

NATIONAL EXTRAVAGANCE. We are now passing through a period of reckless extravagance in national administration. One of the most trying things the republicans will be called upon to explain in the fall election will be the appalling increase in national expenditures. This has been due partly to reckless appropriations for public buildings and improvements but the greater portion of it must be charged to the imperial expense account. The payment of exorbitant salaries to our carpet bag officials, together with the embezzlement of public funds by these same officials, will prove a great burden to taxpayers and a matter of no little annoyance to republican orators.

The administration is not in a position to call a halt in appropriations for the reason that it is committed to a most iniquitous protective tariff and, if liberal appropriations were not made, a surplus would result. This would lead to a demand for a reduction of duties. They prefer to squander the money rather than do this.

Because of the prosperous condition of business throughout the country, the people are comparatively indifferent about this increase in the expense of government. This extravagance will probably continue until it culminates in a panic. Then we will doubtless hear, from demagogues and political plunderers, the familiar cry of a "scarcity of money." These embryonic students of finance will agitate correcting the whole matter by a simple enactment providing for an increase in dollars by establishing the free and unlimited coinage of silver at the sacred ratio of 16 to 1.

SOMETHING OUT OF NOTHING. The alchemists of the seventeenth century transmuted their yearning for the power to create values by necromancy to their posterity. Fortunately all of the American people are not tainted by inherited inclinations to make something out of nothing. This lunacy is sporadic, not epidemic.

The Rosicrucians stoutly maintained their power to transmute one metal into another metal and any and all metals into gold. Picus, in his book, "De Auro," section 3, chapter 2, declares that he has eighteen times witnessed the production of gold by alchemy. His statement does not tax the credulity of THE CONSERVATIVE, however, any more than the statement of certain financial fanatics who declare that an ounce of silver uncoined may be worth only sixty cents, but that coined it will be worth one dollar and twenty-nine cents. Those economists who solemnly aver that when the United States freely coins, without limit, all the silver presented to its mints, at a ratio of 16 to 1 with gold, silver, the world over, will have a selling value of

one dollar and twenty-nine cents an ounce, ask for a supernatural credulity. Nobody, with common sense, believed Picus when he averred that he had witnessed the creation of gold by human means. And very few men, with normal intellectual powers, now believe that an ounce of coined silver is worth twice as much as an uncoined ounce of the same metal.

On the other hand there are a lot of David Harum-like, hard-headed infidels, who will not be persuaded that stamping a thing a certain value bestows that value. These monetary stubborns proclaim, from day to day, the queer, old-fashioned theory of finance: "That any quantity of any metal, in the form of bullion, must be of precisely the same value as the same quantity of the same metal in coin."

What can be done with such pertinacity and prejudice? How can the plain people be undeceived as to the pernicious doctrines of those financial infidels who decline to believe in Bryanarchy and prosperity by enactment?

THE FARMERS' TRUST.

The Washington Post is responsible for the following:

"To a Post reporter Mr. Hanley stated that a movement is on foot to bring the farmers and grain growers of the world into an association, the purpose of which will be to get the combined farmers in all parts of the world to restrict the acreage of wheat and other crops, so as to raise the price, in the case of wheat, to \$1 a bushel."

THE CONSERVATIVE calls the attention of Attorney General Smyth, the terror to trusts, to this agrarian octopus that threatens to raise the price of bread to the plain people. If a combination of capital that has decreased the price of oil is hostile to public interests and must be driven from the state, what ought the distinguished champion of the people do with the farmers' trust which proposes to control the supply of wheat and thereby arbitrarily raise the price?

COST OF CUBAN GOVERNMENT.

Senator Bacon's comparison of the cost of the govern-

ment in Cuba and that of states of the Union brings out some startling facts. The Cuban receipts for 1899 were \$16,000,000 and the expenditures \$14,000,000. Deducting the amount expended for public instruction, justice, and the postal system, the current expenses of government were \$11,000,000. The following was the cost of government in the states: Georgia, \$872,000; Missouri, \$1,707,137; Massachusetts, \$3,500,000; Indiana, \$2,980,000; Arkansas, \$550,000; Minnesota, \$4,650,000; Mississippi, \$749,000; Kentucky, \$2,738,000; Tennessee, \$2,580,000; Michigan, \$3,584,000.

All of these states, except two, have a greater number of people than Cuba,

and the machinery of the government is more complete and more highly organized; therefore, one would naturally expect the cost to be greater.

ELECTION OF SENATORS BY POPULAR VOTE.

There are several weighty, and, as it seems to me, decisive objections to submitting to the states an amendment to the constitution providing for the election of United States senators by a direct vote of the people.

I am opposed to taking this step because I believe it will weaken rather than strengthen the structure of our government, and because it will inevitably lead to the demand for other amendments which it does not seem desirable to adopt.

The change is really the first amendment to the constitution which, if adopted, would require a change in our form of government. The first ten amendments, which were adopted all at once and immediately after 1788, are a bill of rights and merely negative. The twelfth amendment provided that in the electoral college the electors shall designate the person for whom they vote for president and the person for whom they vote for vice-president. The thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth amendments abolished slavery, declared the equality of citizens and established manhood suffrage without regard to color. None of these amendments, covering a period of more than a hundred and twelve years, involved any change in the form of our government. We should not make such a change for any slight or inadequate cause. Macaulay has said, "never remove an anomaly because it is an anomaly; never innovate except when some grievance is felt." But there is no anomaly in that provision of the constitution which provides that the political entities known as states shall choose senators through legislatures elected by the people, and there is no grievance which requires the remedy proposed. Has it ever been shown that our country suffers in the slightest degree by the method of choosing senators through the state legislators, as compared with their choice by a political convention? If it can be shown, as it undoubtedly can, that there is corruption in state legislatures, it is an evil which cannot be cured by transferring their functions as to the election of senators to a nominating convention. You cannot abolish corruption in that way, you simply give it another and a larger field. The legislatures are composed of the chosen men of the state. They are elected to preserve its liberties, to levy its taxes and the whole control of the government is placed in their hands. They are much less likely to be corrupted than the delegates to a convention who may meet in the morning