

# The Conservative.

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**GOVERNMENT CERTIFICATION.** There are some parallels between soldiers and currency, between war and finance. Authorized governments have uniforms and insignia by which they stamp or certificate their troops and the military officers who command them. But eagles and epaulets and stars and shoulderstraps confer no qualities upon those whom they decorate. These insignia merely certify as to rank and authority. The brain, brawn and courage of great warriors have never been bestowed by commissions. Nor has a knowledge of war ever been put into a human head by any military commission acting as a force pump.

But it is just as easy to construct an efficient colonel or general by the mere act of governmentally commissioning a citizen as it is to make fifty cents of bullion worth a dollar in coin. The officer will be useful because of his own brains, fortitude and proficiency in arms, or useless because of his lack of those essentials to military success. The value of the martial chieftain depends upon the fineness and texture of the human bullion out of which the government has coined and certificated him. And as government cannot, by edict and commissions, make great soldiers out of noodles and naturals, so it cannot by enactments and stamping, make silver the equal of gold. The value of the metal bullion in the coin determines purchasing power, and the character and stamina of the man determine the fighting power of the soldier. Stamps do not give value to either money or men.

It does not follow that a horse descended from standardbred trotters will make fast time on the course, without training. No owner would enter an untrained colt in a free-for-all trotting match because the colt had a speedy sire and dam. Money is not risked that readily, nor wealth thus recklessly staked on chances. But there are as many reasons for expecting equine victories in the speed ring from undeveloped thoroughbreds as there are for predicting victories in war for military officers who have been commissioned because their fathers were renowned as generals. A pedigree does not make a racer, always; nor can heredity, invariably, insure us a great soldier. Speed is not transmitted, but the potency to be trained and developed for speed is transmitted. Strategy and military tactics

are not transmitted but the capacity to acquire a knowledge thereof and an aptitude for the art of war may be transmitted.

**THE SCHOLAR IN POLITICS.** Hon. William L. Wilson, the president of the Washington and Lee University at Lexington, Virginia, is a splendid citizen and patriot. No man in recent times has better demonstrated the value of the scholar in American politics. Recently Mr. Wilson wisely wrote:

"The history of our freedom then has not been so much a history of achievement as a history of preservation. The task has not been to win a new possession, but to defend an old one, to bear it safely along the march of human progress, through all the advancing and receding stages of civilization, amid the accidents and changes and perils which steadily increase in number and in portent as the world grows into that 'vast and complicated thing,' which is the only definition M. Taine can find for modern society.

"If one after another of the nations and peoples of the world has lost its freedom in the stately procession of the ages, some surrendering it to the 'wild and many weaponed throng that hangs upon its front and flank and rear,' and others marring by changes

'---all too fierce and vast  
This order of the Human Star,  
This heritage of the past,'

it is our supreme happiness to stand in the single line down which its traditions have come with unsteady, it may be, but never-failing progress, widening from precedent to precedent. If today and in the near future those traditions seem threatened by new perils and new temptations that spring from beneath the chariot wheels of triumphant progress, of our industrial advancement, and our military achievement, it is the more incumbent on patriot and scholar to clear the mind and to cleanse the bosom of all error as to the origin and history of our freedom and the organic conditions under which it must operate through the machinery of self-governing institutions. It must not be forgotten that it has never been the stable creation of theories, however dazzling and magnificent, but the growth of slow, steady, and silent progress. Even its so-called founders and apostles have been men who have faithfully and loyally done merely the next thing, being sure that the next thing was the right thing as tested by the standards of the past. By this wisdom alone have they insured healthy and consistent progress, linking freedom and order into bonds of union and escaping the anarchy and deeds of blood which have too often accompanied the hurried strides of revolution, and, in the name of liberty, driven mankind from its worship.

"How many a glorious dawn has reddened and darkened into night of terror

as mere theory, fanaticism, intoxication of power or of glory, have sought to hasten or to undo the work of evolution and to remodel human life or society by their crude and fanciful notions.

"The founders of our republic were never swept from their firm footing by any such delusive ideas. That 'creative power,' which Mr. Bancroft attributes to them and which they possessed beyond all other state builders in history, was, as he further testifies, merely exercised in the strong and harmonious organization of materials that were the gift of the ages, and he might have added with equal truth, the creative power itself was the rarest and most precious of these gifts of the ages. They understood their task and its inexorable conditions and therefore they succeeded in that task. Names signify little; written constitutions signify little; universal suffrage is no warranty. The potential energy, the soul and living spirit of freedom, does not reside in any of these, nor yet in charters, or bills or petitions of right, or in statutes, but in the political training, the individual enlightenment, the individual morality of a people, and in devotion to personal liberty, in men who having these for their pole-star are not borne to and fro by the shifting tides of popular opinion or popular madness, but who steer right onward, able and willing 'to maintain the day against the hour and the year against the day.'" \* \* \* \* \*

**GOLD STANDARD SORROWS.** In the first number of THE CONSERVATIVE was published the following extract from an eloquent advocate of the free and unlimited coinage of silver at the ratio of 16 to 1:

"The promulgation of the gold standard is an attack upon your homes and your firesides and you have as much right to resist it as to resist an army marching to take your children captive and burn the roof over your head."

In connection therewith a long list was published of the advancements and improvements of the wage-earners of the United States which had been made during the last forty years, notwithstanding the alleged plutocracy of the country. Then it was promised that public attention would be called to more gold standard sorrows. Here are a few of them:

During the last forty years railroads have been required to fence their lines or pay double damage for loss of property resulting from their failure to fence. Railroads in that time have been required also to furnish safe places and appliances for their employees.

Manufacturers and mine owners are compelled to provide places and machin-