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The Asphalt trust, the Sugar trust,
Obey them both McKinley must,
A bigger man than he
Commands the navy, sails the sea,
Makes our tariffs, demands our awe,
Then for the trusts let all hurrah!

The constitution makers in Cuba have been closely following the example of the United States and that is the reason that they did not wish to submit their constitution for approval to foreign nations.

The corrugated zinc sheds and mud huts of the asphalt company were all standing unharmed at last accounts and a squadron of the United States navy was sailing around the coasts of Venezuela under the command of a trust attorney. Hurrah for the trusts!

The State Hypocrite and Thundermaker Harison would do well to read the report of the committee on soldiers' homes appointed by this republican legislature which reports that the Milford home "has been well managed."

Several Chicago ministers have discovered that partisan insanity is very prevalent in that city, so there were many sermons preached by them last Sunday drawing attention to the fact. If they had been readers of The Independent they would have known all about that disease long ago and might have done something to prevent it becoming epidemic.

The blue jackets of the United States navy, whose glory is written upon every page of American history, have now under the administration of McKinley become the Janissaries of the Asphalt trust. To be a trust magnate is greater than being a king. His hired man can sail around in an American war vessel which is an honor denied to any other man. Hurrah for the trust!

Gold standard England has had to call on bimetallic France to pull her out of the danger of bankruptcy again. The British chancellor relies upon France to float much of the new war loan. It will be placed at 97 per cent of its face value; in other words, gold standard English paper is 3 per cent discount in bimetallic France. Where is "the best money" now?

President McKinley said that it was our plain duty to give Porto Rico free trade with the United States. He said that "we must see to it that free Cuba is a reality." What did he do? He signed a bill imposing a tariff on Porto Rico and he is now sending orders to the Cuban constitutional convention to the effect that it must acknowledge the sovereignty of the United States. These statements no man denies, but McKinley is a great, holy, truthful, moral, upright and godly man. Any man who says different is a traitor.

There was $913,282.04 internal revenue collected in Kansas in the year ending June 30, 1900. (See annual report commissioner of internal revenue, page 14.) And the most of this from places that Carrie Nation seeks to demolish with her little hatchet. If the great, upright McKinley treats the constitution and laws of Kansas with utter contempt, is it any wonder that Mrs. Nation finds a few thousand of his followers doing the same thing in that state? They sell liquor, after McKinley has given them a government license to do so, in direct violation of the law and constitution of the state.

In nearly every civilized government national irrigation is an accomplished fact, just as government telegraphs and railroads are. For one, The Independent is very tired of this tagging along at the tail end of civilization. It would have the United States step to the front and take the lead, but the millionaires and plutocrats won't let us as long as they control the government. When they want to copy everything evil in the governments of the old world, they call them "the most enlightened nations." When a pop proposes to adopt some of the measures that these governments have proved to be of great value to the people by long experience, then they are the effete monarchies of the east."

TAXES AND CHARITY.

The article in last week's Independent entitled a "Taxpayers' Convention," has attracted a great deal of notice. Several letters have been received inquiring about it and it has been made the subject of comment in some dailies. The facts about the very large amount of taxation for charitable purposes are new to most taxpayers. They were very much understated in the article referred to, although a great many think that they must have been overestimated. Our courts are supported by taxation and the fact was not mentioned that a considerable amount of the expenses of courts are caused by the dependent classes. It is a fact beyond contradiction that very much more than one half of the money raised by taxation goes to the support of the dependent classes when everything is taken into consideration, and that these classes increase in a far greater ratio than the population. If something is not done to remedy this evil the producing class will be overwhelmed—it will be impossible for its members to support themselves and so large a class of dependents. This fact has been recognized by the scholars and original investigators connected with our universities, and from the study of the subject in a scientific way, has grown up the new science called "sociology." Many of the great universities have departments for the study of this subject. In some there are three or four professors, in others only one or two.

The scientists engaged in this work are very greatly hampered. The truths that they discover they are not free to teach or make public. Plutocracy is afraid of them. They are denounced as cranks, fanatics and disturbers. In their study to discover the cause of the increase of pauperism they have established some facts that are very distasteful to the "dependents" of the upper classes. They do not want these scientific truths to become common knowledge. They do everything in their power to suppress the truth. A most disgraceful scene of that kind occurred in the board of regents of the Nebraska university where the two republican regents put up a fight against the teaching of sociology by the world wide master of the science. They called him a "disturber."

The object of the professors of sociology is to gain an accurate knowledge of the laws and facts producing the conditions which exist in society. When one of these professors after long years of investigation has discovered what he believes to be the cause of the increase of pauperism, and a remedy, he should be as free to make public his discoveries as the man who by long years of study has discovered something new in chemistry. If his conclusions are not correct, their falsity should be shown. To ostrasize him, to drive him from the university, to ridicule him, to denounce him as a "disturber," to drive him into silence and obscurity is adopting the same plan used in the dark ages to silence Galileo when he announced the doctrine that the earth revolved and the sun stood still. Galileo was a "disturber." The men who silenced him, imprisoned him and made him recant a scientific truth, were of the very same class as these two republican regents.

The sociologist looks upon true charity as being a system that would make these dependent classes self-supporting—that would remove the burden of nearly half the taxation now placed upon those who produce. They would find the causes of poverty, insanity and crime and as far as possible remove them. A department of sociology in a university, in the present state of society, is of more importance to the taxpaying citizen than any other department, and the effort to strengthen it in the Nebraska university meets with the most hearty approval of The Independent.

REPUBLICAN ANARCHISTS.

The Independent has said nothing about the performances of Mrs. Carrie Nation, deeming her a perfectly honest woman of good impulses, but suffering from delusions that her friends, instead of encouraging, should have endeavored to suppress. All persons who believe that God speaks directly to them in dreams or in an audible voice are to that extent insane. In Kansas the republican party, through the police force of the state, has agreed to the violation of the law for a certain per cent of the profits. It is the same sort of business that the police force in every large city is engaged in. The police permit crime and protect criminals for the money they get out of it. No upright citizen can agree to any such thing. The police are greater criminals than the men who actually commit the crimes. But Carrie Nation's way will only make matters worse. If she smashes saloons, those who differ with her will retaliate in kind. In one instance a church has been demolished with hatchets. In another a man who stole a small sum from a saloon was sentenced to forty years' imprisonment at hard labor. Each and all of these acts are a violation of constitutional law. Especially so is this extreme imprisonment in direct violation of the eighth amendment to the constitution which provides that no excessive fines shall be imposed nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

The republican leaders in Kansas who so loudly accused the populists of being anarchists have introduced anarchy into the state. There is but one way to preserve order and that is to enforce the laws. If one class is allowed to violate them upon the payment of a sum of money, respect and obedience to all law will soon disappear. Follow Grant's advice. The best way to get rid of a bad law is to enforce it. If a majority of the people of Kansas are in favor of prohibition, then prohibition should be enforced until they change their minds. There is no other way to maintain a government of law or to maintain order. The republican leaders of Kansas are anarchists. If a majority of the people of that state want that sort of thing, then it must be endured. If they do not, let them be voted out of office.

THE CITY "YOKEL."

The city dailies take great pleasure in recording any little acts of "the country yokel" who happens to show a want of knowledge of city ways. But for genuine "greenness," commend us the dweller in the city. The other day this writer saw a woman deposit a letter in a waste paper receptical which she thought was a letter box. If some of these city people go to the country, they show the most astonishing ignorance of the commonest things. Country people, being better bread, do not report it to the papers and avoid remarks that would hurt the feelings of the city visitor. In the city, the want of good breeding sends the person who sees any little lack of knowledge of city ways displayed by one from the country, hastening to a reporter to tell the story. The reporter and the city editor, both being without the knowledge of what genteel deportment really is, forthwith send it forth in the columns of the paper. It would be only a poetic sort of justice if the editors of some of the country weeklies should keep a watch on city folk visiting the country and report some of their doings. This writer once asked some 500 pupils of the grammar grade in the Boston schools, from the flesh of what animal mutton was obtained and only about a dozen could tell. More than one-half of the residents of Lincoln could not tell whether a field of growing grain was wheat or oats or rye until after it was headed out and a good many of them could not tell then. There are more points of distinction between them than between a letter box and a waste paper box. Hundreds of grown up children in the cities do not know where milk comes from. One girl twelve years old was sent to the country for her health and especially that she might get plenty of good fresh milk. After the first day she absolutely refused to touch milk. Her father being sent for, she explained to him that the reason that she did not was because she saw the hired man squeezing the milk that they put on the table out of an old cow. They did not get it out of a nice glass bottle like they did in the city.

The city child breathes in egotism from the day of its birth. All the associations of schools has a tendency to make them feel that they are superior to the ignorant people of the country. It would be a good thing if city teachers would once in a while ask a question of their classes like this one: "What would become of the city—its lawyers, its doctors, its teachers, its merchants and its laborers—if the farmers failed to raise a crop for two years in succession?"

A SCANDALOUS FALSEHOOD.

In another column there is printed a statement in the Chicago Record of the most disgraceful sort concerning Senator Allen. The readers of The Independent know what it thinks of the veracity of the writer of that extract, but statements of the same sort, though not so extended, have been noticed in other papers. It is about time that some sort of denial was made of these statements if they are malicious falsehoods. If Senator Allen has not the time to attend to such matters, there are five private secretaries in Washington to fusion members of congress, each drawing $100 a month, and certainly some one of them could find time to write a short letter to some fusion paper in the state giving the facts about the matter. Senator Allen is being voted for to succeed himself every day the legislature is in session and the republican members go around repeating these undenied stories. The populists have no way of refuting them. That story of W. E. Curtis is simply to the effect that Allen was sleepy drunk upon a very important occasion, that the republicans saw to it that he was placed in a very important and conspicuous place so that his condition could be observed by all. That a sergeant-at-arms and a page were employed to draw attention to the fact. It is a most disgraceful thing from beginning to end. If there is not enough energy in any populist at Washington to pay attention to such a scandalous charge, we might as well quit business.

THE TRUST GOES TO WAR

The sugar trust is not the only trust that can knock the president and congress about, make them get up and hustle, change their policies and eat their own words. The Asphalt trust is a little trust in comparison with some of the others, but it seems to be able to command the navy, use it to transfer its attorneys from one port to another and threaten a friendly nation in a very serious manner. The Asphalt trust was able to make a bigger display of naval force off the chief port of a nation that it had difficulty with than the United States ever made before. It ordered three warships to go to the port Caracas, Venezuela, and they went. One of them carried the attorney of the company, which is contrary to the specific laws governing the navy. But when a trust issues an order, law never stands in the way. The people of Venezuela were astonished beyond measure when they saw this hostile fleet. They have been almost worshippers of the United States. Pictures and statues of Washington are to be everywhere seen in Venezuela. When this country stepped in and demanded arbitration at the time that England was trying to slice off a portion of their territory, they grew to be more enthusiastic admirers of the United States than ever. When the warships appeared they were astounded. They had not heard that the trusts had taken control of this government and could scarcely believe their eyes. The Asphalt trust claimed that the Venezuelan government was about to violate a contract made about twenty-five years ago. The trust did not want to go to law and have the matter settled in the courts and so it just ordered three American warships to make a display off the coast and settle the matter by force. It proceeded to do it without any delay. It is no use to talk to a trust about international law, ethics or rights. Whenever it wants a thing, it just takes it, for it has the American army, navy, president and congress all subject to its orders. If it wants to make war it proceeds to do so.

MARK TWAIN A LUNATIC

The Brooklyn Eagle carries the republican plan of not indulging in defense of its new found policies or attempting to support them by argument to the most extreme point. In a criticism upon Mark Twain's article in the North American review, it says:

"If he or any one in sympathy with him asks why he is not replied to, the answer is that no nation can, with respect for itself, insist it has not lost its virtue, merely because a man deliberately declares that degradation is its condition and its choice."

Mark Hanna said, so it was reported in the newspapers, at the beginning of the last campaign: "We carried the election of 1896 without making an argument and we will carry this election in the same way." The Brooklyn Eagle boldly adopts that plan, and the other, which has proved so efficatious, namely, if you can't reply to a man's arguments, absolutely ignore him, never let his name appear in the news or the discussions of the day, call him a lunatic if he must be mentioned. That plan is indorsed in reference to Mark Twain in the somewhat involved and cumbersome sentences closing a column of insulting criticism. Read it and then ponder on the ways of plutocratic editors. The Eagle says:

"He should think as well of his country as it would think of him. It does not deserve his condemnation. It does not justify his despair. If it has ever wronged him, the offense or injury has been the well intended one of over-praise. Of that the effect on him should not be what some quite gravely fear it may have been—a cerebral tumefaction possibly calling for an experimental period of judicious and benign neglect, in lively hope of a salutary restoration to civic health."

That statement, stripped of redundant verbiage, is an accusation that Mark Twain has a tumor on his brain that has resulted in lunacy, and his name should never hereafter be mentioned in public. That is the treatment accorded to every man of brains and influence in the whole United States, whoever has had the temerity to object to the rule of money or stood up for the rights of man. Mark Twain cannot escape the fate of all the others. He is a lunatic, not a silver lunatic, but an anti-imperialist lunatic. Drive him into obscurity.

ANARCHY AT WASHINGTON.

When a set of men less than a dozen in number can make laws for this government and put them on the statute books without having been passed by either house of congress it amounts to anarchy. That is just what has been done at Washington during the last week. The army bill was enacted and as there were amendments making the bill different when it passed the senate, a conference committee was appointed. The result of the conference was reported to the house and senate and each house adopted it. But after the bill was signed by the president it was discovered that it had been changed in such a manner as to force the president to appoint certain sons of congressmen to very high and lucrative life positions in the regular army. There was an investigation made. At first the enrolling and engrossing clerks were charged with changing the bill, but they had documentary evidence to prove that they were innocent. It was finally traced to members of the conference committee. These gentlemen then boldly acknowledged that they had changed the bill without reporting what they had done to either house. They gave as their excuse that certain members of the house threatened to obstruct the passage of the bill if their sons were not provided for in that way, so the members of the committee deliberately committed forgery and violated their oaths of office and now acknowledge that they did.

Every one of these men should be prosecuted and sent to the penitentiary for ten years at hard labor. This is corrupting government at its very foundation. That is what was done in 1873 when silver was demonetized. Every member of congress who lets this thing pass without a protest, if he has the opportunity to make one on the floor of the house, is particeps criminis in the whole plot. Such a crime ranks next to murder. It is far more serious than theft or assault. The Independent here and now enters its most emphatic protest against letting these congressmen escape punishment.

SUGAR TRUST RULE.

Who rules this country? Does congress or the president? The experience of the last year or so would seem to demonstrate that it is the sugar trust. More than once it has proved itself more powerful than the president or congress. The president declared it was our plain duty to grant Porto Rico free trade. The ways and means committee of the house prepared a bill to carry out the president's recommendation. Then the sugar trust appeared at Washington and knocked them both clear out of the ring in the first round. The ways and means committee prepared a new bill taxing Porto Rico. The president ate his own words and used all the power of his office to force the new bill through.

The other day the sugar trust appeared in Washington again and demanded that the secretary of the treasury put an additional tax of one cent a pound on Russian sugar. It was done. The fact that Russia would retaliate was well known, but Gage knew that he must obey the order of the sugar trust and he did not hesitate over the matter.

The result is certain to be most disastrous. Russia in retaliation has put prohibitory tariffs on nearly everything that we have been shipping to that country. England and Germany will rush in and secure a permanent trade. Gage knew all that before he put the additional tariff on the Russian sugar, but he dare not disobey the order of the sugar trust. Neither will congress. Not a word will be said by a member of the dominant party about it. They dare not. Too many republican senators and representatives have been dealing in sugar stock and the trust holds enough testimony to damn them all. They will all keep mum and for the very same reasons, so will the president. Hanna said during the campaign that the republican party would take care of the trusts, but the sugar trust seems perfectly able to take care of itself.

Nebraska's new republican deputy bank commissioner has made his first report concerning the condition of the state banks. He declares that the banks are in a most flourishing condition. When we look at the figures in his report we find that the banks owe $35,684,219.08 and have only $2,080,125.23 of cash on hand to meet their liabilities. That is a very flourishing condition for the banks if their depositors do not take a notion in their heads some day that they want four or five million dollars of the something over $25,000,000 that they have deposited. If such a condition should arise, these "flourishing" banks would all go into a receiver's hands within twenty-four hours. A short crop or any one of a dozen other things might bring such a condition about.

An Englishman calls attention to the fact that Americans seem to have a greater admiration for hereditary titles than the British. He said that he hardly met a man when visiting this country who did not have some sort of decoration on, of which they seemed to be very proud. They were Sons of Veterans, Knights of Pythias, or something of the sort, and the women were just as badly infatuated with the idea, for they were Daughters of the Revolution or some other such society whose decoration they wore with a great deal of pride. While Englishmen only put on their decorations at public functions, the Americans were so proud of theirs that they wore them all the time. That Englishman, like a good many others of his kind, got his impressions from the flunkies of the east. He should have come out west. There he would have met the virile manhood of the nation—men and women who did not attempt to thrust themselves forward because their far-off ancestors had done something of note, while they, themselves, were mere nonentities.

REPUBLICAN TAXATION.

The statement of Congressman Cochran is so astonishing that a good many different persons have gone to work to see if it was a fact that this government was expending more money than Abraham Lincoln did when he had a million men on the army list and a thousand warships at sea to provide for. They have all been forced to accept the truth of the statement. One editor of a great daily was forced to say in regard to this matter that the present expenditures were even greater than when we were fighting the greatest war of history. He sums it up as follows:

"The comparison seems almost incredible, and yet a reference to the figures involved shows a justification for the assertion. The expenses of the federal government in the fiscal year 1863-64 approximated $1,245,000,000, and for the fiscal year 1864-65 $1,100,000,000. During this period, however, the value of gold fluctuated from 130 to 260, so that the actual value of the amount expended in the two years, reduced to a common standard with our present currency, was hardly above half the sums stated, or, say $1,250,000,000 in gold. The appropriations of the two sessions of the present congress are calculated to be almost $1,500,000,000 (It will be more than that—Ed. Ind.) or considerably above that of the years which saw the end of the civil war."

That is to say, that it takes more of the products of labor, more wheat, corn and cotton, to pay the expenses of the government under McKinley than it did under Lincoln when Lincoln had a million of enlisted men to pay and a thousand warships on the sea to supply, their men to pay and war material to provide. What do the people of the United States propose to do about this? Nothing at all. They are prohibited from knowing that such a state of affairs exists. The great subsidized dailies will say nothing about it. If an intelligent populist informs any of them of the fact, they will simply refuse to believe it. They will continue to vote a ticket called "republican" even if taxation should again be doubled.

PROGRESS IN EDUCATION.

The Independent has never been able to see, and no pop has ever been able to find out why an education that best fits the pupil to become a normal, self-supporting and energetic citizen was not the best education. Not one in ten thousand who attends our common schools or universities has any literary qualifications or ambitions. For such pupils to spend twenty years in the common schools and colleges studying belles letters, has always seemed to the writer the utmost folly. If the cost of such education is to be paid by taxation, he could not see why the cost of an education that would make the pupil a happy, self-supporting citizen, which would not amount to half as much in money or in time, should not be paid in the same way. Whenever such an idea has been expressed in the presence of a pedagogue, no matter how high or how low in the profession he stood, he has met it with the most persistent opposition and very often with supreme contempt for the ignorance of the one who proposed it.

There seems to be a change coming. Superintendent Cooley of the Chicago schools now says: "I am not opposed to classics, but I think that the instruction which will fit a boy for a business career comes first. I will do all I can to insure this instruction."

In accordance with this new idea, a large commercial school is planned to have accommodations for about 1,000 boys. Bookkeeping, typewriting, stenography, commercial arithmetic, commercial geography, etc., are to be taught. Classics of all sorts are to be barred. Boys who have graduated from the grammar schools are to be eligible for admission, and may attend this school instead of attending the regular high schools.

This school is to be part of the common school system of Chicago and is to be supported in the same way. Already there have been over 500 more applicants than can be accommodated. The establishment of this school seems to The Independent to be only good, common sense, but common sense is the most uncommon thing in this world.

Between July 1 and December 31, 1900, American manufactures of iron and steel amounting in value to $125,633,480 were sent abroad and profitably sold in foreign markets. To make these sales our steel manufactures had to underbid the manufactures of the nations to which it was shipped. They had to pay transportation to the nations to which it was shipped. They had to pay transportation for thousands of miles, and to enter Germany, France and Russia they had to pay high tariff duties. They could pay this transportation and these duties and still undersell the manufacturers there. Why should these steel men have a tariff of nearly eight dollars a ton to protect them from the pauper made steel of Europe? There is but one answer. It is to enable them to charge American citizens eight dollars a ton more for their goods than a fair, honest price. That is the reason and the only reason.