The newspapers all over the country tell the same tale of great losses by those devotees of the stock gambling habit. New York and Chicago are largely supported by the enormous amount of commissions paid to bankers and brokers by these small traders. Of the constant stream of dollars that pour into these cities from every town and hamlet but few return and those that do are sweated by the rakeoff.

## ANTI-TRUST LEGISLATION.

The need of tariff reform is so pressing in view of the domination of the trusts that it may be well, instead of waiting for the control of the government to pass into the hands of the Democrats to adopt the advice of the Washington Post, which says:

The Republicans took a hand in the Democratic tariff revision of 1894, a useful, helping hand, going so far as to dictate entire schedules. Let the Democrats reciprocate that favor in the next session of Congress. The Democrats were divided on tariff revision in 1894. To-day there is a division on that question in the Republican party. The movement for anti-trust legislation will divide the Republican party into two factions, as hostile as were the Cleveland and anti-Cleveland factions seven years ago. Why should not Democrats who want "sensible reform of the tariff" follow the example of those Republicans who aided Gorman in his anti-Cleveland fight? This suggestion seems to us to open up great possibilities of early and wholesome reform. Its adoption by the Democrats would be far more likely to expedite than retard their acquisition of full control of the government.

The Post is an advocate of protection and yet sees that the tariff must be revised so what it means by "sensible reform" is rather an uncertain quantity, but if a faction of the Republicans are really in earnest in pushing anti-trust legislation, though it is very doubtful if enough of them are, the Democrats will be found willing to aid them in passing such legislation if it includes a "sensible reform" of the tariff.

But will the Republican brethren be able to stand out against the decision of a party caucus and the wrath of Hanna and the lack of patronage that McKinley will withdraw from recalcitrant members. That will be the crucial test.

## HAMMER AND ANVIL.

Next to a third term, it would suit the present administration to be succeeded by Hanna, then after eight years of Hanna—well, what matters?

If a Democratic administration had been in power when the Wall street panic occurred, what a lesson the Republican newspapers would have drawn from it!

The extravagance of Republican congresses are proverbial, the amount appropriated for the fiscal year beginning July 1st has just been compounded and the total sum is \$730,338,575. No wonder the war taxes could only be in a small measure repealed.

Senator Frey has announced that he will reintroduce the ship subsidy bill directly to the 57th Congress meets. A day or two after this announcement Senator Hanna was in Philadelphia holding a conference with the Pennsylvania railroad officials and other ship owners, probably arranging how much bonus they will contribute to the Republican campaign fund if the bill is passed.

Mr. Schwab, the president of the steel trust, has been making a speech to a graduating class in New York, in it he said: "Boys should start in business early and should place no dependence upon influence." Now this would have been good advice before this age of vast combinations and trusts, but Mr. Schwab should know that boy or man at this time has but small chance of employment at any work that is considered desirable unless he has some influence back of him. Mr. Schwab and his partner, Mr. Carnegie, made their start in life in more propitious times and even they may have had some influences that advanced their own strenuous efforts and they by luck or sharp wits fell into a business that was protected by a tariff that gave vast advantage to a few sharp men.

It is rather late in the day, but better late than never for the president to talk about saving the constitution as he did at San Jose. In his speech there he said: "To us, my fellow citizens, young and old, the preservation of that constitution is committed. It is a sacred instrument, and is a sacred trust given to us to see to it that it is preserved in all its virtue and vigor, to be passed along to the generations yet to come. Glorious constitution, glorious union, glorious flag. Seventy-five millions of people stand together as they never before stood to defend them all." These be fine words, my masters, glorious words, but as a judge of the supreme court said of President McKinley when he had uttered his benevolent assimilation speech, it is not by what the president says that we must judge him, but by his acts.

Meanwhile it will be translated into Spanish, and be printed both in English and Spanish.

Protest of War Veterans.

The resolution adopted by the Association of Spanish-American War Veterans, says the Indianapolis News, asking our Indiana Congressmen, without regard to party, to use their influence to obtain a court of inquiry, so promptly and repeatedly demanded by Colonel Harrison, to correct the injury and right the wrong done him in his dismissal from the army, will re-

## McLAURIN MUST GO.

### DEMOCRATIC PARTY HAS NO ROOM FOR HIS ILK.

Properly Belongs to the Party of Hanna's Trusts, Imperialism and National Bank Rag "Money"—Republicans May Be Working to Establish a Monarchy.

The Republican papers are making much of the speech recently delivered by Senator McLaurin, of South Carolina, at Charlotte in that state. And well they may, for it marks the beginning of a movement in the south which will have an influence upon the politics of the nation, says Mr. Bryan in the Commoner. It is not likely that Mr. McLaurin will be the leader of the movement because he is handicapped by the fact that he is using his official position to misrepresent the views and interests of his constituents, but some leader will arise to give direction and force to the aristocratic and plutocratic element for which Mr. McLaurin speaks. There is such an element in every community and now that the race question no longer unifies the white people of the southern states, it will doubtless manifest itself. Then, too, the corporations are increasing in number and magnitude in the south and with their growth will come attempts to secure from the government privileges, favors and immunities. The commercialism that has debauched municipal and state governments in the north will soon be apparent in the south and the senatorial contests which thus far have been comparatively free from scandal south of the Mason and Dixon line will show the handiwork of organized capital.

Senator Tillman has already taken up the gauge of battle thrown down by Senator McLaurin and will doubtless be able to marshal a considerable majority in that state, but the same influences are at work in other states where there is greater danger of their success.

Imperialism gives to the plutocrat his opportunity. He can hide behind a pretended patriotism and conceal his mercenary purposes by profuse declamation about the nation's expanding greatness and international obligations. Those who are willing to purchase trade with everybody's blood but their own and who will sell any political or moral principle for a pecuniary consideration rush to defend the administration's Philippine policy.

The democratic sentiment is strong enough to resist and overcome the McLaurin movement, but those who believe that the man is more important than the dollar will have to bestir themselves. The corporations are not much on public meetings but they are diligent in securing delegates to conventions. The real democrats, confident of the merits of their cause, often lack organization and are, therefore, at a disadvantage. Their hope lies in a prompt open and persistent appeal to the voters at the primaries.

A white republican party in the south may bring some compensation in that it is likely to divide the colored vote in the north and answer the argument of those northern republicans who have been able to give no better reason for remaining with their party than that the south was solidly democratic.

THE PHILIPPINES AND CHINA.

Republicans boast that in seizing the Philippines the United States hold the key to China and its trade. In view of the enormous cost in men and money to hold the Philippines in the future and saying nothing about the vast loss already sustained, it is well to know exactly what we are likely to gain in the future from this Asiatic trade. The late Consul General Wildman who had represented this country for many years in China, pricked the bubble when he said:

The majority of the peasantry live at the rate from 2 to 5 cents a day, and even if they could afford to purchase modern American farming machinery there would be no room to use it. The nearest thing to such machinery I have seen in Southern China is a fanning mill, which is easily constructed by the ingenious Chinaman. The grain is either trod out of the straw by water buffaloes or whipped over an open tub. Even if an entire village should combine to buy an American threshing machine, it would be used but once, as it would be considered too wasteful both in the way it mangles the straw and the grain in its expensive upkeep. In Southern China there are no horses except the diminutive China pony and, as the agricultural country is mostly flat, there is no way to utilize water power. As for steam, it is an impossibility, fuel being one of the most expensive Chinese luxuries. As long as labor has almost no value and flesh and blood is the cheapest thing on the market, I cannot recommend American manufacturers to waste good printed matter and postage stamps on so impossible a field. I have already called attention to the uselessness of mailing to this consulate trade papers devoted to the carriage and harness industries, and mentioned the fact that we had but three carriages and a hearse here all of which are in a fair state of preservation.

FORCED INTO THE TRUST.

The way the trusts wipe out competition and force old business concerns into their combines is fully told in the case of the locomotive trust which has obtained complete control of all the works in the country. One concern, the Schenectady Locomotive Works, objected to being absorbed by the trust, but has finally decided to do so, says the Chronicle. The company will be reorganized and the capital stock will probably be increased. It is known that the stockholders have been reluctant to join the combination. Practically all of the stock has been in the hands of the Ellis family for forty years and the stockholders have always felt that their position as owners involved some obligations toward their employees and the people of Schenectady.

At the present time the works are enjoying a period of unexampled prosperity. It was pointed out by the representatives of the trust that the large part of the output of the works goes to the New York Central, Delaware and Hudson and Northern Pacific, which are controlled by the Morgan-Vanderbilt-Hill interests, and that they could not get orders enough to keep the shops running a quarter of the time if they stayed out of the combination. The works would also be shut out from buying iron and steel, could not fill whatever orders were received, and the plant would be worth only the value of the machinery sold as old iron. In the face of these statements, which were given as an ultimatum, the stockholders felt themselves powerless.

This Vanderbilt trust acts like a highwayman, with it is your money or your life, if you won't come into the trust we will kill your business. It is about time that action was taken to curb these giant combinations and the people have it in their hands to do so if they will only elect men to legislate for them whom the trusts cannot control.

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cite the fact that the name of Harrison has been associated with the military history of Indiana from its formation as a territory. They also recite the fact that ex-President Harrison died believing that the creditable military record of the Harrison family, made in every war that the country has been engaged in from the Revolution on, was injured by the manner and circumstances of the dismissal of his son. The recital of these facts is ample explanation, if explanation is needed, why this action be taken. Had it been added that Colonel Harrison was dismissed in order to punish his father for his failure to support without qualification the political views of the administration, the common belief of the people of Indiana and of the country would have been voiced. But whatever the motive, the people ought to make it plain that they do not agree with Secretary Root that this is "a closed incident." They cannot afford to have any such incident closed in this manner. They have a right to demand that justice be done a fellow citizen. None can more appropriately lead in such a demand in this case than the people of Indiana. We trust that this is but the beginning. We hope, for the sake of fair play, the rights of American citizenship and a simple justice in the recognition of the equality of such rights, that this movement will continue until it is crowned with success.

## THE BALANCE OF TRADE.

The chief of the national bureau of statistics has been trying to answer the much mooted question of "what has caused so much produce, merchandise and specie to go out of the country without the ordinary corresponding returns." The answer is, without any goods or money being returned for it, and known as the wonderful and illusive balance of trade.

The chief of the bureau acknowledges that nothing but an estimate can be given, which he summarizes as follows: "Freight paid to foreign vessels, \$50,000,000. Interest and earnings of foreign capital, \$75,000,000 to \$100,000,000 and a similar sum expended abroad by Americans. American funds invested in foreign securities in 1900 about \$100,000,000 to which must be added the amount of our foreign indebtedness actually canceled by the return of securities for which no definite estimate has, so far as I am aware, been made."

This is very much like saying that he knows nothing about the matter as any basis for a statistical statement and yet the bureau has been publishing monthly with great flourish of trumpets, the enormous balance of trade in our favor. But this balance is of no use to us unless we obtain something valuable in return and as we do not seem to be getting much back, at least a large part of it, that much is a drain on this country that no statistics can overcome, and instead of being a matter for the Republican party to crow over is something we should all regret. For instance, the \$75,000,000 or \$100,000,000 expended abroad by Americans is an annual drain upon the resources of this country without any corresponding benefit except to the few who enjoy the trip, they are like absentee landlords, they make their money here and spend it elsewhere.

There is not much advantage in exporting goods unless we get money or goods in return and as the export statistician of the treasury cannot tell us with any certainty, or even approximately within hundreds of millions, that we get anything in return for a large part of the value of the goods we are said to export, it is quite possible and probable that there is some great error, either in the reported value of the goods or in the gathering of the figures.

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Wichita lands, it is claimed, can be shipped to market by the allotted time and the rest moved down to the Ki-

at the prisoner. Half of the crowd consisted of women. Despite the efforts of the trustees to keep the

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as to the quality of armor. Other claims will be made for delay in furnishing the quality of armor.

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