

The Norfolk News

It seems to be a mistake to make a hero until it has been discovered what his political inclinations may be.

According to all reports the Boers have not been made serfs by England—they seem to be remarkably free from shackles.

The key-note of democratic objection to republican measures is to place their candidate in the presidential chair this fall regardless of consequences.

The following saying of Michael Angelo is respectfully directed to W. J. Bryan and his supporters: "I criticize, not by finding fault only, but by creating something better."

While the Porto Rican question offers a tempting side track to democracy on which to swing the prosperity train it is not likely that they will have the assistance of the yard men in accomplishing their purpose.

There are now no Coxy armies or free soup houses. The unemployed are employed and everybody who has the ability and wants to is making wages. The majority of the people will not want a change.

If Otis is coming home to subscribe for second place on Dewey's ticket there is likely to be more trouble in the ranks of the politicians. One thing is certain—such a team should be pretty well posted on the Philippine situation.

In 1892 the people voted for a change in the administration without duly considering what the change was they desired. They got it. Its result is too fresh in their memory now, however, for the democrats to convince them that another "change" would be acceptable at this time.

The fusionists designate President McKinley as the lightning change artist without calling attention to the many different colors Mr. Bryan has worn since he was first introduced to the public. If they can keep track of his changes it will keep them busy without devoting attention to the president.

Perhaps the quietude of the state house may be explained on the theory that the members of the state board of transportation are busy inditing a letter to the people of Norfolk informing them how sorry they are that court proceedings render it impossible to do anything with the rate question at present.—Omaha Bee.

The Appeal to Reason, of Girard, Kansas, a socialist publication, says that "every man who believes in private property is an anarchist." This is a statement that places the anarchists in a vast majority and Bryan and his supporters, who were termed anarchists in 1896, should draw some consolation therefrom.

England is about to contract for 50,000 more American horses, which would give a further impetus to the horse market. The horseless age has not yet arrived. It is an ill wind that blows no one good and it must be admitted that the war in south Africa is not a bad thing for American horse owners.

Dr. Leyds, the Transvaal agent at Brussels, in reply to the offer of John G. Maher of Chadron to send 3,000 young Nebraskans to South Africa to assist the Boers, declined the offer by saying that greater aid could be given in other ways. The doctor had probably heard of Maher's typewriter and was afraid of it.

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat says, "A republican legislature would give Missouri the biggest lift the state has ever known." A republican administration has certainly given the country the biggest business lift it has ever known, and judging therefrom the conclusions of the Globe-Democrat are not far awry.

The per capita circulation of money in the United States is now \$26.12 per capita, an increase of over 20 per cent since 1896, when it was \$21.53. Surely this should be a pleasing fact for the free silverites who made "more money" their plea in the late campaign—but it isn't—they are busily engaged in an endeavor to find something else to kick about.

John D. Haskell of Wakefield is being mentioned as a candidate for delegate to the national republican convention from the Third congressional district. Mr. Haskell is well known in Norfolk, where he formerly lived and still retains interests, and it is probable he may receive considerable support from this county. That he would be a fit representative of the district goes without saying.

Because a number of republican statesmen and newspapers refuse to endorse the action of congress in regard to Porto Rico is no reason to suppose that they are ready to swallow W. J. Bryan and all the ants and isms fathered and endorsed by him. A difference of opinion on one of the many questions handled by the present republican congress is not very surprising, and that

the majority have taken the only proper course will probably be demonstrated in time.

Congressman E. J. Barket was renominated by republicans of the First congressional district by acclamation, without a dissenting voice, a nice compliment to his ability in the halls of congress. It is considered that his reelection will be almost as unanimous as his renomination. Congressman Barket has been a powerful representative of the First and that district is full of his friends.

Secretary of the Treasury Gage estimates that the United States treasury will again be afflicted with that abhorrent thing—democrats—a surplus and that the amount of said abomination will be about \$75,000,000 by the end of the present year. To change this situation it is recommended that Old Grover be again placed in the presidential chair. He would substitute a deficiency for the surplus in mighty quick order.

Corn has increased only about 300 per cent in price since 1896 when we were told that the election of McKinley meant 10-cent corn to farmers. Those agriculturalists who didn't believe the fusionists' stories then are congratulating themselves because they voted right. The facts developing since that memorable campaign have convinced many of the errors of their ways and they will vote for a continuance of prosperity.

The publishers of north Nebraska will heartily sympathize with Editor W. H. McNeal of the Wayne Herald, who is also postmaster of that city. The sudden death of his wife Friday morning was a terrible blow to him and his friends. She was taken sick between 9 and 10 o'clock Thursday night and died about 3 o'clock yesterday morning. The funeral will be held Sunday. She leaves a husband and four daughters to mourn her loss.

An exchange takes pride in pointing out the fact that very few anarchists have been produced in the United States, England or Ireland. These enemies of society are bred in the continent of Europe, and have been imported to the above named countries. The paper states that had the prince of Wales been with his mother in Ireland no attempts upon his life would have been made. The people of Ireland are not to be classed with those of Belgium.

Admiral Dewey strenuously denies the report of a New York paper to the effect that he would withdraw his name from the list of presidential aspirants. The old admiral means to find out, if possible, whether the sentiment expressed on the occasion of his Manila victory and his reception home was true or false. He will probably discover, as others have—Candidate Bryan for instance—that people do not always show by their enthusiasm how they are going to vote.

Hudson county, New Jersey, is taking heroic measures to get rid of the slot machines. By order of Prosecutor Erwin \$10,000 worth of the machines were confiscated in Jersey City, Hoboken, Bayonne and other towns of Hudson county. One hundred of the machines, representing the above value, were piled up in the meadow west of the Hackensack river and destroyed by fire. It is evident that slot machines are becoming a thing of the past as fast as law and order can make them.

The democratic press delights in the insinuation that the editorials in certain republican journals are as near "copperhead" as any that have appeared in the democratic press. The News fails to see it. The said editorials are a criticism of the congressional majority, sometimes in severe, but not objectionable language. They have not resorted to cursing the flag, their soldiers or the country. Nor have they lent aid and encouragement to rebels, guerrillas and bandits. There is considerable difference between intelligent criticism and anarchistic or rebellious slander.

The democrats are hoping that the Porto Rico rock will split the republican party wide open. They need not be alarmed. The republicans will hardly consent to vote the country into another era of ruin and disaster because they happen to differ on one public question, even provided they thought the said question would be adjusted to their satisfaction by voting the fusion ticket. There are other questions to be decided at the coming election and even though the republican party may not be right on all of them it has shown that it is right more often than it is wrong.

The good book says something concerning charitable deeds about not letting the left hand know what the right hand doeth. Mr. Bryan has not recently read this passage perhaps and may possibly be excused for informing the press through a telegraphic report that while at Phenix, Arizona, he left a reception in his honor to call upon a dying woman "as she desired to meet the champion of her faith." Had he exerted his power and brought the lady back to health and strength or had he given assurance of a life beyond the tomb, there might have been some excuse for the announcement, but as far as politics are concerned it would probably have been just as well had the announcement never been made.

The Porto Rican Tariff.

The policy of this government in regard to Porto Rico and other outlying possessions is a matter of deep, thoughtful and earnest consideration, and a policy adopted in one instance should be a criterion which should govern in all instances. It is a well recognized fact that a fundamental principle of democracy is that this government should have free trade with all other governments. A policy which has never been approached but to the detriment of home manufacturing industries, home labor and home production. The policy of the republican party has ever been one of protection and encouragement to all of these and under this policy the country has always prospered. When it came to dealing with Porto Rico the democrats saw, or thought they saw, a fine chance to so manipulate affairs that they could present an opening wedge that would finally result in unlimited free trade and their efforts were energetically bent in that direction. Had they accomplished their end they would not only have placed the republican party in an embarrassing position but would have again had an opportunity to place the country in a position and condition as it was under Cleveland, but they were unsuccessful.

The result of tariff legislation in regard to outlying possessions is something of an experiment and the republican party stands ready to give such possessions absolute free trade providing it is shown that the interests of the people of the mainland are not jeopardized to their benefit. No one could conscientiously support a plan that would result in untold benefit to a small island or islands with less than a quarter of the inhabitants of the mainland. Such a course would be condemned as worse than silly. For instance if it was demonstrated that all the corn needed in this country could be produced in Porto Rico at less cost than it could be produced here it would be a suicidal policy to give the farmers of that island every advantage and the thousands of producers of this country none.

Time will demonstrate these things and the people of the United States may rest assured that the people of Porto Rico and the other islands will be given every advantage possible without sacrificing the interests of a larger number of people of this country. It has been repeatedly asserted that the republicans are an overbearing people, grinding the life blood out of every one under their control, but the assertions have never been substantiated and their policy will always be just to the greatest number of home people concerned.

A writer has recently presented this admirable review of the Porto Rican tariff case:

"The bill as it stands proposes to temporarily collect on goods passing from Porto Rico into the United States and from the United States into Porto Rico 15 per cent of the regular, Dingley tariff and to pay into the empty treasury of the island every dollar so collected, this plan to continue only until the legislature of Porto Rico shall have provided local taxation sufficient to meet the necessities of the island and in no event to continue beyond March 1, 1902, after which date there is to be absolute free trade between the island and the United States.

"One of the objects of a tariff upon Porto Rico's products imported here is to establish a right to impose such a tariff in later years, should it be found necessary. This will be a precedent in our legislation for our new possessions, the Philippines. The proposed import duty—15 per cent of the Dingley rates—is merely nominal, within 6 per cent of free trade. Back of it is an established power and recognized authority to deal with these questions as shall seem wisest and best when we know more about the whole matter, and shall better understand the true situation with which we have to deal.

"What Porto Rico is today we know—what it may become ten or twenty years from now, under the influence of American capital and enterprise, we can only conjecture. Cotton may be grown there, and cotton manufacturing might become a large industry. With cheap island labor, the product of our own northern and southern mills could be undersold. Would it be right to expose the agricultural and industrial interests of these United States to such competition? If the principal of a tariff be not now maintained, it might be difficult, if not impossible, to impose one hereafter, if it should thus become necessary. Then the republican party would be blamed, and justly so, for its neglect to protect the interests of American citizens on the mainland, and for its lack of forethought.

"It may be that the sugar yield there may grow to such an extent as to curtail the available market area for our growing beet industry. The same may be true of tobacco, of vegetables, of oranges, of rice, of hides, of hemp, and other products. It is not claimed that there is danger today. But that there is strong probability of danger to American industries through the establishment of free trade relations with Porto Rico, as a precedent for our policy in dealing with all our outlying possessions, no one can deny, after having given the subject careful investigation. What applies to Porto Rico might be held to apply equally to other possessions, and who can say what may develop

in that much larger and equally fertile area in the east, with its abundance of cheap labor.

"This is what we must guard against. Without a precedent, and the established right to impose a tariff upon any of the products of our island possessions, the United States may in years to come feel the effect of such lack of legislation to a very serious degree.

"By the adoption of this legislation, future protection will be possible to American interests in case it be needed against that source, or against the Philippines, or against the Danish West Indies, should we acquire them, or any outlying possessions.

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and it is best not to fix a precedent that will abolish a right which maintains our national policy. Moreover the republican party will not be committed to the policy of free trade as is so earnestly desired by the democrats."

The fusionists have long advocated the election of senators by direct vote of the people, while the republicans have not particularly opposed it. Now that a law to that effect has been passed by the house and is likely to be passed by the senate it takes another plank from their platform and it is beginning to look like that foundation upon which to build a party has been wrecked by dynamite. Early in his political career W. J. Bryan was introduced to the people by having his name placed on the ballot in Nebraska as candidate for the United States senate. He was not elected to the place coveted but stepped from there into the candidacy for president. The election of United States senators by direct vote of the people is a legitimate conclusion and will be done at less expense than heretofore. The time of legislatures is largely consumed by the choosing of senators and by electing them direct the state congress could devote their time to matters more pertinent to the state and would undoubtedly get along with a shorter session and therefore less expense to the tax payers. The time is ripe for such a change and it will undoubtedly come, as all true and permanent reforms have, through a republican congress. About 35 state legislatures have endorsed the proposition and the republican state convention of Nebraska 30 years ago adopted the idea as a plank in its platform.

The Wisner Chronicle has a novel plan to induce equitable taxation and one which certainly has its points to recommend it. If the plan could be adopted it would certainly tend toward the adjustment of a very vexing problem. The Chronicle says: "Judging from the reports of assessors' meetings in the various counties, the grand assessment roll of 1900 will scarcely exceed that of 1899, if in fact it equals it. The concerted effort in all the richer counties to force down the valuation of property and in plain violation of law, must be effectually overcome before anything like equitable taxation for maintenance of state government can be accomplished. Just what will do this is the problem. A system of state insurance would bring about better assessments. If each property owner, by paying a small levy on the dollar valuation, could have his property insured by the state at its assessed valuation, there would be some incentive to list property at about its cash value. There might be abuses of such a system, but the cases would be isolated. At present public opinion is nullifying a plain provision of the statute, and personal property is being assessed at from one-fourth to one-twentieth of its actual value."

As has heretofore been asserted the price of agricultural products depends somewhat upon the farmers. If the present price of corn induces all of them to plant a larger portion of their fields in that cereal than usual and if they happen to raise a bumper crop the price of the product is almost certain to decline unless, perchance, there should be an unprecedented demand. A business administration has some power to make prices by stimulating industries but there are limits to such powers, and business tact on the part of agriculturalists and other peoples is an essential concomitant to prosperity. An administration's policy can no more prevent some people from falling than it can prevent others from making money. These facts should be born in mind at this time.

The announcement that Congressman Mercer of this state is being talked of for second place on the republican national ticket is received with great and general satisfaction by the friends of the young statesman in Nebraska. He has created a record most satisfactory to his constituents and his ability in the halls of congress is recognized by the people of the state regardless of politics. There has been no one mentioned for the position as yet whom the republicans of Nebraska would more quickly roll up their sleeves and wade through "blood up to the bridle" for than Dave Mercer of the Second district. Give us Congressman Dave and watch us climb into the band wagon.

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