

He probably remembered that a general of the United States army had signed an agreement wherein it was stipulated that in certain territory, where United States sovereignty had been declared and over which the United States flag waved, any slave might have the privilege of obtaining his freedom by paying to the master "the usual market price." In that particular case the "usual market price" is said to be about \$20. In San Francisco it would seem that the usual market price ranges from \$1,700 to \$2,500. The difference, however, is purely one of dollars and cents. And if \$20 could be designated as the barrier to human freedom in the Sulus, the "heathen Chinese," perhaps, felt justified in raising the barrier in California to the extent of a few hundred dollars.

Navigation Laws.

"An Old Merchant," writing to a New York paper, says:

Why ignore the true reason why American merchant shipping does not grow as fast as Germany's? Mr. Depew told the Senate it was because Germany paid big bounties. But Germany pays only \$1 in ship subsidies to \$3 paid by France. Even Italy pays more for ship subsidies than Germany. Yet Germany's merchant marine is growing faster than either France's or Italy's.

Now, why? Because Bismarck gave Germans free trade in ships. They were allowed to go and buy their ships where they could get them cheapest. That brought a fleet of German merchantmen built on the Clyde to German ports, with German registry, and now, having got that start, Germany is building ships for herself—and for other nations too. Repeal our stupid old navigation laws and we shall soon have an American merchant marine.

Railroad Trusts.

President Fish, of the Illinois Central Railroad, says:

Consolidation is coming. It has been coming for years, and I don't think anything will arise to stop it. It is the result of natural conditions and of competition.

Competition is recognized as a good thing theoretically, but there is nothing so harmful to railroads and to shippers as unrestrained and unlimited competition.

It is not a great stretch of the imagination to see all the railway lines of the country amalgamated into groups, according to geographical conditions, and each group controlled by one financial interest.

Mr. Fish says he favors the consolidation on the ground that it would be an excellent thing for the public and the railroads. According to Mr. Fish, "consolidation is the only way in which uniformity and stability in rates can be secured." He says it has been proved by the railway history of other countries that consolidation does bring stability in rates, and Mr. Fish does not believe we will have this condition until consolidation is effected.

It is not difficult to see that consolidation would be a good thing for the stockholders of the railroad. But Mr. Fish would find it difficult to convince intelligent men that it would be good for the public. The idea that the public is to be benefited by the creation of an immense railroad trust, absolutely controlling the highways of the nation, is too absurd for discussion. It may be that consolidation is coming; it may be that nothing can stop it. It will not be a great surprise if all the railway lines of the country are amalgamated into one great railroad

trust, and nothing will do more than this to give impetus to the movement of government ownership of the railroads.

The financiers who are giving encouragement to the railroad trust idea do not realize the dangerous ground upon which they stand. They see only the immense advantages they will derive if they are permitted to continue their gigantic organization. They do not believe the people would resent the impositions; they do not know that the people would in short order own and control the railroads of the country, fixing rates in accordance with public interests.

Stone on Party Organization.

Ex-Governor Wm. J. Stone, of Missouri, vice-chairman of the democratic national committee, took occasion to discuss, in a recent speech, the proposed reorganization of the democratic party. The active part taken by him in the campaigns of 1896 and 1900, his acknowledged ability and his courageous defense of democratic principles, make his views both weighty and interesting. The following is an extract from his speech:

I turn now from these general observations which I have made because they should be always borne in mind even in the discussion of public questions, to the consideration of party interests as they relate to the present and the future. Recently we have heard much talk of party reorganization. It is said that the party should be rejuvenated, recalled from its wanderings, put in better hands, and rededicated to true democratic principles and the public welfare. The indictment and the demand are alike too vague and indefinite to be of value. It is easy to say that the democratic party, as now organized, has been undemocratic; but in what respect has it been undemocratic? It is easy to say that the party should return to the true principles of the party; but what are the principles to which these reorganizers would commit the party? We must have a bill of particulars before we can pass intelligently upon the merits of the contention. The very fact that these so-called reorganizers indulge only in general accusation and indefinite assertion, avoiding any specific statement of their own position, subjects them the suspicion of concealing their real designs and of trying to accomplish by covert means what they would not dare to attempt in the open. Their tactics are too much the tactics of those who beat tomtoms in ambush that they may stampede by a mere bewildering confusion of sounds. Besides, I am not over-pleased with the source from which this proposal emanates.

It comes from men who deserted, if they did not betray, the party in at least two of the most stupendous and momentous conflicts in which it has ever engaged, and it contemplates not only the exaltation into places of party leadership of those who sulked and those who fought openly in the ranks of the enemy, but contemplates also the humiliation and retirement of those who stood loyally by the party flag, took the hazard and bore the brunt of battle, and upon whose swords and garments there are today no stains of party treason or treachery.

A proposal of this kind, coming from this quarter, will not, in my opinion, be kindly received, but, on the contrary, will be treated, as it ought to be, by a great majority of the party with resentment and disdain. I believe I voice the real and best sentiment of the party when I say that we would welcome the return of those who abandoned us even on the very field of battle if they should return in good faith to aid the party with honest counsel and with an honest purpose to support its conclusions; but I do not believe that the party, as a whole, will or ought either to welcome or receive those who come mouthing condemnations of others who have been always steadfast and true, who trumpet laudatory justifications of their own apostasy, and who defiantly proclaim a

purpose to seize the party organization and direct its future destiny. For one I am willing, without reference to the unfortunate events of the recent past, to discuss party policies with any and every man who is willing to stand by the party and accept in good faith the final result of its deliberations; but I want nothing to do with those who, for selfish reasons or vaunting vanity, assume to be better and wiser than all who may differ from them, and who, failing to force their conceptions upon the party, stand ready to desert it in a critical hour. We are not yet willing to admit that we were wrong, much less undemocratic, upon any position we assumed.

South America's Growth.

European affairs are so attractive that the people of the United States often overlook interesting facts within their own bailiwick. We know comparatively little of South America and its remarkable progress. The Dallas, Tex., News calls attention to the fact that South America can boast of one of the great cities. According to the News, "Buenos Ayres is the greatest city south of the equator. The population is believed to exceed 800,000. It was officially estimated to be over 795,000 at the close of 1899, and the increase is calculated to be close to 30,000 a year. Therefore, New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia are the only cities in the United States which surpass the Argentine metropolis in the number of inhabitants. There are only about ten cities inhabited by white men in all the world which are bigger.

"Size is not the only notable form of development. The revenue of the city is about \$8,000,000 a year in gold. Its streets and parks are lighted by more than 13,000 gas jets, over 8,000 lamps, and about 1,250 arc lights, of 1,000 to 2,000 candle-power apiece. There are fifteen theaters or smaller places of public amusement, and they have about 1,600,000 spectators every year. The street railways carry 116,000,000 passengers annually, which means some \$5,000,000 income. It is one of the most cosmopolitan of all the earth's centers. Besides the underlying and still dominant Spanish element which used to have the Argentine in exclusive possession, there is a large Italian population, fast increasing, and the Germans, English, French, Irish, Welsh, Portuguese, Chileans, Poles, Russians, Swiss, and other nationalities are well represented in the Argentine Republic, and, to some extent, in its capital. All this is interesting, but the most important fact is yet to be stated. There is a cleanliness movement on in Buenos Ayres, and it is said to be a great success. The men in charge of the city are men of intelligence, who know something of the importance of sanitary improvements, and are said to be alive to their duties. One of them recently announced the determination of himself and his lieutenants, in spite of many obstacles, to make Buenos Ayres the cleanest city in the world."

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the Strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good
or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each
the bloom or blight
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep
upon the right,
And the choice goes on forever between that darkness
and that light."

—James Russell Lowell