

just their bullion value as a medium of exchange and no more.

The same confederate government *de facto* wrested the Southern mints and all their contents of gold bullion from the United States by the power of arms. And the journals of the confederate congress and the statutes at large of the confederate states show that the aforesaid *de facto* government proceeded with the coinage of gold. At Dahlonga and at New Orleans five, ten and twenty dollar gold pieces were emitted until all the gold was exhausted. But those gold pieces, though in law counterfeits, will today buy as much as other gold pieces of the same weight and fineness, which were during the same period of time minted by the United States.

This shows how little a government can do towards creating values.

The paper of the confederacy, with all its authorized promises, is valueless.

The silver coin of the confederacy, with all its mint stamp, is good for its bullion value only.

The gold coin minted by authority of the same government, which is now as dead as the deadest dead government of the Pharaohs, remains with the same vigor of buying power that it would have enjoyed if it had been legitimately coined by the United States.

All that any government ought to do in furnishing a currency for a country is to see that its mint honestly certifies the weight and fineness of the coins which it emits. These coins whether silver or gold play only a small part in the exchanges of a country.

Ninety-three per cent of the wholesale and fifty per cent of the retail trade of the United States is carried on by checks and bills of exchange.

Government should get out of the banking business immediately. Let a currency reform come at once—immediately after March 4, 1899.

TORRENS LAW. We wish to call the attention of our readers to the article on the Torrens law, which we publish on an inner page, and which deals with a matter which is of considerable importance to every owner of a home or farm. Details concerning the operation of this law will be given in a later number.

REINFORCEMENTS FOR POPULISM. The savages and barbarians of the Philippine islands together with the lepers of Hawaii and the hybrids of Porto Rico are capable of reinforcing the populists to a victorious majority in the United States.

Sixteen-to-one and the unlimited coinage of silver at that ratio would captivate all the untutored citizens of the United States which it is proposed by expansion, absorption or annexation to acquire from uncivilized islands. Big chiefs with rings in the nose, huge pen-

dants from the ears, and an occasional metallic bracelet on arm or manacle on the leg would whoop it up for all the vagaries and isms of the populists, and yell with savage ecstasy for the free and unlimited coinage of silver at sixteen-to-one by which all their crude jewelry could be converted into dollars of the fathers at more than twice their bullion value.

The more barbaric the people the more crude their ideas of money, and the clumsier the commodity which they use for money. Hence peltry and shells perform the functions of money among savages. And for the half-savage and benighted beings that jingoism proposes to transform into citizens of the United States the silver standard would be most attractive.

WHAT CENTURY? The question raised in last week's CONSERVATIVE as to when the 20th century begins is going to have a certain influence on our future conversation. If we are born in the year 1900, can we make our boast to our grandchildren that we date from the good old times of the 19th century? If we die in that year, can we jactitate ourselves through a blest eternity upon having lived to see the 20th century come in?

The answer manifestly depends upon what the first year of the era is called; if we count it the year 0, then the year 99 completed the first hundred, and the year 1899 the nineteenth; and if we call it the year 1, then the first century was not closed until the end of the year 100, and the year 1900 will have to be included in the present century. This statement of the issue throws no light upon the question, for the reason that direct evidence on the doubtful point is not now to be had. Those who were living in that year are unfortunately all dead now, and if they were not, they could give us no testimony, because it occurred to no one to reckon dates from the birth of Christ until about the year 527; and then they made a poor computation, as appears from the nativity of Jesus being set in the year 4 B. C.

Our conversational habit is in favor of putting 1900 into the 19th century; we speak of ancient customs as having existed "since the year one;" we never hear of the year nothing.

Later experiments with arbitrary eras still leave us in confusion on the controverted point. A case is found in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. While this venerable record was in the hands of the monks of Peterborough, they suffered the affliction of the loss of their establishment by fire. For some time thereafter the pious fathers dated their annals from this calamity. Abbot Martin kept his monks busy at reconstruction, however; he "wrohte on the circe and sette thar to landes and rentes" and finally "brohte heom into the newe mynstre mid micel wurtschipe;" this happened

"anno ab incarnatione Domini Moxl, a combustione loci xxiii." Now the fire was in the year 1116; to make 1140 the 23rd year from it, 1118 must have been the year 1, 1117 the year 0, and it is hard to see what they could have counted the year of the catastrophe itself.

Again, in the case of the French, who at the time of their revolution planned a new heaven and new earth. They dated the Age of Reason from midnight preceding the autumnal equinox of 1792, and it is distinctly stated that they began counting "the year 1, the year 2, etc." [Now the writer has some books of that period in his possession; one of them is dated "An V," which is parenthetically explained to be 1797; another was printed in "An XII," and that is explained as being 1803. These two dates respectively require 1792 to be considered the year 1 and the year 0, though it is possible that if the printer had given the month of publication, as well as the year, this difficulty would disappear.

Altogether, the point appears to be still open.

CLEVELANDESQUE. Governor Poynter and all others entering upon official duties in January, 1899, will make no mistake by copying and adhering to Grover Cleveland's resolution when he was elected governor of the state of New York in 1882 and wrote his brother that he intended "to make the matter a business agreement between the people of the state and myself, in which the obligation on my side is to perform the duties assigned me with an eye single to the interests of my employers"!

Nebraska will be content with all public servants who copy Cleveland in this relation between the people and their officials and are as honest and courageous as he was while governor of New York and president of the United States.

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD MEAN FROM INTROSPECTION.

To a young citizen there is nothing acrid and irritating in the generally inculcating remark of Mons Rochefoucauld about elderly male humans when he asserts—no doubt after searching introspection—that "old men like to impart good precepts to console themselves for no longer being in a condition to set bad examples." But seriously disposed men of years frequently resent with wrath this implied general accusation.

"AUNTY" MONOPOLY. "Aunty" Monopoly will soon be screeching herself hoarse again as a tender to agrarian and anti-property sentiment, which has been the real spirit of the agitations against good money. As patriotism is said to be the last refuge of the scoundrel, "anti-monopoly" is the dernier resort of political mountebanks.