

The Nebraska Independent.

VOL. XIV.

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, SEPT. 18, 1902.

NO. 17.

A SHAMEFUL RECORD

The World-Herald Recounts a Few Chapters of What has Been Done "Under Authority of the Railroads of Nebraska"

"Under authority of the railroads of Nebraska" is a phrase that has become quite familiar to the people of this state. This phrase is used as a headline to the articles presented through the newspapers of the state by the railroad literary bureau.

In one of its publications this bureau paid its respects to the World-Herald, charging this newspaper with being guilty of deliberate falsehood, and otherwise manifesting a disposition to plain spoliensness, even to the extent of invective and epithet. Accepting this as an invitation to call a spade by its right name the World-Herald feels justified in indulging in a bit of plain Anglo-Saxon for the benefit of public interests and to the disadvantage let us hope of the schemes concocted at the conference of corporation lawyers, at which conference "we all agreed on Mickey as our man."

The statement that these publications are issued "under authority of the railroads of Nebraska" does not necessarily provide assurance to the observing Nebraska that these things, purporting to be statements of facts, are true and correct. On the contrary, in the light of the history of some things that have been done in this state "under authority of the railroads of Nebraska" it is not at all surprising that in so many instances the publications issued by this railroad bureau are ingeniously concocted falsehoods; nor is it at all surprising that in one of the publications issued by this bureau a newspaper should be charged with deliberate falsehood with relation to a statement, which statement the managers of this railroad bureau knew to be absolutely true.

This is not the first time that questionable acts have been committed "under authority of the railroads of Nebraska." Referring to corporations Sir Edward Grey once said: "I cannot commit treason, nor be outlawed, nor excommunicate, for they have no souls." And yet it is true that "in every deed of mischief" the corporation has had "the heart to resolve, the lead to contrive, and the head to execute."

Although during the period when the Bentons and the Eugene Moores reigned through corporation favor the people imagined they were far from the discharge of their obligations to the corporations when they fixed the corporation assessment in this state at \$29,339,431. But looking at the record of the present regime, we find that the corporation administration of today has fixed the corporation assessment at \$26,589,592. Every one understands that during the past ten years great progress has been made in this state, and it will be difficult for an intelligent man to understand with what reason the corporation assessment of 1902 could be fixed at nearly \$3,000,000 less than the corporation assessment of 1892.

But the problem is solved and the mystery is explained when it is understood that the men who made the assessment of 1902 are creatures of the corporations. They have discovered that what their action was an affront to the intelligence of the people of this state, it must be remembered that it was done—"under authority of the railroads of Nebraska."

The republican state board of equalization, being urged to require the corporations to bear their just proportion of the burden of taxation, closed their ears to the appeal in behalf of the people, held their sessions behind closed doors and did the corporation bidding with a promptness that would have put Tom Benton to blush even in Tom Benton's palmist days; and this was all done—"under authority of the railroads of Nebraska."

After the republican board of equalization had made its answer to the supreme court proceedings and the corporation attorneys had discovered that that answer did not suit the corporations' purpose, a conference was held between the corporation lawyers and the members of the republican board of equalization. The result was that these republican officials subscribed to an amended answer, which answer had been prepared by the corporation lawyers, and filed that answer with the supreme court. The republican paper, the Omaha Bee, referred to this act on the part of these republican officials as "the greatest act of perfidy to the people of which any state official could be guilty;" and this "greatest act of perfidy" was done—"under authority of the railroads of Nebraska."

Prior to the republican convention a demand that the republican auditor who had also served the corporations much more faithfully than he had even pretended to serve the people be defeated for re-nomination; but the republican auditor was re-nominated by the republican state convention—"under authority of the railroads of Nebraska."

When the republican state convention met at Lincoln on June 18, a number of the delegates to that convention favored the nomination for governor of a man who would be free from corporation domination. Every one of the three combine railroad companies pretended to have a preferred candidate and the delegates to that convention were treated to the farce of

a struggle between the three great corporations of this state. But after the farce had been carried far enough to suit the managers, the real corporation candidate was brought forward, and a man by the name of Mickey was chosen as the republican candidate for governor of this state. Ten days prior to the republican state convention the corporation lawyers had held a conference and they all agreed on Mickey as their man. The republican state convention indorsed this agreement; and Mickey and Prout and Weston and their colleagues on the republican state ticket were formally presented for the suffrages of the people of this state—"under authority of the railroads of Nebraska."

At the legislative session of 1891 a deed was committed—"under authority of the railroads of Nebraska"—which deed was so impudent and so bold that the people of this state have not yet learned to place a proper estimate upon it. That was when the railroad lobbyists deemed it necessary to maintain a deadlock in the state senate in order to prevent the passage of the maximum freight rate bill. In order to accomplish this result a member of that state senate was abducted, with his consent to be sure, but abducted nevertheless, and carried away to a distant portion of this country. He has never yet returned. He consented to go because he was paid a liberal sum of money for his consent. It is doubtful whether in all the history of corporation intrigue that he ever had a fairer affront to the dignity of a state than that perpetrated by the railroad lobbyists at the legislative session of 1891; and this bribery and this abduction and this affront to the peace and dignity of the people of this commonwealth was all done—"under authority of the railroads of Nebraska."

It was during that legislative session that the railroad lobby went mad in its efforts to please its masters. Wherever men could be purchased, men were purchased; wherever men could be bullied, men were bullied; members of the legislature who were weak were decoyed into compromising positions and they were required to deliver the goods to the corporation lobby as the price of the lobby's silence. It was at that session that the house of ill fame was charged by the railroad lobby in the effort to retain the favor of the weak members and accomplish the defeat of a measure which that lobby claimed was against the "business interests" of the state; and all of these things were done—"under authority of the railroads of Nebraska."

And there is, too, in connection with the legislative session of 1892 a bit of unwritten history. It relates to John M. Moan, one of the most faithful men that ever served the people. John M. Moan was a business man living in Dakota county. He was a large shipper and felt keenly the imposition in the matter of freight rates. He was nominated for the legislature by the democrats and elected. He was, in truth, the leader of the forces that battled faithfully for the maximum freight rate bill. He was thoroughly informed on the freight rate question. With him there was no compromise on that measure. He knew its importance to the shippers and to the people of this state generally, and he stood faithfully by his guns. As a shipper he was offered all the concessions he could, in reason, ask if he would abandon his fight as a legislator. But Moan was not a man to turn his back upon a worthy cause. At a time when the fight on the railroad bill was at its height, John M. Moan was invited to join two acquaintances in a social glass. He had no sooner reached his room after indulging in this bit of sociability than he was taken violently ill. An emetic was administered, and although seriously ill, Moan dragged himself to the state house the next day and took up the fight for the railroad freight bill. From that moment John M. Moan was an invalid and on the occasion of his last visit to Omaha, which was perhaps one week before his death, Mr. Moan stated to a resident of this city, who had been his friend and who will always be proud to remember his memory, that he had never recovered from the drug which he believed had been administered to him—"under authority of the railroads of Nebraska."

The history of corporation interference in the politics of Nebraska provides some of the darkest chapters that have ever been written. Pretending to represent the intelligence, the honor, and the integrity of the commonwealth, the railroad lobby has never hesitated to insult intelligence, to defile honor, and to blacken integrity. In the history of state there has been none that has been so subservient to corporation domination, or that has so suffered through corporation intrigue, as the great state of Nebraska. When, some time in the future, a capable man shall undertake to compile a record of the darkest deeds that have ever been perpetrated in official and political circles, if he shall have done his work well, appended to this record of shameful acts, will be the truthful statement that they were done—"under authority of the railroads of Nebraska."—Richard L. Metcalfe, in Omaha World-Herald.

Something seems to be wrong with the whole inside of Mother Earth. Volcanoes are in active eruption clear around the world. Vesuvius in Italy is extremely active, the volcanoes in Martinique have been acting worse than in the early part of the season several long extinct volcanoes in Alaska are pouring out smoke, steam and ashes, the mountains in the Philippines have been belching and not long since there were reports to the same effect from Japan. That pretty nearly makes a circle of the whole earth.

THE PECULIAR FUNCTION

Mr. Van Vorhis Calls Attention to the One Peculiar Function of Money—Its Debt Paying Power

Editor Independent: There is but one function of money that is peculiar to it. This function is created by law, and is wholly exclusive. This function is a compulsory standard, set up by law for the settlement of time contracts. It cannot be performed by anything else. Of course, legal tender bills, in addition, perform any other possible money function. Outside of this particular and peculiar function, it is impossible to make a line of demarcation between money, according to its commonly accepted meaning, and a variety of articles and devices that perform more or less completely some or all of the other functions of money, or, at least, perform precisely the same kind of offices in regard to it.

Within the limit of this function, the problem is still further complicated by the limited and modified application of the function to the various kinds of money authorized by law.

The subsidiary coins are limited in the amount for which they can be tendered, and the creditor compelled to accept. All other forms of money are unlimited in amount, but all, except gold coin, are limited as to the debts for the payment of which they can be tendered.

The standard silver dollar and treasury notes of 1890 are full legal tender for all debts, including duties on imports and interest on the public debt, but may be deprived of all legal tender quality in the settlement of time contracts by the terms of the contract. United States notes, legal tender for all debts except duties on imports and interest on the public debt.

The comptroller of the currency calls gold and silver certificates and national bank notes non-legal tender money. This is a quibble unworthy of any intelligent man, and wholly inexcusable in any financial official. No difference what he may call them, the certificates "shall be receivable for customs, taxes and all public debts," and that national bank notes "shall be receivable at par, in all parts of the United States, in payment of taxes, excises, public lands and all other dues to the United States except duties on imports; and also for all salaries and other debts and demands owing by the United States to individuals, corporations and associations within the United States except the interest on public debts and in redemption of the national currency."

These are far too important legal tender functions to be waived aside by the comptroller. Even gold as a "standard of payment" has some limitations and qualifications. By the act of 1792, re-enacted in 1873, all gold coins of the United States were made full legal tender, but, if they lose by abrasion the one-eighth part of one grain on the dollar, they are then only legal tender by weight.

According to the currency act of 1900, it is provided in Sec. 1: "That the dollar consisting of twenty-five and eight-tenths grains of gold nine-tenths fine... shall be the standard unit of value... etc. Dollar is the unit of account, but in this section 'standard unit of value' means 'standard unit of payment' or it has no intelligent meaning."

This was certainly intended to make twenty-five and eight-tenths grains of gold nine-tenths fine the standard by which all other forms of money are to be measured, and the "standard of payment" of all obligations. But what is it?

Heretofore, the "gold standard" has been a coin made of gold. The money made was the standard and not the metal. It is, by this law, attempted to make the standard, not the gold coin of the United States, but gold by weight. The treasury department was before treating gold coin and gold bullion very much as if they were one and the same, but, under this act, the legal distinction ceases, and gold bullion now forms part of the gold reserve.

It may very well be questioned where we have not, almost without knowing it, passed from a standard under which gold is a legal tender by coinage to a standard under which gold is a legal tender by weight; whether the scales of Shylock have not become more important to our monetary standard than the authority of the government represented by its stamp.

With all the uncertainty about what performs the money function; with all this confusion of standards of payment; with a "gold standard" that may be claimed to be based upon weight and not upon coinage; with a "silver standard" based upon coinage and not upon weight; nominally a Nebraska tender for all debts, but that may be deprived of its power as a "standard of payment" by contract; with a national bank currency—the debt of corporations—circulating as money, and by law a legal tender for all payment to the United States except duties on imports, and for all debts and demands from the United States except interest on the public debt; and it is impossible to believe that the money question involves now, whatever it may have included in the past, nothing more than the "adequacy of the money supply."

We have surrendered into the hands of corporations the prerogative of the government to issue money, and with this has gone all possibility of government control over the banking corporations control over commercial credits, and guarantees to them power to expand and contract credits at will. The enormous deposits and continuing expansion of credits, as estimated in

the report of the comptroller of the currency, necessarily and inevitably draws into and ties up in the bank reserves—or would if the banks complied with the law—a large part of the money outside of the treasury vaults. If every bank held such reserve, as banking experience has shown to be the lowest that can be held with safety, sixty per cent of all the money in existence would be tied up in these reserves.

Many of these banks are not complying with the law, or banking experience. For several years many national banks have, with the knowledge and connivance of the secretary of the treasury and the comptroller of the currency, been holding reserves that are below the requirements of the law. Now comes a member of the president's cabinet and admits that thirty-six out of the forty-two national banks in New York city have, since January 1, 1902, encroached upon their reserves. These are "central reserve" banks, "reserve agents," holding the reserves of a vast number of "reserve banks of other cities" and of the country banks.

The condition that confronts us is a low average of bank reserves and a large volume of deposits and "loans and discounts." The financial condition is a strain in both directions.

Any attempt on the part of the banks to relieve this strain by increase of reserves, or decrease of credits, must result in business disturbance. There is no way to avoid this except by an increase of the money in circulation, and such increase must be made without disturbing the credits on the reserves.

Prior to the act of March 14, 1900, this could be done only by the treasury department. It was done by the sale and purchase of bonds, by paying interest on the public debt in advance, etc. Such relief was always followed by increase in deposits and credits, and consequent increase in reserves, with a renewal of the strain calling for more relief.

Such has been the reliance upon the government, as an adjunct to banking corporations in the business of manufacturing credits, to supply the unhealthy demand created by folly, avarice and gambling.

There is danger in the great industrial and commercial combines that are setting at naught the law of supply and demand as related to industrial products. There is danger in the abandonment of our great declaration of freedom. But these two questions—trusts and imperialism—are inseparably connected with and rest upon the money question. It is idle to talk about destroying trusts or staying the tide towards imperialism until we have controlled the power of combined wealth.

Touch the combine of banking institutions in New York city and you touch the greatest representative of concentrated wealth. Concentrated wealth has in all ages tended to the slavery of the producing classes and to imperialism in government. Mammon is the mother of trusts and imperialism. Mammon has in all ages been the enemy of liberty. To permit this combination of financial interests to control and use the most important prerogative of government is to endanger the perpetuity of our institutions.

The money question is not the only question, but it cannot be laid aside for any other. Money represents the equities of social organization. In the highest and best sense it represents human development.

If our money is to be used by gamblers as chips to count their winnings; if our financial system is to be used as a method and instrument of oppression, the time will come when we will be compelled to choose between property rights and human rights, and property rights will go down before the spirit of liberty, even though it be in a social cataclysm.

Such has been the experience of history. Wrong cannot be made perpetual. Justice cannot become a vested right. Moral forces cannot be defied. Ethical principles cannot be set at naught. Human development cannot be permanently enjoined, nor can the stream of progress be made to water nothing but the fields of private interests.

FLAVIUS J. VAN VORHIS.
Indianapolis, Ind.

COLORADO POPULISTS

When the Democrats Refused to Fuse They Put a Full Populist State Ticket in the Field

When the populist state convention was informed that the democratic state convention by a vote of 498 to 375 had refused to fuse, it immediately proceeded to place a full ticket in the field and the following nominations were made by acclamation:

Governor, Judge Frank W. Owens, Lake county.
Lieutenant governor, Thomas Anear, San Juan county.
Secretary of state, David A. Mills, Arapahoe county.
Congressman at large, R. H. Northcutt, Washington county.
State treasurer, James L. Hurt, Sagamore county.
Attorney general, Charles C. Post, Clear Creek county.
State auditor, Matthew J. Layden, El Paso county.
State superintendent of public schools, Mrs. Helen M. Grenfels, of Gilpin county.

The idea that the provincials down along the Atlantic coast have of the great west may be gathered from the announcement made in the eastern dailies that the body of Bartholin, the Chicago murderer, was found in "a rice field" in Iowa.

GOLD AND FIAT

Mr. Anthony Discusses Gold Money and Its Representatives, Fiat Money

Editor Independent: Any statement that contradicts our experience is received both by the learned and unlearned with incredulity. From the nature of things it seems impossible to make any material a unit of measure. We cannot put a material figure one into a material yard-stick, a material pound weight, a material bushel basket or a material gold dollar into our heads where the counting is done. No one ever saw material gold used as a unit. No one can imagine how it can be so used. All the material which expresses the unit can be to express things that are not the greatest yard stick can only express in the cloth it measures the three feet itself contains. Applied forty times it determines the forty yards in the bolt. A carpenter with his square exactly prepared the sills of a building for the studding because his square is honest and always expresses and measures the same inches and feet. If it varied every time he pushed it up from four inches to forty inches he could do no accurate work.

Last winter our gold dollar measured here only four dozen eggs. It now measures here nearly seven. In New York it now measures about four dozen. Is this a safe measure, an honest measure? The carpenter's square measures alike one or fifty barn frames, here and in Alaska and everywhere. We are so habituated to things that are not that we cannot see the things that are. One of the greatest advantages of learning is to unlearn the things that are not, that we may learn the things that are. Our habits so fill us with things that are not, that we have no room for the things that are. Once in the world history a Christ appeared, with the capacity to see and use the eternal verities which press upon us for recognition, who astonished the beholders with his divine power. His material became so obedient to the life that it partook of the immortality of the life. Corruption found no alimony in his body on which it could feed. Death baffled sank into the grave prepared for the body, to relieve the life from the domination of the body. The church seems to have perverted this system of natural ethics which the Nazarene taught into the worship of a hierarchy and theology created by it or the devil for the enslavement of a class.

No one can see the truth unless the truth is in him. A truth foreign to us must be put into language we know. A foreigner can only tell me my house is on fire through eyes I comprehend. A farmer's wife takes forty dozen eggs to the store for exchange and Andy tells her he is paying today a dollar for eight dozen. Oscar, the village cobbler, tells her she has \$5 worth of eggs. He uses no material figure one in counting. Each egg expresses the unit, but neither one egg nor the forty dozen are the unit. The farmer's wife selects forty yards of cotton cloth at 5c per yard, 10 lbs. of coffee at 10c per pound, 20 lbs. of sugar at 5c per pound, and 2 bu. of potatoes at 50c per bushel. Here the exchange of the material eggs at \$5 for Andy's material goods at \$5 is completed by the price unit, no gold being used. The quantity of eggs is determined by the unit of number. The quantity of cloth by the unit of length.

When I was a lad in my father's factory the quantity of a bolt of cloth was determined by two sharp steel spindles set exactly three feet apart in two upright posts. Here the unit of measure was the feet of empty space. The quantity of coffee and sugar is measured by the unit of weight. No one ever saw the 16 ounces of gravity or the earth's attraction which the scale marked off to indicate each pound or unit contained in the coffee and sugar. The quantity of potatoes is determined by the bushel unit 32 quarts of empty space.

In this exchange of the eggs for Andy's goods we have used each of the four exact units by their quantity. Every product of nature has these four qualities, number, length, weight and bulk and their sum makes the whole, the product. As each of these qualities do have an exact unit of measure for exchange it follows mathematically that their sum, the whole product must equally have an exact measure for exchange. If this is not true the science of mathematics is no longer exact science which never recedes, but always advances. History in all the ancient languages to which I have had access shows what this exact scientific unit is, and shows the number of grains of silver and gold used to represent this unit at the most ancient known ratio of 10 to 1. If Andy should say to the farmer's wife, "we are not taking eggs today; the grocer across the way will get you gold for them." She exchanges her five dollar units in the eggs for the grocer's five dollar unit's contained in his gold. She then exchanges the five units of material gold for Andy's five units in his material goods. She makes all the exchanges of material for material by the unit of price. In the direct exchange she uses no gold. She exchanges by the immaterial price unit. All exchanges of material things for material things are made by the price unit. Gold, silver or any material under existing conditions it is impossible to make exchanges in any other way. And this price unit is fiat nothing—the imaginary fiat price of a few grains of gold. By fiat of law the price of the grains of gold which represented the true unit have been declared the unit.

Ignorance, custom and habit have reconciled the use of this false measure equality with the worship of gods

who never were. Our gold standard can equally assert that nothing shall be something. Since men are fooled by names, the word dollar which expressed the true unit was applied to this fiat price unit. The form and name were retained while the life was murdered. If our wise solons should enact by law that no little girl could learn to do the simplest sum in her head or cipher it out on her slate unless she led a russet colored or yellow leg to school (a white hog would be impious) such a law would be less absurd than our law declaring that 58.8 grains 9-10 fine of gold shall remain the standard unit of exchange, while neither could any more be used to cipher with than the gold hog can be and to make exchanges, would either express the unit of number. Our gold hog represents and expresses nothing. Expressing nothing, its picture expressing nothing. The limited capacity of steam presses and figures printed on them, \$100,000,000 being nearly as easily printed as \$1. Product is limited to capacity of production. All those paper pictures draw interest which can alone be paid by productive industry. When interest outruns capacity of production ruin comes, production ceases and chaos reigns. With the free use of our true unit, like the free use of our other units, there would be no more danger of too much money than of too many yard-sticks.

It seems useless, Mr. Editor, to construct theories to reconcile false conditions with nature's law and order. The truths of material law and order known and applied remove the false conditions. Solomon wisely says there is nothing new under the sun. The limited of the Supreme Intelligence (called God or Nature) materialized contained all things from the beginning within itself. The truth is only new to the ignorant. The assertion of ignorance, contradicting science and history, that there can be unit exact for the measure of product on exchange, reminds me of an honest, ignorant, credulous English draughtman by the name of John Huddon, who lived in Jackson, Mich. The boys took advantage of John's credulity by corrupting all sorts of yarns upon him. John always listened to the story patiently, but if it exceeded the bounds of his credulity he had one unvarying answer, "That's a lie on the face of it and John Huddon knows it."

All true units are determined parts of real realities. Their material representation created by it or the devil for the enslavement of a class.

The unit of the gold men is fiat nothing. Nothing applied, measures nothing. Falseness is a parasite that cannot lift its head unless that it has a real thing to climb. Gold coins into money to tender the law to complete exchanges, expressing nothing but the fiat of law, is necessarily fiat money. All its representative pictures are equally fiat. The gold men have expended millions to tie their fiat unit to one commodity only—gold. Why? These boarders of gold, making this commodity the only material that can tender the law to compete exchange, by withholding or circulating their paper pictures of gold through the law of supply and demand, can manipulate the price of all other things from zero when they wish to buy to infinity when they wish to sell. Yet these gold men call gold money the only honest money and this one commodity the sole measure of all other commodities. Are they also the only honest men who through their manipulation of this one commodity forever convert the products of industry into interest-bearing debt from the producers to the non-producers.

COMMUNITY.
"That same purpose changer, that sly devil,
That broker, that still breaks the pate of faith
That daily break vow: he that wins of all,
Of kings, of beggars, old men, young men, maids;
Who having no external thing to lose
But the world maid—cheats the poor maid of that;
That smooth-faced gentleman, tickling commodity—
Commodity the bias of the world;
The world, who of itself is paired well,
Made to run even, upon even ground;
Till this advantage, this vile drawing bias,
This sway of motion, this commodity,
Makes it take head from all indifference,
From all direction purpose, course, intent,
And this same bias, this commodity
This band, this broker, this all changing word
Clapped on the outward eye
From a resolved and honorable course
Doth draw all to base and vile conclusion."

—King John, Act II, Scene II.

Let us, Mr. Editor, blaze the path through this wilderness of our ignorance covered with tickets the growth of the hoary ages, knowing the railroad will follow the trail and farms with fields of waving grain and blossoming orchards and towns and villages and cities of industry and men and women and children. Jew and Gentile alike, living in freedom in the recognized presence of the living God.

F. W. ANTHONY.
Mattawan, Mich.

The United States patent office is invaded by men applying for patents on devices for burning oil, gas and several kinds of vapors produced by chemical action. The high price of coal has set the inventors to work. The inventor is the one enemy whom the trusts can't get rid of.

MONEY AS A MECHANISM

Mr. De Hart Continues His Review of Del Mar's Book—A Different Idea of the Peculiar Function of Money

Editor Independent: For some time I have been wanting to talk or write about money as a mechanism. I have been thinking that I could in this way throw more light upon the subject than by talking or writing about it as a "measure of value," or a "medium of exchange." In fact, I believe, that if we will look at money as a mechanism, we will soon begin to see not only that it is a measure of value, but exactly how it acts or works as such. I am beginning to think that money is not so much a medium of exchange as a measure of value. We see it circulating in payment of taxes, interest and other debts, also in exchange for commodities and payment of services; and then we conclude that its primary function or work is to serve as a medium of exchange. We cannot eat it, or drink it, or wear it; and then we conclude that it is only a medium of exchange. Such is the view taken of it by the political economists generally; and such is the view we find in the text books written by the economists and used in our colleges, universities and other institutions of learning. These writers also say, that one of the functions of money is to serve as a measure of value, and they try to point out how it acts or works as such; but, as a rule, they do not succeed very well, partly, because they have no very definite meaning for the word value, and partly because they have no very definite meaning for the word money.

If these men should ever succeed in getting a definite meaning for the word value, which they can get from some of the later writers on money, if not from some of the later writers on economics, they will then have to get a definite meaning for the word money, which they can only get by studying the statutes or laws on the subject of coinage, banking, etc. This will require a long study on the part of those who are not in the habit of dissecting statutes. It is peculiarly the work of lawyers, and they can do it more easily than those who are not accustomed to such work. And, I must say, that it is a dreary task even for a lawyer, who is accustomed to such work. It is a work requiring so much patience, that few lawyers have ever done it; and I do not know of a single political economist, whose writings indicate that he has done it. Mr. Del Mar, however, who does not claim to be a lawyer, or an economist, has been at work many years on this branch of the case, and his writings show that he knows more about the subject than all the lawyers and economists put together. I would, therefore, recommend him to those who would like to know something about the true nature of money as well as something about the true nature of value.

Coming back to the question, How does money act as a measure of value? there is no difficulty in seeing how it acts as a medium of exchange or a medium for the payment of debts; but it has always been more difficult to see how it acts or works as a measure of value. As soon as we have commenced to discuss this, we have always got into a fog; and, yet, the function of money, as a measure of value, is far more important than its function as a medium of exchange or payment of debts. I am not sure but that money has no other function than that of a measure of value; the other function being only incidental to that of a measure. If I am correct, or only half way correct, then it becomes all important that we should understand money as a measure, whether we know anything about it as a medium or not. It is with this view, that I have undertaken to write about money as a mechanism.

Looking at money, from this standpoint, Mr. Del Mar says: "Money is a mechanism of society life designed to measure and determine value." You see that it is not a machine merely, designed to do a certain kind of work on the farm or in the factory, as a money-machine, hay-rake drawn by a horse or a plow drawn by horses or a steam engine, but a piece of mechanism, which has the ability to do many kinds of work. It is not only a mechanism, but a society mechanism, which means that it is such a mechanism that society is obliged to adopt or construct for a certain purpose; or it may be for many purposes, but all the purposes must be for the benefit of society generally, and not for one man or one set of men.

As soon as we can grasp the idea that the mechanism is for the benefit of all alike in the society or nation, then we begin to see not only what money is, in any particular nation, but what it ought to be. It is one thing to point out what money actually is in our nation, but quite another to say what it ought to be. As soon as we begin to look into the mechanism of our money, we find that it is all bottomed on gold, with several kinds of paper money all redeemable with gold and to be so redeemed or else good for nothing—lost forever—and on top of the gold and paper money, we find a vast system of credits or debts all redeemable with the gold or paper money; the total amount of all our money and credits constituting what might be called our currency.

As soon as we begin to examine this vast system carefully, we find that it is all for the benefit of those who may happen to own all the gold and not for the benefit of society generally. This must lead to the conclusion that our money system is a bad piece of mechanism. Having come to this conclusion, we naturally ask ourselves, What kind of a system ought we to have?