

NEWS OF THE WEEK

A Weekly Resume of the Really Vital News by the Editor

The grand jury at Omaha returned an even 100 indictments, running from United States senator down to bootleggers for selling whisky to the Indians and every one of the indicted were republicans. Vote 'er straight. Stand pat.

The government has paid to the friars in the Philippines \$7,250,000, or \$18 an acre for their lands. That seems to be a pretty good price for rice paddies, timber and swamps. It is said that when the friars get their gold they will decamp and shake the mud of the Philippines from their feet.

Christmas trade this year is not nearly so large as last year. One of the great fads now is Indian bead work for Christmas presents. White women are at it making belts, necklaces and watch fob bead work. Elite society is everywhere adopting another Indian custom. Women are going bare-headed. It is said that in the eastern cities they ride in the street cars bare-headed by the score on their way to the theatres and places of amusement.

The death rate among the colored children in the alleys of Washington is 457 in every thousand, being the highest death rate known anywhere in the world. Washington is the home of plutocrats and is a city of mansions and misery. No one votes in Washington. It is governed by a "commission" appointed by congress. It is the most beautiful city in the world and so it is hidden away the greatest horrors on earth.

Mr. Bryan has been in Russia during the last week. The papers say that he had an interview lasting fourteen hours with Tolstoi and also a long conversation with the czar. Bryan questioned the czar about the educational system of Russia and the czar proved well posted with all the details of it.

The coinage commission has at last come out with a plain, undiluted proposition to coin silver at the ratio of 32 to 1. The Independent declared more than a year ago that that was the aim of those eminent gentlemen who during two presidential campaigns declared that bimetallism was impossible. They are now all for bimetallism themselves. The dishonesty of these men who made the gold standard arguments for the politicians and Wall street crowd during the last two presidential campaigns, is now very apparent.

Governor Taft is now on his way home from the Philippines. He will succeed Secretary Root as secretary of war about the first of February.

The sultan has apologized for the attack by the police on the American consul at Alexandrette and the Strenuous One will not at present wage war along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean sea.

One of the coal companies in the anthracite region has cut wages 10 per cent in direct violation of the agreement made with the Roosevelt commission and it is said that the other companies will soon follow. There is a great row always when a labor union violates an agreement arrived at by arbitration, but so far none of the great dailies have had anything to say about the anthracite coal trust doing that same thing.

It is estimated in Washington that Mark Hanna put up the worst job on Roosevelt ever played by one politician on another when he induced him to go into this Panama business in the manner that was adopted. Colom-

bia has landed troops on an island near Panama and the railroads and steamship lines are besieging the quartermaster general for contracts to transport troops. If a war was forced just at the present time on the little republic of Colombia, it would make a campaign issue in which the president would have to fight against great odds.

Rev. Dr. J. E. Vance of Chicago, in preaching upon the increase in crime, last Sunday said: "There is no difference in principle between holding up a nation for \$1,000,000 at the mouth of a pipe line and holding up an individual at the muzzle of a gun for what he has on his person. The man who is looked on as the most successful man in this country is, in the last analysis, a gambler or highway robber. He is not even a creator of money, much less of manhood, but a highway bandit who has held up producers and public for millions. The hero of boys used to be Napoleon. We have made little progress in Christianity, when the hero of the boys of today is John D. Rockefeller or J. Pierpont Morgan." Our readers will recognize that is the same gospel that The Independent has been preaching so long.

Senator Hoar's speech last week in the United States senate against the Rooseveltian way of making Panama treaties and appointing ministers plenipotentiary and envoys extraordinary without authority of congress has again centered the eyes of the people upon the Massachusetts senator. Since the days of Daniel Webster, Massachusetts has had but two senators who have measured up to the old Bay State standard, Sumner and Hoar. Both of them had no hesitancy in attacking their own party when they thought it was going wrong, but there is this difference between them: Hoar stands by his party and votes 'er straight, however much he may think it wrong, and Sumner had no hesitancy in leaving the party and voting against it, both in the senate and at the polls, when he conscientiously differed with it. In the opinion of The Independent, the greater of these two is Senator Sumner.

Rockefeller and his influence is just at present a subject of conversation not only in Nebraska, but generally throughout the United States. Morefield Story, in speaking of him, says: "The lawlessness of the Standard Oil company weakens the protection of property throughout the land." There can be no manner of doubt concerning that fact.

The treaty with China recently confirmed by the senate opens to trade two cities which are not now, and very likely will never will be, under the control of China for they are in Manchuria and a Russian governor presides over them. This opens very fair prospects of a disagreeable affair with Russia. Great is the Hay diplomacy.

Uncle Mark Hanna "he still lay low and say nuffin'."

The president of the united brotherhood of teamsters denies that the striking union in Chicago is interfering with funerals or picketing the houses where funerals occur. He says that the whole thing was concocted by the liverymen's association and the pickets were posted by that association in order to bring the union into disgrace. It is positively declared that no union men have interfered with funerals. The drivers have simply struck and quit work, making a demand for \$2 a day and twelve hours' work.

The supreme court of the state of Missouri in order to set the chief boodler free reversed two former decisions made on exactly the same point.

It is announced that Captain Dreyfus is at last to be fully vindicated and appointed to high military rank. In connection with that matter all thoughts will return to Zola, who made the brave fight almost alone.

According to the Railway Age the total railway mileage of the United States on January 1, 1904, will be 209,855 miles, the present year having added 5,723 miles. The railroads will be able to increase their representation in the United States senate and the state legislatures considerably by

next year. Every 100 miles of new railroad means another corporation legislator.

Bonds and Mortgages announces that the "syndicate and flotation craze" has finally closed. Even the wreckage has been gathered up. The "capitalizing of prosperity" has come to a final end, and that end is just what The Independent said it would be.

Webster County

Commenting on the "Curiosities of the Election," Editor J. P. Hale of the Red Cloud (Neb.) Nation says that although 2,380 electors voted for county treasurer, yet only 2,193 voted for supreme judge, showing that 187 did not care to vote for the latter office. Fifty-four also neglected to vote for district judge. In addition to this, he estimates that 250 electors did not come to the polls at all, making about 437 in the county who did not vote for supreme judge.

"This condition largely prevailed throughout the state," he continues. "The Nation trusts that no campaign will be suffered to pass in this mode again. A campaign without public meetings, without oral discussion of the issues, serves no useful purpose. The candidates might as well be chosen by lot as by a still hunt or personal solicitation. It is only the campaign which arouses the attention of the voter, which excites his interest in ideas, which wins him by the advocacy of principles of government, that does any service to the public good. Oral discussion is the pre-requisite to intelligent voting. When the political parties allow an election to occur without such discussion, it looks as if they had nothing meritorious to present to the people. So far as the populist party in this county is concerned, we trust such a campaign of silence and indifference will never be permitted again."

An Inconsistent Socialist

An old-time subscriber of The Independent who, as he professes to believe, has "progressed into socialism," every now and then writes us a letter marked "personal," which usually contains some caustic comment which is too good to be hidden away unpublished. The Independent will not give his name or address:

Editor Independent: You remind me most forcibly of such "reform" papers as the New York Evening Post and the Springfield Republican. You show up the damnableness of conditions which confront us; but you have no remedy save the populist party. You are a reformer instead of a revolutionist.

You cannot reform a gospel of Rent, Interest and Profits. It is impossible. You are primarily an organ of the farmers. Indeed, you are primarily, secondarily, and tertiarily an organ of the farms. You are an organ of the small farmers, of the individual farmers. You are not an organ of the 10,000, 20,000 and 30,000-acre farmers.

You also remind me of the labor unions. You don't believe in attacking fundamentals. You'd worry along trying to usher in state socialism, while the farmer would still be at the mercy of the capitalists.

By the way, I haven't yet seen a review of Simons' "American Farmer." What did you think of it, anyhow? Honor bright, now!

SOCIALIST AND LABORER.

(The Independent of June 4, 1903, page 5, contained a two-column notice of Mr. Simons' "American Farmer." Think of it? Why, it is a book that merits a careful reading by every populist. It contains a mass of valuable information. But it by no means follows that the conclusions of Mr. Simons are well drawn. He expects the American farmer to read his book, be convinced by its logic, and align himself with the proletarian party—although himself not a member of the proletariat. That's the rankest kind of idealism and the very opposite of the materialism upon which modern socialism is founded. Suppose we grant that the "historic mission" of the wage-workers really is to usher in the co-operative commonwealth by capturing the political machinery of government. What has that to do with the farmer, who is not a wage-worker and who is not exploited through the "surplus value" formula? How can he become "class conscious" and align himself with a class party to which he does not belong?

"Socialist and Laborer" is correct: The Independent IS a reformer and not a revolutionist; but it is not ready to accept as final Mr. Socialist and Laborer's ipse dixit that "you cannot reform a gospel of rent, interest and profits." That may be his opinion—

to which he is surely entitled—but it is not the opinion of The Independent.

Yes, "primarily, secondarily and tertiarily." The Independent IS an organ of the farmers. Why shouldn't it be? Agriculture and manufacturing are the two great industries of America. The Independent can't represent both—because they have conflicting interests. Yes, and an organ of the small farmers, too, because they are the only ones that count. Your ten, twenty and thirty thousand-acre farmers are few and far between, and most of them are men whose real interests lie with manufacturing; who "farm" as an avocation and not as a vocation.

If the fundamentals of socialism are correct, and if the various socialist parties really advocate socialism, then they must work out the "historic mission" of the wage-workers through the wage-workers. The farmers cannot be expected to help. But if these parties are advocating simply a radical populism, they have no reason for existence, because there is now a people's party that fills the bill.—Associate Editor.)

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