

THE GOLD STANDARD.

The republicans, if they establish the gold standard for the United States and make it permanent and enduring as the everlasting mountains, will be entitled to the gratitude of agriculture, commerce and manufacture, they will have made permanent and sure the just reward of labor. They will have earned some mitigation for even their needless waste of blood and treasure and will have, at last, redeemed the one promise which more than any other elected McKinley president.

The old American virtue of economy in public expenditures no longer wins from our rulers even the tribute of a hypocritical admiration. For the second time the president has sent in an annual message without one word of warning against extravagance. He is, in fact, the chief advocate and abettor of extravagance. And all the departments are pushing up their estimates. The attorney-general urges that the salaries of federal judges be raised, and Secretary Hay wants United States ministers and consuls better paid. We calmly talk now of a national expenditure of \$600,000,000, although \$300,000,000 was thought a frightful sum twenty years ago. Prudence, frugality, have become contemptible virtues; and the thrifty ant is jeered at by every happy grasshopper getting his "piece" of McKinley prosperity.

The death of Senator-elect Hayward of Nebraska before he could take his seat reduces by two the republican majority in the upper branch of Congress, as the populist governer will appoint a member of that party, who will hold the seat until the legislature shall have a chance to elect, a year from next January. Four seats in the senate were vacant before Mr. Hayward's death, through the failure last winter of legislatures to elect in Pennsylvania and Delaware in the east, and in Utah and California in the west. Governor Stone is the only one of the four governors in these states who has yet made an appointment, but, of course, if the senate shall admit Quay, the other executives will promptly follow this example. Executive appointments in Utah and California would make no difference in the representation of those states as compared with election by the legislatures, since the governor and majority of the law-makers in Utah are democrats, while in California they are republicans. But the democrats will gain a seat if the senate shall admit Quay from Pennsylvania on the credentials which he presents, and then later receive a man from Delaware on similar papers, as the governor of the latter state, chosen in 1896, is a democrat, while the republicans carried the legisla-

ture in 1898, and might have had a senator sworn in on Monday if they could have agreed among themselves as to who he should be last winter.—New York Evening Post.

PRICE OF NIGGERS. The president put into the forefront of his message some statistics left over from his western stumping tour, designed to show how fast we are getting rich and, therefore, virtuous. But he missed, it seems to us, his best chance to show what a Midas-touch resides in "McKinley prosperity." He referred casually, one might almost say, furtively—to the "usual market value" of slaves in our new gems and glories of the tropic seas. These are our slaves now, of course, and it seems to us that a reasonable cash estimate of what they are worth should be reckoned in when figuring up the value of our Philippine booty. But how easy it would have been for the president to point to the ruling price of slaves in the Sulus—\$18 to \$20, we believe, for likely niggers—and then show what a marked advance this indicated in the money value of flesh and blood since he bought the whole population at a regular bargain-counter price of \$2 a head. Here is a clear gain of 900 per cent, and it is safe to say that if Bryan had been elected president we should never have seen such an astonishing evidence of prosperity.

Mr. McKinley explains that each slave is now happy in the knowledge that he can buy his freedom—if he can only find the money. Some carpers may say that the United States ought to advance it to him. But the president shows that all our spare cash is paid to the sultan, who now draws \$760 a month from our treasury. With a score or two of wives to support, the wonder is how the poor sultan can get on with so small a sum.

The foregoing from the New York Evening Post of December 6th suggests a job for Brigham Roberts, rejected member of congress from Utah. Why not appoint him assistant sultan of Sulu? His experience as a polygamist—if the place is put in the classified civil service and an examination required—would no doubt qualify him for the task.

It goes without saying that the United States government is the best on earth, but that does not mean that it is perfect. All of the different department reports at Washington suggest reforms which merit the careful attention of congress. For a nation that is only a little more than one hundred years old the United States has done surprisingly well, but there is still room for improvement.—Kansas City Star.

A FALSE PROPHET.

"I want to say," said Mr. Towne, in beginning his address, "that the present so-called prosperity is fictitious. It will collapse within the next few months and the results will be terrific to contemplate. Our financial system has no sound basis. It is like a house of playing cards and will certainly collapse."

These words we quote from that impartial journal, the Chicago Daily News. The statement is quite in accord with the sentiments of the free silver leaders. They profited in 1896 and preceding years by public distress, and they look to it as their best ally in the warfare they are waging against the gold standard and sound finance in general.

But it will not come to their aid. The present prosperity is not fictitious. Prosperity implies good wages and brisk demand for labor. It implies abundant crops and fair prices for them. It implies likewise large railroad earnings, increased bank clearings, productive mines, industrial enterprise and mercantile solvency.

Mr. Towne must know from observation that the country possesses just now these elements of prosperity and many others. Such things are not fictitious. They will not disappear in the next "few months," and there will be no result that "will be terrific to contemplate." When this Minnesota prophet looks down from the Duluth hills two or three months hence he will see elevators full of wheat, factories employing many hands and paying high wages. He will observe Superior street crowded with thrifty people and he will see around him happy homes, the reward of enterprise and industry.

Mr. Towne says that "our financial system has no sound basis." We admit that it needs reform. If the basis is at all unsound it is because of the silver agitation which passed the Bland bill in 1878 and continued to plunge the country into debt for the purchase of silver until the partial repeal of the so-called Sherman act in 1893. That movement culminated in the free silver campaign of 1896, which retarded financial reform and threatened to debase the currency as well as to destroy public credit.

Despite its defects "our financial system" will not "collapse." We do not believe that the mantle of Elias has fallen upon Mr. Towne, who in congress and elsewhere has made predictions that would entitle him to take the place of the "False Prophet." Our country will continue to grow in prosperity and our financial system will before long be secure from the assaults of Mr. Towne and his free silver associates.—Sound Money.

A realist is a person who sees things as they are and endeavors to see the direction in which they point.