

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF COMMERCE.

The approach of the end of the century calls attention to the fact that it has been marked by a tremendous development of commerce. The various inventions in machinery operated by steam and electricity have all contributed to this end, and commerce in turn has aided in their promotion. The peace of the latter part of the period, in contrast with the prolonged wars that prevailed at the beginning of the century, has made an unusual development of the international carrying trade possible. The growth of the credit and clearing house system has been another factor.

Progress in commerce can be expressed—superficially, it is true—in dollars and cents, and so is more readily summarized than a corresponding advance in music or art or literature. In an article in the North American Review Mr. O. P. Austin, chief of the bureau of statistics, gathers the figures of a century of commerce. One hundred years ago it was estimated that a population of 640 millions exchanged goods valued at 1,500 million dollars. Since that time the population has increased 135 per cent. and the commerce 1,233 per cent. The trade, which, at the century's beginning, was only \$2.31 for each person, has now increased to \$13.27. The advance in the decade from 1830 to 1840, just after the introduction of the railway, was more than twice as rapid as that of the ten years previous to the railway era. The telegraph system introduced in 1844 has spread, until now it embraces a million miles of wire, with 170,000 miles of submarine cable. A large proportion of the million land messages sent every day are commercial in character. Other factors in the growth of commerce have been the increase in the cultivated areas of the world from 360 to nearly 900 million acres; the advance in coal production from 11 million to 600 million tons, and in pig iron from 460,000 to 37 million tons; the development of other natural and manufactured products.

The bare figures show little of the extent and meaning of the growth of commerce. What trade really stands for is the comfort of the people. The fact that \$13 worth of goods for each person is exchanged in a year instead of \$2, as in 1800, is significant, because it means that each person has a far larger share of the comforts of life now than at the opening of the century. Then a family's furnishings in America were chiefly confined to what its members could make themselves, and the range of its food was little beyond that produced in the neighborhood wherein it lived. Now the workmen of the world contribute to the household goods of every family, and the gardens of temperate zones and tropics are at the service of its table. The real meaning of commercial development is to be found in increased happiness.—Kansas City Star.

A NEW INDUSTRY.

In view of the rapid increase of our population any new industry which will afford reasonable opportunity for ambitious young men to acquire reputation and fortune should be widely welcomed. In the career of an American citizen whose name is familiar to many of our countrymen an illustration is offered of a hitherto measurably new industry. Some ten or twelve years since there lived in a Nebraska town a man who was usually known as Bill Bryan. He had received a fair education and was admitted after the usual period of study as a member of the bar.

For many years, however, his earnings in the line of his profession were very small. He rated as a fourth or fifth class lawyer, and the fact that he lost the most of his cases was a hindrance to his rise in his chosen profession. His command of words was phenomenal, and upon the slightest provocation they would flow from his lips in an uninterrupted and harmonious torrent. When addressing a court or jury the fact, however, that these words seemed to be upon a variety of subjects not pertinent to the case under consideration, and when by accident they were pertinent, bore often against the side of the case on which he was detained, seemed an additional drawback in his legal work.

He was industrious and persistent, but for the reasons above indicated his annual earnings never for many years exceeded the sum of \$100 per month, and even this amount in the eyes of his associates of the bar seemed excessive in view of the character of his work.

He decided, therefore, to adopt the profession of a candidate, and in the course of a few years had such measure of success in this line that he became known as W. J. Bryan.

His ambition then took a loftier range, and he decided to become a candidate for the presidency of the United States. The fact that he had no qualifications for the position, had no experience in matters of statesmanship to fit him for this most exalted work and no fitness for any serious work except a cataract of words that could be turned on at a moment's notice, caused him no hesitation.

After his candidacy was announced he became William Jennings Bryan. His peregrinations extended over all parts of the great republic, and everywhere his deluge of words came down as rain upon the mown grass. From the fact that his stock in trade was the advocacy of an absurd issue his first candidacy was unsuccessful. Undeterred by this fact, however, he continued his wanderings, sought to galvanize into life the issue which the people had decided should be buried out of sight, selected a large number of words from his repertory, arranged them in platitudinous sentences to make a book, became his own

advertising agent, exhibited himself and his book and his flow of words, charging an admission fee to view the aggregation, and thereby accumulated a comfortable fortune.

He then again became a candidate for the nomination, and the Spanish war being nearly over he volunteered as a colonel of a militia regiment, and risked his life for his country by proceeding as far as the malarial regions of Florida by the time the Cuban war was over. He thus became Colonel William Jennings Bryan, and, having again received the nomination for president, he added to his previous subject of discussion certain new features.

With an undiminished deluge of words he proceeded to explain to his countrymen that all who had risen by diligence and economy above the condition of day laborers had so risen by robbery; that those who by reason of exceptional ability and thrift had acquired sufficient capital to be able to employ workmen were public enemies, thriving by stealing from their employees. These ideas, with the corpse of the dead issue and clothed in words multitudinous as the stars, were scattered throughout the country in a series of meetings which attracted oftentimes large crowds of people. Many went out of curiosity, others because their friends went, and great enthusiasm often prevailed at the meetings. Comments such as "See how his necktie has slipped," or "See how he sweats," were often heard from his auditors.

The people, however, had tired of the subject and the book and the man, and he was again relegated to private life, but the possessor of a handsome fortune, the results of his exhibition of himself, his book and his automatic jaw.

Here is an object lesson in what may be fairly termed a new industry. To be sure many other people have been candidates for the presidency, but rarely have such candidates possessed absolutely no qualifications for the exalted position. No man need, therefore, hesitate to make a similar effort. The number of men who have absolutely no qualifications for the office and who are therefore equally eligible for the office with Colonel Bryan is very great, and his example may inspire such men with the hope of a similarly acquired competence.—Franklin H. Head in the Chicago Times Herald.

A NEW MANUFACTORY.

The latest manufacturing industry in this state has been established at Nebraska City by J. Sterling Morton. It is a condensed vituperation factory and all the leading Grover Cleveland gold bugs are buying stock in the concern. The republican newspapers have the contract for doing the advertising.—Schuyler Quill.