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The Independent has been favored with a marked copy of the Christian Cynosure (Chicago) asking that the American people "guard the Mt. Vernon tomb." The whole magazine seems to be devoted to an attack on freemasonry.

Certainty in punishment is much more salutary than severity. In the olden times persons were subject to capital punishment for all sorts of misdemeanors, but crime was even more prevalent than now. The fear of hanging never prevented a murder.

The Independent is pleased to see that the legal representatives of Marion Mead Morrell, who was killed in the Table Rock wreck last month, have sued the Burlington for \$50,000. A. D. McCandless of Wymore and E. O. Kretsinger of Beatrice represent the plaintiff.

The total output of coal, bituminous and anthracite, for the year 1901 was 293,298,516, and for 1902, 295,018,192 tons. Where does the shortage come from? There was a shortage in the output of anthracite of 23,738,536 tons, but that was more than made up by the increase in the output of bituminous.

And now it is announced that Edna Wallace Hopper is to set a new pace for eastern idiots. It is nothing more or less than to have diamonds set in her finger nails. Of course the ingenious paragrapher does not explain how the diamonds can be fastened to the nails—but that doesn't bother him in the least. It suffices for an illustrated two-column article in the Cincinnati Enquirer, that one-time supposedly democratic paper.

Republicans take their political economy second hand from the populists. Populism, seen too oft, familiar with its face, they first denounce and then embrace. Look at these chaps, after having called populists anarchists for ten years for advocating the public ownership of street car lines, water and gas works, now introducing bills in the Nebraska legislature to force the cities to adopt that populist policy. What a strange sort of a creature a mullet head is anyway.

Father Hardy intimates that the state government "sanctions the drunkard-making machine by giving a license" (to sell liquor). He forgets that it isn't the selling of whisky that makes drunkards—but the drinking of whisky. Instead of whipping the devil around the stump, why not give him a direct slap? Selling whisky is not in itself productive of evil—it is the drinking that does the devilry. Why not go after the whisky drinker? Why not make it a criminal offense to drink ardent spirits as a beverage?

THE INDEPENDENT'S LEADERSHIP

Attorney General Knox has at last found out that what The Independent has been declaring for the last two or three years is true. Rebates on the railroads, consequent and resulting from private ownership, is the basis upon which the trusts rest and the source of their greatest profits. Mr. Knox says:

"I believe the rebates and kindred advantages granted by carriers to large operators in the leading industries of the country, as against their competitors, in many years amounted to a sum that would represent fair interest upon the actual money invested in the business of such an operator."

The Independent leads, and one by one the chief administrators of the republican party fall in behind its leadership and adopt its economic views. Two or three years from now the republican leaders may advance enough to adopt the views of The Independent concerning the government ownership of the railroads, but at present they offer no such solution of the problem of rebates. Mr. Knox gives his opinion on the way to prevent rebates as follows:

"My suggestion, therefore, is that as a first step in a policy to be persistently pursued until every industry, large and small, in the country, can be assured of equal rights and opportunities, and until the tendency to monopolization of the important industries of the country is checked, that all discriminatory practices affecting interstate trade be made offenses to be enjoined and punished, such legislation to be directed alike against those who give and those who receive advantages thereof, and to cover discrimination in prices as against competitors in particular localities resorted to for the purpose of destroying competition in interstate and foreign trade, as well as discrimination by carriers."

In reply to that, The Independent assures Mr. Knox that he may set his injunction mills to grinding every day in the year and they will never settle that question. Injunctions were secured in Chicago against the railroads but since that the managers have advanced rates and continued their old practices.

Just at the present time the republican leadership sees a necessity to make a show of doing something to suppress the trusts and various things are proposed, none of which are intended to be effective. It will not do anything that will destroy the source from which the contributions come with which they buy elections. The tariff will remain a shelter for the trusts and the railroads will be managed by men who have a large financial interest in the trusts. The two weapons which could be effectively used to destroy the trusts will not be used, namely, the government ownership of the railroads and removing the tariff shelter.

BLAINE AND MCKINLEY

Every reader of this paper will remember how often it has declared during the last five or six years that if the protectionists continued to hold the government and refused to reduce the exorbitant tariffs in force, that the other manufacturing nations of the earth would enact retaliatory tariffs and the whole world would start on a Chinese exclusion policy. Germany has already greatly raised her tariffs against this country and Austria-Hungary is about to enact similar laws. The rejection of the French reciprocity treaty will result in retaliatory legislation in France. Russia has already to some extent adopted that policy on account of the additional duties imposed on her sugar and so it goes all over the world. No nation can open its markets to us while we shut them off from a market here. The economic necessities of the case would make that certain without retaliatory laws.

"Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad." The idea that we can

continue for any length of time to sell goods to any nation and take nothing in return but gold, is an insane idea. If we do not take goods in return for the goods that we send a nation, then we must take gold. How long could any nation continue to buy any considerable amount of goods and pay for them in gold?

It is true that a foreign trade may be carried on with a nation for an indefinite time from which we import nothing directly. We may sell machinery to Argentina. That republic may sell hides to Great Britain and Great Britain may buy wheat from us, but all that does not alter the fact that Argentina pays for our machinery with hides and not with gold. Both Blaine and McKinley tried to hammer this idea into the skulls of the mullet heads of the republican party, but it seems that they failed.

BANK NOTE ISSUES

If President Roosevelt had taken down from the shelves any work on banking or had even read an article in any of the standard encyclopaedias on note issuing by banks, he never would have made the recommendation to congress that he did. He would have learned of the disasters that have followed leaving the issue of paper to the unrestricted discretion of an indefinite number of bankers. He would have learned that note issuing is no part of the banking business, but another and entirely different thing. The issues of the Bank of England are secured by a loan to the public, being very much the same thing as national bank notes secured by the deposit of bonds, and a small increase allowed if provincial banks curtail their issues. But for every other note which the issue department of the Bank of England may issue above the maximum of 15,000,000 pounds sterling, an equal amount of coin or bullion must be deposited in its coffers. That makes the notes of the Bank of England always immediately convertible into gold and the gold is there to make the conversion, not "bank assets." The Bank of England directors are not permitted to substitute a shadow for a reality, such as "asset banking" would allow. What the law of England does is to limit the uncontrolled issue of bank notes. Asset banking would allow bankers the discretion of increasing or diminishing the amount of notes to be issued, and they would do it just as their own interests indicated, the public interest would not be considered.

The scheme recommended to congress by the president and secretary of the treasury is simply "wild cat" banking, a thing that the republican party has denounced for twenty-five years.

All this brings to mind an incident that occurred in one of the corridors of the house of representatives in Washington in 1893. The editor of The Independent was engaged in a discussion with a congressman from New Jersey. The Jersey congressman was applying some of the customary epithets to populists, when the editor replied that the mass of republican congressmen knew nothing of finance or political economy and if the leaders of the party should demand a return to wild cat banking they would all favor and vote for it, upon which both persons got angry and a capitol policeman took a hand in the fracas. That identical congressman is now an ardent supporter of "asset banking."

It seems that the Chicago Record-Herald has also discovered a truth that The Independent has been proclaiming for a long time and falls in line behind this paper and says: "The railroads have been the chief instrumentality for the building of trusts. They have constituted, in fact, such a large part of the trust problem that they might be considered its all-sufficient cause in themselves." The Record-Herald is welcomed to the ranks of those who follow the leadership of The Independent.

LET SATAN RESIGN

If any man can manufacture a bigger lie than the following from W. E. Curtis, then satan should resign and give him his throne. In the Record-Herald of January 2 Curtis says: "Uncle Sam has \$1,329,266,733 in his strong box as working capital to resume business January 2, 1903."

Compare that monumental lie with the statement made before the National Association for the Advancement of Science by Assistant Secretary Ailes, which was as follows:

"Within the last few months the secretary of the treasury, by extraordinary efforts, succeeded in stimulating national banks to take out some \$25,000,000 additional circulation. He also increased the amount of public funds which national banks are permitted to hold by \$4,000,000. By anticipating the payment of interest on the public debt, he succeeded in paying out \$3,000,000 more, with a profit of over \$40,000 to the treasury, and, finally, when the business of the country demanded still further relief, he anticipated a portion of the public debt itself by buying bonds and thus releasing some \$23,000,000. By the time the crop moving season was over the amount of cash actually locked up in the treasury had been reduced by nearly \$50,000,000, and there was left in the treasury vaults only a little over the \$50,000,000 which tradition and practice have established as a fair working basis."

While it may be true that satan is the father of liars, here certainly is a demonstration of the fact that some of his progeny can outlie the devil himself. There is considerable difference between \$50,000,000 and \$1,329,266,733.

This statement by Curtis is a sample of the "facts" furnished the readers of the great dailies. It is by flooding the homes of the American voters with such statements that the republican party has been able to keep itself in power. Millions of dollars have been spent by that party to get these plutocratic papers into the homes of the people. The only way to fight that thing is to spread the circulation of papers that publish the truth. No expenditure of money will have so good effect as putting such papers as the Nebraska Independent in the homes of the people. Every county that ever tried it has found that to be true.

A MOST SERIOUS MISTAKE

Any man with a slight knowledge of history or present conditions in the densely populated regions of Asia knows that annexation of any part of it to these states could be nothing less than a burden and a drag upon us. What possible advantage can come to us as a nation from having to keep fifteen or twenty thousand troops and a large party of our navy in the Philippines, where the climate wrecks and destroys the health of the men? Our commerce would be just as great if the islands were a republic or if they were under the suzerainty of any other nation. The only possible advantage that can come from the annexation is that it furnishes a large number of officers, which the party in power can use to pay off their party workers and to which they can send those men who have done party work, but whose characters are such that it would be impossible to give them offices at home. To the people at large there is no benefit at all. It would be cheaper for them to appropriate a million dollars a year to pay the ward heelers and ballot box stuffers of the party in power, and let these men go without offices.

No nation ever made a worse mistake from every point of view than was made when the Philippine islands were annexed as an "appurtenance" of the United States. It weakens the nation as a military power and is a constant drain on its resources, which in hard times would be most severely felt.

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