TAX THE DOLLAR

The populist principle is: Tax the dollar and not the man. Why? Because there is justice in taxing the dollar and none at all in taxing the man. Take one of these billionaires. He may own railroads running through several states, have banks located in many cities, own franchises worth millions of dollars. To protect his property and interests a whole army of policemen, judges and juries are employed whose salaries are paid by taxation. The laboring man who lives in his little cottage never costs the government anything for policemen, judges or juries, while the billionaire has constantly in his service perhaps more than a thousand of them. On many occasions he calls for the service of the army or militia and the state is put to great expense on his account. To tax these two men in the same way, one requiring the constant help of the government and its judges, juries, policemen and often the military arm, while the other never costs the government a cent, is manifestly the grossest injustice. One receives from the government a thousand times as much and should pay taxes in proportion. The only way to make the billionaire pay his just proportion is to collect an income tax. But a plutocratic supreme court, by one majority, says that is unconstitutional, although all the judges from John Marshall down said otherwise.

IRRIGATION WITHOUT COST.

The government could, without increasing taxation one cent, open up the arid regions of the west and make a markct for manufactures five times as great as all our boasted foreign trade. In those regions could be made happy homes for millions of self-supporting American citizens who would be consumers in very large amounts of all our manufactured goods. We repeat that this could be done without a cent of expense to the taxpayers of this nation. Why not do it? It is well known that there are millions of acres of land in the arid regions that belong to the government. That land now is utterly worthless. The government has been offering to give it away for the last thirty years if anybody would go and live on it. No one will take it even as a gift. Let the government use its credit to put up irrigation reservoirs, get water onto these dry acres and then invite the settlers to come, provided that they will pay the cost of irrigation. See how they will flock there in unnumbered thousands. There would not be a vacant acre left in five years, if men only had to pay the actual cost of irrigation to get a title to the land. Any man of common sense knows that to be true. But there is no hope of such a thing. The government may pay subsidies to the millionaires, but to make free homes for farmers, never. Not at least while the mullet heads run this nation.

THE MILK WHITE FLAG.

The attempt to establish imperialism in this free and peaceful republic produces many different and unexpected situations—some tragic, some pathetic and many that are comical. News reaches this office from Washington that the attempts to enlist 100,000 men in this peace-loving republic for a war of conquest against a people trying to establish a free and independent republic have amounted, so far, to practically nothing. But the president has gone ahead and appointed all the officers. So we have a situation that equals that in one of Hoyt's comic operas. We have a major general, three brigadier generals, twenty colonels, sixty majors, two hundred and forty captains, four hundred and eighty first and second lieutenants and five privates for their command. There are three army corps like that. When they form a line at the inauguration of the president and emperor of the Philippines on the 4th of next March, they will make such a sight as the world never saw before. That night all the theatres of Washington should have a performance of "The Milk White Flag." It would be appreciated as it never was before.

CAN'T FIND OUT

The Illinois Steel company has just captured a contract to furnish the government of Australia 17,000 tons of steel rails in open competition with all the manufacturers of the old world. These 17,000 tons of rails are to be delivered at Melbourne. From Chicago to Melbourne is a journey of 2,000 miles by land and over 10,000 miles by sea. The freight on those 17,000 tons of steel will of course have to be paid, and it must be heavier than it would be on British rails carried all the way to Melbourne by sea, without reshipment, from Southampton.

There is one thing connected with the manufacture of steel in this country that no pop can find out. Why must these manufacturers who can underbid all the manufacturers of Europe have a tariff of $7.84 per ton to protect them from the competition of the pauper labor of Europe?

In a private letter from a man who knows the inside workings of the manipulators at Washington as well as any other man in the United States, he says: "You do not seem to fully appreciate what the claim put forward that the United States should control the power of Cuba over debts really means. There are outstanding over four millions of Spanish bonds that it is well known the Cubans, if left to themselves, will absolutely and forever repudiate. They were issued by the Spanish government to pay the cost of wars against Cuba. These bonds have been pretty freely distributed among congressmen. To have supervision over Cuban debts, means that these bonds are to be paid in part at least. That is the whole thing in a nut shell. That is what the claim is put forward for. It is a bondholders' deal, and you know that the bondholders have always come out on top for the last quarter of a century." The Independent commends this bit of special information to its readers. The great dailies will not mention it.

According to the official announcements made by the officer in charge, the old veterans will be placed at the tail end of the procession at McKinley's inauguration, the officers of the new army and the five privates that they have coaxed to enlist will take the head of the line. Nobody will be permitted to ride except Mark Hanna, who will sit beside the president in the one carriage allowed. All the rest have been ordered to walk. Oh! the gold lace, the shoulder straps and the epaulets! Won't it be a wonderful show? How the plebians will be cowed! Three thousand new made military officers, all feeling the immensity of their own importance! That will be the end of opposition to imperialism. The "old soldiers" are getting to be so few in numbers that their votes are not a threat against insult any more. That is the reason that they are put in the rear.

It has dawned on the benighted minds of a few of the mullet editors in this state that one of the political chaplains employed by the legislature (at the cost of the taxpayer) to do their praying for them, is making a mock of religion. The other day he thanked the Lord that the members were able to visit their homes without any cost to themselves, the inference being that they all had railroad passes. This prayer has been published in a great many eastern papers as a sample of the devotions of the republican party in this state. As long as the papers make that statement The Independent will not object, but when they come to intimating that the people of Nebraska generally believe in that sort of devotions, it puts in a protest.

Under republican government in the state of Indiana 3,435 persons are allowed to sell liquor without paying a license, although the state has a license law. Every one of these liquor dealers are active workers for the republican party. Every minister who supports that party in the state knows of these facts, but the authorities have never been known to be denounced from the pulpit by the men who support the republican party, for permitting this condition of affairs. They call the party in that state the "God and morality party." The Independent has no remarks to make on this subject.

The dispute in Venezuela was about two surveys. By one survey an asphalt deposit belonged to the trust and by the other it belonged to another company. The other company proposed that the matter should be settled in the courts, but the trust preferred to settle it with warships. It therefore ordered warships to the nearest point and they came as fast as steam could drive them. How the commanders of these warships felt when they found that they were under the orders of an American trust and were to fight for asphalt instead of liberty, has not been reported by the daily papers.

The White Man's Burden

What is the white man's burden?
Does destiny demand
His back be laden higher
By every dusky hand?
Am I my brother's keeper—
Or keeper of his land?

What is the white man's burden?
Is it the mountain flood
Of treasure, vain to vanquish
The tides of patriot blood,
While our supremest jewel
Is trampled in the mud?

What is the white man's burden?
That weights upon his sleep?
To hear the hundreds dying?
To see the thousands weep?
Oh, wanton war that haunts him
Oh, seed that he must reap!

What is the white man's burden—
The burden of his song
That once was "Peace and justice;
The weak beside the strong?"
He falters in the singing
At memory of the wrong.

What thought our vaunt of freedom
Must evermore be mute,
And the trading of men's vices
Drag both below the brute;
Go bribe new ships to bring it—
The white man's burden—loot!
—Robert Underwood Johnson, in New York Evening Post.

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Current Comment

There may be something in the persistent stories that King Edward is opposed to the Boer war. If he is, the present English ministry may be shortly overthrown and a new policy adopted. As all know, the existence of the ministry depends upon a majority in parliament. The moment an adverse majority appears, the ministry will resign and a new election will be held. That came very near being the case the other day. A majority against the ministry is often obtained on some trivial affair not connected with the general policy of the government at all. Gladstone was thrown out of power on a vote on some question connected with a brewery, which was entirely of a local nature and had never entered into any of the discussions of the members when seeking election. That sort of business is only a political trick in which the English politician is about as expert as any other kind of a politician. The majority had been elected on a program for home rule for Ireland and having changed their minds and gone over to the other side, they would not vote against home rule, but would vote against the government on some trivial question, which would produce the same result.

All the royalties and the queen herself was opposed to Gladstone's program, and although a majority had been elected to carry it out, these lords, dukes and royalties set about getting that majority away from him. They did it by society influence. They did not talk politics to these Gladstonian members, but they invited them to garden parties, put them in prominent places at public functions and above all, royalty smiled upon them. Little by little the Gladstonian majority melted away and at last on some trivial question an adverse majority was obtained and Gladstone was put out of power. Then the whole policy of the British government was changed.

If King Edward is really opposed to the Boer war, it will not take long for him to get Lord Salisbury's majority away from him. He need never say a word about politics. Indeed it would not do for him to say a word. There would be an uproar from one end of England to the other if he did. It would have about the same effect in that country as it would in this, if the chief justice of the supreme court should doff his robes and take the stump for some presidential candidate. But King Edward's particular associates can drop a word now and then to the effect that he is very much opposed to the war. In court functions the master of ceremonies can play upon the flunkyism of members of parliament. No one living in this country and who has not visited England can have any idea of the social power of royalty. This writer once had an invitation to a "smoking concert," we believe that is what they called it. It was at a time when the wearing of watch chains was all the fashion. Seats were reserved in front for the Prince of Wales and his immediate friends and attendants. Every man in that audience had a watch chain on. When the prince came in he had no watch chain. Within five minutes there was not a watch chain to be seen in that audience. Within a few days not a watch chain was to be seen on the streets of London.

What is called "the human equation" has very much to do with governments. However honest a judge, lawmaker or an executive may be, the little affairs of every day life affect his judgment to a greater or less degree. These members of parliament having always lived in an atmosphere of royal flunkyism are particularly susceptible to royal influence. The queen was opposed to the Boer war, but she was a woman and very old and could not bring to bear the social influence that the King can. The fact that she was opposed to the war has been given out by the king's consent. That is one of the great forces that he can use in getting Lord Salisbury's majority away. The persistent stories that she made some sort of a statement to King Edward and her grandson, the Emperor of Germany, and extorted some sort of a promise from them concerning a settlement of the dispute with the Boers has not been denied even by the most radical jingo newspapers. If King Edward allows that statement to be repeated, it will have a powerful influence upon many members of parliament. The result may be that some day on some insignificant question that arises in parliament, a division will be called and the government will find itself in a minority. None of the conservative members will have to cast a vote against the prosecution of the war, they will not have to do anything that on the record will show a change of policy toward the Boers, but all the same it will have that effect. That is the way the English have of doing it.

A private letter from Washington says that the rush for appointments and the fight for place has brought a rabble there, which in numbers and activity were never known before. The scenes at the White house and around the hotels and halls of congress are disgraceful beyond description. Nothing like it was ever known at the capitol before. Senators and representatives who wear a republican brand are followed about constantly with a perfect horde of applicants for places. Bribery, intimidation, slander, piteous appeals—every sort of thing that the imagination and greed of man can invent, is brought into use to secure appointments in the army, on commissions and the thousand other places that have been created by the republican party since it got full control of the government. Men throw aside all honor, all manhood, all regard for decency and fight for places like hungry wolves. The writer thinks that a demoralization will follow this in the public service such as was never seen before. That will not only be the case, but it will have a reflex action on society at large that must be most disastrous. Such scenes as these were frequent around the courts of Rome preceding its decadence. In the middle ages, a court was the exact copy of what is now going on at Washington. The whole daily press has been so completely captured by plutocracy that not a word is said in the news or editorial columns about these things. There is no opposition press to purify politics any more. The democratic dailies have laid down and quit. No matter what disgraceful thing may happen, they haven't a word to say. But here is the populist part that is going to stand up and fight for right and decency to the end of time. There is no lying down about a populist.

Things in China are all in an uproar again. The Chinese government has replied to the powers that it is absolutely impossible for it to comply with the demand for the beheading of so many princes of the royal blood. It will agree to banish them and decapitate a few others of lower rank, but that Prince Tuan and one or two others cannot be decapitated. It is evident that the Chinese government has not the power to do it even if it so desired. These men control the army and the mass of the Chinese people. If such an effort were to be made, the dowager and emperor would be captured and carried further into the interior of China and edicts would be issued in their name. The result would be that there would be no government at all to negotiate with.

On top of this news comes the story that Count Waldersee has determined to make an extensive invasion of the interior of China and has ordered the troops of other nations to co-operate. It is said that upon the representation of General Chafee the government at Washington has refused to take part in this expedition. The Independent was nearly convinced against its will, but now it has the same opinion still, that the European nations do not want to settle this matter at all, but are determined on dividing up China among themselves. Everything points in that direction. This expedition under Waldersee is the beginning of it. If the other European nations take a stand against it and refuse to have anything to do with it, it might be evidence against the division of China. We shall have to wait to see.

About once a month a statement is published in the dailies to the effect that Mexico is going to adopt the gold standard. Then every mullet head hugs himself in delight as if that were going to put money in his pocket and bring some great blessing to him. Suppose that Mexico should adopt the gold standard. What result must follow from such action? Mexico uses no gold now. All her business is done with silver. If she discarded silver she would have to get gold to take its place. Some of the millions that she would have to have would come from her next door neighbor, the United States. That would make gold scarcer and harder to get here. What benefit would accrue to the people of Nebraska from that? So far Mexico has paid no attention to these statements, but last week the Mexican government authorized the statement to be published that it had no idea of introducing the gold standard. A Mexican greaser has more sense any way than a Nebraska mullet head.

The London Standard has at last found out that it is the American fiscal policy that has made trusts possible. If the editor had attended some of the institutes of political economy established in Nebraska sod houses at the beginning of the last decade it would have found that out long ago. In speaking of the steel trust the Standard now says: "It remains to be seen whether the American people will much longer tolerate a fiscal policy which renders such a combination possible." The London Standard don't like this fiscal policy" which has concentrated the wealth of this country in the hands of the few as much as it did a few years ago when it thought that the United States owed England about a thousand million dollars which would be made more valuable by helping to establish the gold standard in this country. It don't think that it is a good "fiscal policy" at all now. It thinks that the steel trust may be broken up, however, because Mark Hanna will squeeze it so hard for campaign funds that it will be ruined. They seem to understand Mark's ways over in England pretty well.

It is now agreed upon all hands that there is to be an extra session of congress. The excuse is given that congress must pass upon the Cuban constitution. What right this country has to pass upon the constitution of a foreign nation no one seems to ask. That is not the point that interests McKinley and his followers. The thing is those $450,000,000 of Spanish bonds that the Cubans swear they will never pay. With so many republican statesmen having their pockets stuffed with them, there is an absolute necessity for an extra session of congress. Mark Hanna's subsidy will have to be attended to also. With these two things staring them in the face it is utterly impossible for the republican statesmen to get along without an extra session which will cost the taxpayers a great many millions of dollars.

The enormous combination of iron, steel and tin interests now practically formed by J. Pierpont Morgan has an actual capitalized valuation of $831,000,000. There are ten great interests in the combination, headed by the Carnegie Steel company. The total annual output of the consolidated interests is 6,500,000 tons of which the Carnegies contribute about one-half. The Morgan-Rockefeller combine will absolutely control more than one-half of the total output of the entire United States. They own 50 miles, 122 vessels on the lakes and nearly all the coke ovens in the country. They own more than one thousand miles of ore-carrying railroads; they control the natural gas fields; they control 70 per cent of the steel rail output. They will do 75 per cent of the business in structural steel and iron.

They control the steel plate trade; of sheets and tin plates they have full control; bars and hoops they control. They will make 90 per cent of the tubes and pipes. Wire, nails and tacks must now come almost altogether from the trust.

The first payment that was made to Carnegie was $25,000,000, one-seventh of the assessed valuation of the state of Nebraska. He has about $200,000,000 more coming to him which is secured by a first mortgage bond on the whole steel plant. If he should take a notion to come out here and buy the state of Nebraska some day, what would the mullet heads have to say about the fiscal policy that brought this thing about? But Morgan and Rockefeller bought Carnegie out and they now not only own all that he possessed, but three or four times as much more. Suppose that they should take a notion to buy two or three states. What then? Would the mullet heads still continue to talk about a dollar worth a hundred cents and money good in Europe and be happy? For more than ten years the pops have been telling them that their money theories would end in concentrating all wealth in a few hands. Do they believe now? If concentration goes at the same rate that it has for the last ten years, five or six men will own the whole United States and these poor mullet heads will be told that if they don't like it to get off the earth.

HARDY'S COLUMN

REMINISCENCES OF NEBRASKA.

The territory from which Nebraska was carved was first brought to our mind by the study of Olney's geography, early in the thirties. We remember the great American desert, which extended from the lakes to the Rocky mountains and from the north pole to the gulf. We remember the scenes pictured there. One represented Indians driving buffaloes over a high bank into a corral, made of poles. We remember another picture, that of a prairie fire, where Indians, buffaloes and wolves were running for their lives before the flames.

The next we remember seeing several bales of buffalo skins, lying upon the sidewalk in the city of Buffalo, just brought from the Missouri river near Council Bluffs. This was early in the forties.

The next we remember was a letter from an older brother, written after his arrival in California in 1849. He went the overland route and describes the country west of Rock Island. He found no signs of white men except on the Des Moines river, two priests and two ferrymen at Council Bluffs, a company of soldiers at Kearney and Mormons at Salt Lake. West of the Missouri he found buffalo paths running to the Platte river and Mormon paths running west.

We were much surprised at his statement that the desert was not a desert and that there was good territory for three more states between the Mississippi and the Rocky mountains. Another statement surprised us that Fremont's pass was a broad, level prairie with mountains on either side just in sight. We had supposed it was a narrow defile just wide enough to let a mule or a man through.

The next was Greeley's description of his stage ride to the coast in 1858. His mention of the tall grass, the gently sloping hills, the countless herds of fat buffaloes. It was not stretching the imagination to conclude if the buffalo could live without the help of man the ox could with a little of his help. The flag of Nebraska at first represented a grazing country. We were told there would be no use for plows ten miles west of the Missouri.

In 1854 the not political history of Nebraska and Kansas commenced. The Missouri compromise law, which prohibited slavery north of the Mason and Dixon line, which was the south line of the state of Missouri extending westward, was repealed, Nebraska and Kansas were lined up as territories and opened to slavery. At once slaveholders commenced settlement in hundreds in Kansas and a few in Nebraska. But the free states outstripped the slave states, two to one, in sending settlers to the new territories. The New England emigrant and society furnished their emigrants with Bibles, Sharp's riffes and transportation money. Between 1854 and 1860 the two territories witnessed scenes of strife and bloodshed.

May 30, 1854, the territory of Nebraska was organized and included the Dakotas, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and Colorado. Colorado was first taken off, then March 3, 1863, Nebraska was reduced to her present limits.

In March, 1860, the people refused to be admitted as a state by a vote of 1987 to 1877. The chief reason given was the expense of running a state would be too great.

In 1864 congress passed another enabling act, but the people this time ignored the proposition without taking a vote. A constitutional convention met, but no constitution was submitted. In 1866 the territorial legislature framed a constitution and the people adopted it on June 21, following. On the 28th of the same month congress passed a bill admitting the state, but President Johnson vetoed it. In January, 1867, congress passed another bill, then repassed it over the president's second veto. In 1871 a state constitutional convention was called and a new constitution framed, which was rejected by the people. The chief objection raised was against the taxing of meeting houses. It was argued that graveyards and school houses should be taxed just as much as meeting houses, so that the community that got along without these luxuries should be relieved of that much tax.

In 1875 another convention was called and the present constitution was adopted by a vote of 30,202 to 5,474.

Several amendments to the present constitution have been submitted to a vote of the people, but the method of voting and counting the votes prescribed by the constitution are such that all of them failed to get the necessary vote. The one increasing the pay of the legislature was, however, counted in. It was voted on in November, 1880, and declared carried by the legislature January, 1881. The three most noted amendments that have been submitted were those extending the right of suffrage to women, the prohibition of the liquor traffic and the increase of the supreme judges.

We first landed in Lincoln in October, 1870, and one of the first things that attracted our attention was a political meeting held in the new state house, then nearly completed. Governor David Butler was the speaker. He was a candicate for re-election. He openly acknowledged that he had loaned state money to himself; that he had also loaned to Mr. Tichner without warrant of law, but that he did it be-