

The Commoner.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

VOL. 7, NO. 51

Lincoln, Nebraska, January 3, 1908

Whole Number 363

CONTENTS

TARIFF—HELP OR HINDRANCE?
A WORD TO STATE BANKERS
THE COUNTRY NEWSPAPER
THE WISE AGE
PARTIALITY TO WALL STREET
GOVERNMENT GUARANTEE OF DEPOSITS
THE DUMPING ARGUMENT
PLANNING FOR THE GREAT CONTEST OF
1908
WASHINGTON LETTER
COMMENT ON CURRENT TOPICS
HOME DEPARTMENT
WHETHER COMMON OR NOT
NEWS OF THE WEEK

BIG DIVIDENDS

A New York dispatch to the Chicago Record-Herald follows: "That one jobbing firm affiliated with the American Tobacco company does a business of \$13,000,000 a year in New York City and Yonkers was brought out today in the hearing of the government's action against the company before United States Commissioner Shields. Adolph D. Bendelm, president of the Metropolitan Tobacco company, so testified with reference to this concern. Over seventy-five per cent of the jobbing business of New York City was controlled by the Metropolitan, Mr. Bendelm continued. It bought out twenty smaller jobbers. M. W. Reed, president of the Amsterdam Supply company, organized to purchase supplies for the American Tobacco company and subsidiaries, said the supply company recently earned enough to declare a stock dividend of sixty per cent."

Is this a good or a bad trust?

PRINT THE TESTIMONY

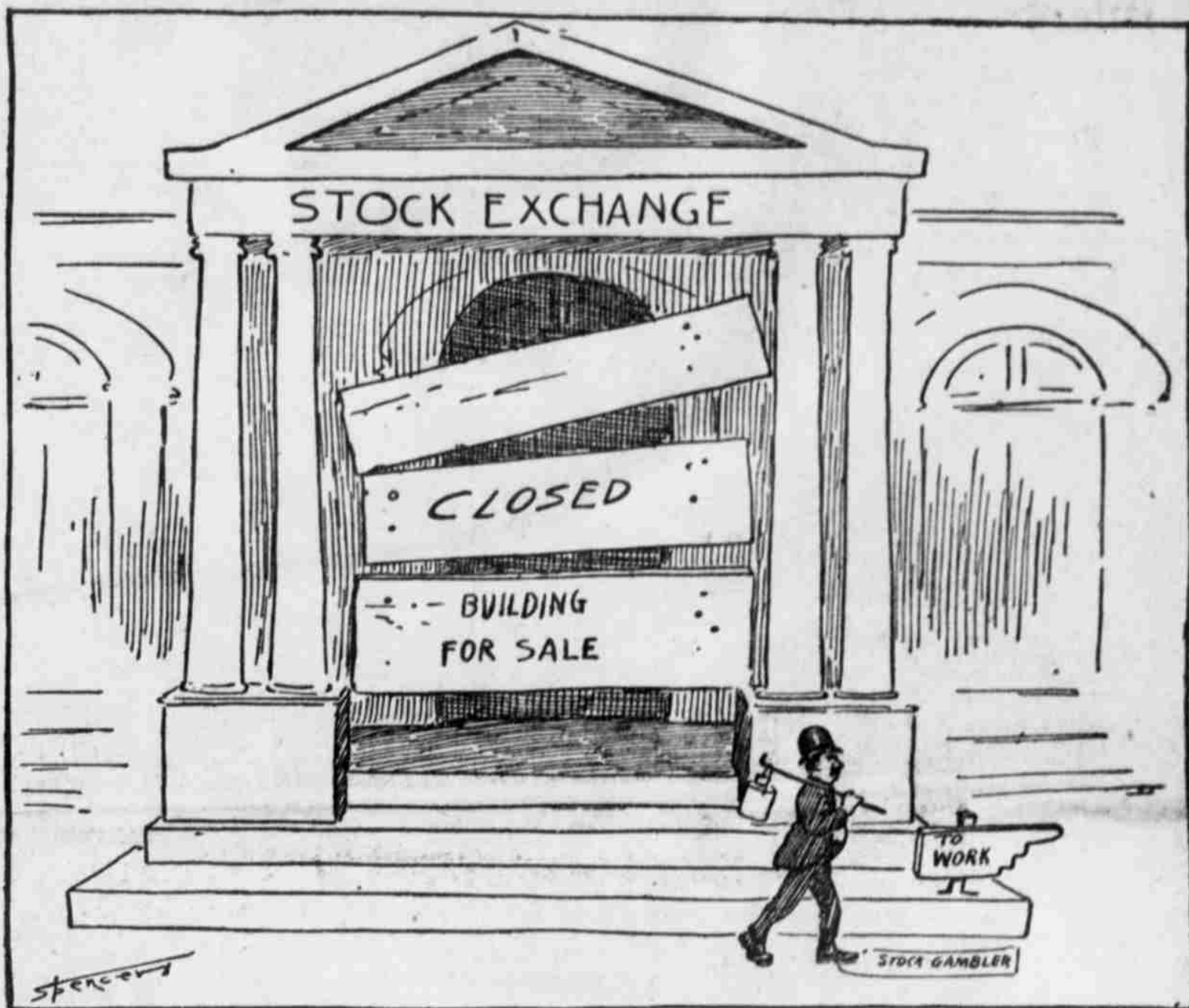
The Saturday Evening Post of December 7 contains an article by John D. Archbold in defense of the Standard Oil company. The fact that Mr. John D. Archbold draws a handsome income each year from the Standard Oil company gives him a bias in favor of the company, and this bias being known to the readers of the Saturday Evening Post, will lessen the weight of the article. That its readers may be correctly informed, it might be well for the Post to present some of the testimony taken in the various suits against the Standard Oil company.

DEMOCRATIC NEWS SERVICE

Mr. Willis J. Abbot is conducting a news service which can be relied upon. His own fidelity to democratic principles, his acquaintance with public men and his knowledge of public affairs all enable him to present to the democratic newspapers national politics from a democratic standpoint. Editors desiring information on public questions ought to write to Mr. Abbot, for he is in a position to tell them what is going on.

NEW POSTAL RULING

The postmaster general has issued an order effective January 1, 1908, which requires publishers of weekly papers to drop from their subscription lists the names of all subscribers whose subscriptions are twelve months or more in arrears. Cancellation of the paper's second-class mail privilege is the penalty for failure to comply with the above rule.



As to Panics--The Ounce of Prevention

Tariff---Help or Hindrance?

Senator Beveridge's article entitled "Revision Necessary—by Commission," and printed in the Reader Magazine, is a frank confession that the import duties which we now collect are indefensible; but while he admits that revision is necessary, he is as unreliable as other champions of protection in the arguments presented and as much at sea as they in proposing a remedy. In the first place, he assumes that the principle of protection has been established throughout the world. He quotes Mr. Balfour, of England, as saying that Great Britain is "on the eve of abandoning that antiquated and moth-eaten system," referring to a tariff for revenue only. He ought to have explained that Mr. Balfour is an ex-premier, and that the prefix "ex" was attached with unusual emphasis because he went before the country on the protection issue. The defeat which the high tariff idea received in Great Britain was especially significant. The movement for protection was headed by Mr. Chamberlain just at the close of the Boer war, when he was enjoying a vast amount of popularity because he had conducted the war for the overthrow of two republics in South Africa. He made a canvass of Great Britain and rallied to his support a large number of manufacturers, who, like the manufacturers of this country, furnished him with the necessary campaign funds. As a result of the contest the liberal party won the greatest victory that has been credited to it in recent years, and the protective idea received a staggering blow. Of course, Senator Beveridge can prophesy a reversal of public sentiment and a future victory for his

pet theory, but prophecies are not history, and predictions are not arguments. The fact that Germany is wedded to a high tariff is not conclusive proof that it is wise. If the tariff system is good, it must stand upon its own merits, not upon the fact that in some other nation those in power manifest a willingness to tax the whole country for the benefit of a part of the country. Our manufacturers, however, are more afraid of the competition of England than they are of the competition of Germany, and yet Germany has the protective system, while England refuses to adopt it, and England, with a low tariff, pays higher wages than Germany with a high tariff. We pay higher wages than either Germany or England, and yet we can send into foreign countries the goods made by high-priced labor and, without any protection, compete successfully. No system of logic has been devised which can prove that we need a high tariff to hold our own markets when we can conquer other markets in open competition with the world.

Senator Beveridge now wants a tariff which will, first, "raise as much revenue as possible; second, encourage our home industries; and third, open foreign markets to our surplus products," and the last he declares to be the "problem for the American producers to solve." The first and second propositions are difficult to reconcile. In proportion as a tariff really increases a home industry, it fails as a revenue measure. If, for instance, we consume ten million dollars' worth of a certain product, of which there is no domestic manufacture, and we put on a fifty per cent duty in order to encourage