

Free Coinage of Silver.

SPEECH
OF
HON. WILLIS SWEET,
OF IDAHO,
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Thursday, March 24, 1893.

The House having under consideration the bill (H. R. 4426) for the free coinage of gold and silver, for the issue of coin notes, and for other purposes—

Mr. SWEET said:

Mr. SPEAKER: The various theories and all of the statistics relative to this question have been presented. It is useless to repeat or review them. I therefore prefer to submit the condition of the people among whom I have lived, with their belief and mine, that free coinage would at least right some of the wrongs herein recited. In legislating upon this question, all classes of the people, all sections of the country, all lines of business, and all kinds of occupations should have a hearing. The producer, the debtor, and the lender are the three great factors to which I propose to pay special attention to-day. The select creditor is of course a great factor, but as the financial power of the Government has been dedicated to him and his service since 1873, I leave him out as an important special factor, and ask him, for once, to take his chances with the rest of humanity.

When I declare that I am in favor of the free coinage of silver I think I speak the sentiment of nearly every man in the State I have the honor to represent. Our creditors and the creditors of the nation live in the Eastern States and in the Old World; and, confining the sentiment strictly to that class, it is as unanimous against the free coinage of silver as the debtor and producing classes are unanimous for it. There has been no change of sentiment in the Northwest on this subject.

THE GREAT FOUR.

There has been a suspicion on the part of the people that the politicians have been playing football with this great question. That a minority would vote for and the majority against this measure, as it was thought political capital would be won or lost.

A free-coinage bill passed the Senate at its last session, and the universal opinion was and is that it would have passed the House had the measure not been smothered in committee. The Democrats in Congress had given the bill such generous support that the Northwest expected much from that quarter. Soon after the adjournment of the Fifty-first Congress, four distinguished leaders of the Democracy visited the uncultivated political fields of the new States. They came on an avowed educational campaign. They made speeches to the people. They told the people about reforms in general and tariff reform in particular. They did not weary of talking about Thomas Jefferson—his simplicity, statesmanship, and every other phase of his public life, except the excellent indorsement which that great statesman gave to bimetalism at the beginning of our country's history.

But the people of the Northwest were not so much interested in what they did say, as they were disappointed over what they did not say. Future politics came in for a full share of attention, but on the subject of silver coinage never a word was uttered! It was a great circulating constellation; and, although "one star differeth from another star in glory," still each member of that now famous roving group was a bright, particular star, and each was of the opinion that tariff reform was the "logic of the situation." It is needless to add that our borrowers, and interest-payers, and silver producers left their meetings disappointed.

WHO ARE DEBTORS AND BORROWERS—OPPOSED TO LENDERS.

Let me define what I mean by the term debtor and creditor classes. In speaking of the people of Idaho as belonging to the debtor class I do not mean that individually they are debtors, although even that statement would apply to many. It is sometimes necessary to borrow money in the work of developing the farm; but it is absolutely necessary to persuade capital to invest in railroads, merchandise, banks, brick blocks, steamboats, etc. Money is invested for the profit the investor hopes to realize out of the investment, and the interest the investment will safely produce is the sole and only guide of the capitalist.

In the broadest sense of the word, then, we are borrowers. For as we are without the money at home with which to do all the things I have enumerated, and many more just as necessary, we must look to others for it, and our people must pay the interest on the investments made. What I have said of Idaho is true of the West and South generally; for while the South is old, and its industries were at one time fixed and prosperous, yet to-day we find her confronted with a different life, a changed industrial system, and, let us hope, a better and a brighter destiny.

To-day she is seeking money at a reasonable rate of interest with which to develop her great, but, in many instances, dormant industries. In the sense I have mentioned, the West and South are borrowers; and their creditors are the same. Note this remarkable fact: The borrowers and the lenders are arrayed against each other to-day over this question as clearly as Grant and Lee stood arrayed against each other at the Wilderness. What does it mean? Is it accident? It is worth while to inquire. It is charged that we lack patriotism, and that we would ruin the nation's credit for the sake of "cheap" money.

This phase of the question can not be considered. We repudiate the charge and those who make it. Indeed, it is not necessary to discuss it; for any man can claim as much patriotism as can be absorbed by one who seeks to contract the actual money of the country for the purpose of increasing or maintaining a ruinous rate of interest. But, for some reason, the borrower favors the free coinage of silver, and the lender opposes it. Can it be that their interests conflict?

THE PRODUCER'S STRUGGLE.

The farmer is the most conspicuous interest-payer on account of development money invested either in the South or West. Why is he so persistent in his demand for the free coinage of silver? A glance at life on the farm and the price of farm products explains it. The husband and wife are up before the sun, and do not retire until after it is set. The team is in the harness at dawn, and darkness alone drives the laborer from the field. This round of toil has continued day after day, week after week, year after year. It has been measured only by the changing of the hours from darkness to daylight.

The years of labor have been rolled up against interest and could not wipe it out. Old age comes early to these men and women, and the mortgage is still with them unchanged, impregnable, and absolute in its demands. They have grown weary of the hopeless struggle, but the note is past due, and the land itself will not now pay the principal and accumulated interest. While interest, transportation rates, and the price of money have been maintained at a high figure, the farmer has witnessed a steady decline in the price of his product and the value of his land. He has revolted. Men laugh and say: "I have nothing to sell, but I am in favor of voting money to everybody, particularly to myself."

It may be amusing, but it does not explain away the causes of the troubles I have mentioned. Besides, the farmer has had something to sell. His granaries each fall have been filled to overflowing with the necessities of life. The transportation companies that carry his product to market publish statements showing the enormous profits made in moving this produce from and supplies to the farm. The bank statement shows that the village bank is safe by reason of its splendid profits, and the combination which buys and sells the grain is rich. Ah, but you say: "It is the supply and demand that regulates these prices."

No matter what regulates it; but it is so regulated that everybody makes something out of it except the man who does the work that produces it and pays the interest necessary to carry on the work of production. There is something wrong, independent of the law of "supply and demand," when two or three classes of people make a living, and often accumulate immense fortunes, off the labor and capital of another class, while the producer can not possibly lift his face to the surface of the financial sea. But let us look into this principle of "supply and demand" a little further. When we propose to pass a usury law we are met with the proposition that it is a question of "supply and demand."

Money will be cheaper as soon as it becomes a little more plentiful, says the lender. If the proposition that money is cheap or dear as supply and demand dictate is true, then let us give to the people West and South sufficient money, since we can do so and maintain a sound currency, to accommodate the volume of business in those sections; let the supply be such, from natural sources, since we have them, that the demand may be met without needless, heartless sacrifices.

The farmers and miners of Idaho feel that injustice is being done them in that their bank rate of interest is from 1½ per cent per month to 1½ per cent per month, while at the same time the Government is making a profit of \$1,000,000 per annum off of our silver product. But to return. You can not regulate the price of the farmer's grain, but you can say that the currency of the country shall not be so constituted and regulated that it is irresistibly massed in the hands of the few and thus the price of money dominated by the lender. And since I am on the subject of the money-lender, let me discuss him for a moment, passing thence to what I conceive to be the just grievance of the farmer in relation to the price of his product as affected by the question in issue.

THE MONEY-LENDER.

The infamous transaction of 1873 has resulted in creating the most dangerous and oppressive class that ever threatened the general prosperity of America. It is the money-lender. His scheme is to keep interest up to usurious rates as long as possible. I do not refer to the banker, nor the rich man, nor the business man. I am talking about the money-lender, pure and simple; the Shylock of this day and age. He toils not, neither does he spin. He is neither a Jew nor a Gentile. He is without a country or a conscience. His prosperity depends upon the misfortunes of humanity. Over the calamities of men he drives his bargains in usury. A famine is his harvest. He is not true to any political organization, and he belongs to no party. In politics he is for an "honest dollar." His note, on the coast, reads about as follows:

"Five years after date, for value received, we promise to pay to John Doe or order \$1,000 United States gold coin, with interest thereon in like coin, at the rate of ——— per cent per annum, payable semi-annually. If not paid at maturity, then the principal and interest to draw interest at the rate of ——— per cent per annum until paid. In case default be made in the payment of said principal sum, or interest, or any part thereof, then the whole amount, both principal and interest, to become due and payable at the option of the holder. And in case suit or action is commenced to collect said principal sum, or interest, or any portion thereof, we further agree to pay the sum of \$250 as attorneys' fees in said suit."

This note must be signed by the family. They have secured in the mortgage something that will be inherited by their heirs or assigns, if the mortgagee does not take the farm before they die.

Yet the House begrudges time necessary for this financial debate, while the RECORD is sent out groaning under its biennial

load of tariff oratory. Kansas and Nebraska go to the devil; eighty thousand old veterans disappeared after one battle in Kansas and the leaders of the Republican party looked at each other, shook their heads, and said: "It is the drought." "These sisters are thirsting for our tariff-reform remedy," cry the Democrats. Iowa threatens to join her sisters across the river, and the Republicans say: "The whisky question accounts for it." The Democrats hug themselves and say: "Ah ha! Iowa is also thirsting for a long draft of our tariff-reform remedy."

At the same time, the great tariff-reform remedy did not save Wade Hampton in South Carolina, although the State had had nothing else for years. The truth is, your long-winded tariff speeches will never be read. The people are better educated than is supposed; and are well enough educated to know that an adequate volume of currency is needed—that the same dollar for all classes is the only "honest dollar" that can circulate with justice to all.

I am informed by a shrewd business man in a great agricultural county of a Western State, that the farmers of his county owe about \$1,000,000 secured by farm mortgages held by money-lenders, drawing interest at the rate of 12 per cent per annum, interest payable quarterly, principal and interest payable in gold coin. Every holder of such a mortgage is screaming for an "honest dollar!" This terrible usury keeps the country drained of every surplus cent. This is only an illustration, but, according to the census returns, most of the Western States are about as badly off.

In considering the following figures, it is well to bear in mind that the circulation per capita mentioned means a per capita based upon all the money in the country, inclusive of the actual money, gold, and its various representatives in the form of silver and paper. As everybody knows, there is only six or seven dollars per capita of actual money in this country. Considered from this standpoint, the following information is absolutely appalling, but is bad enough to call for a halt, no matter what standpoint it may be viewed from.

From Alabama and Iowa come the following alarming facts: The real-estate mortgage debt in Alabama, in force January 1, 1890, was \$39,027,983. The real-estate mortgage debt in Iowa, in force January 1, 1890, was \$199,034,956. The average debt to one of population in Alabama was \$26; in Iowa, \$104. Thus it will be seen that the debt in Alabama was in excess of the circulation of money per capita, and in Iowa the debt was in excess of the circulation per capita more than 4 to 1. Kansas and some other States can not make as favorable a showing as either Iowa or Alabama, and have less than either with which to pay. And, mark you, the debt of Iowa and Alabama above quoted is exclusive of crop or chattel mortgages or mechanics' or judgment liens.

In some of the States the mortgage loan and trust companies have been supplemented in their work by grasshoppers and cyclones; and as if these calamities were not sufficient, the people themselves voted subsidies at nearly every crossroad, either to railroad corporations or other schemes, until the burdens of tax-

ation are almost past endurance. In Iowa inquiry developed the fact that 19 per cent of the indebtedness given was contracted to purchase more land. Interest is quoted at from 1 to 20 per cent. I need not add that farming can not pay any such rate of interest, for no legitimate business can pay it.

No man can appreciate this money-lending scheme who has not observed its effects. Grasshoppers, cyclones, and droughts are blessings compared with those coupon, double back-action mortgages. They have proven an unmixed curse. The transaction is unspeakably cruel. The farmer pays for his abstract, which is right. Then he pays for making out two mortgages, which is wrong. Then he pays for having two mortgages recorded, which is robbery. Then he pays from \$40 to \$60 per thousand as a commission for the money. This is simply infamous and makes holding up stages respectable.

Mr. Lincoln said: "This nation can not endure half slave and half free." Borrowing the thought, I declare that it is equally impossible for the Republic, as it was founded, to endure, with two-thirds of the people toiling, struggling, barely existing, to the end that the other one-third may live surrounded by luxuries that are supported and sustained by the sweat of other men's brows.

If it is urged that some of the agricultural States have been reckless in voting State, county, and precinct indebtedness, I will admit it. If it is alleged that farmers have allowed themselves to be talked into making injudicious and often unnecessary loans at unreasonable rates, I will admit it. But are these facts an excuse for demonetizing silver in the interests of the lender? Is the mistake of the farmer an excuse for the act of Congress that has resulted in ruining the price of his product?

SILVER AND PRICES OF PRODUCTS.

This condition of affairs as to the money market is but one of the factors that have been instrumental in arousing the producers of our land. Our farmers are competing with Russia, Egypt, and India in the markets of the world for the sale of the two greatest staples of the earth—wheat and cotton. Silver is a measure of value in Russia and India; and the truth has long since been demonstrated to be that as silver goes up or down, wheat and cotton, and all products in sympathy with them or either of them, go with it. This statement can not be successfully disputed, notwithstanding the fact that occasionally, under extraordinary circumstances, such as a failure of a large portion of the world's crop, as was the case last year, produce has advanced regardless of all other conditions.

Mr. George O. Jones, of this city, submitted to the public the following table, which presents the matter in so conclusive a form that I have borrowed it for the purpose of illustrating the statement just made.

Silver was demonetized in 1873. In 1872 it was worth in New York \$1.32 per ounce; at the same time wheat in Chicago was worth \$1.30 per bushel. Now, observe how the decline in wheat followed the decline in silver:

Table showing average price of wheat and silver in New York and Chicago from 1872 to 1890.

Year.	Average price in Chicago.	Average price in New York.	Nearly average price in Chicago.	
	Wheat per bushel.	Silver per ounce.	Wheat per bushel.	Silver per ounce.
1872.....	\$1.30	\$1.32	\$1.25½	{ \$1.32 1.31 1.29½ 1.28½ 1.27½ 1.26½ 1.25½ 1.24½ 1.23½ 1.22½ 1.21 1.19 1.18 1.17 1.16 1.15 1.14 1.13 1.12 1.11 1.10 1.09 1.08 1.07½ 1.06½ 1.05½ 1.04½ 1.03½ 1.02½ 1.01½ 1.00 0.99 0.98 0.96½ 0.95½ 0.94½ 0.93½ 0.92½ 0.91½
1873.....	1.17	1.29	1.22½	
1874.....	1.05	1.27	1.21½	
1875.....	1.07	1.24	1.19	
1876.....	1.05	1.15	1.15½	
1877.....	1.39	1.20	1.13	
1878.....	0.95	1.15	1.11	
1879.....	1.07	1.12	1.09	
1880.....	1.09	1.14	1.07	
1881.....	1.19	1.13	1.05	
1882.....	1.16	1.14	1.02	
1883.....	1.02	1.11	0.99	
1884.....	0.83	1.13	0.97	
1885.....	0.83	1.06	0.94	
1886.....	0.77	0.99	0.90	
1887.....	0.81	0.97	0.86	
1888.....	0.90	0.94	0.82	
1889.....	0.93	0.94	0.77	
1890.....	1.04	1.08	0.72	

The silver question has been assuming increasing proportions from year to year as the figures above set forth became better understood by the producing classes. The foregoing table is a great object-lesson to the farmer, and may, after the question can be no longer dodged, receive the attention of the now exceedingly cautious statesman who is afraid he will disturb "business" circles, and is so horrified at the thought of again equipping for commercial warfare the old comrade of the "honest dollar."

The facts and figures apply to the prices of cotton covering the same dates, and show that this great staple has been subjected to the same influences.

Again, the enormous value of gold, used as a measure of value of labor, land, or money, has made everything worldly insignificant as compared with it. It has annihilated land values.

Land has become third-class security, and can not be sold to-day for its cost price twenty years ago. A gold dollar will almost outweigh a man's eternal soul, even in church circles.

Our people do not ask for fiat money, but they do object to producing silver for profit to the Government, and then to be loaned back to us at usurious rates; or to be handed over to Great Britain's grain speculators at a low price with which to enter foreign markets, and there using it as a measure of value in buying produce in competition with our own producers. Fortunately for us, England's producers have discovered that they are also injured by the same transaction and in the same manner. Her Majesty's farmers are about to unite with ours in this struggle for existence.

FROM OVER THE SEA.

On December 6, 1891, the Sun of New York published the following important telegraphic information, showing the progress that is being made across the water in preventing discrimination in favor of speculation and against the producer:

Mr. Goschen's announcement of a scheme for issuing pound notes has considerably fluttered the financial world and has been the subject during the week of animated controversies. The balance of opinion seems to be with the chancellor of the exchequer, but some critics handle him roughly on the ground that he is resorting unnecessarily to "American methods of finance."

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The bimetallicists do not attempt to conceal their satisfaction, and they pray that the present Government may have another lease of power, and with good reason, in view of the fact that several of its members, including Mr. Goschen, Mr. Balfour, and Mr. Chaplin, are bimetallicists more or less pronounced. Very little has been heard in London lately of the Bimetallic League, but it has been working actively in the provinces, with, it is asserted, a large amount of success, especially in Lancashire, where the staple industries are most injuriously affected by the constant fluctuations in value of the Indian rupee.

The league has evidently got hold of the Textile Factory Workers' Association, an important body which recently issued a manifesto practically calling upon the workers to vote for only bimetallic candidates at the parliamentary elections. Mr. Moreton Frewen and other astute silver men who started the agitation here only a few years ago, and have since kept it going at considerable expense to themselves, now begin to see a prospect of getting some return for their money.

But a greater than Balfour has spoken on the subject. That class of the public in England technically known by the "four hundred" as the "common people" has become so emphatic in its demands that even Lord Salisbury has felt the pressure. His lordship once declined to give audience to a delegation of bimetallicists, it is said; but after the escape of England and America from bankruptcy last winter, he is quoted as having spoken as follows:

Conditions materially modifying the financial situation of the whole world have been developed during the past twelve months. The world has been growing faster commercially and financially than it has in population, and to a greater or less extent old methods will have to be supplemented, and the business machinery of the world developed and enlarged. It begins to look as if there was not enough gold in sight to satisfactorily finance the business of the world, and England must not be handicapped by prejudices nor held back from her highest prosperity by the mere dogmas of political economy.

Thus the principle of bimetallicism is gradually forcing itself upon the great commercial nation across the sea, although she produces but 7 per cent of the world's product, and would naturally resist the innovation as long as possible.

EAST AND WEST.

There is a feeling in the West to the effect that it would be beneficial to that section if the men who own the mines could receive actual money for their bullion at its coin value. It is believed a surplus would be thus acquired which would not be subjected to the influences that so frequently corner the actual money of the world by assaults upon gold contracts. Actual money is needed in the West (for development purposes) that is not subject to marching orders at any moment.

Last winter every dollar in the West was ordered East with which to meet the demand for immediate settlement of gold contracts held and owned in England. It was impossible to obtain a dollar of money, even upon the Eastern gold man's favorite security—"confidence." It is said we have money, but lack confidence. I beg to suggest that there never has been a sufficient amount of confidence coined to supply the West and South with the money necessary to meet business demands at such rates of interest as could be paid without in the end surrendering the security given.

The business men of the East may be able to borrow all the money needed at fair rates, provided they have sufficient "confidence" or other collateral upon which to base the loan, but no fact is better known than that capitalists who supply them will not place their money at great distances and long time investments. The money that is loaned cheap in business circles is held for loaning purposes only, on short dates, gilt-edge securities, within the range of observation, and where it is turned many times during the year.

It is quite different from the volume of money held for long loans or for business investment in distant and undeveloped parts of the country. This fund is entirely too limited to meet the demands of the people. Pardon me if I call your attention to the fact that one great man perished because he could not realize what a vast region of country lies west of Buffalo.

MISTAKEN IDENTITY.

Again you say: We consent to the use of silver. We buy the entire American product. The purchase of the American product is of no value to the people at large except for the profit made out of it by the Government. It is intended for class legislation in the interest of the mine-owner. Like all class legislation, it is in the end injurious to all. The antisilver men have all along misunderstood the nature of the demand for silver and whence it comes.

The gold men say: When will the silver millionaires be satisfied? It is a mistake. Of course all silver-miners will rejoice when silver is again assigned its proper and lawful place as money. But the demand from them is by no means as imperative as is the one coming from the interest-payers—the pioneers of development of new enterprises, new markets for the East, and the conquerors of new States for the Union.

On the 28th day of January, 1791, Alexander Hamilton submitted to Congress his celebrated report on the mint. After submitting a masterly argument against attaching the unit of value exclusively to either metal, he said:

But upon the whole it seems to be most advisable, as has been observed

not to attach the unit exclusively to either of the metals; because this can not be done effectually without destroying the office and character of one of them as money, and reducing it to the situation of a mere merchandise, which, accordingly, at different times, has been proposed from different and very respectable quarters; but which would probably be a greater evil than occasional variations in the unit from the fluctuations in the relative value of the metals, especially if care be taken to regulate the proportion between them with an eye to their average commercial value.

The unit was based upon the two metals. For nearly one hundred years our national currency rested upon that basis, and then one of the metals was deprived of its great character as money, and how soon the Secretary's prediction was fulfilled. One stride sent silver from money to merchandise. To-day it is said (criticizing the present silver law), if the Government is to purchase one man's product, why not buy another's? The question can not be successfully answered.

SILVER DEMONETIZED.

Congress adopted the double standard, but in 1873, under the leadership of England, as I verily believe, and by deceit skillfully played, this Government changed its basis from genuine bimetallicism to gold monometallicism. I might have more faith in the statement that many prominent men were deceived and did not know of the change, if, since that time, some of them had repudiated their action, thus obtained, and sought to reestablish the old standard. Hence I have concluded that many were deceived into voting for that bill.

I am also satisfied that many were not. England is great. She seems to have been the genius of commerce. Her ships, liberally assisted by the Government, are always burdened, carrying to this wonderful land the wealth of the world. She produces about one-seventh of the world's silver; we produce about half. She has simply outgeneraled us, and has, by ways that are peculiar to diplomacy, and which I do not understand, contrived to make a handsome profit out of one of our greatest resources. Whenever we are on excellent terms with England she is making money off of us.

England is a land of concentrated wealth, and of landlord and tenant. A laborer had better kill a farmer than a grouse or a deer. Our theory of government, as regards the financial and property rights of men, is distinctly opposed to that of England. I am not in favor, therefore, of following our English-speaking neighbor either in real-estate or financial legislation.

THEN AND NOW.

At the time of adopting bimetallicism in this country we had just emerged from the Revolutionary war. We were without money or credit as a nation. The United States then was the West of to-day in the following respects: The nation was a borrower. The people were without money with which to build up their industries or develop their resources. Under those conditions the double standard was considered safest and best. New England and the East have in turn become lenders to the South and West; and, naturally perhaps, seek to control the price and movement of money. I love New England for the history she has made and for the patriotism of her sons and daughters. But she has changed in many respects since 1776. She used to

advocate reform by striding down to the sea and throwing the tea overboard.

Now she adjusts her gold-rimmed spectacles, figures up the interest due on her coupons, orders that collections shall be pushed, and then meets with the Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Civil Service Reform, and insists that everything and everybody must be "reformed." She now impresses the outside world with the thought that if she is as good as she is determined everybody else shall be, heaven is a superfluous creation.

NEW ENGLAND SENTIMENT.

But let us account for her sentiment. She holds mass meetings now and then to protest against the free coinage of silver; yet she became rich under the munificent provisions of bimetallism. She did no protesting against it until she became the lender. Now she can build railroads, own mines, develop manufacturing resources, and take mortgages in the West, and naturally seeks to continue to dictate what profit we shall pay on the money she invests with us—and she wants all of our raw materials admitted to her factories free of duty besides! New England's great industrial system was built up under financial legislation based upon the following paragraph from Hamilton's report:

To annul the use of either of the metals as money is to abridge the quantity of circulating medium, and is liable to all the objections which arise from a comparison of the benefits of a full with the evils of a scanty circulation.

Even though the vaults of the money centers be overflowing with money to be used for commercial purposes, yet if you deplete that supply by taking from it money to meet the demands of the South and West for permanent investments, the financial strength of the East would be so crippled as to subject the country to a panic upon the slightest jar in financial circles.

But the question is asked: Why does the poor man of New England oppose free coinage? In all cases he does not, but on this subject the sentiment of New England is dominated by capital and theory. Hence it is that both political parties in New England protest against the free coinage of silver in their party platforms. Wealth brings leisure, and leisure and wealth combined have produced scholars, magazines, and newspapers devoted to theories. A theorist is rarely practical, no matter how learned. The man who has spent his life in a library cries: Buy where you can buy the cheapest, sell to him from whom you can obtain the highest price, and thinks he has exhausted the subject of a protective tariff.

The man working in a factory and receiving a dollar per day for his labor, knows that if other factories around him pay 50 cents per day for labor, and his factory and all the rest manufacture the same article from the same material, buy at the same figure, and sell at the same price, it is only a question of time until his employer must reduce his wages to 50 cents per day or close the factory. The manufacturer desires protection for his manufactured article, and so he combines with his employé, and the two united prevail.

In colonial days, the philosopher Locke prepared a constitution for a southern colony. It was perfect in mechanism, and every theory for a just and equitable government was carried

out to the utmost detail. It was found not to be practicable. "It was a condition and not a theory" with which this constitution came in contact, and as the theory was not applicable to the condition, it failed. New England, with her numerous colleges, magazines, and with her literary surroundings, is the favorite abiding place of "reformers," and is swarming with theorists, who, like Locke, are ready to submit plans and specifications for a perfect system of finance upon a moment's notice. When not arrayed against her capital invested in actual business these gentle "reformers" are a power in New England.

On the question of free-silver coinage, the theorist and the capitalist unite and prevail. The capitalist is against free coinage for practical reasons. If the single-standard policy can be maintained and the volume of actual money kept within control it will be many years before he will have any competition in the West or South, while the interest his Western investment pays him is the richest and surest income of all, notwithstanding he may make an occasional mistake. It is a part of luxury and leisure to be against free coinage, entirely independent of the political and business view of the question. It is "English, you know;" and that is reason enough for the "reformer" and theorist to be on that side.

Bright, able men who occupied seats in this Chamber as members of the last Congress were not returned for no reason on earth save that they supported the greatest and most equitable tariff bill ever given to the country. Is it possible that the New England manufacturer only cares for himself? If so, then one step more, and the greatest section of our country in the field of education, the section that all lovers of liberty have been taught to revere, will have gone over to free trade and gold monometallism. England will have her old colony back at last.

IMPORTERS AGAINST US.

The New York importers are against us. They fear free coinage would result in sending gold to a premium. Two things are assumed: First, that the balance of trade will be against the United States, and payable in gold; second, that the free coinage of silver would drive gold from the country. The first proposition depends entirely upon the vicissitudes of commercial life. Some years it will doubtless be against us, and other years in our favor. Silver legislation could not bring the balance of trade in our favor, nor can it make the sheet balance the other way. I have never learned why silver was demonetized. Certainly I never heard given as the reason that it was driving gold from the country.

If the prediction that the free coinage of silver would result in establishing a premium on gold should be verified, then what is the worst that can follow? There would unquestionably be some hardships to be endured by those who have gold notes outstanding. The money-lender would drive it to a premium if possible. But the producer could well afford the loss. It would increase the value of his property and the price of his product more than enough to offset the threatened premium. And the producer must also face the fact that he has this danger to encounter some day:

Whenever the old position is resumed, the gold men will no doubt bring to bear every means of financial torture at their command to compel the bimetallists to cry enough. If we are prosperous now, it is the time to make the fight. Financial freedom will not be regained in this country without a considerable struggle and more or less of a loss.

Again, if the balance of trade is against us the premium which the importer will be obliged to pay for gold with which to meet it must come either out of his profits or out of the pocket of the purchaser of imported goods. It must lessen the profits of the one or increase the price for the other. To the rank and file of the United States it makes but little difference which pays it. American products would be good enough for our debtors until such time as the business of the country became adjusted to the new conditions.

It is also possible that large business corporations have outstanding foreign debts payable in gold, and that some inconvenience, or even loss, might be suffered in that direction. However, I have never heard this phase of the question raised, and it is perhaps unnecessary to anticipate difficulties that the money-lenders have overlooked.

If, then, we are to make some losses in the directions mentioned, the policy of the greatest good to the greatest number would still demand the free coinage of silver. But I do not apprehend any evil results from the causes specified. I have never seen nor heard facts nor logic to demonstrate the much-talked-of deluge of foreign silver, while, in place of gold becoming so valuable as to hide itself to avoid use, it would, in my judgment, walk out into the marts of trade, its majesty having departed, because its tremendous power over the destinies of nations and of men could no longer be absolute. Assertion has always been the form in which the silver deluge and gold stampede theories have been mentioned, and I do not believe they actually exist.

DOUBTFUL VIRTUE.

Boston meets in the old hall dedicated to liberty and equality for all, and demands "honest" money. The inference is that we ask for dishonest money. Boston used this "dishonest" money for a hundred years. Her citizens got rich under the system. She has become wonderfully virtuous all of a sudden. It is not the first time people have become rich by dubious means, and then joined the church, become virtuous and charitable, and attended all meetings for reform, protesting at all times the most wonderful sanctity. It is unadulterated nonsense, conceived in the interest of more interest and endless coupons.

DISHONEST METHODS.

Not only is silver "honest" money under the history and laws of our country, but it is deprived of its just place in our monetary life by absolute dishonesty. The farmers have been told: First, that silver is money now; and, second, in direct opposition thereto, that a silver dollar is worth but 80 cents, and that it passes for a dollar only because the Government will exchange a gold dollar for it. But the lenders have not explained why it is necessary to use silver at all, if it is valuable only on

the basis that each dollar will bring a gold dollar. A paper dollar will do as well under that theory.

The fact is, these men dare not tell the people that silver is not money; that as a matter of fact we have only about five or six hundred millions of dollars of actual money in the country, as a basis for about two billions two hundred and fifty millions of money issued in one form or another; that gold is liable to be sent to a premium at the first crisis in our financial affairs, owing to the tremendous issue beyond the reasonable basis of redemption. If these "great financiers," as the money manipulators are pleased to term each other, were to tell the people the truth, they would be annihilated without benefit of clergy.

Again, the farmers are told that the silver-miners are endeavoring to make the Government pay more for silver than it is worth; and, say the lenders, continuing the thought, why should not the Government pay the farmer a certain price for his wheat as well as pay the miner \$1.20 per ounce for his silver? This is not an honest statement of the case, and the men who make it, I must believe, know it is not honest. The effort has been and now is to make silver money and to take it from the list of commodities. What does the Government pay per ounce for gold? But why discuss this phase of the question?

The advocates of a contracted currency know full well that the object sought by the advocates of free coinage is to make silver money, and to take the question of price entirely away from it, just as there is no price for gold except as it may be necessary to fix a ratio. But misrepresentation of the question has won so far. The antisilver men dare not submit to the people the simple question: Shall silver be money? They hope now to prejudice the farmer against his own interests by prejudicing him against the miner, and the means used are neither fair nor honest.

The people of the West are very unjustly accused in connection with the silver question. Among other things it is said we are dishonest, in that, it is alleged, we are endeavoring to pay our debts in a depreciated currency, when in truth we are seeking to establish a more generous distribution of money per capita and by sections. Did not Congress deprive us of one of our most valuable resources from which to meet our obligations? If it is unfair to the creditor—which it is not—to remonetize silver, was it not first unfair to the debtor to demonetize it? If it is a bad step to remonetize silver now, it simply proves the old adage, one bad step begets another.

HENRY CLAY.

While the act of 1873 made hundreds rich, it made thousands poor. Its effect was described by Henry Clay in his speech made in September, 1837, when, speaking like a prophet, he used the following language:

Assuming the currency to consist of two-thirds of paper and one-third of specie: and assuming also that the money of a country, whatever may be its component parts, regulates all values and expresses the true amount which the debtor has to pay to his creditor, the effect of the change upon that relation (that is, to contract the volume of money by canceling the paper currency) and the property of the country would be most ruinous.

All property would be reduced in value to one-third its present nominal amount, and every debtor would, in effect, have to pay three times as much

as he had contracted for. The pressure of our foreign debt would be three times as great as it is, while the six hundred millions, which is about the sum probably due to the banks by the people, would be multiplied into eighteen hundred millions.

No living man can better describe the result of the antisliver legislation of 1873.

The purchase of the American product under the present law is not a test of what silver will do for the country under free coinage. To make silver of value to the people it must be accepted as money—it must be made a measure of value. Indeed, the present law is of but little value even to our Western States. The profit on silver, which, if we received it in the form of cold cash, would be invested in the development of our country, now goes to the Government, transportation companies, speculators in bullion, and finally reaches us, its producers, if it reaches us at all, in the form of a loan at the same old rate.

THE PRESIDENT INDORSED.

During the President's tour last summer he said many patriotic and many statesmanlike things. Speaking at Omaha on the subject of finance, the Associated Press reported him as follows:

Whatever money the Government issues, paper or coin, it must be good money. I have an idea that every dollar we issue should be as good as any dollar; for whenever we have any money, paper or coin, the first errand it does is to pay some workingman for a day's toil.

The same thought, in much the same language, appeared in the President's late message. The sentiment expressed meets with general approval. But the capitalists of the country do not seem to consider "one dollar as good as another." If a depression should come to us; if gold should go to a premium, as it might do at any time, if called upon to redeem one-third of its pledges, the first errand a paper dollar would do would be to pay some laboring man for a day's toil, and the first thing a gold dollar would do would be to pay interest on gold bonds or upon farm mortgages given to secure gold notes. But the President's statement ought to be the law, and will be the law, when this contest for equal money for all is over.

A PECULIAR EXCEPTION.

On one of the bills issued under the act of July 14, 1890, I find the following:

This note is a legal tender at its face value in payment of all debts, public and private, except when otherwise expressly stipulated in the contract.

I do not understand the purpose of this exception. The usual statement is, that this class of money shall be a legal tender in payment of all debts, public or private, except interest on the public debt and duties on imports. It must be that it is intended for the laboring man, to the end that he may demand gold in payment for his daily toil! If one dollar is to be as good as any other dollar, why not? If the dollar issued by the Government is to be as good for one as for another, why not?

If the banks can demand gold contracts; if the great landlords are to hold gold leases; if the money-lender is to have a gold note; if the "four hundred" in finance are to have gold, and the laborer, farmer, small merchant, etc., are to take whatever they can get, what a farce it is to talk about one dollar being as

good as another! Yet the laborer, farmer, or artisan who would preface his application for work or proposition to sell with a statement that he must be paid in gold would be laughed at. And if all these classes were to do what the banks and capitalists are doing the country would be bankrupt in a month.

These capitalists of ours are hardly fair in this: They propose to pay in that unseen, mysterious factor in finance known as "confidence" and at the same time collect in gold coin. Not until we have the same dollar for all, rich and poor alike, shall we have an "honest dollar."

ALMOST FOUR TO ONE.

The Treasurer of the United States, in his report for 1891, gives the total stock of money in the United States as follows: Gold, \$653,308,095; silver, \$529,019,947; total specie, \$1,182,328,042. Paper, various issues, \$1,068,272,910, the entire stock of money in the United States, in September, 1891, being \$2,250,600,952.

Such are the component parts of our currency at this time. In money of ultimate redemption; in absolute, full legal-tender money, receivable in payment of all debts, public and private; as an actual basis for all this money we have \$653,308,095. If silver were money our specie basis would be superb. As it is, no man can contend, in the light of experience and common sense, that \$653,308,095 is a safe basis for a volume of money aggregating \$2,250,600,952 in times of adversity or business disaster, whatever it might be in the sunshine of success. It is equally clear that with gold and silver as money we would be invincible and ready to trade in products or money with all the nations of the earth.

The pressure upon Congress for silver legislation is not now quite as marked as it has been. The utter failure of crops abroad and the buoyancy of markets at home accounts for the change. But the pressure will return. Notwithstanding all the talk about his great prosperity the farmer can not pay his interest. He will go in to settle and the interest will take all he has left after paying his store bill. It is the old story, as old as usury, as inexorable as fate.

Another phase of the question: If silver is not money, then the Government is squandering 95 cents per ounce for every ounce it buys. If it is money, then the miner is being robbed of 30 cents per ounce on every ounce purchased.

THE MINER.

The miner is charged with avarice, and is being roundly abused by the money-lenders and some of their advocates. They forget that he furnishes them with gold as well as silver. But the miner does not care for it. It is his boldness in making investments and his fearlessness in sustaining his judgment with the money necessary for development that has made the nation rich in mineral wealth and resources. He needs no eulogy and asks none. Gold and silver are his money. Rich or poor, he makes his money like a man and spends it like a king. He is as necessary to the Government as the Government is necessary to him. He is a stranger to the man who lives upon the fruits of usury, and by the very laws of nature they will never become acquainted with each other.

Every gold and silver dollar in the world to-day is a monument to the prospector who found it, the miner who mined it, and the man who furnished the means with which to explore the unknown quantities that lie beyond the face of the tunnel. The coin and the mines are left to their countrymen as an inheritance by these men; and no class of our citizens think so lightly over the toils and dangers to which they are subjected in the work of building up their country and exploring its resources.

Still the farmers are urged to indorse the present silver law, because, since the passage of the Bland act, the Government has, by the arbitrary exercise of power, filched from the Western States \$72,000,000. Men having the most votes can do such things, but imagine the howl that would go up from five or six North-eastern States if one of their leading industries were subjected to such a tax. But the miner is patient. He has no doubt of ultimate justice. I am satisfied that my lot has been cast with him, and with the farmer who can almost see the ships as they sail in from the sea to receive and bear to distant markets the products of our soil.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, the supply of gold is wholly inadequate to the business demands of the world; yet we have presented to us the remarkable spectacle of the entire world gathered around a pot containing a few millions of gold, each nation striving to secure the contents, and each possessing full knowledge that ruin awaits those who fail to grasp the prize.

Still the struggle goes on; great nations continuing to measure the products of the earth by gold, with the supply so limited and the measure of value occupying a position so exalted that a bushel of wheat is of no value compared with it; so limited in quantity that the shipment abroad of a few millions creates consternation in our business circles; so precious that it is hoarded by Government and people alike; so scarce that land, the necessities of life, and the sweat of man's brow weigh as a feather against a stone when placed in the opposite scale.

These farming States have suffered so long from this monetary wickedness that now they are likely to become so radical as to demand not only the restoration of the equality of gold and silver, but to make such extremely radical demands as to play back into the hands of the single-standard men and money lenders.

I am for the free and unlimited coinage of gold and silver, because I am a bimetallist. Everybody claims to be for it about election time, but think the matter should be put off to a more convenient season; put off until something comes to pass that never will happen. It is the plea of the sinner when the duty of repentance stares him in the face. I am for the free coinage of silver, because it is impossible for a structure of \$2,250,000 to rest in safety on a foundation of \$600,000.

I am for the free coinage of silver, because we can not maintain the gold standard in the face of adversity; and we can not hope that we shall always be blessed, and that the disasters of the world will be forever visited upon other nations for our benefit. It now requires a famine in the rest of the world and a bountiful crop in our own to enable the producer to pay his interest. Our turn will come some day. Are we ready for it? I am for gold

and silver as money and as a basis of money, giving the Secretary authority to pay our debts in either, because it would give us the foundation for a sound and adequate volume of currency; a system of finance that would be a sure and safe anchorage in adversity as well as in prosperity.

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