

Politics of the Day

BALANCE OF TRADE.

Some thoughtless people are lulled into apathy by talk about the balance of trade in our favor. It never occurs to them to inquire what becomes of it and who gets the benefit. It is true that for a number of years there has been a large excess—a very large excess—of exports over imports of merchandise. Bankers, men of affairs, men at the head of large financial institutions, who assume a superior knowledge about business and finance, know so little of the accounts kept of the aggregate business of the country that they tell us this balance of trade is evidence of prosperity. They do not stop to inquire what we have received for the large amount we have sold and exported each year since 1873. In the five years ending Dec. 31, 1897, our exports of merchandise exceeded our imports by \$953,193,323. Was this a sale? Did we receive anything for it? Was it a source of income? It was not a sale. It was an expense. It was a veritable outlay from which we have not derived one dollar of income. Will some of the great financiers who express themselves so learnedly and confidently about balance of trade tell us what we have received? We did not receive other merchandise, for this vast amount is not all we sent away, but the excess of what we sent away over all that we received. Did we get gold for it? Did we add to the stock of this money metal by this large exportation of our products? Is this where the New York banks secured an increase of their gold holdings to an amount of \$4,000,000 per month during the last twenty months? Such cannot be the case, because during the same five years we sent out of the country (exported) \$379,255,202 of gold, and this was \$111,963,963 more than we received (imported). During the five years, instead of adding to our income in gold, we had an outlay, an actual expense, of \$111,963,963 paid in gold, in addition to the merchandise exported. Did we get silver for this merchandise and for gold, together amounting to \$1,065,187,186? Have the other nations of this earth been dumping their silver on us in exchange for our products and our gold? Is this where all the silver came from that has so alarmed our bankers, and with which the goldites tell us we are in grave danger of being overwhelmed? Have we had this enormous importation of silver, and is this what has made it so cheap? Alas, no! This cannot be true, because the Treasury Department reports that in the same five years we sent out (exported) \$270,334,693 worth of silver, and this was \$146,690,906 more than we received (imported).

Now and Next Year.

Two years of President McKinley's administration have passed, and two more are ahead, although the decision as to his successor will come up next year. He was elected, as we all know now, on a false cry, which cannot be raised again with the same effect, although the political syndicate back of it will try to win on it once more.

The issue on which Bryan was defeated is still strong with a very large proportion of the people. The war with Spain, and the unexpected development of the imperial colonial possessions idea, in consequence of Admiral Dewey's spectacular victory, has confronted the nation with entirely new problems, which may lead to a realignment of parties, in which the McKinley second-term syndicate is liable to lose, even within the Republican organization through which it is working.

The McKinley administration was originally not in favor of going to the rescue of Cuba, because it feared the effect of the piling up of a new debt for the people to pay. It became convinced after a while, however, that it had better take the risk under the stimulus of the contractors anxious to furnish army supplies. Mark Hanna was opposed to going to war with Spain until he saw that the iron industry, in which he is largely interested, and the Western beef industry would be largely benefited thereby.

The outlook is, of course, that the expansionists will have their own way in the Republican party. That McKinley will be renominated is, however, more doubtful. The syndicate which forced him to the front in 1896, and succeeded in electing him, is handicapped by Alger, one of its most wealthy members. His mismanagement of the War Department has thrown discredit on all, and a new man is most likely to be forced on them. His name may be Roosevelt or another not yet much thought of, but it is realized that the President of to-day may have to be dropped.—New York News.

Decadent Republican Party.

The prophecy made by Senator Hoar that the decadence of the American republic will date from the administration of President McKinley would sound better and be much truer if it read: The decadence of the Republican party will date from the administration of President McKinley. There is no doubt about it, the Republican party is hopelessly split. Senator Hoar has more followers than they would like to admit.—Boston Traveler.

Increase of Papsuckers.

The extravagance of the Congress which has just closed is far beyond the record. Administration journals defend this on the ground that the country is growing, and that the Federal expenses

grow with it. This is a radically false proposition. The Federal establishment is growing out of all proportion to the growth of the country. There is a constant establishment of new and useless offices and commissions, an annual robbery of vast dimensions in public buildings, an unnatural growth and encouragement of the Federal judiciary, and a tendency in Federal taxation to promote private interests rather than keep sufficient funds in the public treasury.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Republican Prospects.

Republican politicians will not admit that the outlook for their party in 1900 is not of the most rosy hue. This is natural and is the usual thing, but there are many reasons to support the theory that Republican politicians are whistling to keep their courage up.

The army scandals have weakened greatly the standing of the administration before the people. Alger's blunders and venality have proved disastrous and the stubborn stupidity of Alger, who refuses to resign "under fire," is going to estrange many voters who would otherwise be inclined to support McKinley.

But army scandals are not the only burdens which the administration must bear. The extravagance of the Republican Congress, which has broken all records by passing appropriation bills aggregating a billion and a half of dollars, will work disaster to the Republicans. And most injurious of all will prove the attitude of the administration in fostering and promoting trusts. Nearly four billions of dollars are represented in the capital of the combines already formed, and new trusts are being created each day.

Republicans did not believe in 1873 that they would be overwhelmingly routed in 1874. Who in 1891 or in the early months of 1892 could have suspected that the Democratic party, on a free trade platform, was on the eve of a great triumph over the party of protection and prosperity? There is going to be a political revolution in 1900, and the reign of Hanna, McKinley & Co. will be ended.—Chicago Democrat.

Impudent Advice.

Why are the gold bug papers so anxious to see the Democratic party abandon the free silver platform? The above question is frequently asked by Democratic leaders of Republican papers. And no wonder, for every Republican organ from Maine to California is impudently offering to furnish the Democratic party an issue to supplant bimetalism. Of course they want us to win in 1900. So they would have us believe. But the truth of the matter is that they are afraid to meet us again on the financial issue. All their lying "arguments" against a financial system that will restore equality between the debtor and the creditor classes have been exhausted, while arguments of the bimetalists have been strengthened by the course of events since 1896. If the Democrats stick to the platform of 1896, and there is no doubt of it, Republican defeat is a certainty. To change the issue would be to offer the Republican party a new lease of life.

Administration War on Reed.

There is a strong movement on foot among Republicans to change the rules of the national House of Representatives and deprive the Speaker of the arbitrary power which has been exercised by Mr. Reed. There is no question as to where this movement originates. It comes from the administration, which Mr. Reed has deliberately thwarted on several occasions, and which he has most grievously offended by his refusal to recognize as members of the House gentlemen who hold commissions from the President.—Indianapolis Sentinel.

Reed in McKinley's Way.

The administration can formulate policies, but an able, aggressive and courageous man like Reed in the Speaker's chair can defeat them, and that he is willing to take the responsibility has been fully demonstrated the last three months. The first session of the next Congress will be confined to President-making and unmaking exclusively, and it will be a great disadvantage to the McKinley-Alger outfit, aiming for a second term, to have Tom Reed as the chief mogul of Congress.—St. Louis Republic.

Assuming the Responsibility.

Had McKinley promptly dismissed Alger from his cabinet when the flagrant jobbery, trickery, favoritism, machine politics and incompetency of the head of the War Department were first exposed to the public view, his triumphant renomination by his party would have been inevitable. By retaining Alger in office the President has tacitly assumed a share of the responsibility.—St. Louis Republic.

The Story and Why It Is Told.

Some kind friend of General Miles has raked up the story that he was the luckless wight who happened to put Jeff Davis in irons on orders from the Secretary of War. This, it is thought, will prevent General Miles from stealing any Southern delegates away from McKinley and Alger next year.—Grand Rapids Democrat.

Not a Change for the Better.

If Secretary Alger is to be allowed to name his successor the President might as well keep him. Nobody wants an Algerian indorsement.—Washington Times.

THE FIELD OF BATTLE

INCIDENTS AND ANECDOTES OF THE WAR.

The Veterans of the Rebellion Tell of Whistling Bullets, Bright Bayonets, Bursting Bombs, Bloody Battles, Camp Fire, Festive Bugs, Etc., Etc.



It was the rule when the Confederates were driven out of any town for the printers and writers to take possession of the printing office or job office and issue a little Union paper. Even if we occupied the town for only a few days the boys managed to get out at least one edition of a soldier's paper.

"Some of these bulletins of news or quarter-sheet papers were as queer specimens of journalism as were ever published anywhere. In not a few cases they were full of regimental and brigade news, spiced with jokes and stories current in camp. Occasionally a paper started by soldiers became well established as the Union journal of the town or county, and some of them are still published under the names given by the soldiers who started them."

"When the Union troops occupied Clarksville, Tenn., the always enterprising printers of the brigade found a printing office that had been left in pretty good shape. They waited upon the brigade commander, explained the situation, and asked him to give them an editor. There was on Gen. Bruce's staff a young man whose only experience in newspaper work had been in writing letters to his home papers. This young fellow was assigned to the editorship of the Clarksville Bulletin, a little four-page, 8x10-inch paper. The young man had the newspaper instinct, and made so good a paper that the circulation extended to other brigades."

"He organized a corps of correspondents in the different regiments and brigades of the division, and published every week the orders from the brigade and regimental headquarters, the gossip about camp, letters from detached regiments or companies, and neighborhood news. The paper attracted the attention of George D. Prentice of the Louisville Journal, and before the war closed the soldier editor of the Bulletin was a member of the Journal's staff. From there he went to New York to become the editor of a leading sporting paper. In rummaging through the garret the other day I found a complete file of the Clarksville Bulletin, and I wondered if the editor cared as much for the papers as the soldier who carried them home in his knapsack."

"I noticed the other day," said the Major, "that somebody sneered at Henry Watterson as the editor of a camp paper, and declared that Watterson ought not to be grouped with the army correspondents who made great reputations. Watterson edited the only Confederate camp paper that had good circulation in both armies. He and another young fellow started the Rebel, and while they were publishing it in the field near Chattanooga it was smuggled through the Union lines and was read with interest. It was a more pretentious paper than the Clarksville Bulletin; contained more news, and had some journalistic features that were adopted later by large newspapers."

"When Gen. Bragg discovered that the Rebel was being exchanged at the picket lines for the Nashville and Northern papers he used it to mislead the Union generals. At his instigation Watterson concocted dispatches from different points in the South, which on their face gave away valuable information to the enemy. As a matter of fact, these dispatches gave no information of value, and were constructed simply to mislead Gen. Rosecrans and his subordinates. After Gen. Bragg was driven from Missionary Ridge the Rebel was carried southward, but the old game of printing dispatches to mislead had been worn threadbare."

"But the Rebel was a saucy, newsy, interesting paper, and I know a good many old comrades who have many of the issues printed in 1863. There was published by the Union troops at Cleveland, Tenn., another bright army paper, which was given to stories of army adventures, skillfully constructed to convey one meaning to the soldiers in camp and another to the world at large. Some of these narrowly escaped the indecent, but the exchange editors of the North gave them wide circulation without suspecting their true character."

"While I was home on furlough in 1864 I was horrified to see one of the most scandalous of these stories printed in the leading daily in the city. I called on the dignified editor to explain and give him warning, but he declined to listen to me. He insisted that the army story was one of the best he had ever read, and that the man who could see anything wrong about it was not much of a man. Meeting with this sort of a reception, I retired, and the story went the rounds for weeks and weeks, and was published in leading city dailies as late as April, 1865."

"In 1862," said the Captain, "I was private in Company C, Tenth Maine Infantry, stationed at Winchester, and was detailed as printer for Gen. Meade. When the Rebels left Winchester they fled the outfit of the Winchester Republican, but left all the material there. Company C had among its members several printers, and when any of them were punished for running guard, etc., they were sent up to the office to set pl. In a short time we had the office in run-

ning order, and issued one number of the paper on the 19th of May. On the morning of the 25th Jackson swooped down upon us, and I was unlucky enough to be caught in the office by a squad of the Fifth Louisiana."

"Before they discovered me, however, I had pulled two pages of type from the imposing stone to the floor, and by making good use of a shovel and a couple of column rules I made the types unfit for further use in the art preservative. I then took all the matter on galleys (about fourteen columns) and dumped it into the ink barrel, which contained about six or eight inches of thin news ink. Next I took the impression-bolt from the hand press and threw it from the back window. All I had to do now was to tip the cases of type upside down and the job was complete. By the time I had finished there came heavy pounding on the door—and I was wanted."—Chicago Inter Ocean.

The Battle's First Dead.

There is a feeling that cannot be described which comes over one when he sees for the first time a soldier who has been killed in battle, and it matters not whether it be friend or foe. There is that awful sadness welling up until it almost overcomes one. Thoughts of home, of friends, of the past life, pass rapidly through the mind and a sense of dread that it may come our turn next takes a fast hold upon one's thoughts."

In my four years of hard service I saw many hundreds of dead on the field, saw my own bosom friends and comrades fall at my side, but there was not that fear or awful feeling of something impossible to describe that I experienced at the sight of the first soldier I had seen who had been killed in battle."

In February, 1862, the Thirty-second Indiana, on picket duty across Green River at Mumfordsville, Ky., was furiously attacked by a body of Terry's Texas Rangers and support of infantry, and a number of the gallant gunners fell to rise no more, and with them a greater number of Texans fought their last fight."

The long roll soon had the brigade moving to support. The regiment, or a portion of it to which the writer belonged, quickly crossed the river and hastened to the support of the Thirty-second. The battle had ended and we relieved the Thirty-second, who had been for some time hotly engaged. Our company was pushed out well in advance where the battle opened and where a number of dead were found."

We halted on a little knoll barren of timber, a rocky point covered with cactus, and were ordered to lie down. This was impossible on account of the sharp thorns of the cactus, which completely covered the ground or rocks. Within five feet of where we halted (so close that the writer could have almost touched them) lay a Texan Ranger and his horse, both dead and weltering in their blood which had run in little rivulets down the rocky slope. It seemed that the man had not been instantly killed and in his terrible anguish and pain had struggled and rolled from side to side until his face and hands were covered with the thorns of the cactus. His eyes were wide open and staring, his hands clutched into the thorny cactus, and blood covered both face and hands. Horrors! Could anything have been more awful?"

I was a boy, scarce past 17, and unused to such scenes. Thousands of other boys saw such sights, and they, if living, cannot describe that awful terror that almost unmanned them at the sight of the first dead slain in battle, and the scene and the thoughts will remain with them through life."

Is it any wonder that the soldier of the civil war turns gray early in life? It is more wonder that his nerves and mind are not broken by the sight of such awful scenes as befell his lot on the field of battle. And yet we have critics who tell us there are no terrors in war. Those who so believe have never witnessed even one such scene as has been described, and God grant they never may.—J. T. Knowland, in American Tribune.

"Jack."

It may not be out of place to devote a little time and space to the four-footed heroes who so valiantly aided in putting down the rebellion, while the "old boys" are chronicling their personal reminiscences of 1861-'65."

Among the ungazetted heroes is the subject of this sketch, who was a member of Company G, Thirty-sixth Illinois Regiment. "Jack" was recruited in a somewhat mysterious manner (no matter how) in Rolla, Mo., and was adopted by the company, to which he became devotedly attached. He was a good specimen of the canine species, a cross between a bull and a mastiff. "Jack's" duty was in catching hogs (the regular Missouri razor backs the old boys remember so well), and as a forager he had not an equal. Whenever fresh meat was wanted "Jack's" services were indispensable in securing it."

At the battle of Pea Ridge, Mo., in one of the three days' fights, March 6, 7 and 8, 1862, he unfortunately came in violent collision with a rebel bullet, and for some time was disabled for service as a forager. His wounds were dressed by his comrades, and in a short time he reported for duty again."

On the trip to Cairo, Ill., from Columbus, Ky., by steamer, in September, 1861, a misfortune befell Company G in the loss of "Jack," who, by some mishap, was either drowned or by other means came to an untimely end. He was never known to fall his comrades in the hour of need, and when his connection with the regiment was severed the men of Company G sadly and sincerely bewailed the fate of poor "Jack."

An Atlantic liner on each trip from Liverpool to New York carries over 20,000 eggs, which are consumed by its passengers."

GEOGRAPHICAL SONGS.

One Element in Popular Melodies Seems to Appeal to Public Taste.

The trend of the professional song writers just now is geographical, says the New York Sun. It is thought fitting, if not, indeed, indispensable, for a popular song to have a geographical background. "Louisiana Lou" has attained success on both sides of the Atlantic, and "The Little Alabama Coon" is not very far behind it in many of the qualities which contribute to a successful vogue. "Down in Old Tennessee" has had as much, or nearly as much, success in its way as "Bred in Old Kentucky," and "The Georgia Camp Meeting" has found admirers among many who have not had occasion to applaud a song of which the Cracker State was the theme since "Marching Through Georgia" first stirred the patriotic sensibilities of music-loving Americans. "Down in Sunny Virginia" has recently come into some celebrity, following, though a good distance off, the always popular "Maryland, My Maryland." Everyone has heard of "The Old Kentucky Home," of which the late Eugene Field once said that it was made up of five acres—and a mortgage."

Many of those who are familiar with the subjects of these songs incline, perhaps, to the belief that the Southern States furnish for them the most desirable theme, and that other States have been or may be neglected by the song writers. That is a mistake, for geographical divisions are of very little account to song writers when public applause is the object of their efforts. "In My Old New Hampshire Home" has recently attained some popularity, and a song having for its subject the Boston Back Bay, or the elms of New Haven, or the pier at Narragansett, cannot be far off. For a number of years a very popular song in the vaudeville houses has been "In Kansas," which is descriptive of the unusual size of fruits and flowers, the unusual abundance of cereal crops and the exalted standard of social life and citizenship in the Sunflower State. More recently some popularity has been attained by a waltz song, "Little Miss Ida from Idaho," and nearly every one has heard sung, whistled, played on hand organs or in phonographs "On the Banks of the Wabash" in Indiana."

Up to date the Empire State of New York has been a little behind some other States in respect to songs with geographical themes, but this deficiency may be accounted for, perhaps, on the ground that the superior importance of New York makes possible such minor divisions as would be thought unnecessary or indefensible elsewhere. There are two cities of the first class in New York, and each of them has in the popular estimate its own appropriate topical song. "My Best Girl's a New Yorker" is sufficiently descriptive of what one city of the first class in the Empire State can do in the line of popular song making, and the other city of the first class has a lyric favorite, "Put Me Off at Buffalo." By the selection of a geographical subject of a song the author, or authoress (for many popular songs nowadays are written by women), is assured of the advantage of a clear understanding of the locale, so to speak, of the narrative. Moreover, there is a decided partiality for such songs, which dates back, perhaps, to the first popular acceptance of "Way Down Upon the Swanee River." Since then the geographical titles have always been popular, but they were never before so popular as they have been recently. The number of such geographical songs further includes "Dat Gal from Baltimore," "Elsie from Chelsea," "On the Banks of the Ohio" and "In the Old Palmetto State." In the popular view of intelligent and appreciative song patrons "The Streets of Cairo" is not usually included among the geographical songs of the day. The particular street of Cairo referred to was in the Midway of the Chicago fair."

Talma and Napoleon.

Talma was standing at a corner, one of an immense crowd that thronged the streets of Paris to see Napoleon drive by in state.

"Do you see that little man there?" he said to a friend at his side, pointing as he spoke to the Emperor in his carriage.

"Yes," replied his companion. "What signifies that?"

"Well, answered Talma, "not so many years ago that same individual applied to me for a position in my company. He was ambitious to be an actor, and wished me to teach him the art of the stage. I discouraged him, as I could not see that he had any ability, and told him that there was no hope for any other than a genius in my profession."

"Is there hope in any calling," asked he, "for the unfortunate plodder not blessed with ability?"

"Well," said Talma's companion, "what of that?"

"Nothing," replied the actor—"nothing; only that unfortunate little man is now Emperor of France, and I—well, I am just plain Talma."

Horseless Carriages.

During the reign of Louis XV. of France a horseless carriage was invented by one Vancanson, run by a spring that was wound up like that in a watch. The Duke de Mortemart and M. de Lauzun rode in it round a court in Paris, but the Academy of Sciences decided that it could not be tolerated, and the thing was dropped."

Church Insurance.

The Methodist church in Canada is inaugurating a fire insurance business to take risks only on churches and parsonages. The profits will go to the fund for superannuated ministers."

Buried in Westminster.

In Westminster Abbey 1,176 persons have been buried."

THE PEOPLE'S MONEY

The Philosophy of Money.

Mr. George Wilson, of Lexington, Mo., although a banker, and a very successful one, is also an earnest and intelligent advocate of free silver. His book, "Financial Philosophy," is one of the best contributions to this subject that has been published. The fact that Mr. Wilson is highly educated and intelligent, and also noted for his liberality and benevolence, explains why he has no patience with that selfish absurdity called the single gold standard. Mr. Wilson advances an idea that will seem novel to many, namely, that money, the common medium of exchange, being in fact public property, ought not to be taxed. In other words, a tax on that which belongs to all the people is a self-imposed tribute, and at the same time unproductive and hurtful, creating a result similar to that produced by the man who tried to lift himself over the fence by tugging at his own suspenders. The suggestion points toward the single tax theory, which we fear is founded on a fallacy. But it embraces also a principle that we believe to be sound. That is to say, money being a creature of the public and belonging to the people, no individual should be permitted to loan or hire it out to other individuals. This is the germ of the Mosaic law, which was founded on wisdom and justice. The lending of money by individuals amounts to the same thing as one member of a family charging the rest a rental for the use of the comforts that belong to all. The Government, which is all the people acting in concert, is, or ought to be, the only agency authorized to lend money, and all private lending ought to be prohibited by law. If this were the rule the interest or rent paid by individuals to the Government for the use of the common medium of exchange would pay all the public expenses and create that philosopher's dream of a government without taxation. Is not this a more substantial idea than the single tax plan of laying all the burdens of government on that element which is necessary to the existence of every creature. Is it not also part of the principle suggested by friend Wilson? And, furthermore, can we not trace the unpopularity of the money-lending business referred to in Mr. Wilson's letter, to the fact that it is an evil calling, prohibited by the law of the scripture, and regulated and circumscribed by the statutes of every civilized nation? But, it will be asked, would you take away the opportunity of those who are dependent on the interest of their money for a living, in many instances widows and orphans who cannot invest their means in business? The writer remembers that a similar argument was used in support of the righteousness of human slavery, but it did not prevail. Freedom overcame all argument and all fallacy, and slavery disappeared. Human freedom is also involved in this question of the lending of money, and we believe it will be settled right, just as slavery was. With its settlement will come public ownership of railroads and other utilities, based on guaranteed bonds that will afford a safer and more certain income for invested capital than security on individual property can possibly furnish.—Exchange.

Currency of Banks.

Bank currency and bank credits are issues by the banks for their own exclusive profit. Greed for gain is the motive that impels the banks to expand their circulation and multiply their credits. Every expansion of such money substitute tends to advance prices. Every advance in prices adds new life and vigor to production and business by increasing the profits of enterprise. If such advance in prices was based upon the existence of actual money to sustain them and money supply would sufficiently keep pace with demand to prevent prices from receding, the energies of a nation would soon find full play and an era of production, progress and happiness would follow. But with bank currency and bank credits doing money work and thereby advancing prices, the prosperity that follows in its wake is ephemeral and is only paying the way for the ruin of thousands of innocents for the enrichment of every one of the conspirators."

Events forbid the gold combination and banking ring to longer prate their erstwhile vauntings about laws that are higher than, and superior to, statute laws—referring to the laws of trade—that are self-acting forces. Under the operations of these laws the gold standard is bearing upon the world with crushing effect, forcing England to hesitate lest by persevering in India she may forfeit her supremacy in trade and hasten the doom of the British Empire."

Any recognition whatever of the universal self-acting laws of trade consigns the issue of bank currency to the realm of lunacy."

The money of the country was good money and proved itself to be panicle proof. When the banks commenced their squeeze by contracting their credits and forcing their customers to pay money, their phantom money—confidence money—broke down, and the banks were forced to suspend cash payments. If we had had bank notes in 1893 instead of greenbacks, treasury notes, and silver certificates, the industrial and producing classes of the country would have been involved in universal ruin and the foundation of social order would have been severely tested."