

THE NEBRASKA INDEPENDENT

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The people of the United States don't need a dictator at present, either in home affairs or foreign relations.

Several papers have "endorsed" President McKinley's Cuban policy. We believe it would trouble them greatly if they were asked to tell what the policy is.

News comes from Topeka that Governor Leedy, having found it impossible to get pledges for his railroad bill from a majority of the members of the legislature, has abandoned all idea of an extra session.

Pingree has incurred the eternal enmity of the railroads in that state promptly cancel the passes of every editor who says a word in praise of the governor or who prints anything he says. That is an excellent way for those fellows to show their devotion to the principles of a free press.

Let congress take up and pass the Postal Savings bank bill while it is waiting for McKinley to make up his mind. Whether it is peace or war the bill is important for the country. The people are not afraid to trust the government with their money, whatever the fellows in Wall street may say.

The World-Herald has done a noble work in taking up and presenting the need of Cuban relief from this state and Nebraska has done nobly in response. The train of twenty-two cars which started last week for the starving people of Cuba carries with it a great deal more than its money value from this state. With it goes the hopes and prayers of a million people and the hearts of 200,000 men willing to fight if called upon for the freedom of Cuba.

BIRDS AND TREES.

April 22nd is Arbor Day. Arbor Day is a Nebraska institution and worthy of honor in the land of its birth. The spirit that animates Arbor Day has covered a Nebraska prairie 300 miles long and 200 wide with beautiful groves.

Along with the groves come the birds. It is within the memory of many settlers of Nebraska when in all the vast region from Lincoln west a robin was as rare as a snowy owl. Today robins and thrushes are as common in that region as snow birds in winter. As many as twenty-three robins have been counted at one time upon the state house grounds at Lincoln. The early settlers made the groves, the groves made homes for the birds and the birds are with us.

It is highly appropriate that the schools of Nebraska should do something to teach the children of the state the value of trees and birds and the beauty and honor of caring for both. In the spirit of doing this the state superintendent's office has just issued a pamphlet program of school exercises to be held on Arbor Day. Two beautifully colored pictures of two of Nebraska's best birds—the passenger pigeon and the American quail—adorn the covers of the little book.

Among the many good things in this little book for the children are some worthy of attention by all who value Nebraska as a home. For instance the following from Prof. Lawrence Bruner, state entomologist, who has just returned from a year's work fighting destructive insects in the Argentine Republic:

Three-fourths of the food of birds consists of insects. Suppose each bird in Nebraska to eat twenty-five insects per day, it would take 1,875,000 insects for a single day's rations for summer.

Should the work of the birds be stopped, in about twelve years there would be enough insects to carpet the whole state, one to a square inch over the whole territory.

The United States Agricultural Department is sending out loud warnings against the appalling destruction of birds which has been followed by an enormous increase of insect pests resulting in a loss in fruits and grains estimated at \$0 to 100 millions of dollars yearly.

Speaking further for one of the handsomest and best friends of the farmer Prof. Bruner says:

Perhaps no other bird that frequents the farm pays higher prices for the grain it eats than does the quail. Living about the hedgerows, groves and ravines, where insect enemies gather and lurk during the greater part of the year, this bird not only slices large numbers of these enemies

daily during the summer months, when they are "abroad in the land," but all winter through it scratches among the fallen leaves and other rubbish that accumulates about its haunts seeking for hibernating insects of various kinds. Being a timid little creature, the quail seldom leaves cover to feed openly in the fields, and therefore does but little actual harm in the way of destroying grain. In fact it only takes stray kernels that otherwise might be lost.

It is also one of the few birds that feeds upon that unsavory insect, the chinch-bug; and the number of this pest that occasionally fall its prey is really astonishing. A single chinch-bug is a small thing, still I have seen a quail's stomach filled with them—more than five hundred at least—calculation having been sacrificed for a single meal of the bird examined.

No farmer or fruit grower should ever kill a quail himself, nor should he allow any one else to hunt them on his premises.

The farmers of Nebraska ought to stand by their friends as well as oppose their enemies. We are glad that in an increasing number of local communities throughout the state the farmers are joining in local bird protective associations by giving notice that no hunters will be allowed on their premises. A shot gun is a very poor farm implement anyhow and with the disappearance of the grouse from most of the counties of Nebraska comes all the more need for preserving the quail, plover, meadow lark and other birds which have too often been a mark for the sportsman's aim.

MONEY FOR WAR.

Washington dispatches represent the president in conference with John A. McCall, president of the New York Life Insurance company, upon the question of getting money to carry on war in case one should be declared. The dispatches give up the further valuable information that Mr. McCall represented to the president his belief that within forty-eight hours he could raise among the financial institutions of New York alone \$300,000,000, which the government could have upon its own terms, and that if a popular subscription were called for, \$500,000,000 could be obtained in a few days.

"Upon its own terms" in this case is a phrase as captivating as the clothing merchant's advertisement "goods at your own price"—and about as accurate.

The question that arises in the mind of the progressive student of the money question is what good reason there was for the president of the United States asking the president of a life insurance company for money to carry on a war with anyhow. As much greater as the United States is greater than the New York Life so much (and more) is the financial ability of the United States government superior to that of the insurance company. The insurance company has no constitutional power to "coin money and regulate the value thereof." The United States government has both. It has more. It has the unbounded confidence and love of seventy millions of people, possessing more than seventy billions of property. It has yet more than this. It has over sixty millions of silver bullion in its vaults, not represented by any silver certificates afloat. It has still more than all these. It has rights under the constitution and decisions of the supreme court to issue full legal tender paper currency which seventy million people stand eager to take for the means they will furnish of carrying on the war.

Now, in the face of all these admitted facts, what sense is there in consulting the president of the New York Life or any other insurance or trust company respecting funds for carrying on any prospective war? As it became an issue of bonds is to be one of the first war measures proposed? This is the question that is in the minds of many millions of Americans. It is especially the question in the western states whose population is probably the most intensely interested in free Cuba of any part of the country. These people have just contributed more largely of their means than any other section for the relief of the helpless people now being starved by Spanish cruelty. They are willing to contribute vastly more to make the Cubans free. But they are not willing to see a bonded debt placed upon their backs.

Under present conditions it is more necessary than ever that all those who believe that the issuing of money is a government function should stand together. When the people are excited and the spirit of patriotism runs high, then is the time that the cunning of the money grabber is brought into action. The Cuban agitation will afford a splendid opportunity for the advocates of the gold standard to fasten their system on the country and they will not be slow in embracing it.—Columbia Blade.

Mr. Eric Johnson, publisher of the Wahoo News Era was in the city this week. Mr. Johnson is getting out an excellent paper and is having well deserved success.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

gress and the American people have For three weeks the American con-waited with throbbing hearts and bated breath from an official message from the president of the United States and the commander-in-chief of her armies and navies which should present a program for action for the relief of the people of Cuba. This paper has been disposed to stand by the president in taking plenty of time, in exhausting every resource for the avoidance of war, in affording opportunity for sober second thought and reflection by our own people and for sending the means of life to the suffering in Cuba and preparing the means of war by our own nation. A man charged with responsibility of war or peace between two nations ought not to act hastily and we believe the great body of populists in this state have been disposed cordially to support the president in his trying position and to sustain his deliberation in the case.

Now, finally, the word of the president has gone to the people. It must be approved or rejected at once. There has been enough deliberation. The time for action is here and we believe the American people, through their representatives, should instantly reject the president's program.

In the first place President McKinley asks too much when he requests congress to grant him power to settle the hostilities between Spain and Cuba and to "secure the establishment of a stable government capable of maintaining order and observing its international obligations" in Cuba. There is no occasion for vesting such power in one man. No such authority was asked for or granted to President Lincoln when the civil war broke out. There is no occasion for granting it now.

In the second place President McKinley presents a plan that is either supremely ridiculous or is damnable. He favors armed intervention to stop the war, but refusal on our part to recognize the Cuban insurgent government.

Let the plain common sense of America solve this enigma of intervention without independence as best it can. The president gives no hint of his intention. If the United States intervenes in Cuba it must result either in helping the Cuban insurgents establish their own government or in the establishment of some other government. If we intend the former result why not recognize the struggling patriots at the start? If we intend the latter let the president tell the people plainly when and how we shall establish a better government in Cuba than the one he does not want to recognize. If we intervene at all it is to set the Cubans free. But why not join hands with the government which has been set up by Cubans who are fighting to be free?

President McKinley has given us no answer to these questions. The only answer that can be thought of is the one that relates to the payment of the Spanish war debt for which the revenues of Cuba are pledged. It is hard to believe that the highest councils of this nation are being swayed by considerations of that kind from full recognition of the struggling Cubans in arms for freedom. But so far no other reason that will bear a moment's inspection has been suggested. Suppose France had said in 1777 when the capital of the colonies and their chief cities were in the hands of British troops that she would intervene to stop the war, but would not recognize the patriot government, offering the same excuses for not doing so now offered by President McKinley, hinting as he now does about the "establishment of a stable government."

We are forced to the conclusion that behind this proposition of intervention without recognition of independence lurks some sinister reason that will not bear the light of day. We believe that congress should act for the patriotic heart of the nation and we believe that heart especially here in the west leans for a free independent and for no intervention unless it is to secure that independence.

LOST MONEY.

There is \$350,000 of the state's money lost.

It is an embarrassment to the eminent ability of Attorney General Sawyer and his deputy, Ed P. Smith, nor to their almost superhuman industry the past year to say this. It is known to those familiar with the work in the attorney general's office that more hard labor has been done there the past twelve months than in the preceding four years. They have honestly and conscientiously strained every legal nerve to save the people's money stolen by the people's trusted servants.

The refusal of Judge Powell of the Douglas county district court to grant another trial in the suit against Bartley's bondsmen practically ends the hope of recovering from them. There are still other suits to recover part of this money—one against the bondsmen for Bartley's first term, the other against the National Bank of Omaha, from which Bartley drew the money, secured by the sale of the \$150,000 warrant. There is no doubt a ground for action against the bank which cer-

tainly had reason to know that Bartley was using the state funds for his own purposes. But the prospect of recovering judgment against any one for Bartley's stealings after the verdict in the last trial is not hopeful.

The money stolen by Bartley and Moore is lost money. The only way it will be recovered, in all human probability, is by recovering it from the pockets of the taxpayers of the state.

NEBRASKA'S SOD HOUSE.

The Nebraska state commission has very sensibly acted upon the suggestion of this paper and appropriated \$500 for the erection of a typical Nebraska sod house upon the Trans-Mississippi grounds at Omaha. The erection of the building has been entrusted to Mrs. L. Bowser of Norfolk, who will look after the erection of this typical illustration of early life in Nebraska and will take up her abode in the structure for the term of an exposition. Mrs. Bowser speaks with pride of the ten years of her early Nebraska life which was spent in a sod house and she says that all the details of household economics of the early days will be faithfully portrayed. The sod from which the house will be constructed will be brought from Rock county. The building will be located on the bluff tract a short distance southeast of the Nebraska building.

The Independent congratulates the Nebraska commission upon the prospect of having—a representative of our pioneer days from the far northwestern part of the state, where the pioneer days are still close enough to be in touch with the present. Hail to Nebraska's John the Baptist the frontier sod house! And three times hail to the men and women who have built her walls and made their homes.

THE GOVERNOR DECLINES.

Many will regret to learn that Governor Holcomb has decided that he will not accept a nomination for a third term. After due deliberation he has given a letter to the press in which he declares that he will retire to private life at the close of the present term. It is another evidence of his devotion to the principles of the populist party which has always declared against the third term. He asks the party to cling to its custom and make no exception in his case.

During his four years administration Governor Holcomb has accomplished much—more than could be told in a volume. He has the admiration and confidence of his friends, and his political opponents have long ago learned to fear him. It is but natural that the populist party should idealize such a leader. The governor need have no fear for the future. The populist party will press him into service again. At a later day he will receive the reward he merits.

The governor has acted wisely in announcing his determination at an early date. It will give the party an opportunity, which it will improve, to consider well the selection of his successor. There will be many candidates for the place, many worthy candidates, but care should be used in the selection. The populist party is now in control of this state. It will undoubtedly remain in control for some time, depending upon the manner in which it conducts the state's business. With its power comes its responsibility. Every member of the party should be on guard to see that none but worthy men are trusted with responsible positions. It was particularly fortunate in nominating and electing Governor Holcomb when it did. A man with less ability or less determination would have been unequal to the contest that was waged by republican officials during his first administration. Well versed in the law and fearless in his determination he made a record for the populist party that has given it strength in all the United States and will insure its success in this state for many years. Care should be taken to find a man with the ability to take up the work where he has left it and continue it in the interests of the people.

A Myron Reed Story.

I remember seeing an old man, a member of an orthodox church, sitting in his office and counting over his money. I can see the caress he gave his copper, silver and gold. And then he had some bills, and I observed him as he patted them and smoothed out the wrinkled corners. When he was through with his devotions, an old farmer came in to make a last payment on a mortgage on a raspberry farm of 40 acres, where he was trying to live. He made the last payment lacking 1 cent, and the old, white haired creditor and Christian said to him, "You bring in that cent tomorrow, and I will release the mortgage." I was only 9 years old when I heard that, but it made an impression like that of a red hot iron. I went home and told my father of it, and he said, "When that man dies, he can attend his own funeral." And he died shortly after and my father had business breaking a coil.

The Trust Movement.

The tendency of capital to concentrate in large and large corporate concerns continues at an increasing pace. According to The Journal of Commerce, 200 organizations of the trust order now exist in the United States. They jointly possess capital stock and bonds amounting to \$2,602,000,000, which is equal to more than 50 per cent of the aggregate capital invested in the United States in 1890.

It pays to read the newspapers.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Congress Notified of the Conditions in Cuba.

THOROUGH REVIEW OF FACTS.

Recognition of the Present Government in Cuba is Opposed—Maine Disaster Shows That Spain Can Not Protect Neutrals in Cuban Waters.

Washington, April 11.—The president today sent a message to the congress of the United States, substantially as follows:

"The present revolution is but the successor of other similar insurrections which have occurred in Cuba against the dominion of Spain, extending over a period of nearly half a century, each of which, during its progress, has subjected the United States to great effort and expense in enforcing its neutrality laws, caused enormous losses to the American trade and commerce, caused irritation, annoyance and disturbance among our citizens, and by the exercise of cruel, barbarous and uncivilized practices of warfare, smacked the sensibilities and offended the humane sympathies of our people.

"We have found ourselves constrained, in the observance of that strict neutrality which our laws enjoin and which the law of nations commands, to police our own waters and watch our own seaports in prevention of any unlawful aid in aid of the Cubans. Our trade has suffered, the capital invested by our citizens in Cuba has been largely lost, and the temper and forbearance of our people have been sorely tried as to beget a perilous uncertainty among our own citizens.

"In April, 1896, the evils from which our country suffered through the Cuban war became so onerous that my predecessor made an effort to bring about a peace through the mediation of this government in any way that might tend to an honorable adjustment of the contest between Spain and her revolted colony, on the basis of some effective scheme of self-government for Cuba under the flag and sovereignty of Spain. It failed, through the refusal of the Spanish government then in power to consider any form of mediation, or indeed any plan of settlement which did not begin with the actual submission of the insurgents to the power of Spain, and then only on such terms as Spain herself might see fit to grant. The war continued unabated. The resistance of the insurgents was in no wise diminished.

"The policy of devastation and concentration, inaugurated by the captain-general's hands of Oct. 21, 1896, in the province of Pinar del Rio, was afterward extended to embrace all of the island to which the power of the Spanish government was able to reach by occupation or by military operations. The peasantry, including all dwelling in the agricultural interior, were driven into the garrison towns or isolated places held by the troops. The raising and movement of provisions of all kinds were interdicted. The fields were laid waste, dwellings unroofed and food, mills destroyed, and, in short, everything that could desolate the land and render it unfit for human habitation or support was commanded by one or the other of the contending parties, and executed by all the powers at their disposal. The agricultural population, to the estimated number of 200,000 or more, was herded within the towns and their immediate vicinages, deprived of the means of support, rendered destitute of shelter, left poorly clad, and exposed to the most unsanitary conditions.

"As the scarcity of food increased with the devastation of the depopulated areas of production, destitution and want became misery and starvation. Month by month the death rate increased in an alarming ratio. By March, 1897, according to conservative estimates from official Spanish sources, the mortality among the reconcentrados from starvation and the disease thereto incident, exceeded 50 per centum of their total number. No practical relief was accorded to the destitute and starving, and, in fact, the most part women and children, with aged and helpless men, enfeebled by disease and hunger, could not till the soil, without tools, seed or shelter, for their own support or for the supply of the cities. Reconcentration, adapted as it was to a war measure in order to cut off the resources of the insurgents, worked its predicted result. As I said in my message of last December, it was extermination. The only peace it could beget was that of the wilderness and the grave.

"Meanwhile the military situation in the island had undergone a noticeable change. The extraordinary activity that characterized the second year of the war, when the insurgents invaded Cuba, hit their unharnessed fields of Pinar del Rio and carried havoc and devastation up to the walls of the city of Havana itself, had relaxed into a dogged struggle in the central and eastern provinces. The Spanish arms retained a measure of control in Pinar del Rio and parts of Havana, but, under the existing conditions of the rural country, without immediate improvement of their productive situation. Even that partially restricted revolutionary held their own, and their submission, put forward by Spain as the essential and sole basis of peace, seemed as far distant as at the outset.

"In the state of affairs, my administration found itself confronted with the grave problem of its duty. My message of last December reviewed the situation and detailed the steps taken with a view of relieving its acute distress and opening the way to some form of honorable settlement. The assassination of the prime minister, Canovales, led to a change of government in Spain. The former administration, pledged to subjugation without concession, gave place to that of a more liberal party, committed long in advance to a policy of reform involving the wider principles of home rule, respect for the rights of the people, and the maintenance of peace through the exercise of justice.

"While these negotiations were in progress, the increasing destitution and the alarming mortality among them claimed attention. The measures which had attended the limited measure of relief extended to the suffering American citizens among them by the humane expenditure through the consular agencies of the money appropriated expressly by the joint resolution, approved May 21, 1897, promoting the humane extension of a similar character of aid to the great body of sufferers. A suggestion to this end was acquiesced in by the Spanish authorities. On the 24th of December last I caused to be issued an appeal to the American people, inviting contributions in money or in kind for the relief of the starving sufferers in Cuba, following this appeal by a similar public subscription and announcement of the formation of a central Cuban relief committee, with headquarters in New York city, composed of

three members representing the American National Red Cross and the religious and business elements of the community. The efforts of that committee have been untiring and accomplished much. Nearly \$200,000 in money and supplies has already reached the sufferers, and more is forthcoming. Thousands of lives have already been saved. The necessity for a change is recognized by the Spanish government. Within a few days past the orders of Gen. Weyler have been revoked, the reconcentrados are, it is said, to be permitted to return to their homes, and aided to resume the self-supporting pursuits of peace; public works have been ordered to give them employment, and a sum of \$600,000 has been appropriated for their relief.

"The war in Cuba is of such a nature that short of subjugation or extermination, a final military victory for either side seems impracticable. The alternative lies in the physical exhaustion of the one or the other party, or perhaps of both—a condition which in effect ended the ten years' war by the treaty of Zanjon. The prospect of such a protraction and conclusion of the present strife is a contingency hardly to be contemplated with equanimity by the civilized world, and least of all by the United States, affected and injured as we are, deeply and intimately, by its very existence.

"Realizing this, it appeared to be my duty, in a spirit of true friendliness, no less to Spain than to the Cubans who have so much to lose by the promulgation of the struggle, to seek to bring about an immediate termination of the war. To this end I submitted, on the 27th ultimo, as a result of much representation and correspondence through the United States minister at Madrid, propositions to the Spanish government looking to an armistice until Oct. 1, for the negotiation of peace with the good offices of the president.

"The reply of the Spanish authorities was received on the night of the 31st ultimo. It offers, as the means to bring about peace in Cuba, to confine the preparation thereof to an insular parliament, inasmuch as the concurrence of both would be necessary to reach a final result. It being, however, understood that the powers reserved by that constitution to the central government are not lessened or diminished. As the Cuban parliament does not meet until the fourth of May next, the Spanish government would not object, for its part, to accept at once a suspension of hostilities, if asked for by the insurgents from the general-in-chief, to whom it would pertain, in such case, to determine the duration and conditions of the armistice. From Gen. Woodford's explanatory report of preliminary discussions preceding the final conference, it is understood that the Spanish government stands ready to give the insular congress full powers to settle the terms of peace with the insurgents, whether by direct negotiations or indirectly by means of legislation done by the insular parliament.

"With the last overture in the direction of immediate peace and its disappointing reception by Spain, the executive was brought to the end of his effort.

"In my annual message of December last I said: "Of the untried measures there remain: Recognition of the insurgents as belligerents, recognition of the independence of Cuba, neutral intervention to end the war by imposing a rational compromise between the contestants and intervention in favor of one or the other party. I speak not of forcible annexation, for that can not be thought of as a means of ending a war, would be criminal aggression."

"Thereupon I reviewed these alternatives, in the light of President Grant's measured words, uttered in 1875, when after seven years of sanguinary, destructive and fruitless hostilities in Cuba he reached the conclusion that recognition of the independence of Cuba was impracticable and indefensible, and that the recognition of belligerence was not warranted by the facts according to the tests of public law. I commented especially upon the latter aspect of the question, pointing out the insuperable and increasing dangers of a recognition of belligerence which, while adding to the already onerous burdens of neutrality within our own jurisdiction, could not in any way extend our influence or effective offices in the territory of hostilities. Nothing has since occurred to change my view in this regard—and I recognize as fully now as then that the issuance of a proclamation of neutrality, by which process the so-called recognition of belligerence is published, could, of itself and unattended by other action, accomplish nothing toward the end for which we labor. The instant recognition of Cuba and the cessation of the misery that afflicts the island.

"Turning to the question of recognition at this time of the independence of the present insurgent government in Cuba, we find safe ground in our history from an early day. They were recognized in President Jackson's message to congress, Dec. 21, 1836, on the subject of the recognition of the independence of Texas. He said: 'The uniform policy and practice of the United States to avoid all interference in disputes which mainly relate to the internal government of other nations, and eventually to recognize the authority of the prevailing party without reference to our particular interests and views, or to the merits of the original controversy.'

"But on this, as on every other trying occasion, safety is to be found in a rigid adherence to principle. If, in carrying it, we are but carrying out the long-established policy of our government, a policy which has secured to us respect and influence abroad and inspired confidence at home.

"The president continues: "I do not think it would be wise or prudent for this administration to recognize at the present time the independence of the so-called Cuban Republic. To commit this question now to the resolution of any particular government in Cuba might subject us to embarrassing conditions of international obligation toward the organization so recognized. When such a case arises hereafter that there is within the island a government capable of performing the duties and discharging the functions of a separate nation, and having, as a matter of fact, the proper forms and attributes of nationality, such recognition can be promptly and readily recon- sidered in relation to the interests of the United States with such nation adjusted.

"There remain the alternative forms of intervention to end the war, either as an impartial mediator by imposing a rational compromise between the contestants, or as the active ally of the one party or the other.

"The forcible intervention of the United States as a neutral, to stop the war, according to the large dictates of humanity, and following by many historical precedents where neighboring states have interfered to check the hopeless sacrifice of life by intervening hostilities beyond their borders, is justifiable on national grounds. It involves, however, hostile constraint upon both parties to the contest as well to enforce a truce as to guide the eventual settlement.

"The grounds for such intervention may be briefly summarized as follows: "In the case of humanity and to put an end to the barbarous, bloodshed, starvation, and horrible misery now existing there, and which the parties to the conflict are either unable or unwilling to stop or mitigate.

"The right to intervene may be justified by the very serious injury to the commerce, trade and business of our people and by the waste and destruction of property and devastation of the island, and which I have already transmitted to congress the report of the naval court of inquiry on the destruction of the battleship Maine in the harbor of Havana during the night of the 15th of February. The destruction of that noble vessel has, in the estimation of our people, been a disaster of such magnitude and irreparable loss of two hundred and fifty-eight brave sailors and marines and two officers of our navy, reposing in the sacred custody of a