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AMERICAN INDUSTRIES.

What is the conspicuous fact now revealed in the industrial situation of the world? Is it not this: Go where you may, visit the neighborhood of nations, take all the time you need, examine their history, listen to their traditions, and enquire: At what time existed the most general distribution of comfort and luxuries among the people of the earth?—Will not the answer be: Now? Another question: In the closing days of the 19th century, where was found the greatest abundance of these things and the most general distribution? Will not the answer be: In the United States? Looking impartially upon those engaged and arrayed in this industrial dispute, and knowing them and their methods of business, of whom shall we take counsel? Of the progressive, or of the retrogressive? Of the thrifty, or the improvident? Of the active, or the indolent?

THE INDEPENDENTS.

In the letters and recollections of John Murry Forbes, edited by his daughter, Sarah Forbes Hughes, and published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co., of Boston and New York, THE CONSERVATIVE finds on page 209, of volume II, the following: "Having got entirely free from the shackles of party, by voting for Cleveland on each of the campaigns when he was a candidate I find myself left free to give what influence I can to whichever party seems most likely to carry into effect the two important practical issues which seem to me now before the country, civil service reform, and still more, a readjustment of the tariff; and,

of course, to vote, without regard for party, for the candidate in each federal, state or local election who seems to me most creditable."

That personal platform made by Mr. Forbes for his own patriotism and guidance is good enough for any good citizen who belongs to his country instead of belonging to a party. Party organizations become corrupt by long leases of power. Democratic power, entrenched behind Tammany in New York, is reeking with rotteness. Republican rings hold Philadelphia in their putrescent grip and rifle the pockets of tax-payers so adroitly and thoroughly that Croker and his disciples are green with envy.

Platt-Crockerism in New York, Quayism in Pennsylvania and Goebelism hybridized on Bryanism in Kentucky teach citizens who have taxes to pay the importance of independent thought and independent action in political affairs. If the republic is to be perpetuated and civil and religious liberty to be preserved it must be by independently thinking and voting Americans.

Branding a man democrat or branding him republican does not change his nature nor transform his character. The party process of making voters with party brands, as ranchmen identify their cattle on the plains, does not tell what kind of a man the wearer of the brand may be—whether honest and able, or dishonest and weak-minded—any more than the mark on a steer tells what breed he is and whether in beef he will prove succulent and tender or unpalatable and tough. There are competent and honest men in all political parties. Out of such men who, like John M. Forbes, can see and criticize with courage, wrong-doings by their own party must be developed the independent vote of the United States—a vote absolutely necessary to preserve a popular form of government to our posterity.

OCTOPUS KILLERS. Among all the valorous hunters pursuing the mighty Octopus in the jungles of plutocracy, none outranks Attorney General Smyth of Nebraska. His charge upon the silver smelter octopus has no parallel in courage and skill. That mastodon of monopolies will soon be slaughtered and its stuffed hide adorn the economic museum of Mr. Smyth. Beside it the carcass of the Standard Oil Octopus is a mere mouse.

WALT MASON.

This issue of THE CONSERVATIVE contains a beautiful tree-conserving lesson in musical rhythm. It is thoroughly appreciated by the arboricultural editor and will meet with a great welcome among the lovers of trees, woodlands and forests everywhere. Mr. Mason can do a splendid service with his facile pen in behalf of tree saving, tree planting and the reforestation of the country. He is cordially welcomed to THE CONSERVATIVE and its band of crusaders in behalf of groves and orchards, woodlands, forests and roadside trees.

IGNORANCE IN FINANCE.

The advocates of the free coinage of silver at the ratio of 16 to 1 are, as a rule, ignorant of all economic science and especially densely and superbly lacking in the power of diligent investigation. Their fight against the gold standard is for a prejudice. Reasoning against a prejudice is like fighting a shadow; it exhausts the reasoner without visibly affecting the prejudice. Arguments cannot do the work of instruction any more than blows can take the place of sunlight.

Let the reasoners have the gold standard. Prejudice will then war against the immutable. It cannot, however, destroy it nor harm it even a little.

TERROR OF TRUSTS.

THE CONSERVATIVE has read with profound interest and satisfaction a pamphlet on "trusts" by Henry Apthorp. It is issued by "The Common Sense Publishing Co.," Lock Box 14, Cleveland, Ohio, and single copies can be purchased for ten cents. Mr. Apthorp remarks on his first page: "It appears to be a conflict between those who do loud talking and those who do quiet thinking. Clergymen, editors and professors and nearly all other classes of teachers, and most of the politicians, now spend a great share of their time in talking and writing against 'the prisoner at the bar.' These men go on using violent words and the trusts go on making useful things. Some of the words cost more than some of the things. I paid five cents to ride four miles on a warm, electric car to reach a cold hall, and then paid fifty cents admission to hear an anti-trust talk."