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Criminal Speculation.

If a crime is defined as an act the doing of which is prohibited by law, stock speculation cannot be considered criminal, but when the word crime is used in its broader sense to describe an act which offends against morality or the public welfare, it certainly includes that species of gambling upon the market which endangers the community as well as injures the participants. A record of Wall Street's doings for the last week is an indictment against our boasted civilization. That such transactions are allowed is as much a reflection upon the intelligence of the country as it is upon the conscience of the people. It is little less than amazing that a few men should be permitted to corner the market for their own selfish purposes, beat down the price of one stock and boom the price of another stock, demoralizing business and jeopardizing the interests of all classes of society. It is reported that the slump in stocks amounted to seven hundred millions in value, and that the New York banks had to put up nearly twenty millions of dollars to prevent a panic. How will the historian describe an age in which a petty thief is severely punished while great criminals go unwhipped? It often takes an object lesson to arouse the people to the evils of a bad system and the recent fluctuations in the stock market, costly as they have been, will be cheap if they lead to legislation which will put an end to stock gambling, erroneously described as "business."

Corporations Enter Parliament.

From London dispatches it would seem that corporation influence is manifesting itself in the English parliament. The following is in point:

The discussion in the house of commons today of a private bill conferring additional powers on the London & Northwestern railway led to a great deal of acrimonious recrimination. John Burns, who, with the opposition generally, opposed the measure, was called to order by the speaker for stigmatizing some of the railroad representatives in the house as "ornamental guinea pigs." Mr. Burns' special reference was to Mr. Macartney, who was elected a director of the London & Northwestern railroad after having been appointed financial secretary to the admiralty.

The bill was finally rejected by a vote of 210 to 202, amid prolonged cheering.

Mr. Swift MacNeill, a liberal member, entered a protest against Mr. Macartney's vote in favor of the bill on the ground that he was pecuniarily interested. Mr. Macartney's right to vote was defended on the ground of precedent, Mr. Balfour going to his rescue. Sir

Henry Campbell-Bannerman and John Dillon advocated a rule prohibiting directors of corporations from voting under such circumstances. Mr. Kier-Hardie said that the House ought to adopt a higher standard of purity and declared that there was a strong feeling in the country "that the House was becoming more and more corrupt financially." He declared that "the working people regarded the House as an annex to the stock exchange."

All this goes to show that corporate influence is making itself felt on the other side of the Atlantic and that there, as here, it is being exerted in behalf of privileges and favors antagonistic to the interests of the common people. It also shows that those who are under corporation influence lose all sense of propriety and insist upon voting upon questions in which they are pecuniarily interested.

The Effect of Diet.

It is reported from Havana that the Cuban Commissioners upon their return gave a detailed account of their trip to Washington, including the social attention shown them. Some objection was made to the recording of the entertainment part of the report, but the objection was very properly over-ruled.

The republican leaders have expert knowledge on the effect of diet. In the campaign of 1900 they addressed their arguments to the stomach rather than to the head or heart. They insisted that a full meal was the summit of human hope and their theory exhibited some signs of popularity. History testifies to the mollifying effect of food distributed to the poor in the days when plutocracy was destroying the glory of the Roman empire. If the Cuban commissioners were won over to the Platt amendment at the banquet table, it is only fair that this new evidence of the potency of pleasant viands should be preserved in the Cuban archives. If they swallowed their objections to foreign interference and washed them down with wine the fact should be properly authenticated.

There are those who insist that the disposition can be changed by diet and much evidence can be adduced in support of the proposition. Many a man has visited Washington with a disposition to serve his constituents and has found that disposition gradually changed by a diet of champagne and terrapin.

Motion, Not Progress.

A republican reader of *THE COMMONER*—and *THE COMMONER* is glad to have republican readers—complains because this paper refers with approval to the principles of Jefferson, Jackson and Monroe and condemns the princi-

ples set forth by the republican party of today.

The reader referred to objects to the prevalent practice of "ransacking antiquated centuries to find a suitable standard for present day actions." He says:—"All the nations are moving forward in conformity with the growth of knowledge, the birth of new thought, and the expansion of ideas; and it is neither wise, intelligent, nor patriotic to condemn progressive men and advanced measures."

The difficulty with this republican reader is that he fails to distinguish between motion and progress. Motion is change of place; progress is movement forward. He fails to distinguish between growth and inflammation. The republican party is not making progress; it is in motion, but the motion is backward instead of forward. The doctrines which it now advocates are not new; they are as old as history. Imperialism is not an invention of modern origin; it is ancient. It rests upon the doctrine of brute force, and force was the foundation of empires in the past and is the foundation of the monarchies of the old world today.

Cain was the first man to act upon the imperialistic idea. He killed his brother and wore the brand of a murderer forever afterward. Imperialism has been killing ever since. It disregards human rights and moral principles. The fact that a nation instead of an individual commits a wrong does not change the character of the act; neither does the fact that punishment is delayed justify us in believing that it can be avoided. There is only one sound rule, namely, that every violation of human rights will bring its punishment—if a great many join in the violation, the punishment will be greater when it comes.

The principles of Jefferson, Monroe and Jackson are referred to because they were sound principles at the time they were applied, and they are still sound. They can be forgotten; they can be ignored, they can be trampled upon, but their truth cannot be destroyed.

Upsetting the Government.

Referring to the Porto Rico case now pending in the Supreme Court, Senator Spooner of Wisconsin recently predicted that the court's decision would support the administration's policy of imperialism. He based his prediction on the belief that "The Supreme Court will not dare to upset the government." What Senator Spooner meant was that the Supreme Court would not dare to upset the administration. Since we have assumed imperialistic habits we have unconsciously employed imperialistic phraseology. For instance, in the good old days when our republican form of government was jealously guarded, none