

Bimetallism.

SPEECH

OF

HON. NEWTON C. BLANCHARD,

OF LOUISIANA,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Tuesday, August 15, 1893.

The House having under consideration the bill (H. R. 1) to repeal a part of an act, approved July 14, 1890, entitled "An act directing the purchase of silver bullion and the issue of Treasury notes thereon, and for other purposes"—

Mr. BLANCHARD said:

Mr. SPEAKER: Upon a question which has occupied the attention of mankind for thousands of years, and is still open to debate, I might well be distrustful of my own conclusions, and it is with much hesitation that I submit them to-day to the consideration of this enlightened body.

The gold advocates—those who contend for the disestablishment of silver—hold the affirmative of the proposition under discussion. The *onus probandi* is, therefore, upon them; they must make good by fact and argument their case. Have they done so? Let us see. That the act of the 14th of July, 1890, known as the "Sherman act," ought to be repealed, or at least what is called "the purchasing clause" of it, all are agreed.

But the gold advocates demand that this repeal be unconditional, while the bimetallics insist that it should be accompanied by a substitute for the Sherman act, recognizing the principle of bimetallicism in some effective form, and enacting substantially into law the declarations of both the great parties, in their national platforms, on the money question.

The adoption of the pending measure, repealing "the purchasing clause" of the Sherman act, would bring the country, in theory and practice, to the gold basis, and would be everywhere accepted as the announcement by the United States of a settled policy to maintain the monometallic gold standard.

Mr. Speaker, the argument of the advocates of the single gold standard may be summarized briefly as follows: The leading commercial nations of the world have closed their mints to the coinage of silver, and thus have practically demonetized that metal; that in consequence the price of silver everywhere has depreciated; that it is now a debased metal, and no longer fit for use as money, except for purposes of subsidiary coinage;

and that the United States, making use of silver as money for general purposes, can not, alone, maintain parity between gold and silver upon a fixed ratio.

To all these averments the bimetallicists enter a general denial, except as to the first.

It is admitted that the leading commercial nations of Europe have closed their mints to the further coinage of silver as money for general purposes.

Thus is the issue joined. Let us review the contention of the gold advocates.

Going back along the historical lines of this question, we find that bimetallicism—the use of both metals as money, maintained at parity on a ratio fixed by law—obtained in this country from the year 1792 down to 1873. In all this time the ratio varied but little.

We find, further, that in 1873 silver was demonetized. It is charged by many that this was done fraudulently. To this I do not subscribe. That it was done surreptitiously, I believe. It was accomplished in a bill which bore the innocent title of "An act revising and amending the laws relative to the mints and assay offices of the United States."

When that measure passed the House of Representatives it did not contain one word or the remotest suggestion changing the law of free coinage or taking the minting privilege from silver. As it passed the Senate of the United States there was, even with the Senate amendments added, not one line which affected silver adversely as a coin metal of the country. In no debate on, or explanation of the bill, nor in any amendment offered, either in the House or Senate, had one word ever been said or suggestion made that free coinage should be repealed.

On the contrary, the bill contained the following clauses:

That the charge for minting gold bullion should be 5 per cent, and for silver bullion its actual cost.

Also,

That silver coins other than the trade dollar shall be paid out at the several mints and at the assay office in New York City in exchange for gold coins at par. (CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, page 673, third session Forty-second Congress.)

The bill as it passed the House had been taken up in the Senate and passed with amendments. It was reported to the House with the Senate amendments.

The House nonconcurred in the Senate amendments, and a conference between the two Houses on the bill and Senate amendments followed. Three managers on part of the Senate and three on part of the House were appointed. This was the usual conference committee, and these six gentlemen, within the privacy of a committee room of this Capitol, added the fateful words which struck down the free coinage of silver and brought this country to the monometallic gold basis.

The words, Mr. Speaker, thus added, which accomplished this remarkable result, were only eleven in number and were these:

And no deposit of silver for other coinage shall be received.

The report of the conference committee was as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the ninth amendment of the Senate and agree to the same, with an amendment as follows:

Strike out the words proposed to be inserted, together with the remainder of the section, and in lieu thereof insert the following:

"That any owner of silver bullion may deposit the same at any mint to be formed into bars or into dollars of the weight of 420 grains troy, designated in this act as trade dollars, and no deposit of silver for other coinage shall be received." (See CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, page 1150, third session Forty-second Congress.)

No gentleman in either House who was a member of the conference committee, nor any one else, called attention to this amendment, or stated what its effect would be. The report of a conference committee does not always command close attention. It is rarely supposed that any new matter has been taken up by it. The object of appointing a conference committee is to effect a compromise between the two Houses on matters which have been introduced, explained, and debated, and upon which the two bodies have failed to agree.

In this case neither the House nor the Senate had referred the subject of free coinage to this committee, and consequently no one suspected that their report would touch the question. When the report was read from the Clerk's desk, and the vote was taken adopting the same, it is likely that no one in either House, outside of the committee of conference, knew that the report repealed free coinage.

I venture the assertion, Mr. Speaker, that at no period in the history of any country, in ancient or modern times, was so brief a sentence added to any provision of legislation which has had the momentous effect that these eleven words have had throughout this country and the world. Those words, added by a conference committee, and passed by the two Houses without debate, had more of significance, of importance to the people of the United States than all the enactments of law by that Congress at its two sessions. They were words which revolutionized the monetary system of the Government and affected the welfare of people even in remote lands.

It has always been claimed, Mr. Speaker, that this action was brought about by the "gold" people of the country for the purpose of establishing the monometallic gold standard, making all our debts gold debts, payable in gold coin, and in this way increasing the value of the securities held by those people. A distinguished leader of the Republican party, until recently a Senator of the United States, and one of the most brilliant of the public men of his time, has the following to say relative to the bill referred to. I read from a speech made in the Senate in February, 1878, by Senator John J. Ingalls, of Kansas. He says:

The act was improvidently passed. The attention of the people was not called to the subject. It was not discussed nor understood. Though it was done at a time when the public mind was intensely interested upon financial subjects, and methods of relief were assiduously sought, the demonetization of silver was never suggested by anyone as likely to ameliorate the pecuniary distress of the nation. But there is strong evidence that the destruction of the legal-tender power of silver was the culmination of a scheme long entertained by the holders of the public debt of this country, devised by them for the purpose of appreciating the value of their investments, regardless of the ruin and desolation which it would bring upon the laboring and productive classes of the nation.

These are strong words from a source that gives great weight to them.

At the time the demonetizing act of 1873 was passed, if the question had been submitted to the American people, if it had been made an issue in any political contest at that time or sub-

sequent, the proposition to eliminate silver from our monetary system would have been voted down by an immense majority.

The enactment of that law was following the example set by England in 1816, and by Germany in 1873.

Germany demonetized silver under the most favorable auspices. The phenomenal success of the German arms in France had just startled the world. France lay bleeding and prostrate at the feet of conquering Germany, and a war indemnity of a billion and sixty millions of dollars in gold had been wrung from her people. The far-seeing policy of Bismarck was about to be consummated; the dream of Germanic consolidation was being accomplished; the Germanic Confederation was giving way to the Empire of Germany; King William of Prussia was now William the First, Emperor of Germany; the moment was opportune for the "gold" people; they took advantage of it; silver had been money in the states and principalities and dukedoms which formed the Germanic Confederation. But these had now been welded into the Germanic Empire; silver was demonetized and the gold of France took its place.

There was reason, sir, for England and Germany to demonetize silver. They were both creditor nations. It is to the interest of the creditor that the obligations he holds be met in the dearest money. Gold is that money. Germany believed that the greatness and power of England was due to her monetary system. It is due, as I believe, to her mines of coal and iron and to the cheapness of her production. But believing as Germany did, she followed the example set by England in 1816, and demonetized silver in 1873.

Then it was, Mr. Speaker, that the United States, a debtor nation, producing 40 per cent of the world's annual output of silver, with conditions essentially different from those prevailing in England and Germany, was seized with the "gold fever," inculcated by the creditor class with the virus brought from England and Germany, and demonetized silver.

But prior to this consummation the first step in the conspiracy had been taken.

This was in the passage, in the interest of the creditor class, of the acts of 1869 and 1870, for "the strengthening of the public credit" and for "the refunding of the public debt."

A large part of the public indebtedness of the United States, incurred in time of war, had been made by the law of its creation and the letter of its contract payable in any legal-tender currency of the United States. But the acts mentioned changed this, and the indebtedness referred to became payable in coin. That meant gold or silver; but with silver struck down, out of the way, demonetized, it left gold as the only "coin" with which to pay the holders of these bonds.

Herein is the secret of the demonetizing act of 1873. The public debt, first payable in any lawful money of the United States, then changed to be made payable in either gold or silver, then conditions produced or created which placed it on a gold basis, to be paid in the dearer money, gold. The additional burden thus imposed upon the producing and taxpaying classes in the United States by these acts of the Republican party is beyond computation.

Forced by the action of Germany and the United States in demonetizing silver, France and the States of the Latin Union in

Europe reluctantly closed their mints to the free coinage of silver. And thus it was, Mr. Speaker, that the world was practically brought to the single gold standard.

With the white metal struck down, prostrate in the dust, humiliated by the laws of the leading commercial nations of earth, is it to be wondered at that it depreciated in value? Is it to be wondered at that many now think that if silver is continued in money use, the ratio should be changed from 16 to 1 to 20 or 24 to 1?

Is it fair or just to judge silver from the standpoint of the abyss into which it has been plunged by the deliberate action of the gold adherents?

The "gold" people created the conditions, produced the causes, which had the effect of depreciating silver, and then point to this effect as reason why we should continue in this country the disestablishment of silver.

How preposterous the position!

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman who opened the discussion on the affirmative side of the pending question, the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. RAYNER], took occasion to say in his speech that the contention of the silver people that silver was a money of the Constitution was unfounded in fact. He denied vehemently that there is anything in the Constitution which requires the coinage of gold or silver. To this extent only was he correct: there is no positive, direct declaration in the Constitution that silver shall be coined along with gold. But it is there by the plainest possible implication.

The Constitution declares that Congress shall have power to coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin, and to fix the standard of weights and measures.

Then it is said elsewhere in the Constitution that no State shall

coin money * * * nor make anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts.

We thus find that the Constitution, while denying to the States the power to coin money, also denies to them the right to make anything a legal tender in payment of debts except gold and silver. This plainly implies that the States may make gold and silver a tender for debts. But they can not coin those metals.

In permitting the States to make gold and silver a tender for debt, it was clearly intended that those metals should be coined by some competent authority into convenient form, of standard weight and fineness, for use as money. Who or what is that authority? Congress; the power to coin is reserved exclusively in Congress.

It is thus plain that silver is a money metal of the Constitution, is named in that instrument; and by irresistible inference and implication it is made the duty of Congress to coin gold and silver.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Will the gentleman yield for a question?

Mr. BLANCHARD. I will.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. My question is a legal one, and I want to hear you upon it. The Constitution grants to the State of Georgia the right to make silver a legal tender. Suppose Congress demonetizes silver, and yet in face of that demonetizing act the State of Georgia still continues silver as a legal tender and should bring an action in the Federal courts to test her right

to make silver still a tender for debt, under the clauses of the Constitution quoted by you would not the Supreme Court of the United States sustain the State?

Mr. BLANCHARD. I am inclined to think so and would like to see the matter tested. But a difficulty suggests itself in this: How far can a State go in declaring, or can it do so at all, a metal a tender for debt that is not endowed with legal-tender qualities by Congress, which alone can coin into money, regulate its value, and determine its weight and measure? Congress may not coin it at all, or if it does coin it, may limit its legal-tender power to a small sum. Would a State have authority to enlarge or increase its legal-tender power, so far as debts enforceable within its limits are concerned? I say these are difficulties suggesting themselves to me which make the question one not free from doubt.

Mr. Speaker, Alexander Hamilton, who was the first Secretary of the Treasury, in his report in 1791 on the Mint, said:

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.

Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to Mr. Hamilton in 1792, said: I concur with you that the unit must stand on both metals.

R. M. T. Hunter, in a report (1852) to the United States Senate, said:

The mischief would be great, indeed, if all the world were to adopt but one of the precious metals as the standard of value. To adopt gold alone would diminish the specie currency more than one-half; and the reduction the other way, should silver be taken as the only standard, would be large enough to prove highly disastrous to the human race.

These are but samples of the unbroken line of opinion, sustaining bimetallicism, coming down from the adoption of the Constitution to 1873.

The fathers of the Republic, carrying out the spirit of the Constitution, opened mints for the free coinage of the two metals, and under the bimetallic policy which prevailed the country advanced with astonishing rapidity in population, wealth, greatness, and prestige.

Let me now cite a few opinions from well-known financiers and authors of Europe:

Leon Fanchet, in *Researches upon Gold and Silver*, written in 1843, says:

If all the nations of Europe adopted the system of Great Britain the price of gold would be raised beyond measure and we should see produced in Europe a result lamentable enough.

Before a French monetary convention, held in 1869, testimony was given by Baron Rothschild, by M. Roulard, governor of the Bank of France, and by others.

Baron Rothschild said:

The simultaneous employment of the two precious metals is satisfactory and gives rise to no complaint. Whether gold or silver dominates for the time being, it is always true that the two metals concur together in forming the monetary circulation of the world, and it is the general mass of the two metals combined which serves as the measure of the value of things. The suppression of silver would amount to a veritable destruction of values without any compensation.

M. Roulard, governor of the Bank of France, said:

We have not to deal with idle theories. The two moneys have actually coexisted since the origin of human society. They coexist because the two together are necessary, by their quantity, to meet the needs of circulation.

This necessity of the two metals—has it ceased to exist? Is it established that the quantity of actual and prospective gold is such that we can now renounce the use of silver without disaster?

M. Wolowski said:

The sum total of the precious metals is recouped at fifty milliards, one-half gold and one-half silver. If, by a stroke of the pen, they suppress one of these metals in the monetary service, they double the demand for the other metal, to the ruin of all debtors.

Opinions of eminent authorities to the same effect might be cited at great length, but the foregoing will suffice to establish the fact for which I contend, that bimetalism is correct in principle and beneficial in practice.

Mr. Speaker, when the American people realized that silver had actually been demonetized by the act of 1873, that a blow had been struck at one of the money metals, an agitation over the country began at once for the reestablishment of silver.

It quickly entered politics. The two great parties took it up. They vied with each other in declarations on the subject. Both took silver endearingly to their bosoms, petted it, declaimed against the injustice and wrong done it, and "pledged their sacred word" to do battle valiantly in its cause. Here are the declarations in the national platforms of the two parties. The Democratic national platform of 1880, third clause:

Honest money—the strict maintenance of the public faith—consisting of gold and silver and paper, convertible into coin on demand.

Democratic national platform of 1884:

We believe in honest money, the gold and silver coinage of the Constitution, and a circulating medium convertible into such money without loss.

In 1888 the platform of the party appears to have been silent on the money question, but in 1892 the national Democratic convention at Chicago made the following distinct declaration in its platform:

We denounce the Republican legislation known as the Sherman act of 1890 as a cowardly makeshift, fraught with possibilities of danger in the future, which should make all of its supporters, as well as its author, anxious for its speedy repeal. We hold to the use of both gold and silver as the standard money of the country, and to the coinage of both gold and silver without discriminating against either metal or charge for mintage, but the dollar unit of coinage of both metals must be of equal intrinsic and exchangeable value, or be adjusted through international agreement, or by such safeguards of legislation as shall insure the maintenance of the parity of the two metals, and the equal power of every dollar at all times in the markets, and in payment of debt; and we demand that all paper currency shall be kept at par with and redeemable in such coin. We insist upon this policy as especially necessary for the protection of the farmers and laboring classes, the first and most defenseless victims of unstable money and a fluctuating currency.

On this platform Mr. Cleveland was nominated and elected President of the United States.

The Republican national platform of 1888 said:

The Republican party is in favor of the use of both gold and silver as money, and condemns the policy of the Democratic Administration in its efforts to demonetize silver.

In its platform of 1892 the same party said:

The American people, from tradition and interest, favor bimetalism, and the Republican party demands the use of both gold and silver as standard money, with such restrictions and under such provisions, to be determined by legislation, as will secure the maintenance of the parity of values of the two metals, so that the purchasing and debt-paying power of the dollar, whether silver, gold, or paper, shall be at all times equal.

You will observe, sir, that the demand for bimetalism, the use and continuance of both metals as money, rang out from all these platform utterances with no uncertain sound.

The two great parties are absolutely committed to this policy, if words mean anything at all. If platform declarations are not mere "glittering generalities," if what they say are not mere "catch-words" to deceive the people, then indeed, are all of us here, Democrats, Republicans, and Populists alike, pledged to vote for a measure which will maintain the coinage of gold and silver on terms of equality at a fixed ratio.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, the signs indicate that on this [Democratic] side of the House a large number intend to vote for the pending measure, which repeals the purchasing clause of the Sherman act, stops the coinage and use of silver as money, and provides nothing to take its place.

And I am well aware that the great majority of our friends on the other [Republican] side of the aisle intend also to vote to close the mints to silver.

The platforms of our parties, it seems, were well enough to run on before the people when we wanted office, but now it is found convenient to cast them aside.

Mr. HEPBURN. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman has read here a portion of the last Democratic platform. There is a clause, I think, following what he read, which by some is claimed to be qualifying. I would ask the gentleman, not captiously, to give the House his views with regard to that subsequent portion of the plank of which he has read a part.

Mr. BLANCHARD. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be interrupted by my friend from Iowa [Mr. HEPBURN], whom I am delighted to see back in the House, with whom I served for years before his temporary retirement, and whom I learned to admire for his ability and his always courteous demeanor as a member of this body. The qualifying words of that plank of the Democratic national platform—if they be qualifying words, which I do not admit—are these:

—or be adjusted through international agreement, or by such safeguards of legislation as shall insure the maintenance of the parity of the two metals and the equal power of every dollar at all times in the markets and in payment of debts.

This language does not commit the Democratic party to bimetalism only on the basis of international agreement. It refers to adjusting the dollar unit of coinage "through international agreement," or "by such safeguards of legislation" as shall maintain the parity of the two metals, and the equal power of every dollar in payment of debts.

Let us agree in this House by our votes that we intend to preserve in our monetary system the principle of bimetalism, and I doubt not the details of a measure to accomplish this in some effective form, while at the same time maintaining the parity of the two metals and the equal debt-paying power of every dollar, will quickly follow.

Mr. Speaker, in the canvass of 1892, before the people who honor me with a seat on this floor, in speaking of the platform of the party I put a plain, common-sense construction on the plank referred to by the gentleman from Iowa, and declared that the Democratic party had always sustained bimetalism; that it always opposed the striking down of silver; that the Republican party alone must be held responsible for the demonetizing act of 1873, and that the Democratic party had not yet had a chance to

redeem the pledge it had made to the people to reestablish silver in its place as a money metal.

The argument was made all over the South and West that the Democratic party had lost control of the Government in March, 1861, and that from that time down to 1892 (when the canvass was being made) it had not been in power to the extent of enabling it to enact its pledges to the people into law; that it was true we had had at one time the lower House of Congress, at another the Senate, at another the House and the Presidency, at still another, for a brief period, the two Houses; that it took the two Houses of Congress and the Presidency, concurrently, to constitute in the hands of the party the law-making power; and that as soon as the Democratic party achieved this result it would carry out its pledges, among them the restoration of bimetallicism.

On these lines we appealed to the farming classes of our people, who showed a disposition to go off into the ranks of the People's party, to abide in patience within the lines of the Democratic party, and at least to give the party a chance to make good its platform declarations by assisting it to carry the then approaching elections and secure control of the two Houses of Congress and of the Presidency. We urged that the signs of the times gave promise of the accomplishment of this result. Mr. Speaker, it was upon such pleas that many farmers were persuaded from going over into the ranks of the Populists and were induced to maintain their fealty, their allegiance, their loyalty to the Democratic party.

And now, sir, when, as we then predicted, the Democratic party, as the result of the election, succeeded to power in the Government in all its branches, we are met by a measure presented here by so good a Democrat as my friend from West Virginia [Mr. WILSON] which says to the people to whom I spoke and to whom others spoke, as I have stated, that the Democratic national platform did not mean the maintenance of gold and silver as equally the money of the country, and that the pledge of bimetallicism was not made to be kept. He has introduced a bill which in effect assumes that the portion of the national Democratic platform which declares for the repeal of the Sherman act is the only one that has any meaning in it.

I should dislike to go to the people I represent and carry that message to them. I would fear for its effect upon the party in the election for member of this House in 1894. And how true that is of many other districts in the United States!

Mr. Speaker, it is said by some of the gentlemen supporting the Wilson bill that if we enact it into law it carries out the first part of the plank in the Democratic platform relating to the money question, and that hereafter, by additional legislation, we can carry out the remainder. But why divide the proposition? The declaration of the party upon the money question is embraced in one clause and is to be taken as a single proposition. In that clause the party declares for the repeal of the Sherman act, and then for the use of both gold and silver as the standard money of the country, and for the coinage of both metals without discriminating against either. And if we are going to be true to the platform pledge; if we are going to deal honestly with the people; if we meant what we said in the platform; if the party does not intend to be recreant to its pledges, let us now in one

bill enact substantially into law the declarations of the clause of the platform referred to.

Mr. Speaker, some of us have served for a good many years on this floor. Those of us who have so served are well acquainted with the methods of legislation here. We know that even when a majority of members in this House favor a given proposition it is oftentimes within the power of a minority to defeat the enactment of the same into law. How many times have we seen this happen? Let this repeal be accomplished, unqualifiedly and unconditionally as asked, and I venture the prediction here and now that neither at this extra session nor at the regular sessions of this Congress will a "t" be crossed or an "i" dotted in the enactment of any further financial legislation. The best opportunity to redeem the pledge of bimetalism made in its platform by the party will have gone forever.

The same sordid, grasping power, the combined power of the gold people of the world, which encompassed the repeal of the purchasing clause of the Sherman act and in this way brought us directly to a gold basis—the single gold standard—will be potent enough to prevent further legislation having the object of the reestablishment of silver. The predominant trait and chief characteristic, Mr. Speaker, of the Anglo-Saxon race, to which you and I and a great majority of members here belong, is the love of power and the ever restless, relentless, and the oftentimes unscrupulous pursuit of it. This race has never been known to yield voluntarily any atom of power once acquired, nor indeed anything else of value once acquired. Surrender to them now the disestablishment of silver, give to them now the single gold standard, and with it the control of the money power of the world and hardly anything short of revolution will ever again restore silver to its rightful place as a money metal.

Mr. BLAND. Will the gentleman allow me a moment?

Mr. BLANCHARD. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. BLAND. I think the gentleman's argument may be misunderstood in one particular. He has been assuming that the Wilson bill carries out the Chicago platform in so far as the repeal of the Sherman act is concerned. It does no such thing. The platform demands the wiping out of the Sherman law, while the Wilson bill proposes to repeal only the purchasing clause of that law, leaving the remainder, leaving the gold standard portion of it. I want it made clear that the advocates of the Wilson bill do not attempt to conform to any part of the Chicago platform, even so far as concerns the repeal of the Sherman bill.

Mr. BLANCHARD. My friend from Missouri is correct in his explanation of the scope of the Wilson bill. It does not go to the extent of the repeal of the Sherman law as demanded by the party's platform; it deals only with one clause of that law; it confines itself to repealing what is called "the purchasing clause" of the Sherman act, leaving the remainder untouched, and is, therefore, not a compliance with any part of the Chicago platform.

Mr. BOATNER. Will my colleague allow an interruption for a question?

Mr. BLANCHARD. I will.

Mr. BOATNER. Has any suggestion been made by the other side, or by any of the adherents of the Wilson bill, looking to

any legislation providing for free coinage of silver on any basis whatever?

Mr. BLANCHARD. None whatever. Of all who have addressed the House on that side of the pending question, the gentleman from New York [Mr. WARNER] is the only one who even stated that he was willing to vote for any subsequent measure having the object of carrying out the declarations of the platform of the party on this subject.

Mr. BOATNER. But he did not say what he was willing to vote for on that line.

Mr. BLANCHARD. He did not; only expressed a willingness to vote for some subsequent measure.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. PATTERSON], who addressed the House in support of the pending measure with much earnestness and force, declared he could not vote for the coinage of silver on any ratio that might be proposed, for he did not believe the two metals could any longer be kept at parity, and that the inevitable result of attempting bimetallism here, in the absence of an international agreement, would be that the cheaper metal, silver, would drive out of the country the dearer and more valuable metal, gold. The gentleman has not heeded the lesson which the experience of France on this subject teaches.

France for more than a half century has maintained nearly or quite as much silver as gold in circulation at parity on a ratio of 15½ of silver to 1 of gold. She has now in circulation \$700,000,000 of silver. She appears to have no difficulty in keeping it at a parity with gold at the ratio mentioned. The presence of so much silver, even at a less ratio than the one adopted by us, does not seem to have had the effect of driving out gold. She has more of actual silver and more of actual gold to-day than any nation on earth. It is estimated that her stock of gold at this time is \$900,000,000.

The money circulation of France is equal to \$57 or \$58 per capita of her population. Ours is only about \$23 per capita, and much of this is not in actual circulation, is in the form of reserved funds, etc. France in extent is equal to only about one-seventeenth of our territorial area, and her population is but little more than half as great as ours. She has largely more silver than we have. Our stock of silver for money purposes is placed at about \$500,000,000. Is not our ability as great as that of France to keep silver in circulation and on a parity with gold at the same or at a greater ratio? If gold does not run away from the presence of so much silver in France, why should it run away from an equal amount, proportionally to population, in our country?

Mr. Speaker, if we were to coin all the silver produced annually in the whole world, less the percentage used in the arts, it would take us some six or eight years to obtain as much silver coin per capita of our population as France maintains to-day per capita of her population.

And yet the wild cry is raised that we must close our mints to silver, that we must stop its coinage, that the country will be ruined if we do not, and more of that kind of rubbish.

England, since 1816 a monometallic gold standard country, has far less of actual gold than France. If gold is afraid of silver, why does it not run away from France, where there is so much

of silver, to England, where there is no silver at all except for subsidiary coin purposes? It is just such questions as this that upset the theory of the gold advocates. A few years ago, in consequence of the withdrawal by the Russian Government of a very large amount of gold on deposit with the Barings, that great English banking house tottered, and apprehension was great it would go down in bankruptcy.

The Bank of England came to its rescue, and in doing so drew so heavily on its gold resources that it was thought prudent to effect a loan of gold. Where did the great Bank of England go for this loan? Did it go to monometallic gold-standard Germany or the United States? No; it went to bimetallic France, and the Bank of France loaned to the Bank of England 75,000,000 francs in gold. Nor was this the first time the Bank of England borrowed gold from France. Twice before, as my information goes, she did the same thing.

Mr. Speaker, what magic power does gold possess that enables it to command the homage of thousands? What subtle influence does it invoke that makes it so potent a factor in the affairs of men? It has no intrinsic value except that which makes it useful in the arts and for ornamentation. In this respect it has no advantage over silver. Its money qualities are not inherent; they are endowed by man. Gold is money because the common consent of mankind makes it so. Silver and gold were chosen over the other metals as mediums of exchange and measures of value because of their limited supply and their greater adaptability for the purpose. In this sense they are precious metals. Gold unendowed with the money quality would be of comparatively little use, and would attract but limited notice from man.

But as money, ah! Mr. Speaker, therein lies its magic power. The subtle influence which quickens the senseless metal with life and energy and force and might—which makes kings and emperors its servants and queens and princesses its handmaids—springs from that quality which enables it to acquire property, purchase talent, learning, and skill, and pay debts.

What it will accomplish as money is epitomized by Addison in the following sentence:

Gold is a wonderful clearer of the understanding. It dissipates every doubt and scruple in an instant, accommodates itself to the meanest capacities, silences the loud and clamorous, and brings over the most obstinate and inflexible. Phillip of Macedon refuted by it the wisdom of Athens, confounded their statesmen, struck their orators dumb, and at length argued them out of their liberties.

With all its power it is

COWARDLY AND TREACHEROUS.

Senator Ingalls, of Kansas, in a speech in 1878 in the United States Senate, depicted it in graphic language, as follows:

No enduring fabric of national prosperity can be built on gold. Gold is the money of monarchs; kings covet it, the exchanges of nations are effected by it. Its tendency is to accumulate in vast masses in the commercial centers, and to move from kingdom to kingdom in such volumes as to unsettle values and disturb the finances of the world. It is the instrument of gamblers and speculators, and the idol of the miser and the thief. Being the object of so much adoration, it becomes haughty and sensitive and shrinks at the approach of danger, and whenever it is most needed it always disappears. At the slightest alarm it begins to look for a refuge. It flies from the nation at war to the nation at peace. War makes it a fugitive.

No people in a great emergency ever found a faithful ally in gold. It is the most cowardly and treacherous of all metals. It makes no treaty that it does not break. It has no friend whom it does not sooner or later betray.

Armies and navies are not maintained by gold. In times of panic and calamity, shipwreck and disaster, it becomes the chief agent and minister of ruin. No nation ever fought a great war by the aid of gold. On the contrary, in the crisis of greater peril it becomes an enemy more potent than the foe in the field: but when the battle is won and peace has been secured gold reappears and claims the fruits of victory. In our own civil war it is doubtful if the gold of New York and London did not work us greater injury than the powder and lead and iron of the rebels. It was the most invincible enemy of the public credit. Gold paid no soldier nor sailor. It refused the national obligation. It was worth most when our fortunes were lowest. Every defeat gave it increased value. It was in open alliance with our enemies the world over, and all its energies were evoked for our destruction. But as usual when danger has been averted and the victory secured, gold swaggers to the front and asserts the supremacy. But silver is the money of the people. It is the money of wages and retail. Its tendency is toward diffusion and dissemination. It enters into the minute concerns of traffic, and is exchanged day by day for daily bread. It penetrates the remotest channels of commerce, and its abundance, bulk, and small subdivision prevents its deportation in sufficient amount to disturb or unsettle values. If it retires at the approach of danger, or from the presence of an inferior currency, it still remains at home ready to respond to the first summons for its return.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the adoption of the single gold standard in this country would be disastrous in the extreme to the agricultural interests of the South and West. We do not find, sir, any demand from those classes of our people for the repeal unconditionally of the Sherman law. That demand comes up principally from the Eastern sections of the country, and from the bankers and boards of trade in the cities throughout the country. I believe that the adoption of the single gold standard would mean falling prices continued in this country, and the ruin and impoverishment of the agricultural and laboring classes.

Since 1873, when silver was demonetized, we have had a period of falling prices. We in the South and West know that since 1873 the agricultural interests of our sections have been in their tendency down, down, down. Before the civil war, under a different system of finance, the agricultural interest of the South and West was one of appreciation—a little better, a little stronger, a little higher every year.

In the South, prior to the war, the very best security that could be offered for a loan of money was a mortgage on our agricultural lands. Now almost any kind of collateral is considered better security than the same lands. Prior to the war agricultural lands commanded ready sale in the market at appreciating prices. Is that true of these same lands now? It is not. All of you from the South and West know it. In many localities lands are a drug on the market, hard to dispose of, and oftentimes sacrificed at ruinous prices. The basis of prosperity in the South and West is our agricultural lands, and any national policy that affects their selling value, or their rental value, or the value of their products, strikes a blow at the very foundation of our welfare.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the adoption of the single gold standard would mean a constantly decreasing value of currency to supply the needs of a constantly increasing volume of business; or a volume of business that would constantly increase if the supply of money permitted. It would mean a volume of money diminishing to the needs of the people in proportion as the number of people to use it increased.

In other words, as our population increased our money supply would decrease per capita, and in proportion as the money supply decreased the value of money would appreciate.

The effect of this would be the perpetuation of the era of fall-

ing prices, and falling prices mean the destruction of values and the impoverishment of the people.

On the disastrous results to follow from an appreciation of the currency, I have here the declarations of one of the most distinguished men in the Republican party. From a speech made in the Senate in 1869 by Senator SHERMAN, of Ohio, I extract the following:

But the distress caused by an appreciation of the currency falls mainly on the debtor class; others suffer only by reason of his inability to pay. What does specie payment mean to the debtor? It means the payment of \$135 where he has agreed to pay \$100—

I will suggest here that we substitute the word "gold" for the word "specie," for this demonitization of silver, this striking down of silver, this closing of the mints of the country to silver means the bringing of debts to a gold basis. So substitute the word "gold" for the word "specie," and it would read—

What does gold payment mean to a debtor? It means the payment of \$135 where he has agreed to pay \$100, or, which is the same thing, the payment of \$100 where he has agreed to pay \$75. Where he has purchased property and paid for one-fourth of it, it means the loss of the property; it means the addition of one-fourth to all currency debts in the United States. A measure to require a debtor now to pay his debt in gold, or currency equivalent to gold, requires him to pay 135 bushels of wheat when he agreed to pay 100; and if this appreciation is extended through a period of three years, it requires him to pay an interest of 12 per cent in addition to the rate he has agreed to pay.

Again, in the same speech, he made use of this language :

The debtors of this country include the active, enterprising, energetic men in all the various employments of life. It is a serious proposition to change their contracts so as in effect to require them to pay one-third more than they agreed to pay.

The SPEAKER *pro tempore*. The time of the gentleman from Louisiana has expired.

Mr. BLAND. I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman have time to conclude his remarks.

There was no objection, and it was so ordered.

Mr. BLANCHARD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the House for its indulgence. The Senator from Ohio [Mr. SHERMAN], in the same speech, used also the following language, which is all the more significant since he is to-day known as one of the ablest exponents of the monometallic gold standard in this country:

To every person except a capitalist out of debt, or to the salaried officer, or annuitant, it is a period of loss, danger, lassitude of trade, fall of wages, suspension of enterprise, bankruptcy, or disaster. To every railroad it is an addition of at least one-third to the burden of the debt; and more than that deduction from the value of its stock. To every bank it means the necessity of paying \$150 for one hundred of its notes and deposits, except so far as the bank may transfer this to its debtors. It means the ruin of all dealers whose debts are twice their capital, though one-third less than their property. It means the fall of all agricultural productions without any very great reduction of prices.

This speech is contained in volume 71 of the Congressional Globe, and was delivered January 27, 1869. It was delivered on a bill which related to the public debt and to the currency. He was arguing, in that part of the speech which I have quoted, against the evils to follow from a reduction in volume of the money of the country, and his statements on that subject are of value in this discussion, since if this purpose of the gold people is achieved our mints will be stopped to the coinage of silver. Nor is it proposed in anyway to replace the money which will thus be stricken down, and of which we will thus be deprived, by any other form of money or currency.

Mr. Speaker, the history of falling prices the world over has been the history of ruin and poverty. Falling prices have been productive of more of disaster to the human race than anything else that has ever happened to it, war and pestilence not excepted.

I have before me a report made in 1877 by the United States Monetary Commission to the Senate of the United States. This commission was organized under a joint resolution adopted August 15, 1876. As pertinent to the points under discussion just now, I send up to the Clerk's desk to be read the extract which I have marked.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the Christian era the metallic money of the Roman Empire amounted to \$1,800,000,000. By the end of the fifteenth century it had shrunk to less than \$200,000,000. During this period a most extraordinary and baleful change took place in the condition of the world. Population dwindled, and commerce, arts, wealth, and freedom all disappeared. The people were reduced by poverty and misery to the most degraded conditions of serfdom and slavery. The disintegration of society was almost complete. The conditions of life were so hard that individual selfishness was the only thing consistent with the instinct of self-preservation. All public spirit, all generous emotions, all the noble aspirations of man shriveled and disappeared as the volume of money shrunk and as prices fell.

History records no such disastrous transition as that from the Roman Empire to the Dark Ages. Various explanations have been given of this entire breaking down of the framework of society, but it was certainly coincident with the shrinkage in the volume of money, which was also without historical parallel. The crumbling of institutions kept even step and pace with the shrinkage in the stock of money and the falling of prices. All other attendant circumstances than these last have occurred in other historical periods unaccompanied and unfollowed by any such mighty disasters. It is a suggestive coincidence that the first glimmer of light only came with the invention of bills of exchange and paper substitutes, through which the scanty stock of the precious metals was increased in efficiency. But not less than the energizing influence of Potosi and all the argosies of treasure from the New World were needed to arouse the Old World from its comatose sleep, to quicken the torpid limbs of industry, and to plume the leaden wings of commerce.

It needed the heroic treatment of rising prices to enable society to reunite its shattered links, to shake off the shackles of feudalism, to relight and uplift the almost extinguished torch of civilization. That the disasters of the Dark Ages were caused by decreasing money and falling prices, and that the recovery therefrom and the comparative prosperity which followed the discovery of America were due to an increasing supply of the precious metals and rising prices, will not seem surprising or unreasonable when the noble functions of money are considered. Money is the great instrument of association, the very fiber of social organism, the vitalizing force of industry, the protoplasm of civilization, and as essential to its existence as oxygen is to animal life. Without money civilization could not have had a beginning; with a diminishing supply it must languish, and, unless relieved, finally perish.

Mr. Speaker, the great premier of Great Britain, Mr. Gladstone, is said to have made in a recent speech this observation in reference to silver as money—

that to return to free coinage in England would be a move directly in the interest of our debtors in America who owe us, because to do so would be to put in their hands just twice the amount of money with which to pay us, and thereby enable them to pay us with just half the value.

If it be true that that declaration was made to the English people by so eminent an authority as Mr. Gladstone, it would, sir, seem to me the part of wisdom for us to pursue just the reverse of the policy which he there urged upon England. Our public debt is payable in coin, and coin means silver and gold.

I have here a list of the acts, beginning with 1861 and coming down to 1870, authorizing the issuance of bonds and greenbacks

and the creation of the public debt. It is all payable in coin—gold or silver.

But if we should adopt the pending proposition to close our mints to the coinage of silver it increases upon us the burden of this national debt. And this applies equally to private debts. We add from one-third to one-half more to the burden which the laboring and producing classes of the people have to bear. And, Mr. Speaker, the great majority of the people of the United States belong to the debtor class. They are not asking that silver be stricken down as a money metal; they are not asking that the mints of the country be closed to the coinage of silver; they are not seeking to take upon themselves a greater burden of indebtedness: they are not asking to put the contracts which they made on a gold basis. It is the East; it is the monometallists of New York, of Boston, of Philadelphia, of the money centers; it is the money classes of Europe, who hold American securities, that are demanding this greater burden be placed upon the laboring and agricultural classes in order that there may be an appreciation of their holdings.

Mr. Speaker, there has been a good deal said in this debate about our having come to the forks of the road; and perhaps we have in more ways than one. It looks like this is an attempt on the part of the money classes to overburden the laboring and agricultural classes of the West and South. Take care that we have not come to the forks of the road where the South and the West will part, politically, with the East. You know that this was predicted as early as 1878, by the same distinguished Western Senator whom I quoted awhile ago, Senator Ingalls, who said at that time:

It is the East against the West and South combined. It is the corn and wheat and beef and cotton of the country against its bonds and its gold; its productive industry against its accumulations. It is the men who own the public debt against those who are to pay it, if it is to be paid at all. If the bonds of this Government are ever paid, they will be paid by the labor of the country, and not by its capital. They are exempt from taxation and bear none of the burdens of society.

The alliance between the West and the South upon all matters affecting their material welfare hereafter is inevitable. Their interests are mutual and identical. With the removal of the causes of political dissension that have so long separated them, they must coalesce, and united they will be invincible. The valleys of the Mississippi and Missouri, with their tributaries, form an empire that must have a homogeneous population and a common destiny from the Yellowstone to the Gulf.

These great communities have been alienated by factions that have estranged them only to prey upon them and to maintain political supremacy by their separation. Unfriendly legislation has imposed intolerable burdens upon their energies; invidious discriminations have been made against their products; unjust tariffs have repressed their industries. While vast appropriations have been made to protect the harbors of the Atlantic, and to erect beacons upon every headland to warn the mariner with silent admonition from the "merchant-marring rocks," the Mississippi was left choked with its drifting sands till the daring genius of Eads undertook the gigantic labor of compelling the great stream to dredge its own channel to the sea. The opening of this avenue of commerce marks the epoch of the emancipation of the West and South from their bondage to the capital of the East. In asking the passage of this bill they are asking less than they will ever ask again. When I reflect upon the burdens they have borne, the wrongs they have suffered, I am astonished at their moderation.

Mr. Speaker, if these words were true in 1878, they are ten-fold more true to-day. The West and the South do not want this country brought to a monometallic gold standard basis. They want silver used along with gold as the money of the country. They want it because it means more money and higher prices for

agricultural products and agricultural lands. It means less of burdens to bear; it means more people living in comfort and happiness.

But it is said the silver dollar is not an honest dollar, and the changes are rung upon this by the gentlemen who take the gold side of this question. Without admitting this to be true, suppose, for the sake of argument, it is conceded. If it be a dishonest dollar, what made it so?

That is a question which these gentlemen who so glibly advocate the gold standard have not answered. I will answer it for them. It is made so by legislation hostile to silver, secured by interested parties from the leading commercial nations of the world. I would ask my gold friends this question: Would the silver dollar be a dishonest dollar to-day but for this hostile legislation? Clearly not.

If an international agreement were secured to coin the silver dollar everywhere at a ratio of 16 to 1, would it not be an honest dollar even in the eyes of those who now so glibly denounce it; would it not be worth a hundred cents in gold everywhere; would it not be the unit of value along with gold everywhere? Undoubtedly. With this policy of bimetallism universally recognized and adopted, would there not follow an enormous increase in the world's wealth; would not prosperity be more general; would not the hard conditions of life be changed for the better; would not more people live in comfort and happiness; would not poverty be less?

It seems to me so. Well, who prevents this international agreement? Who but interested parties, having a selfish motive to subserve, the money classes, whose greed prompts them to invoke the aid of law to add a fourth, or a third, or a half to the value of their securities by diminishing the world's supply of money by the destruction for coin purposes of one of the metals used for money by all people since the dawn of history?

Will the United States lend its giant aid in this attempt at the destruction of one-half of the world's money supply? Will the United States, which produces 40 per cent of the silver of the world, join the crusade against it?

England leads in this attempt to destroy silver as money. It is to her interest to do so. She is a creditor nation and levies tribute on all the nations of the earth. She wants her debts paid to her in dear money, and gold is this "dear" money with silver stricken down. England produces two-thirds of the manufactured products consumed in the world, and is, besides, the common carrier of the world. In her bottoms are carried more than half of the transportation business of the world. It is thus that she has become the great creditor nation of the earth and aspires to dictate the kind and character and value of the money of the world, if not its weight and fineness.

But we have nothing in common with England in this. She is in many respects our rival. What suits her does not suit us. A policy that she elects to follow as best for her interests, is likely to prove not best for ours. The conditions with us are different. We are not a creditor, but a debtor nation. Our unwise tariff laws have prevented us from becoming a serious competitor with her as a furnisher of manufactured supplies to the world, and the same condition, together with unwise navigation laws, have deprived us of our fair share of the carrying trade of

the world. Great Britain is a compact nation, with population crowded comparatively in a small space.

The United States is a country of vast territorial extent; its sixty-odd millions of people scattered over a wide area; our interests are more complex: our climatic conditions widely variant; our productions more diversified.

Our position is more isolated from the leading commercial nations of earth. We can not make use of credit, as understood in commercial transactions, as easily and readily and to the extent that England does. We need more money than she does, a larger volume to spread over our vast country, to move our more diversified crops, to carry life and vigor into our more numerous industries and enterprises.

Our system of banking is different. We can and do make use of more different kinds of money, are capable of a more complex system of finance. We can use silver to advantage in our money system where England might find difficulty in doing so.

If the United States—one of the greatest nations of earth—makes a stand now for silver, because it means an ever-increasing volume of money for all mankind, will it not have the effect of calling a halt the world over in the crusade against silver? Will it not revive the hopes of bimetallists in all lands, strengthening their hands and confirming their purpose? Even in England the signs portend the development of sentiment favorable to bimetalism.

Mr. Balfour, one of the leaders of the Conservative party in the House of Commons, is an avowed bimetalist, and with him stand many able and prominent men in both political and commercial circles. In the great manufacturing center of Manchester public meetings have been held in the interest of the bimetallic standard, and many things point to a healthy growth of popular sentiment in that direction.

Shall we check this movement by striking down bimetalism in this country, its last refuge and stronghold?

But those who advocate the single gold standard assert the people of the United States can not maintain the parity of the metals at a fixed ratio. They forget the example of France. That nation maintained single-handed for sixty years the free and unlimited coinage of silver in Europe, and that, too, at a ratio smaller than the one which obtains here. But let us set the example of opening our mints to the free coinage of silver, and may we not expect other nations to follow our lead? France and the states of the Latin-Union reluctantly closed their mints to the free coinage of silver, being forced to it by the action of Germany and the United States demonetizing that metal in 1873.

Let the United States reestablish silver, and the bimetallic sentiment of Europe will compel other countries to do the same. Besides, is the United States in the habit of looking around to see what other people are doing, or of asking their advice before acting on a principle or announcing a purpose? We have reached that point in material and commercial greatness when we should lead, and not follow.

Where is the spirit of 1776? At that time we, a mere handful of people, taking counsel of no one, relying only upon the God of justice and truth and the righteousness of our cause, boldly proclaimed the great principle of civil liberty. In the

clash of arms that followed we triumphantly vindicated and established that principle.

We are now a great continental republic, the peer in greatness, glory, and power of any nation on earth, possessed of every variety of climate and production, whose people are as one again, loyally devoted to the perpetuity of the Union, fearing no foreign foe, following the pursuits of peace, and solving practically the great problem of self-government.

Can we not afford to proclaim now the great principle of financial liberty; to take the lead in the emancipation of mankind from the thralldom and slavery of the money power, even as we did in Colonial days in the emancipation of mankind from the slavery and tyranny of political power?

If we do not, Mr. Speaker, then, indeed, have we fallen on degenerate days, evincing a loss in national courage, force, and nerve, and we may well ask ourselves the question: Have we entered on a period of national decadence?

"He who would be free himself must strike the blow."

But, Mr. Speaker, if the silver dollar is not an honest dollar what shall we say of the gold dollar? Is it any more honest?

The gold dollar, under favoring conditions, has robbed its brother silver dollar of part of its value and added it to its own. The present gold dollar, then, is not an honest dollar. It is as much above the fair average of value as the silver dollar is below that average. It has as much surplus of value as the silver dollar has of deficiency of value. It is as much too valuable as the silver dollar is less valuable. In the last twenty years gold dollars have increased in value at the expense and loss of silver. "The restoration of bimetalism is to preserve the old yardstick of value against the revolutionists who have added 40 per cent to the length of gold by the legislation of the past twenty years."

The gold dollar—
says a writer of note—

is a dishonest dollar to the extent that the metal in it exceeds the mean value of gold and silver. The silver dollar is a dishonest dollar to the extent that the metal in it is less in value than the mean value of gold and silver.

It will not, therefore, do for our friends of the gold standard to denounce the silver dollar as a dishonest dollar without casting the mote out of their own eye so as to see the dishonesty which is in the gold dollar of to-day—the gold dollar worth more than it should be worth, made so by legislation; the silver dollar worth less than it should be worth, made so by legislation. There is as much dishonesty in the one as in the other, but the dishonesty in the gold dollar makes itself felt the more because that dollar is so much harder to get by the agricultural and laboring classes of the country by reason of this very excess of value.

Mr. Speaker, on a gold basis we continue of necessity borrowers of money from Europe. The continued coinage and use of silver as money will obviate this necessity and rescue us from paying tribute to Europe in the form of interest.

Under the Bland-Allison act of 1878, the Government undertook to go into the markets of the world and buy silver to coin, not exceeding four millions a month and not less than two millions a month.

This implied another undertaking on the part of the Government, and that was to get this silver money into circulation after coinage.

Therein, Mr. Speaker, lies the trouble; and it is greater, even, under the Sherman act of 1890, for the Treasury requirement of silver under the latter was greater per month than under the Bland-Allison act.

To itself attempt to put money into circulation Government is essaying what, strictly speaking, is not a legitimate function of government. Especially is this true of normal times. Government defines the unit of value, says what shall constitute money, fixes its weight and fineness, puts its stamp upon it to denote weight and fineness, and establishes mints where money is coined for those who have metals from which money is permitted by law to be coined, charging the expense of mintage.

But to get it into circulation is the business of the people who own it. Government, by taxation, collects enough money from the people to meet its expenses, and then puts it back into the channels of circulation when it pays it out to the people it owes. But beyond this Government can not well go in circulating money. It is not the business of Government to enter the markets of the world and become a trader, buying stocks and goods and lands and the products of land, and in that way get its money into circulation.

But open the mints of the country to the free coinage of silver as well as gold. Let those who have these metals go to the mints and have them coined into money, and then enter the channels of trade and barter and commerce and get it into circulation. They will be quick to do it. The man who has his silver coined into money for him at the mint will not hoard it in his treasury, his bank, his vault, his strong box, as the Government has been compelled to do, or has done, in its treasury vaults. Oh, no! He will go out into the markets and exchange it for lands, for mules, for horses, for cattle, for wheat, for corn, for cotton, for houses, for merchandise, for everything he may need or fancy, and that is the only legitimate way of getting and keeping money in circulation.

The Bland-Allison act of 1878 was repealed by the Sherman act of 1890—a worse law. They both forced upon the Government the undertaking of circulating silver. That is not what is wanted. Let both these laws be wiped out. Instead, open the mints to everybody's silver. Then the Government will have no silver to purchase as now; then it will own no silver except that which comes to it through taxation: then silver will be treated just as gold is now. The Government has no gold except that which comes to it through taxation: it buys no gold for coinage, it opens its mints to everybody's gold, and how quickly it is gotten into circulation!

SILVER THE POOR MAN'S MONEY.

Mr. Speaker, silver is the poor man's money—yes, exactly that; the poor man's money—not in the sense that the poor man should receive his dues in money less valuable than that which is demanded by the rich, or that there should be one kind of money for the rich and another kind for the poor, but the poor man's money in the sense that it is money not so hard to get

as the gold money. It means more for the wage-earner for the day's work than if gold alone were money.

But, more than that, it means the more ready employment of labor; and in that sense more than any other it is the poor man's money. There are to-day, Mr. Speaker, thousands upon thousands of our fellow citizens all over this country, especially in the Western States, where the silver mines are—laboring people—who are deprived of employment because of the scanty supply of money in circulation; because the mints are closed to free silver; because the mines are shut down.

The gold standard the world over means contraction, scarcity, shrinkage. It means dear money, money hard to get; so hard to get that, when gotten, it is hoarded. It means diminution in quantity, shrinkage in volume, stagnation in business, paralysis of enterprise, stoppage of industry. It stays the hand of thrift, palsies the arm of energy, and languishes the heart of hope. It makes all debts gold debts. It means a greater demand for gold, double work for the volume of gold money to do, and accordingly an undue appreciation of its value. It means the elevation of the gold dollar as a unit of value, and the corresponding decrease in the value of everything else by comparison.

Bimetallism, the free coinage of gold and silver, means more money, an expanding volume. It means a quickening of enterprise, enlarged business opportunities, multiplied industries. It means money not so hard to get, and when gotten invested, not hoarded. It means a market—and I call the attention of our Western and Southern friends to this—it means a market for what we have to sell. Gentlemen in this House know to-day that we have not a market for what we have to sell. Our best agricultural lands are oftentimes a drug on the market; and this is becoming more and more the case under the policy which has obtained since 1873.

The bimetallic standard means a fuller market for what we have to sell, because there is more money. It means better prices for our agricultural lands of the South and West, for our timber, our cattle, our corn, our wheat, our beef, our cotton, our sugar, our rice. It means easier money to the consumer who buys from the retail merchant, and larger transactions by the retail merchant with the wholesale dealer and stock-jobber. It means a revival of trade in both the retail and wholesale lines. It means competition, and the resulting higher compensation, for the services of the bookkeeper, the cashier, the accountant, the salesman.

This comes about by the multiplying of business concerns and houses needing the services of such employes. It means money to pay the doctor, the lawyer, the preacher, the mechanic; to erect and sustain schoolhouses and churches. It means cheap money—cheap in the sense of a low rate of interest—with which to raise, as now, 6 or 7 cent cotton and half-dollar-a-bushel wheat. It means money to meet obligations with, to pay debts. It is fair alike to both creditor and debtor—one gets his just equivalent; the other is not overburdened or crushed.

Mr. Speaker, under the conditions which now obtain, the agricultural classes of the South have to pay, the best of them, 8, 10, 12, and 15 per cent for money to raise 6-cent cotton. And when those who are not able to borrow money directly, go to the stores and get credit for their supplies, they pay often for them what

would be equivalent to interest at the rate of from 25 to 100 per cent. Every man here from the South knows this to be true, and I believe it to be true also of the West. And these conditions will be made harder if we are brought absolutely to the single gold-standard basis, as is insisted upon by so many here.

Mr. Speaker, the body politic is sick. "Uncle Sam" is suffering from serious indisposition. Some gentlemen here act as though they believed him to be drunk. They would apply the Keeley gold cure. [Laughter.] They propose a hypodermic injection of that mixture, and insist that it is a panacea for all the ills the country is suffering from. Fifty years ago there obtained in this country a school of medicine which insisted upon bleeding a patient for almost every indisposition. The lancet was applied, and a part of the blood which circulated in his veins drawn off under the pretext and belief that this would contribute to his cure. But as science developed, as experience widened, this old idea was discarded as not only useless but harmful.

The foremost practitioners in the profession now rarely, if ever, resort to bleeding. It is hardly ever heard of. But it would seem that there are quacks on this floor who would return to this discarded practice. "Uncle Sam" being sick, they would bleed him. If they have diagnosed his case with skill, they could not fail to discover he was suffering from a deficient circulation already. Yet they would bleed him anyhow. The lancet must be applied, and the circulation of blood, already scanty, must be lessened.

Mr. Speaker, the money in circulation is the lifeblood of the country. The cry on all hands now is for money, more money. There is a deficiency of it. Yet these lancet-using quacks of the gold-standard theory would cure "Uncle Sam" by bleeding him, by diminishing the already scanty supply of money, by stopping the further use of silver as money.

Out with such charlatanism; such malpractice. Let us adopt the reverse practice; let us infuse more blood into the sick patient; let us maintain a full circulation of this lifeblood—money—in the veins of the body politic; let us maintain what we have always maintained, what was the money of our fathers, what is the money of the Constitution—bimetallism.

Many gentlemen who advocate the gold side of this question admit that on principle bimetallism is correct. But, while they say this, they add that this is not the time to adopt it; that the conditions now confronting us do not admit of our maintaining a bimetallic standard in this country. Their argument is one of convenience. It is the argument of expediency. It is not the argument of principle, and the people of the United States have long since discovered that we have fared best whenever we planted ourselves squarely on principle as the basis of governmental action. We have ever done so as a nation.

In Colonial times, when resisting the encroachments of the mother country, we planted ourselves on the enduring principle of civil liberty, and won. When secession spread over a section of the country and a number of the States separated from the Union, the United States again acted on the principle that the Union must and shall be preserved, went to work on that line and succeeded. They did not in the face of that great crisis give heed to the argument of convenience or expediency.

Again, when in 1812 the right of search of American vessels

was insisted upon by Great Britain, America planted itself on the sound principle of exemption from foreign espionage, and though a weak, struggling nationality at that time, the United States went to war to sustain it and again won. And so the American people have ever been greatest and most successful when struggling to establish a principle or to maintain one. A strong, vigorous, aggressive nation always suffers in loss of national character and prestige when, abandoning principle, it takes to expediency.

If bimetallism be correct, if sound in principle, we should plant ourselves on it and make the fight squarely for it in face of the world.

Mr. Speaker, some thousands of years ago, in their exodus from Egypt and the house of bondage, the Israelites of old crossed the Red Sea and wandered forty years in the wilderness on their way to the promised land. Tiring of the rule of God, who communicated His directions to them through His servants, Moses and Aaron, and promulgated His Divine commands amid the thunders of Sinai, rebellious of heart they turned away, made a calf of gold, erected it as a god in the wilderness, and bowed and prostrated themselves before it.

History repeats itself. The people of the United States, wandering in the wilderness of financial doubt and distress, a portion of them have veered away from the teaching of the Fathers of the Republic and from the admonition and spirit of the Constitution, and, under the lead of false prophets, have erected a golden money calf and propose to prostrate themselves before it. Holy Writ tells us that retribution, swift and terrible, followed in the wake of the transgression of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Let us beware that retribution, equally terrible if not so swift, taking the form of financial thralldom and slavery, of ruined homes and pauperized millions, does not follow the consummation of this attempt at departure from the precept and example of the founders of the nation. [Applause.]

