

The Commoner.

ing to secure credit because of the increased volume of money, which they did not contemplate and did not want.

Business conditions have not been normal during the last three years. War in the Philippines and in South Africa has operated to raise the price level,—first, by withdrawing a large number of men from the labor market; and second, by increasing the demand for provisions, army supplies and equipment for soldiers. Nations have been mortgaging the future to secure money to spend in the present.

There is a theoretical advantage in the double standard, but the practical necessity for it has been based upon the scarcity of gold. If the production of gold increases to such an extent as to furnish a volume of money which will keep pace with population and business, the restoration of bimetalism will not be necessary. But if such a condition comes it will be more gratifying to bimetalists than to the advocates of the gold standard, for bimetalists will have secured that which they desire, namely, a stable dollar, while the advocates of the gold standard will be disappointed because of the disappearance of the dear dollar.

Whether this increase in the production of gold will be sufficient to maintain the level of prices, is a question which no one is prepared at this time to decide.

Not all of the annual product enters into the currency. A very considerable proportion of the production goes into the arts and some gold is necessary to compensate for the shrinkage by abrasion and loss of coin. No one can say with certainty just how much will be added to the gold coin of the world annually. It must be remembered that a large addition to the annual supply of money is necessary to keep pace with population and industry. In 1890 Senator Sherman made a speech in support of the bill which bore his name, and in that speech he argued that an annual addition of more than fifty million of dollars was then necessary in this country alone. How much would be necessary for the entire world if all nations adopted the gold standard? Then, besides furnishing the necessary annual increase there would have to be enough gold to replace the standard silver money now in use in the world, which amounts to some \$4,000,000,000. There is also a large quantity of uncovered paper, which might absorb a great deal more.

It requires a period of years to measure the influence of the money supply on prices. All that anyone can say now is that the increased production of gold has brought a measure of relief; no one can say that it will be found entirely adequate.

Even now the tendency of prices is downward again and nearly every week shows a greater number of business failures than the corresponding week of last year. According to the index numbers of the London Economist the price level reached the highest point in March of 1900 and remained nearly stationary until September of that year. Since the later date there has been a perceptible fall. If the reaction from high prices continues for a considerable period it will be proof that the

gold supply is not equal to the demand made upon it, and the necessity for bimetalism will again become apparent.

Whether improved conditions will force the money question into the background or whether less favorable conditions will give it a new emphasis, no one can predict with certainty. The same principle, however, which divided the people upon the money question will divide them upon a number of other questions, and those who take the side of the masses on the money question will take the people's side on other questions which separate the wealth producers from those who seek an unearned and undeserved advantage over their fellows.



Civil Service Reform.

The New York Nation, one of the staunchest supporters of civil service reform, thus discusses the new member of the Civil Service commission:

The President's appointment of ex-Representative Rodenberg of Illinois as Civil Service Commissioner is ideal—that is, it represents perfectly the McKinley notion of civil service reform. Mr. Rodenberg has openly and ostentatiously opposed the whole reform system. On February 17, 1900, he was one of the seventy-seven members of the House who voted, on a formal roll call, to strike out the appropriation for the Civil Service Commission. This is, of course, the annual spoils-men's motion. They wish to kill the reform system by refusing to provide its necessary expenses. To stand up on a yea-and-nay vote and be registered in favor of this attack on the merit plan of filling public offices, has long been recognized as the mark of the thorough-going spoilsman, the man who sneers at "snivel-service reform" and denounces the "hypocrites" who pretend that Congressmen will not appoint the noblest specimens of the race. Mr. Rodenberg is fresh from this demonstration of his hostility to reform, and it is fitting that President McKinley should now select him to administer the law which he abhors. It is like appointing an ex-burglar to be police magistrate.

Mr. Rodenberg's "special fitness for the place" is trumpeted in a dispatch from Washington to the Court Circular—beg pardon, we meant the Tribune. Yes, but he was also eminently fitted for any other place within the gift of the president, and uncommonly anxious to fill one; the kind and its duties being a matter of indifference, provided the salary were satisfactory. There was "a great time at the White House today," telegraphed the Washington correspondent of the Chicago Record on March 20. He referred to a gathering of the Illinois delegation for the purpose of demanding from the President the appointment of ex-Representative Rodenberg as a Commissioner of the St. Louis Exposition. Mr. McKinley was reminded that he had been appointing "dead ducks" to that desirable sinecure, but that four of them had come from the Senate and only two from the House. Moreover, the Republican dead ducks had been getting the worst of it. The Illinois delegation united, therefore, on Mr. Rodenberg. He was a republican, no duck could be deader than he, and he ought to have the place. The President demurred, and is even said to have displayed a little temper at being asked to provide for so many "busted" politicians. Happily, he bethought himself of the vacant Civil Service Commissionership, and, regarding it frankly as "a place," flung it as a sop to the spoils-hunter. But we know that this is no "backward step" in civil service reform, because President McKinley promised that none should be taken during his administration.



Strange Things.

Mr. Rockhill, the American Commissioner at Peking, is full of trouble. It appears there is a ceremonial peculiar to the Chinese Court which is extremely objectionable to Americans and Europeans who dance attendance before Chinese royalty. This ceremonial is called the

"Ko-Tow." When one enters the presence of the Chinese emperor and empress, he must fall prostrate and beat his head upon the ground. Because foreign ministers have objected to this ceremonial they have found it necessary to absent themselves from the presence of the royal family, and transact their business with the representatives of the ruler of the country. No effort has heretofore been made to abolish this ceremonial. Mr. Rockhill has taken the bull by the horns and is endeavoring to induce the Chinese Court to receive European and American representatives without requiring them to indulge in a ceremony so obnoxious.

Mr. Rockhill is not to be blamed. On the contrary he is to be applauded. It would be difficult for an intelligent American or European to take kindly to the Ko-Tow ceremony. Yet we doubt not that to the people of China who are accustomed to that ceremony it is no serious embarrassment. It all depends on the way in which a person has been reared. Even we Americans have some practices which the Chinese cannot quite understand. They probably find it difficult to understand how it is that a people who, as our missionaries tell them, follow a God "who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believed in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"—they probably find it difficult, we repeat, to understand how such a people could find it in their hearts to loot and pillage and destroy as we have looted and pillaged and destroyed in China.

This Ko-Tow ceremony doubtless puzzles us no more than some of our practices puzzle the Chinese.



The Concord Hymn.

BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

(On the nineteenth of April, 1836, a monument was erected upon the Concord battlefield to commemorate the engagement fought there April 19th, 1775. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote a hymn which was sung on that occasion and the first stanza was inscribed upon the monument. This number of the COMMONER is issued on the anniversary of the battle of Concord and the reader is invited to compare the sentiment expressed by the poet with the sentiment that inspires wars waged for the purpose of extending trade.)

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.
The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.
On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set today a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.
Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.