

CHANGING WESTERN PUBLIC OPINION

The New York Evening Post calls attention to two important facts. One of them is that "for the first time since the financial issue arose in its modern form, a few years after the close of the civil war, the republicans in either branch of congress have been united in favor of action on the right side." The other fact is that the section of the country tributary to the Mississippi river, which "in the past has been the seat of free coinage delusions, soft money crazes, and reckless financial theories generally," has now assumed the leadership in the movement for sound financial legislation.

The hard times which followed the panic of 1873 created an immediate demand for an inflation of the currency to "relieve the distress." The hard times were felt the most in the west and the cry for inflation was the loudest there. Indiana and Iowa were preëminent among the states which clamored for more greenbacks. When General Grant vetoed the inflation bill in 1874 twenty-five republican senators voted to pass it over his veto and only twenty voted to sustain the veto. In the house 102 republicans voted for the bill and only 64 against it. The Iowa and Indiana senators—all republicans—were for the inflation bill. So were all the Indiana representatives and all those from Iowa with one exception.

The republican party, as a whole, has been for sound money since 1874, but there have always been republican congressmen in larger or smaller numbers who refuse to stand by sound money principles. That was due mainly to the fact that their constituents, generally in the west, had not been converted to such principles. But the constituencies have been converted. The Evening Post rejoices in the fact that "now not only do the republican representatives from Indiana and Iowa vote for currency reform, but they have been the most prominent agents in committing their party to this policy." Mr. Overstreet, of the Indianapolis district, introduced the bill the house will pass next week, and in Indianapolis, "once the headquarters of financial folly"—when Morton was senator—the movement started which has culminated in the house bill.

The new speaker of the house, the first one elected from a state west of the Mississippi, was a leading member of the caucus committee selected last year to draft a currency reform measure, while "the republican governor of Iowa, reëlected last month by an overwhelming majority, has been the strongest advocate of the gold standard known in all that country ever since Leslie M. Shaw came into national prominence by his bold championship of that cause two years ago."

The Evening Post says that such a

showing is as encouraging as it is significant, and that it encourages the nation to believe that a safe currency "is as safe now that the Mississippi valley is coming into control of the nation as when the guardianship of our finance rested with the Atlantic seaboard."

The west has made the great progress described by the Evening Post. No doubt within a few years there will begin to be another advance toward the recognition of the right of invested capital to the same measure of protection that is given to labor—that they should be on an equal footing in the administration of the laws. The day will come when people will look back with amazement at the time when mayors, governors and other administrators of public affairs truckled in a spiritless, cowardly fashion to the outrageous demand of "business agents" and labor agitators. Chicago had its lesson when both governor and mayor hesitated to enforce the law against Debsism, and it became necessary to appeal to the national government to secure protection which it was the duty of the city and state to give. The day when city and state officials cowered before Debsism will always be the dark day in the history of Chicago. Kansas has had its lesson as well as Chicago. That state has learned that the rights of invested capital cannot safely be violated.

Chicago cannot have too many new industries. If Mr. Frick builds a steel plant here he should be welcome and he should be assured of the prompt and impartial administration of the laws. The city, which has been made great by the constant inflow of new capital and energetic managers of it, will cease to grow if that inflow is checked. But new industries will not come here unless there is a reasonable assurance that the rights of capital and employers shall be recognized to the same degree at least as are those of labor and of the walking delegates and "business agents."

The mischievous consequences of yielding to the unjust demands of labor demagogues are so fully understood now that there will be little patience with the insane demand that work on the government building in Chicago shall be stopped unless the granite to be used in it is cut here. The implication is that Chicago is an independent city and has a right to prohibit the importation of material not manufactured here. The mere statement of such a proposition demolishes it. The people of this city and state will not submit to the blind despotism which asks that a Chinese wall be built around the city of Chicago and that it shall be forbidden to exchange all commodities freely with other parts of the country.

The "walking delegates" or "business agents" who have tyrannized over contractors and mayors make a mistake

when they attempt to coerce the national government. The United States will erect its buildings where it pleases and as it pleases. It will buy its materials and have them shaped in any part of the United States it chooses. Any walking delegate or band of conspirators that may attempt to put a veto on its actions is bound to be crushed. This is a government of equal rights and no discrimination can be tolerated within the limits of the country in favor of one part of it or against another.—Chicago Tribune, December 13th, 1899.

HEARD ON THE OAKLAND FERRY.

"Nebraska farm lands are good property these days," remarked D. W. Hitchcock, ticket agent of the Union Pacific. "I have just refused an offer of \$10,000 for a farm in Burt county, which cost me \$6,000 a few years ago. My selling price is \$15,000. And talking of Nebraska, I knew W. W. Foote when he was driving an express wagon in Omaha. Afterwards he was a reporter on the Omaha Herald."

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"And speaking of Omaha," said the man at the end of the seat, "I see that Senator John M. Thurston was married at Washington last week. The newspapers said that immediately after the ceremony he started on a Southern tour in a private car belonging to the Union Pacific company. I knew Thurston and his first wife when they were doing their courting—belonged to the same Good Templars' lodge with them. When they got married there was no private railroad car waiting in the back yard for them. Thurston may have had money enough then to make a wedding journey across the Missouri to Council Bluffs and back to Omaha if he should return in a couple of days or so. That was in 1871. His first wife was a small woman with dark hair, dark eyes and dark complexion. Her father was a brother of Senator Poland of Vermont. In these days he is frequently referred to as 'Judge' Thurston, but the highest judicial position he ever reached was that of justice of the peace. He attracted the attention, in the 70's, of A. J. Poppleton, the chief attorney for the Union Pacific, who gave him a position as assistant attorney for that company at a salary of \$3,000 as a starter, and when Mr. Poppleton retired in 1890 Thurston succeeded him as leading counsel for the company with a salary of \$15,000. Mr. Poppleton was one of the brainiest lawyers in the state. He located in Omaha, a newly fledged attorney, in 1854, and there died a few years ago, totally blind, though he continued in the practice of his profession for several years after being suddenly stricken with blindness."—Oakland Enquirer, Nov. 21, 1899.