

THE DEGENERATING INFLUENCE OF WEALTH

We are not pessimists, but facts are facts, and cannot be ignored.

This glorious republic of the Western hemisphere is the Mecca of the world. The weary eyes of all nationalities turn longingly toward it.

It is the country of hope and of promise to all. It should go on from glory to glory through coming centuries, but will it?

It is now but a century and a quarter old, and yet it shows elements of weakness that are an occasion for alarm to every lover of his country who has studied at all the history of the rise and fall of nations.

We boast of the great prosperity of the country, and for proof cite statistics of trade and of commerce, both home and foreign.

In themselves they are evidences of development and of strength considered alone. But we have to look but a step farther, and we find alarming indications of peril to our free institutions in the concentration of business interests and enormous wealth in few hands.

It is not the fact of concentration alone that suggests the peril but that which is an inevitable accompaniment of such concentration of wealth and power, viz.:

Degeneracy and loss of virility. No nation in history ever made such rapid strides in the direction of tre-

mendous wealth, concentrated in few hands, and consequently no nation ever took such a galloping pace toward the precipice over which nations have plunged into death and oblivion.

The possession of vast fortunes destroys personal ambition, encourages almost every form of vice, degenerates and weakens those who inherit them—not usually those who acquire them through their own efforts—and sends out the children of the third generation physical, mental and moral wrecks. In proof of this fact we have but to look about us. Thus far, in the infancy of this republic, a single son or daughter of a family of inherited wealth has, in most cases, retained enough of the sturdy manhood of the founder to hold the family possessions in the lines that he indicated, while the other children have dissipated and weakened themselves by almost every indulgence imaginable.

But the inevitable tendency is apparent in the excesses of living indulged in; in the selling, for the highest title, the daughters of fortune to the rakes of Europe, and in the indulgence of the passions in drink, in gambling and other forms of fast living.

And still the fight for the possession of dollars goes on, and the dread consequences loom up more ominously and more surely.—Boston Traveler.

PASSING THE EXPENSE ALONG

The gentle and profitable pastime of "passing along the expense" to the consumer is just now being indulged in by the coal mine owners, the coal roads and the coal dealers.

Tomorrow will witness the first delicate raise in prices to the consumer from the low water mark, which was reached a few weeks ago. The increase is fixed at 20 cents per ton, or about 5 per cent.

Thus it will be seen that the great public has scarcely been given time to draw its breath, much less its pocketbook, while comparatively low prices prevailed.

But even at the recent low water mark of \$6.25 per ton the price was from 75 cents to a dollar per ton greater than at the corresponding period last year, an amount equal to about a 15 to 20 per cent increase.

And yet at the former price it was proved that the coal operators made in net profits over five million of dollars more per year than they had made previous to the advance in wages,

granted to the miners about three years ago.

What then must be the prospective profit to the operators under this new scale of prices?

Admitting that the wages of miners have been increased on an average of from 8 to 10 per cent through the recent decision of the coal commission, how can this excessive increase in the price of coal of 15 to 20 per cent be justified?

According to Mr. Baer, whose company controls the hard coal supply, it isn't justified. It is simply scheduled, just as Mr. John Jacob Astor would schedule an increase in the rents of his buildings.

To Mr. Baer it apparently makes no difference that tenants can quit Mr. Astor's buildings, although the public must have coal.

It is the position assumed by such men as President Baer that is rapidly developing the spirit of socialism in the country and giving impetus to the movement for government ownership of all public and semi-public utilities.—Providence Telegram.

WHITEWASH DOESN'T STICK

On April 27 the war department gave out the result of its alleged investigation of the Denver Post's published interview with Gen. F. D. Baldwin, in which the general said that he preferred the negro as a soldier because he did not have to worry about his safety in a fight, "as it doesn't make any difference whether he gets killed or not."

General Baldwin at first tried to explain and modify the interview, but the war department gave him a plain hint to deny it absolutely, and apparently he took the hint, for the report given out from Washington was to the effect that the general was not interviewed, that the Denver Post had been imposed upon, and that the reporter had been discharged. The Denver Post immediately

printed a double-column editorial sustaining the reporter and exposing the impudent mendacity of the official report. The Post said in large type:

"The reporter was not discharged, and his dismissal was not even thought of, because the Post does not believe that he perjured himself when he made oath to the truth of his interview with the general."

No person of ordinary intelligence believes that the reporter lied or that the war department's report is true in any particular. All the evidence, all the testimony worthy of credence, proves beyond reasonable doubt that General Baldwin was interviewed, and said just what the Denver Post reporter swears he said.—Philadelphia North American.

Where Reverence is Due.

In Rome, a monument has been erected in commemoration of the martyrs who established in Caesar's gardens and arena—where they blazed as human torches and writhed in the grasp of jungle beasts—the religion we enjoy in peace and security.

All over the world the "First Church" holds sacred today, the memory of those saints who lived the life of sorrow and denial and died the death of anguish and of fire, and with commendable pertinacity clings to the faith of Peter and Paul, through all the innovations and translations of the Bible and variance of creeds, holding in their hearts a reverence beyond expression, for the noble band of martyrs, whose fearless death taught them the way to live.

Strange to say, the average American citizen is anything but consistent or reverent.

This has been proven by the fact that the home of America's greatest martyr—Abraham Lincoln—has been sold under the hammer and will be converted into a feeding place for stock. Rare marble monuments are erected all over the land, to his memory. The chair he sat in is sacredly cherished, the books he read, the pen he used, the words he wrote are priceless treasures, but the home where he toiled and slept and passed the early hours of his care turned life, is turned over to pack of hungry cattle!

Here his eagle heart soared in dreams of a future useful life, dedicated to mankind; here he trimmed his candle and sat until the small hours of the night studying to fit himself for the place his pure and lofty soul aspired to win in the minds and hearts of men. Here he swung his axe and plied his hoe in humble toil, and here where the earth is sacred to his footsteps—behold; as in the prophesy of Babylon—"the flocks and herds shall feed where golden gardens bloomed."

We are not one of those who believe that fair words and flowers can comfort our dead, but these martyrs who gave to man so great an heritage, deserve a little praise, a little weeping, a great reverence and some consistency in its bestowal.—Lewistown (Ill.) News.

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