SPEECH

OF

HON. WM. J. BRYAN,

OF NEBRASKA,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Wednesday, August 16th, 1893.

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THE GOLD AND SILVER COINAGE OF THE CONSTITUTION.

"Dessaix has never taught me retreat, but I can beat a charge. Oh, I can beat a charge that would make the dead fall into line! I beat that charge at the Bridge of Lodi; I beat it at Mount Tabor; I beat it at the Pyramids; oh, may I beat it here?"—MUEHLBACH.

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The House having under consideration the bill (H. R. 1) to repeal the purchasing clause of the Sherman act.

Mr. BRYAN said:

Mr. SPEAKER: I shall accomplish my full purpose if I am able to impress upon the members of the House the far-reaching consequences which may follow our action and quicken their appreciation of the grave responsibility which presses upon us. Historians tell us that the victory of Charles Martel at Tours determined the history of all Europe for centuries. It was a contest "between the Crescent and the Cross," and when, on that fateful day, the Frankish prince drove back the followers of Abderrahman he rescued the West from "the all-destroying grasp of Islam," and saved to Europe its Christian civilization. A greater than Tours is here! In my humble judgment the vote of this House on the subject under consideration may bring to the people of the West and South, to the people of the United States, and to all mankind, weal or woe beyond the power of language to describe or imagination to conceive.

In the princely palace and in the humblest hamlet; by the financier and by the poorest toiler; here, in Europe and everywhere, the proceedings of this Congress, upon this problem will be read and studied; and as our actions bless or blight we shall be commended or condemned. The President of the United States, in the discharge of his duty as he sees it, has sent to Congress a message calling attention to the present financial situation, and recommending the unconditional repeal of the Sherman law as the only means of securing immediate relief. Some outside of this hall have insisted that the President's recommendation imposes upon Democratic members an obligation, as it were, to carry out his wishes, and over-zealous friends have even suggested that opposition to his views might subject the hardy dissenter to administrative displeasure. They do the President great

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injustice who presume that he would forget for a moment the independence of the two branches of Congress. He would not be worthy of our admiration or even respect if he demanded a homage which would violate the primary principles of free representative government.

TO WHOM ARE WE RESPONSIBLE?

Let his own language rebuke those who would disregard their pledges to their own people in order to display a false fealty. In the message which he sent to Congress in December, 1885, he said, in words which may well be our guide in this great crisis: "The zealous watchfulness of our constituencies, great and small, supplements their suffrages, and before the tribunal they establish every public servant should be judged." Among the many grand truths expressed felicitously by the President during his public career none show a truer conception of official duty or describe with more clearness the body from which the member receives his authority and to which he owes his responsibility.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, it is before the tribunal established by our constituencies, and before that tribunal only that we must appear for judgment upon our actions here. When we each accepted a commission from 180,000 people we pledged ourselves to protect their rights from invasion and to reflect their wishes to the best of our ability, and we must stand defenseless before the bar if our only excuse is "he recommended it." And remember, sir, that these constituencies include not bankers, brokers, and boards of trade only, but embrace people in every station and condition of life; and in that great court from whose decision there is no appeal every voter has an equal voice. That the Democratic party understands the duty of the Representative, is evident from the fact that it found it necessary to nonconcur in a similar recommendation made by the President in 1885.

In the message which he sent to the Forty-ninth Congress, at the beginning of the first session, we find these words:

> Prosperity hesitates upon our threshold because the dangers and uncertainties surrounding this question. Capital timidly shrinks from trade, and investors are unwilling to take the chance of the questionable shape in which their money will be returned to them, while enterprise halts at a risk against which care and sagacious management do not protect.
>
> As a necessary consequence, labor lacks employment, and suffering and distress are visited upon a portion of our fellow-citizens especially entitled to the careful consideration of those charged with the duties of legislation. No interest appeals to us so strongly for a safe and stable currency as the vast army of the unemployed. I recommend the suspension of the compulsory coinage of silver dollars, directed by the law passed in February, 1878.

It will be seen that the same forces were at work then as now; the same apprehensions existed as now; the same pressure was brought from the same sources in favor of the debasement of silver; but the members of Congress, refusing to take counsel of their fears, stood by the record of both great parties and by the Nation's history and retained the coinage of silver as then provided for. Let it be said to the credit of the Democratic party that in the House only 63 of its members voted to suspend the Bland law, while 130 are recorded against suspension. Time has proved that the members, reflecting the opinions of their people, were wiser than the Executive, and he is doubtless grateful to-day that they did not follow his suggestion.

THE MESSAGE.

I have read with care the message sent to us last week, and have considered it in the light of every reasonable construction of which it is capable. If I am able to understand its language it points to the burial of silver, with no promise of resurrection. Its reasoning is in the direction of a single standard. It leads irresistibly to universal gold monometallism—to a realm over whose door is written: "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here!" Before that door I stop, appalled. Have gentlemen considered the effect of a single gold standard universally adopted? Let us not deceive ourselves with the hope that we can discard silver for gold, and that other nations will take it up and keep it as a part of the world's currency. When all the silver available for coinage could gain admission to some mints and

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all the gold available for coinage would find a place for mintage, and some nation like France maintained the parity by means of bimetallism it was of comparatively little importance whether a particular nation used silver, or gold, or both.

Exchange did not fluctuate and trade could be carried on without inconvenience. But times have changed. One nation after another has closed its mints to silver until the white metal has, in European countries, been made an outcast by legislation and has shown a bullion value different from its coinage value. India, at last, guided by the misrepresentations of the metropolitan press, which proclaimed as certain what was never probable, has suspended free coinage, fearing that this country would stop the purchase of silver. If the United States, the greatest silver producing nation, which now utilizes more than one-third of the total annual product of the world, closes its mint to the coinage of silver, what assurance have we that it can retain its place as primary money in the commercial world?

Is it not more reasonable to suppose that a further fall in the bullion value of silver will be followed by a demand for a limitation of the legal tender qualities of the silver already in existence? That is already being urged by some. Is it not reasonable to suppose that our hostile action will lead to hostile action on the part of other nations? Every country must have money for its people, and if silver is abandoned and gold substituted it

AN HONEST DOLLAR

must be drawn from the world's already scanty supply. We hear much about a "stable currency" and an "honest dollar." It is a significant fact that those who have spoken in favor of unconditional repeal have for the most part avoided a discussion of the effect of an appreciating standard. They take it for granted that a gold standard is not only an honest standard, but the only stable standard. I denounce that child of ignorance and avarice, the gold dollar under a universal gold standard, as the most dishonest dollar which we could employ.

I stand upon the authority of every intelligent writer upon political economy when I assert that there is not and never has been an honest dollar. An honest dollar is a dollar absolutely stable in relation to all other things. Laughlin, in his work on Bimetallism, says:

> Monometallists do not—as is often said—believe that gold remains absolutely stable in value. They hold that there is no such thing as a "standard of value" for future payments in either gold or silver which remains absolutely invariable.

He even suggests a multiple standard for long-time contracts. I quote his words:

> As regards National debts, it is distinctly averred that neither gold nor silver forms a just measure of deferred payments, and that if justice in long contracts is sought for, we should not seek it by the doubtful and untried expedient of international bimetallism, but by the clear and certain method of a multiple standard, a unit based upon the selling prices of a number of articles of general consumption. A long-time contract would thereby be paid at its maturity by the same purchasing power as was given in the beginning.

Jevons, one of the most generally accepted of the writers in favor of a gold standard, admits the instability of a single standard, and in language very similar to that above quoted suggests the multiple standard as the most equitable if practicable. Chevalier, who wrote a book in 1858 to show the injustice of allowing a debtor to pay his debts in a cheap gold dollar, recognized the same fact, and said:

> If the value of the metal declined, the creditor would suffer a loss upon the quantity he had received, if, on the contrary, it rose, the debtor would have to pay more than he calculated upon.

I am on sound and scientific ground, therefore, when I say that a dollar approaches honesty as its purchasing power approaches stability. If I borrow a thousand dollars to-day and next year pay the debt with a thousand dollars which will secure exactly as much of all things desirable as the one thousand which I borrowed, I have paid in honest dollars. If the money has increased or decreased in purchasing power, I have satisfied my debt with dishonest dollars. While the Government can say that a given weight of gold or silver shall constitute a dollar,

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and invest that dollar with legal-tender qualities, it cannot fix the purchasing power of the dollar. That must depend upon the law of supply and demand, and it may be well to suggest that this Government never tried to fix the exchangeable value of a dollar until it began to limit the number of dollars coined.

DOLLARS RISE AND FALL.

If the number of dollars increases more rapidly than the need for dollars—as it did after the gold discoveries of 1849—the exchangeable value of each dollar will fall and prices rise. If the demand for dollars increases faster that the number of dollars—as it did after 1800—the price of each dollar will rise and prices generally will fall. The relative value of the dollar may be changed by natural causes or by legislation. An increased supply—the demand remaining the same—or a decreased demand—the supply remaining the same—will reduce the exchangeable value of each dollar. Natural causes may act on both supply and demand; as, for instance, by increasing the product from the mines or by increasing the amount consumed in the arts. Legislation acts directly on the demand, and thus affects the price, since the demand is one of the factors in fixing the price.

If by legislative action the demand for silver is destroyed and the demand for gold is increased by making it the only standard, the exchangeable value of each unit of that standard, or dollar, as we call it, will be increased. If the exchangeable value of the dollar is increased by legislation the debt of the debtor is increased, to his injury and to the advantage of the creditor. And let me suggest here, in reply to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. McCall], who said that the money loaner was entitled to the advantages derived from improved machinery and inventive genius, that he is mistaken. The laboring man and the producer are entitled to these benefits, and the money loaner, by every law of justice, ought to be content with a dollar equal in purchasing power to the dollar which he loaned, and any one desiring more than that desires a dishonest dollar, it matters not what name he may give to it. [Loud applause.] Take an illustration: John Doe, of Nebraska, has a farm worth $2,000 and mortgages it to Richard Roe, of Massachusetts, for $1,000. Suppose the value of the monetary unit is increased by legislation which creates a greater demand for gold. The debt is increased. If the increase amounts to 100 per cent. the Nebraska farmer finds that the prices of his products have fallen one half and his land loses one half its value, unless the price is maintained by the increased population incident to a new country.

The mortgage remains nominally the same, though the debt has actually become twice as great. Will he be deceived by the cry of "honest dollar?" If he should loan a Nebraska neighbor a hog weighing 100 pounds and the next spring demand in return a hog weighing 200 pounds he would be called dishonest, even though he contended that he was only demanding one hog—just the number he loaned. Society has become accustomed to some very nice distinctions. The poor man is called a socialist if he believes that the wealth of the rich should be divided among the poor, but the rich man is called a financier if he devises a plan by which the pittance of the poor can be converted to his use. [Laughter and applause.]

The poor man who takes property by force is called a thief, but the creditor who can by legislation make a debtor pay a dollar twice as large as he borrowed is lauded as the friend of a sound currency. [Laughter and applause.] The man who wants the people to destroy the Government is an anarchist, but the man who wants the Government to destroy the people is a patriot. [Applause.]

CONFIDENCE MUST BE RESTORED.

The great desire now seems to be to restore confidence, and some have an idea that the only way to restore confidence is to coax the money loaner to let go of his hoard by making the profits too tempting to be resisted. Capital is represented as a shy and timid maiden who must be courted, if won. Let me suggest a plan for bringing money from Europe. If it be possible, let us enact a law "Whereas confidence must be restored; and whereas money will always come

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from its hiding place if the inducement is sufficient: Therefore, be it enacted, That every man who borrows $1 shall pay back $2 and interest (the usury law not to be enforced)."

Would not English capital come "on the swiftest ocean greyhounds?" The money loaner of London would say: "I will not loan in India or Egypt or in South America. The inhabitants of those countries are a wicked and ungodly people and refuse to pay more than they borrowed. I will loan in the United States, for *there* lives an honest people, who delight in a sound currency and pay in an honest dollar." Why does not some one propose that plan? Because no one would dare to increase by law the number of dollars which the debtor must pay, and yet by some it is called wise statesmanship to do indirectly and in the dark what no man has the temerity to propose directly and openly.

WHAT DOES A GOLD STANDARD MEAN?

We have been called cranks and lunatics and idots because we have warned our fellow-men against the inevitable and intolerable consequences which would follow the adoption of a gold standard by all the world. But who, I ask, can be silent in the presence of such impending calamities? The United States, England, France, and Germany own to-day about $2,600,000,000 of the world's supply of gold coin, or about five-sevenths of the total amount, and yet these four nations contain but a small fraction of the inhabitants of the globe. What will be the exchangeable value of a gold dollar when India's people, outnumbering alone the inhabitants of the four great nations named, reach out after their share of gold coin? What will be the final price of gold when all the nations of the Occident and Orient join in the scramble?

A distinguished advocate of the gold standard said recently, in substance: "Wheat has now reached a point where the English can afford to buy it, and gold will soon return to relieve our financial embarrassment." How delighted the farmer will be when he realizes what an opportunity he has to save his country! A nation in distress; banks failing; mines closed; laborers unemployed; enterprise at a standstill, and behold, the farmer, bowed with unceasing, even if unremunerative, toil, steps forth to save his country—by selling his wheat below the cost of production! And I am afraid he will even now be censured for allowing the panic to go as far as it has before reducing his prices.

It seems cruel that upon the growers of wheat and cotton, our staple exports, should be placed the burden of supplying us, at whatever cost, with the necessary gold, and yet the financier quoted has suggested the only means, except the issue of bonds, by which our stock of gold can be replenished. If it is difficult now to secure gold, what will be the condition when the demand is increased by its adoption as the world's only primary money? We would simply put gold upon an auction block, with every nation as a bidder, and each ounce of the standard metal would be knocked down to the one offering the most of all other kinds of property. Every disturbance of finance in one country would communicate itself to every other, and in the misery which would follow it would be of little consolation to know that others were suffering as much as, or more than, we.

THE SUFFERING CONTINUOUS.

I have only spoken of the immediate effects of the substitution of gold as the world's only money of ultimate redemption. The worst remains to be told. If, as in the resumption of specie payments in 1879, we could look forward to a time when the contraction would cease, the debtor might become a tenant upon his former estate and the home owner assume the role of the homeless with the sweet assurance that his children or his children's children might live to enjoy the blessings of a "stable currency." But, sir, the hapless and hopeless producer of wealth goes forth into a night illuminated by no star; he embarks upon a sea whose further shore no mariner may find; he travels in a desert where the ever-retreating mirage makes his disappointment a thousand-fold more keen. Let the world once commit its fortunes to the use of gold alone and it must depend upon the annual increase of that metal to keep pace with the need for money.

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The Director of the Mint gives about $130,000,000 as the world's production last year. Something like one-third is produced in connection with silver, and must be lost if silver mining is rendered unproductive. It is estimated that nearly two-thirds of the annual product is used in the arts, and the amount so used is increasing. Where, then, is the supply to meet the increasing demands of an increasing population? Is there some new California or some undiscovered Australia yet to be explored?

Is it not probable that the supply available for coinage will diminish rather than increase? Jacobs, in his work on the Precious Metals, has calculated the appreciation of the monetary unit. He has shown that the almost imperceptible increase of 2 per cent. per year will amount to a total appreciation of 500 per cent. in a century. Or, to illustrate, that cotton at 10 cents to-day and wheat at 60 cents would mean cotton at 2 cents and wheat at 12 cents in one hundred years. A national, State or municipal debt renewed from time to time would, at the end of that period, be six times as great as when contracted, although several times the amount would have been paid in interest.

When one realizes the full significance of a constantly appreciating standard he can easily agree with Alison that the Dark Ages resulted from a failure of the money supply. How can anyone view with unconcern the attempt to turn back the tide of civilization by the complete debasement of one-half of the world's money! When I point to the distress which, not suddenly, but gradually is entering the habitations of our people; when I refer you to the census as conclusive evidence of the unequal distribution of wealth and of increasing tenancy among our people, of whom, in our cities, less than one-fourth now own their homes; when I suggest the possibility of this condition continuing until, passed from a land of independent owners, we become a nation of landlords and tenants, you must tremble for civil liberty itself.

FREE GOVERNMENT IN DANGER.

Free government cannot long survive when the thousands enjoy the wealth of the country and the millions share its poverty in common. Even now you hear among the rich an occasionally expressed contempt for popular government, and among the poor a protest against legislation which makes them "toil that others may reap." I appeal to you to restore justice and bring back prosperity while yet a peaceable solution can be secured. We mourn the lot of unhappy Ireland, whose alien owners drain it of its home-created wealth; but we may reach a condition, if present tendencies continue, when her position at this time will be an object of envy, and some poet may write of our cities as Goldsmith did of the "Deserted Village:"

> While scourged by famine from a smiling land,
> The mournful peasant leads his humble band,
> And, while he sinks without one hand to save,
> The country blooms—a garden and a grave.

But, lest I may be accused of reasonless complaining, let me call unimpeachable witnesses who will testify to the truth of my premises and to the correctness of my conclusions.

UNIMPEACHABLE WITNESSES.

Jevons says:

> If all nations of the globe were suddenly and simultaneously to demonetize silver and require gold money a revolution in the value of gold would be inevitable.

Giffin, who is probably the most fanatical adherent of the gold standard, says, in his book entitled The Case Against Bimetallism:

> The primary offender in the matter, perhaps, was Germany, which made a mistake, as I believe, in substituting gold for silver as the standard money of the country. * * * To some extent also Italy has been an offender in this matter, the resumption of specie payments in that country on a gold basis being entirely a work of superfluity; the resumption on a silver basis would have been preferable. * * * No doubt the pressure on gold would have been more severe than it has been if the United States had not passed the Bland coinage law.

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The gentleman from Maryland [Mr. RAYNER] said in the opening speech of this debate:

In my opinion there is not a sufficient amount of gold in existence to supply the demands of commerce and the necessities of the world's circulation.

Mr. Balfour, member of Parliament, in a speech recently made, said:

Let Germany, India, and the United States try a gold currency and a tremor seizes every one of our commercial magnates. They look forward, in the immediate future, to catastrophe, and feel that the ultimate result may be a slow appreciation of the standard of value, which is perhaps the most deadening and benumbing influence that can touch the enterprise of a nation.

Mr. Goschen, delegate from Great Britain, said at the International Monetary Conference in 1878:

If, however, other States were to carry on a propaganda in favor of a gold standard and the demonetization of silver, the Indian government would be obliged to reconsider its position and might be forced by events to take measures similar to those taken elsewhere. In that case the scramble to get rid of silver might provoke one of the gravest crises ever undergone by commerce. One or two States might demonetize silver without serious results, but if all demonetize there would be no buyers, and silver would fall in alarming proportions. * * * If all States should resolve on the adoption of a gold standard, the question arose, would there be sufficient gold for the purpose without a tremendous crisis? There would be a fear on the one hand of a depreciation of silver, and one on the other of a rise in the value of gold, and a corresponding fall in the prices of all commodities.

Italy, Russia, and Austria, whenever they resume specie payments, would require metal, and if all other States went in the direction of a gold standard, these countries too would be forced to take gold. Resumption on their part would be facilitated by the maintenance of silver as a part of the legal tender of the world. The American proposal for a universal double standard seemed impossible of realization, a veritable Utopia; but the theory of a universal gold standard was Utopian, and indeed involved a false Utopia. It was better for the world at large that the two metals should continue in circulation than that one should be universally substituted for the other.

AMERICAN AUTHORITY.

Thus does an eminent English monometallist denounce the idea of a universal gold standard and foretell its consequences. But we are not dependent for authority upon foreign advocates of a single standard. Read the words of him who for many years was the guiding genius of the Republican party, Hon. James G. Blaine, and say whether he was a lunatic because he described in emphatic words the dangers attendant upon universal monometallism. He said upon the floor of the House, February 7, 1878:

On the much vexed and long mooted question as to a bimetallic or monometallic standard, my own views are sufficiently indicated in the remarks I have made. I believe the struggle now going on in this country and in other countries for a single gold standard would, if successful, produce widespread disaster in and throughout the commercial world.

The destruction of silver as money and establishing gold as the sole unit of value must have a ruinous effect on all forms of property except those investments which yield a fixed return in money. These would be enormously enhanced in value, and would gain a disproportionate and unfair advantage over every other species of property. If, as the most reliable statistics affirm, there are nearly $7,000,000,000 of coin or bullion in the world, not very unequally divided between gold and silver, it is impossible to strike silver out of existence as money without results which will prove distressing to millions and utterly disastrous to tens of thousands.

Again, he said:

I believe gold and silver coin to be the money of the Constitution; indeed, the money of the American people, anterior to the Constitution which the great organic law recognized as quite independent of its own existence. No power was conferred on Congress to declare either metal should not be money. Congress has, therefore, in my judgment, no power to demonetize silver any more than to demonetize gold.

Senator SHERMAN said in 1869:

The contraction of the currency is a far more distressing operation than Senators suppose. Our own and other nations have gone through that operation before. It is not possible to take that voyage without the sorest distress. To every person except a capitalist out of debt, or a salaried officer or annuitant, it is a period of loss, danger, lassitude of trade, fall of wages, suspension of enterprise, bankruptcy, and disaster. It means ruin of all dealers whose debts are twice their business capital, though one-third less than their actual property. It means the fall of all agricultural production without any great reduction of taxes. What prudent man would dare to build a house, a railroad, a factory, or a barn with this certain fact before him?

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Let me quote from an apostle of the Democratic faith, whose distinguished services in behalf of his party and his country have won for him the esteem of all. Mr. Carlisle, then a member of the House of Representatives, said, February 21, 1878:

I know that the world's stock of precious metals is none too large, and I see no reason to apprehend that it will ever be so. Mankind will be fortunate indeed if the annual production of gold and silver coin shall keep pace with the annual increae of population, and industry. According to my views of the subject the conspiracy which seems to have been formed here and in Europe to destroy by legislation and otherwise from three-sevenths to one-half the metallic money of the world is the most gigantic crime of this or any other age. The consummation of such a scheme would ultimately entail more misery upon the human race than all the wars, pestilences, and famines than ever occurred in the history of the world.

The absolute and instantaneous destruction of half the entire movable property of the world, including houses, ships, railroads, and other appliances for carrying on commerce, while it would be felt more sensibly at the moment, would not produce anything like the prolonged distress and disorganization of society that must inevitably result from the permanent annihilation of one-half the metallic money of the world.

The junior Senator from Texas [Mr. Mills] never did the party greater service than when, on the 3d of February, 1886, on this floor he denounced, in language the force and earnestness of which can not be surpassed, the attempted crime against silver. Let his words be an inspiration now:

But in all the wild, reckless, and remorseless brutalities that have marked the footprints of resistless power there is some extenuating circumstance that mitigates the severity of the punishment due the crime. Some have been the product of the fierce passions of war, some have come from the antipathy that separates alien races, some from the superstitions of opposing religions.

But the crime that is now sought to be perpetrated on more than fifty millions of people comes neither from the camp of a conqueror, the hand of a foreigner, nor the altar of an idolator. But it comes from those in whose veins runs the blood of the common ancestry, who were born under the same skies, speak the same language, reared in the same institutions, and nurtured in the principles of the same religious faith. It comes from the cold, phlegmatic, marble heart of avarice—avarice that seeks to paralyze labor, increase the burden of debt, and fill the land with destitution and suffering to gratify the lust for gold—avarice surrounded by every comfort that wealth can command, and rich enough to satisfy every want save that which refuses to be satisfied without the suffocation and strangulation of all the labor of the land. With a forehead that refuses to be ashamed it demands of Congress an act that will paralyze all the forces of production, shut out labor from all employment, increase the burden of debts and taxation, and send desolation and suffering to all the homes of the poor.

LANGUAGE COULD NOT BE STRONGER.

Can language be stronger or conclusion more conclusive? What expression can be more forcible than the "most gigantic crime of this or any other age?" What picture more vivid than that painted in the words, "The consummation of such a scheme would ultimately entail more misery upon the human race than all the wars, pestilences, and famines that ever occurred in the history of the world?" What more scathing rebuke could be administered to avarice than that contained in the words of Mr. Mills?

It is from the awful horrors described by these distinguished men, differing in politics, but united in sentiment, that I beg you, sirs, to save your fellow-men.

On the base of the monument erected by a grateful people to the memory of the late Senator Hill, of Georgia, are inscribed these words:

Who saves his country saves himself, and all things saved do bless him. Who lets his country die lets all things die, dies himself ignobly, and all things dying, curse him.

If, sirs, in saving your country you save yourselves and earn the benedictions of all things saved, how much greater will be your reward if your efforts save not your country only but all mankind! If he who lets his country die, brings upon himself the curses of all things dying; in what language will an indignant people express their execration, if your action lead to the enslavement of the great majority of the people by the universal adoption of an appreciating standard?

BIMETALLISM.

Let me call your attention briefly to the advantages of bimetallism. It is not claimed that by the use of two metals at a fixed ratio absolute stability can be secured. We only contend that thus the monetary unit will become more stable

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in relation to other property than under a single standard. If a single standard were really more desirable than a double standard, we are not free to choose gold, and would be compelled to select silver. Gold and silver must remain component parts of the metallic money of the World—that must be accepted as an indisputable fact. Our abandonment of silver would in all probability drive it out of use as primary money; and silver as a promise to pay gold is little, if any, better than a paper promise to pay. If bimetallism is impossible, then we must make up our minds to a silver standard or to the abandonment of both gold and silver. [Applause.]

Let us suppose the worst that has been prophesied by our opponents, namely, that we would be upon a silver standard if we attempted the free coinage of both gold and silver at any ratio. Let us suppose that all our gold goes to Europe and we have only silver. Silver would not be inconvenient to use, because a silver certificate is just as convenient to handle as a gold certificate, and the silver itself need not be handled except where it is necessary for change. Gold is not handled among the people. No one desires to accept any large amount in gold. The fact that the Treasury has always on hand a large amount of gold coin deposited in exchange for gold certificates shows that the paper representative is more desirable than the metal itself. If, following out the supposition, our gold goes abroad, Europe will have more money with which to buy our exports—cotton and wheat, cattle and hogs.

If, on the other hand, we adopt gold, we must draw it from Europe, and thus lessen their money and reduce the price of our exports in foreign markets. This, too, would decrease the total value of our exports and increase the amount of products which it would be necessary to send abroad to pay the principal and interest which we owe to bondholders and stockholders residing in Europe. Some have suggested the advisability of issuing gold bonds in order to maintain a gold standard. Let them remember that those bonds sold in this country will draw money from circulation and increase the stringency, and sold abroad will affect injuriously the price of our products abroad, thus making a double tax upon the toilers of the United States, who must ultimately pay them.

Let them remember, too, that gold bonds held abroad must sometime be paid in gold, and the exportation of that gold would probably raise a clamor for an extension of time in order to save this country from another stringency. A silver standard, too, would make us the trading centre of all the silver-using countries of the world, and these countries contain far more than one-half of the world's population. What an impetus would be given to our Western and Southern seaports, such as San Francisco, Galveston, New Orleans, Mobile, Savannah, and Charleston. Then, again, we produce our silver, and produce it in quantities which would to some extent satisfy our monetary needs.

[Here the hammer fell.]

On motion of Mr. HUNTER the time of Mr. BRYAN was extended indefinitely.

Mr. BRYAN. I thank the gentleman from Illinois and the House.

Our annual product of gold is less than 50 cents per capita. Deduct from this sum the loss which would be occasioned to the gold supply by the closing of our silver mines, which produce gold in conjunction with silver; deduct, also, the amount consumed in the arts, and the amount left for coinage is really inconsiderable. Thus, with a gold standard, we would be left dependent upon foreign powers for our annual money supply. They say we must adopt a gold standard in order to trade with Europe. Why not reverse the proposition and say that Europe must resume the use of silver in order to trade with us? But why adopt either gold or silver alone? Why not adopt both and trade with both gold-using and silver-using countries? The principle of bimetallism is established upon a scientific basis.

The Government does not try to fix the purchasing power of the dollar, either gold or silver. It simply says, in the language of Thomas Jefferson, "The money unit shall stand upon the two metals," and then allows the exchangeable value of that unit to rise or fall according as the total product of both metals decreases or increases in proportion to the demand for money. In attempting to maintain the parity between the two metals at a fixed ratio, the Government does not undertake the

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impossible. France for several years did maintain the parity approximately at $15\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 by offering unlimited coinage to both metals at that ratio. It is very common for some people to urge, "You cannot put value into anything by law," and I am sorry to see some proclaim this who know by rich experience how easy it is for the Government to legislate prices up or down.

VALUE CREATED BY LAW.

We were called together to relieve financial distress by legislation. Some propose to relieve the present stringency in the money market by removing the tax on national bank circulation and allowing banks to issue 100 per cent. on their bonds instead of 90 per cent. This legislation would put value into bank stocks by law, because it would add to the profits of the bank, and such a law would probably raise the market price of bonds by increasing the demand for them. I will not discuss the merits of this proposition now. Let those who favor it prepare to justify themselves before their constituents. The New York World of August 3 contained an article encouraging the banks to issue more money under the present law. It showed the profits as follows:

These bonds are selling now at 109 to 110. At this latter period a $100,000 bond transaction would stand as follows:

$100,000 U. S. 4's at 110, less $\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. accrued interest, $109,666 net, would cost		$109,666
Less circulation issued on this amount		90,000
Making the actual cash investment only		19,666
On which the bank would receive an income of over $12\frac{7}{8}$ per cent., as follows:		
Interest on $100,000 4's per annum		$4,000
Less tax 1 per cent. on circulation	$900	
Less sinking fund to retire premium to be improved at 6 per cent	464	
Less expenses	100	
		1,464
Net income		2,586

Already a good portion of these bonds held in reserve are coming into the market and soon find their way into the hands of national banks.

If the proposed law is adopted $900 will be taken from the expense column by the repeal of the tax on circulation and $10,000 will be taken from the cost of investment, so that the profits would amount to $3,436 on an investment of $9,666, or more than 33 per cent. If, however, the increased demand for bonds raised the premium to 15 per cent., we could only calculate a little less than $3,436 on an investment of $14,666, or nearly 25 per cent. This they would probably call a fair divide. The bondholder would receive an advantage in the increased premium of, say, $25,000,000, and the national bank would be able to make about double on its investment what it does now. If the premium should increase more than 5 per cent. the bondholder would make more and the bank less. If the premium should not increase that much the bondholder would make less and the bank more.

Let those, I repeat, who favor this plan, be prepared to defend it before a constituency composed of people who are not making 5 per cent. on an average on the money invested in farms or enterprises, and let those who will profit by the law cease to deny the ability of Government to increase the price of property by law. One is almost moved to tears by the sight of New England manufacturers protesting with indignation against the wisdom or possibility of giving fictitious value to a product, when for the last thirty years they have drained the rest of the country and secured artificial prices by protective tariff laws. [Applause.] Some of our Eastern friends accuse the advocates of free coinage of favoring repudiation.

Repudiation has not been practiced much in recent years by the debtor, but in 1869 the Credit Strengthening Act enabled the bondholder to repudiate a contract made with the Government and to demand coin in payment of a bond for which he had given paper and which was payable in lawful money. That act increasing the market value of the bonds gave a profit to many who now join the beneficiaries of the act assuming the District debt in vociferous proclamation that "the Government can not create value." Does not the location of a public build-

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ing add to the value of adjacent real estate? Do not towns contest the location of a county seat because of the advantage it brings? Does not the use of gold and silver as money increase the value of each ounce of each metal?

PRECIOUS METALS LIMITED.

These are called precious metals because the production is limited and can not be increased indefinitely at will. If this Government or a number of governments can offer a market unlimited as compared with the supply, the bullion value of gold and silver can be maintained at the legal ratio. The moment one metal tends to cheapen, the use falls on it and increases its price, while the decreased demand for the dearer metal retards its rise and thus the bullion values are kept near to their legal ratio, so near that the variation can cause far less inconvenience and injustice than the variation in the exchangeable value of the unit would inflict under a single standard. The option is always given to the debtor in a double standard.

In fact, the system could not exist if the option remained with the creditor, for he would demand the dearer metal and thus increase any fluctuation in bullion values, while the option in the hands of the debtor reduces the fluctuation to the minimum. That the unit under a double standard is more stable in its relation to all other things is admitted by Jevons and proven by several illutrations. Mr. Giffen tries to avoid the force of the admission by saying that the difference in favor of the double standard is only in the proportion of 2 to 1, and therefore not sufficient to justify its adoption. It would seem that where stability is so important—and it never was so important as to-day, when so many long-time contracts are executed—even a slight difference in favor of the double standard ought to make it acceptable.

We established a bimetallic standard in 1792, but silver, being overvalued by our ratio of 15 to 1, stayed with us and gold went abroad, where mint ratios were more favorable.

THE DOLLAR OF OUR DADDIES.

I have here a silver coin [exhibiting it] which came from the mint in 1795. It has upon the edge these significant words: "Hundred Cents—One Dollar or Unit." It would seem, therefore, that the weight of the gold dollar was regulated by the silver dollar, and the gold pieces provided for made multiples of it. In 1834 and in 1837 the alloy was changed and the gold dollar reduced in size in order to correspond to the newly established ratio of 16 to 1. The amount of pure silver in the standard dollar has never been changed since its adoption in 1792.

The ratio of 16 to 1 overvalued gold and our silver went abroad. The silver dollar was worth about 3 cents more than the gold dollar, because it could be coined in France at the ratio of 15½ to 1. Thus during all the period prior to 1873 this country enjoyed bimetallism and, although at one time we used one metal and at another time another, no statesman arose to demand a single standard. We now have three kinds of bimetallists—those who favor a double standard only by international agreement, those who favor independent action at a changed ratio, and those who favor independent action at the present ratio. Those favoring an international agreement might be again divided into those who favor an agreement by a few nations, those who favor an agreement by many nations, and those who favor it only on condition that all nations would join.

INTERNATIONAL BIMETALLISM.

I suppose it would hardly be proper to further divide them into those who really desire an international agreement and those who utilize the possibility of an international agreement to prevent independent action. I am afraid the agreement will not be brought about by those who, like the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HARTER], are willing to try it, but have no faith in its permanency; nor will it receive much aid, I fear, from the gentleman from New York [Mr. HENDRIX], who said on last Saturday:

> I predict to you that inside of three months—before this Congress meets again—if you repeal this Sherman law and adjourn, England will make proposals to this country to come into a monetary conference and see what can be done for the sake of her ward, India.

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Less than five minutes before he had pierced the veil of the future with prophetic ken and declared:

> The moving finger of Time, down from the days when gold started in the race for first place to this moment, has pointed to a single unit of value. It is our destiny. It will triumph in this Hall—perhaps not in this Congress nor in your day; but it is going to become the financial policy of this country just as sure as to-morrow morning's sun will rise.

Any hope of bimetallism there?

What is the prospect for the establishment of international bimetallism? I would be glad to see the unlimited coinage of gold and silver at a fixed ratio among the nations, but how is such an agreement to be secured? The gentleman from Maryland [Mr. RAYNER] says the unconditional repeal of the Sherman law will bring England to terms. Is it impossible to extract a lion's teeth without putting your head in his month? Is it not a dangerous experiment to join England in a single standard in order to induce her to join us in a double standard? International agreement is an old delusion and has done important duty on many previous occasions.

WE ARE STILL WAITING.

The opponents of the Bland law in 1878 were waiting for international bimetallism. Mr. Cleveland mentioned the prospect of it in his message in 1885, and again this year. It was a valuable weapon in 1890, when the Sherman bill was passed and the Brussels conference was called in time to carry us over the last Presidential election. We are still waiting, and those are waiting most patiently who favor a gold standard. [Laughter and applause.] Are we any nearer to an international agreement than we were fifteen years ago? The European nations wait on England, and she refused within a year to even consider the adoption of the double standard. Can we conquer her by waiting? We have tried the Fabian policy.

BOND OR FREE.

Suppose we try bringing her to terms by action. Let me appeal to your patriotism. Shall we make our laws dependent upon England's action and thus allow her to legislate for us upon the most important of all questions? Shall we confess our inability to enact monetary laws? Are we an English colony or an independent people? If the use of gold alone is to make us slaves, let us use both metals and be free. If there be some living along the eastern coast—better acquainted with the beauties of the Alps than with the grandeur of the Rockies, more accustomed to the sunny skies of Italy than to the invigorating breezes of the Mississippi Valley—who are not willing to trust their fortunes and their destinies to American citizens, let them learn that the people living between the Alleghanies to the Golden Gate are not afraid to cast their all upon the Republic and rise or fall with it. [Loud Applase.]

One hundred and seventeen years ago the liberty bell gave notice to a waiting and expectant people that independence had been declared. There may be doubting, trembling ones among us now, but, sirs, I do not overestimate it when I say that out of twelve millions of voters, more than ten millions are waiting, anxiously waiting, for the signal which shall announce the financial independence of the United States. [Applause.] This Congress cannot more surely win the approval of a grateful people than by declaring that this nation, the grandest which the world has ever seen, has the right and the ability to legislate for its own people on every subject, regardless of the wishes, the intreaties, or the threats of foreign powers. [Applause.]

WHAT SHALL THE RATIO BE?

Perhaps the most important question for us to consider is the question of ratio. Comparatively few people in this country are in favor of a gold standard, and no national party has ever advocated it. Comparatively few, also, will be deceived by the promise of international bimetallism annually held out to us. Among those

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in favor of bimetallism, and in favor of independent action on the part of the United States, there is, however, an honest difference of opinion as to the particular ratio at which the unlimited coinage of gold and silver should be undertaken. The principle of bimetallism does not stand upon any certain ratio, and may exist at 1 to 30 as well as at 1 to 16.

In fixing the ratio we should select that one which will secure the greatest advantage to the public and cause the least injustice. The present ratio, in my judgment, should be adopted. A change in the ratio could be made (as in 1834) by reducing the size of the gold dollar or by increasing the size of the silver dollar, or by making a change in the weight of both dollars. A larger silver dollar would help the creditor. A smaller gold dollar would help the debtor. It is not just to do either, but if a change must be made the benefit should be given to the debtor rather than to the creditor.

Let no one accuse me of defending the justness of any change; but I repeat it, if we are given a choice between a change which will aid the debtor by reducing the size of his debt and a change which will aid the creditor by increasing the amount which he is to receive, either by increasing the number of his dollars or their size, the advantage must be given to the debtor, and no man during this debate, whatever may be his private wish or interest, will advocate the giving of the advantage to the creditor

A CHANGE OF RATIO UNFORTUNATE.

To illustrate the effect of changing the ratio let us take, for convenience, the ratio of 24 to 1, as advocated by some. We could make this change by reducing the weight of the gold dollar one-third. This would give to the holders of gold an advantage of some $200,000,000, but the creditors would lose several billions of dollars in the actual value of their debts. A debt contracted before 1873 would not be scaled, because the new gold dollar would purchase as much as the old gold dollar would in 1873. Creditors, however, whose loans have been made since that time would suffer, and the most recent loans would show the greatest loss. The value of silver bullion has only fallen in relation to gold. But the purchasing power of one ounce of silver has varied less since 1873 than has the purchasing power of one ounce of gold, which would indicate that gold had risen.

If, on the other hand, the ratio is changed by increasing the size of the silver dollar, it would be necessary to recoin our silver dollars into dollars a half larger, or we would have in circulation two legal tender silver dollars of different sizes. Of the two plans it would be better, in my judgment, to keep both dollars in circulation together, though unequal in weight, rather than to recoin the lighter dollars. The recoinage of more than 500,000,000 of silver dollars, or the bullion representing them, would cause a shrinkage of about $170,000,000, or one-third of our silver money; it would cause a shrinkage of nearly one-sixth of our metallic money and of more than one-tenth of our total circulation. This contraction would increase our debts more than a billion dollars and decrease the nominal value of our property more than five billions.

A change in the ratio made by increasing the size of the silver dollar as above suggested would also decrease by one-third the number of dollars which could be coined from the annual product of silver. If, as Mr. Carlisle has said, the supply of metal, both gold and silver, is none too large to keep pace with population, the increase in the weight of each dollor would make the supply to that extent deficient. A change in ratio, whether secured by decreasing the gold dollar or by increasing the silver dollar, would probably make an international agreement more difficult, because nearly all of the silver coin now in existence circulates at a ratio less than ours.

If the change should be made in this country by increasing the size of the silver dollar and an international agreement secured upon the new ratio, to be effected by other nations in the same way, the amount of money in the world, that is metallic money, would suffer a contraction of more than $1,000,000,000, to the enormous injury of the debtor class and to the enormous advantage of the creditor class. If we believe that the value of gold has risen because its supply has not

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increased as fast as the demand caused by favorable legislation, then it would be unfair to continue this appreciation by other legislation favorable to gold. It would be a special injustice to the mine owner and to the farmer, whose products have fallen with silver, to make perpetual the injunction against their prosperity.

WHO IS UNSELFISH?

We often hear our opponents complain of the "cupidity of the mine owner." Let us admit that the mine owner is selfish, and that he will profit by the increased price of silver bullion. Let us, for the sake of argument, go further, and accuse him of favoring the free coinage of silver solely for the purpose of increasing the price of his product. Does that make him worse than other men? Is not the farmer selfish enough to desire a higher price for wheat? Is not the cotton-grower selfish enough to desire a higher price for his cotton? Is not the laboring man selfish enough to desire higher wages? And, if I may be pardoned for the boldness, are not bankers and business men selfish enough to ask for legislation at our hands which will give them prosperity? Was not this extraordinary session called in order to bring back prosperity to our business men?

Is it any more importantant that you should keep a mercantile house from failing than that you should keep a mine from suspending? Are those who desire free coinage of silver in order that the barren wastes should be made to "blossom like the rose" any worse than those who want the Sherman law repealed in order to borrow foreign gold and retire clearing house certificates? There is a class of people whose interest in financial legislation is too often overlooked. The money-loaner has just as much interest in the rise in the value of his product—money—as farmers and miners have in the increased price of their products.

The man who has $10,000 in money becomes worth $20,000 in reality when prices fall one-half. Shall we assume that the money-lenders of this and other countries ignore the advantage which an appreciated currency gives to them and desire it simply for the benefit of the poor man and the laborer? What refining influence is there in their business which purges away the dross of selfishness and makes pure and patriotic only their motives? [Laughter.] Has some new dispensation reversed the parable and left Lazarus in torment while Dives is borne aloft in Abraham's bosom? [Laughter.]

THE MINER'S JUST COMPLAINT.

But is the silver miner after all so selfish as to be worthy of censure? Does he ask for some new legislation or for some innovation inaugurated in his behalf? No. He pleads only for the restoration of the money of the fathers. He asks to have given back to him a right which he enjoyed from 1792 to 1873. During all those years he could deposit his silver bullion at the mints and receive full legal-tender coins at the rate of of $1.29 for each ounce of silver, and during a part of the time his product could be converted into money at even a higher price. Free coinage can only give back to him what demonetization took away. He does not ask for a silver dollar redeemable in a gold dollar, but for a silver dollar which redeems itself.

If the bullion value of silver has not been reduced by hostile legislation, the free coinage of silver at the present ratio can bring to the mine owner no benefit, except by enabling him to pay a debt already contracted with less ounces of silver. If the price of his product has been reduced by hostile legislation, is he asking any more than we would ask under the same circumstances in seeking to remove the oppressive hand of the law? Let me suggest, too, that those who favor an international agreement are estopped from objecting to the profits of the silver mine owner, because an international agreement could only be effected at some ratio near to ours, propably 15½ to 1, and this would just as surely inure to the benefit of the owner of silver as would free coinage established by the independent action of this country.

If our opponents were correct in asserting that the price of silver bullion could be maintained at 129 cents an ounce by international agreement, but not by our

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separate action, then international bimetallism would bring a larger profit to the mine owner than the free coinage of silver by this country could. Let the international bimetallist, then, find some better objection to free coinage than that based on the mine owner's profit.

THE PROFITS OF MINING.

But what is the mine owner's profit? Has anyone told you the average cost of mining an ounce of silver? You have heard of some particular mine where silver can be produced at a low cost, but no one has attempted to give you any reliable data as to the average cost of production. I had a letter from Mr. Leech when he was Director of the Mint, saying that the Government is in possession of no data in regard to the cost of gold production and none of any value in regard to silver. No calculation can be made as to the profits of mining which does not include money spent in prospecting and in mines which have ceased to pay, as well as those which are profitably worked.

When we see a wheel of fortune with twenty-four paddles, see those paddles sold for 10 cents apiece, and see the holder of the winning paddle draw $2, we do not conclude that money can be profitably invested in a wheel of fortune. We know that those who bought expended altogether $2.40 on the turn of the wheel, and that the man who won only received $2; but our opponents insist upon estimating the profits of silver mining by the cost of the winning paddle. It is safe to say that taking the gold and silver of the world—and it is more true of silver than of gold—every dollar's worth of metal has cost a dollar. It is strange that those who watch so carefully less the silver miner shall receive more for his product than the bare cost of production ignore the more fortunate gold miner.

Did you ever hear a monometalist complain because a man could produce 25.8 grains of gold, .9 fine, at any price whatever, and yet take it to our mint and have it stamped into a dollar with full legal tender qualities? I saw at the World's Fair a few days ago a nugget of gold, just as it was found, worth over $3,000. What an outrage that the finder should be allowed to convert that into money at such an enormous profit! And yet no advocate of honest money raises his hand to stop that crime.

VALUE NOT DEPENDENT ON COST.

The fact is that the price of gold and silver does not depend upon the cost of production, but upon the law of supply and demand. [Applause.] It is true that production will stop when either metal cannot be produced at a profit; but so long as the demand continues equal to the supply the value of an ounce of either metal may be far above the cost of production. With most kinds of property a rise in price will cause increased production; for instance, if the price of wheat rises faster than the price of other things, there will be a tendency to increased production until the price falls; but this tendency cannot be carried out in the case of the precious metals, because the metal must be found before it can be produced, and finding is uncertain.

Between 1800 and 1849 an ounce of gold or silver would exchange for more of other things than it would from 1849 to 1873, yet during the latter period the production of both gold and silver greatly increased. It will be said that the purchasing power of an ounce of metal fell because of the increased supply; but that fall did not check production, nor has the rise in the purchasing power of an ounce of gold since 1873 increased the production. The production of both gold and silver is controlled so largely by chance as to make some of the laws applicable to other property inapplicable to the precious metals. If the supply of gold decreases without any diminution of the demand the exchangeable value of each ounce of gold is bound to increase, although the cost of producing the gold may continue to fall.

Why do not the advocates of gold monometallism recognize and complain of the advantage given to gold by laws which increase the demand for it and, therefore, the value of each ounce? Instead of that they confine themselves to the denuncia-

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tion of the silver-mine owner. I have never advocated the use of either gold or silver as the means of giving employment to miners, nor has the defence of bimetallism been conducted by those interested in the production of silver. We favor the use of gold and silver as money because money is a necessity and because these metals, owing to special fitness, have been used from time immemorial. The entire annual supply of both metals, coined at the present ratio, does not afford too large a sum of money.

THE ANNUAL INCREASE OF SILVER.

If, as is estimated, two-thirds of the $130,000,000 of gold produced annually are consumed in the arts, only $46,000,000—or less than we need for this country alone—are left for coinage. If one-sixth of the $185,000,000 of silver produced annually is used in the arts, $155,000,000 are left for coinage. India has been in the habit of taking about one-third of that sum. Thus the total amount of gold and silver annually available for all the people of all the world is only about $200,000,000, or about four times what we need in this country to keep pace with increasing population. And as population increases the annual addition to the money must also increase.

The total sum of metallic money is a little less than $8,000,000,000, The $200,000,000 per annum is about two-and-a-half per cent. on the total volume of metallic money, taking no account of lost coins and shrinkage by abrasion. To quote again the language of Mr. Carlisle.

> Mankind will be fortunate indeed if the annual production of gold coin shall keep pace with the annual increase of population, commerce and industry.

An increase of the silver dollar one-third by an international agreement would reduce by 50,000,000 the number of dollars which could be coined from the annual product of silver, which would amount to a decrease of about one-fourth of the entire increase of metallic money, while the abandonment of silver entirely would destroy three-quarters of the annual increase in metallic money, or possibly all of it, if we take into consideration the reduction of the gold supply by the closing of gold-producing silver mines.

Thus it is almost certain that without silver the sum of metallic money would remain stationary, if not actually decrease, from year to year, while population increases and new enterprises demand, from time, to time a larger sum of currency. Thus it will be seen that the money question is broader than the interest of a few mine owners. It touches every man, woman, and child in all the world, and affects those in every condition of life and society.

INCIDENTAL BENEFITS.

The interest of the mine owner is incidental. He profits by the use of silver as money just as the gold miner profits by the use of gold as money; just as the newspaper profits by the law compelling the advertising of foreclosures; just as the seaport profits by the deepening of its harbor; just as the horse seller would profit by a war which required the purchase of a large number of horses for cavalry service, or just as the undertaker would profit by the decent burial of a pauper at public expense.

All of these receive an incidental benefit from public acts. Shall we complain if the use of gold and silver as money gives employment to men, builds up cities and fills our mountains with life and industry? Shall we oppress all debtors and derange all business agreements in order to prevent the producers of money metals from obtaining for them more than actual cost? We do not reason that way in other things; why suppress the reason in this matter because of cultivated prejudices against the white metal? But what interest has the farmer in this subject, you may ask. The same that every laboring man has in a currency sufficient to carry on the commerce and business of a country. The employer cannot give work to men unless he can carry on the business at a profit, and he is hampered and embarrassed by a currency which appreciates because of its insufficiency.

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THE FARMER'S INTEREST.

The farmer labors under a double disadvantage. He not only suffers as a producer from all those causes which reduce the price of property, but he is thrown into competition with the products of India. Without Indian competition his lot would be hard enough, for if he is a land owner he finds his capital decreasing with an appreciating standard, and if he owes on the land he finds his equity of redemption extinguished. The last census shows a real estate mortgage indebtedness in the five great agricultural States—Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska—of more than one billion of dollars. A rising standard means a great deal of distress to these mortgagors. But as I said, the producers of wheat and cotton have a special grievance, for the prices of those articles are governed largely by the prices in Liverpool, and as silver goes down our prices fall, while the rupee price remains the same. I quote from the agricultural report of 1890, page 8:

> The recent legislation looking to the restoration of the bimetallic standard of our currency, and the consequent enhancement of the value of silver, has unquestionably had much to do with the recent advance in the price of cereals. The same cause has advanced the price of wheat in Russia and India, and in the same degree reduced their power of competition. English gold was formerly exchanged for cheap silver and wheat purchased with the cheaper metal was sold in Great Britain for gold. Much of this advantage is lost by the appreciation of silver in those countries. It is reasonable, therefore, to expect much higher prices for wheat than have been received in recent years.

Mr. RUSK's reasoning is correct. Shall we by changing the ratio fix the price of wheat and cotton at the present low price? If it is possible to do so it is no more than fair that we restore silver to its former place, and thus give back to the farmer some of his lost prosperity. Can silver be maintained on a parity with gold at the present ratio? It has been shown that if we should fail and our effort should result in a single silver standard it would be better for us than the adoption of the gold standard—that is, that the worst that could come from the attempt would be far better than the best that our opponents could offer us.

PRESENT RATIO BEST.

It has been shown that dangers and disadvantages attend a change of ratio. It may now be added that no change in the ratio can be made with fairness or intelligence without first putting gold and silver upon a perfect equality in order to tell what the natural ratio is. If a new ratio is necessary, who can tell just what that ratio ought to be? Who knows to what extent the divergence between gold and silver is due to natural laws and to what extent it is due to artificial laws? We know that the mere act of India in suspending free coinage, although she continues to buy and coin on government account, reduced the price of silver more than 10 cents per ounce. Can anyone doubt that the restoration of free coinage in that country would increase the bullion price of silver? Who doubts that the free coinage of silver by the United States would increase its bullion price?

The only question is how much. Is it only a guess, for no one can state with mathematical precision what the rise would be. The full use of silver, too, would stop the increased demand for gold, and thus prevent any further rise in its price. It is because no one can speak with certainty that I insist that no change in the ratio can be intelligently made until both metals are offered equal privileges at the mint. When we have the free and unlimited coinage of gold and silver at the present ratio, then, and then only, can we tell whether any of the apparent fall in the bullion price of silver is due to circumstances over which we have no control, and if so, how much? If this experiment should demonstrate the necessity for a change of ratio it can be easily made, and should be made in such a way as to cause the least injury to society. But we can, in my judgment, maintain the parity at the present ratio. I state this without hesitation, notwithstanding the fact that our opponents do not disguise the contempt which they feel for one who can believe this possible. If the past teaches anything it teaches the possibility of this country maintaining the parity alone. The Royal Commission of England stated in its report that France did maintain the parity at 15½ to 1, although she

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has not half our population or enterprise. During the years when her mint laws controlled the price of gold and silver bullion the changes in the relative production of gold and silver were greater than they have been since. At one time before 1873 the value of the silver product was related to the value of the gold product as 3 to 1, while at another time the relation was reversed, and the production of gold to silver was as 3 to 1.

No such changes have occurred since; and the present value of the silver product is only 1½ to 1 of gold. Much of the prejudice against silver is due to the fact that it has been falling as compared to gold. Let it begin to rise and it will become more acceptable as a money metal. Goschen, at the Paris Conference, very aptly stated the condition when he said:

At present there is a vicious circle. States are afraid of employing silver on account of the depreciation, and the depreciation continues because States refuse to employ it.

Let that "vicious circle" be broken and silver will resume its rightful place. We believe, in other words, that the opening of our mints to the free and unlimited coinage of gold and silver at 16 to 1 would immediately result in restoring silver to the coinage value of $1.29 per ounce, not only here, but everywhere. That there could be no difference between the dollar coined and the same weight of silver uncoined, when one could be exchanged for the other, needs no argument.

We do not believe that the gold dollar would go to a premium, because it could not find a better coinage ratio elsewhere, and because it could be put to no purpose for which a silver dollar would not be as good. If our ratio were 1 to 14 our gold would, of course, be exchanged for silver; but with our ratio of 16 to 1 gold is worth more here than abroad, and foreign silver would not come here, because it is circulating at home at a better ratio than we offer.

NO DANGER FROM FOREIGN COIN.

We need not concern ourselves, therefore, about the coin silver. All that we have to take care of is the annual product from the mines, about 40 per cent. of which is produced in this country. Under the Sherman law we furnish a market for about one-third of the world's annual product. I believe about one-sixth is used in the arts, which would leave about one half for all the rest of the world. India has suspended free coinage temporarily, in anticipation of the repeal of the Sherman law. The Herschell report expressly states that the action was necessary, because no agreement with the United States could be secured. The language is as follows:

In a dispatch of the 31st of June, 1892, the government of India expressed the deliberate opinion that, if it became clear that the Brussels conference was unlikely to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion, and if a direct agreement between India and the United States were found to be unattainable, the government of India should at once close their mints to the free coinage of silver and make arrangements for the introduction of a gold standard.

There is no doubt of the restoration of free coinage in India if this Government takes the lead, and with India taking the usual amount, but one-sixth of the annual supply if left for the other silver-using countries. There can be no flood of silver, nor will prices rise to any considerable extent—except the price of silver itself and a few of the staple products of agriculture which have fallen with silver because of India's competition. General prices cannot rise unless the total number of dollars increases more rapidly than the need for dollars, which has been shown to be impossible. The danger is, that taking all the gold and all the silver, we will not have enough money, and that there will still be some appreciation in the standard of value.

To recapitulate, then, there is not enough of either metal to form the basis for the world's metallic money; both metals must therefore be used as full legal tender primary money. There is not enough of both metals to more than keep pace with the increased demand for money; silver cannot be retained in circulation as a part of the world's money if the United States abandons it. This nation must, therefore, either retain the present law or make some further provision for silver. The only rational plan is to use both gold and silver at some ratio with

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equal privileges at the Mint. No change in the ratio can be made intelligently until both metals are put on an equality at the present ratio. The present ratio should be adopted if the parity can be maintained; and, lastly, it can be.

THE SHERMAN LAW.

If these conclusions are correct what must be our action on the bill to unconditionally repeal the Sherman law? The Sherman law has a serious defect; it treats silver as a commodity rather than as a money, and thus discriminates between silver and gold. The Sherman law was passed in 1890 as a substitute for what was known as the Bland law. It will be remembered that the Bland law was forced upon the silver men as a compromise, and that the opponents of silver sought its repeal from the day it was passed. It will also be remembered that the Sherman law was in like manner forced upon the silver men as a compromise, and that the opponents of silver have sought its repeal ever since it became a law. The law provides for the compulsory purchase of 54,000,000 ounces of silver per year, and for the issue of Treasury notes thereon at the gold value of the bullion.

These notes are a legal tender and are redeemable in gold or silver at the option of the Government. There is also a clause in the law which states that it is the policy of this Government to maintain the parity between the metals. The Administration, it seems, has decided that the parity can only be maintained by violating a part of the law and giving the option to the holder instead of to the Government. Without discussing the administration of the law let us consider the charges made against it.

FALSE ALARM.

The main objection which we heard last spring was that the Treasury notes were used to draw gold out of the Treasury. If that objection were a material one the bill might easily be amended so as to make the Treasury notes hereafter issued redeemable only in silver, like the silver certificates issued under the Bland law. But the objection is scarcely important enough for consideration. While the Treasury notes have been used to draw out gold, they need not have been used for that purpose, for we have $346,000,000 worth of greenbacks with which gold can be drawn, so long as the Government gives the option to the holder. If all of the Treasury notes were destroyed the greenbacks are sufficient to draw out the $100,000,000 reserve three times over, and then they can be reissued and used again. To complain of the Treasury notes while the greenbacks remain is like finding fault because the gate is open when the whole fence is down, and reminds me of the man who made a box for his feline family, and cut a big whole for the cat to go in at and a little hole for the kittens to go in at, forgetting that the large hole would do for cats of all sizes.

Just at this time the law is being made the scapegoat upon which all our financial ills are loaded, and its immediate and unconditional repeal is demanded as the sole means by which prosperity can be restored to a troubled people.

The main accusation against it now is that it destroys confidence, and that foreign money will not come here, because the holder is afraid that we will go to a silver standard. The exportation of gold has been pointed to as conclusive evidence that frightened English bondholders were throwing American securities upon the market and selling them to our people in exchange for gold. But now gold is coming back faster than it went away, and still we have the Sherman law unrepealed. Since that theory will not explain both the export and import of gold, let us accept a theory which will. The balance of trade has been largely against us during the last year, and gold went abroad to pay it, but now our exportation of breadstuffs has increased and the gold is returning. Its going was aggravated by the fact that Austria-Hungary was gathering in gold for resumption and was compelled to take a part from us. Instead of using that export of gold as a reason for going to a gold basis, it ought to make us realize the danger of depending solely upon a metal which some other nation may deprive us of at a critical moment.

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Mr. CANNON of Illinois. Will the gentleman permit me to interrupt him?

Mr. BRYAN. Certainly.

Mr. CANNON of Illinois. I am in complete harmony with what my friend is saying now. I ask him if he will allow me to request him not to omit to state that in the twelve months ending June 30 last this same balance of trade that was against us not only took the gold of the United States, but nearly $17,000,000 of silver as well.

Mr. BRYAN. I think the statement made by the gentleman is correct.

The Sherman law fails utterly to account for present stringency. Let me suggest a more reasonable cause for the trouble. Last spring an attempt was made to secure the unconditional repeal of the Sherman law. We had no panic then, but the same forces which have always opposed any legislation favorable to silver demanded that the purchase of bullion should stop. Some who believe that 15 per cent. reserve makes a bank safe became frightened lest a 25 or 30 per cent. reserve might not be sufficient to make the Government safe, and wanted an issue of gold bonds. The great argument used in favor of both these propositions was that money was being drawn from the Treasury and sent to Europe; that confidence was being destroyed and that a panic would follow. They emphasized and magnified the evils which would follow the departure of gold; they worked themselves and their associates into a condition of fright which did cause financial stringency. Like the man who innocently gives the alarm of fire in a crowded hall, they excited a panic which soon got beyond control.

THE REAL TROUBLE.

The trouble now is that depositors have withdrawn their deposits from the banks for fear of loss, and the banks are compelled to draw in their loans to protect their reserves, and thus men who do business upon borrowed capital are crippled. The people have not lost faith in the Government or in the Government's money. They do not refuse silver or silver certificates. They are glad enough to get any kind of money. We were told last spring that gold was going to a premium, but recently in New York City men found a profitable business in the selling of silver certificates of small denominations at 2 per cent. premium, and on the 5th of this month there appeared in the New York Herald and the New York Times this advertisement:

> WANTED—SILVER DOLLARS.—We desire to purchase at a premium of ¾ per cent. or $7.50 per thousand, standard silver dollars, in sums of $1,000 or more, in return for our certified checks payable through the clearing-house.
>
> ZIMMERMAN & FORSHAY, *Bankers*, 11 *Wall Street.*

About the same time the New York police force was paid in $20 gold pieces because of the scarcity of other kinds of money. How many of the failing banks have obeyed the law in regard to reserve? How many have crippled themselves by loaning too much to their officers and directors? The situation can be stated in a few words: money cannot be secured to carry on business because the banks have no money to loan; banks have no money to loan because the depositors have withdrawn their money; depositors have withdrawn their money because they fear the solvency of the banks; enterprises are stagnant because money is not in circulation.

FAMINE WILL NOT CURE HUNGER.

Will a repeal of the Sherman law cure these evils? Can you cure hunger by a famine? I know that there are some who tell us that we have plenty of money. If I may be pardoned for a personal allusion, their attitude reminds me of a remark made by my father-in-law just after he intrusted his daughter to my care, "William," said he, laying his hand affectionately on my head, "while I have we shall not *both* want." Others say, "What is the use of having more money? We cannot get it unless we have something to sell." That is true; but the price of what we sell depends largely upon the amount of money in circulation. How can we pay our debts without selling something, and how can we sell anything

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unless there is money in circulation to buy with? We need money. The Sherman law supplies a certain amount. Will the stringency be relieved by suspending that issue? If the advocates of repeal would take for their battle cry, "Stop issuing money," instead of "Stop buying silver," would not their purpose be more plain? But they say the repeal of the law will encourage foreign capital to come here by giving assurance that it will be repaid on a gold basis. Can we afford to buy confidence at that price? Can we afford to abandon the constitutional right to pay in either gold or silver in order to borrow foreign gold with the certainty of having to pay it back in appreciated dollars? To my mind, Mr. Speaker, the remedy proposed seems not only dangerous and absurd, but entirely inadequate. Why try to borrow foreign capital in order to induce the people in this country to redeposit their savings in the banks?

A SUGGESTION.

Why do not these financiers apply the remedy to the diseased part? If the gentleman from New York [Mr. HENDRIX], to whom I listened with pleasure, and who said, "I have come into this Hall as a banker, I am here as the president of a national bank," desires to restore confidence, let him propose for the consideration of the members a bill to raise, by a small tax upon deposits, a sum sufficient to secure depositors against possible loss; or a bill to compel stockholders to put up security for their double liability; or to prevent stockholders or officers from wrecking a bank to carry on their private business; or to limit the liabilities which a bank can assume upon a given amount of capital, so that there will be more margin to protect its creditors; or a bill to make more severe the punishment for embezzlement, so that a man can not rob a bank of a half million and escape with five years, and can not be boarded at a hotel by a marshal, while the small thief suffers in a dungeon. [Applause.] Let him propose some real relief and this House will be glad to coöperate with him.

Or, if there is immediate relief necessary in the increased issue of paper money, let our financiers press the suggestion made by the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. JOHNSON], viz. that the holders of Government bonds be allowed to deposit them and draw the face in Treasury notes by remitting the interest and with the power of redeeming the bonds at any time. [Applause.] This will give immediate relief and will save the Government interest on the bonds while the money is out. But no, the only remedy proposed by these financiers at this time, when business is at a standstill and when men are suffering unemployed, is a remedy which will enable them to both control the currency and reap pecuniary profit through its issue.

MORE MONEY NEEDED.

One of the benefits of the Sherman law, so far as the currency is concerned, is that it compels the issue of a large amount of money annually, and but for this issue the present financial panic would, in my judgment, be far more severe than it is. That we need an annual increase in the currency is urged by Mr. SHERMAN himself in a speech advocating the passage of the Sherman law. On the 5th day of June, 1890, he said in the Senate:

> Under the law of February, 1878, the purchase of $2,000,000 worth of silver bullion a month has by coinage produced annually an average of nearly $3,000,000 per month for a period of twelve years, but this amount, in view of the retirement of the bank notes, will not increase our currency in proportion to our increasing population. If our present currency is estimated at $1,400,000,000, and our population is increasing at the ratio of 3 per cent. per annum, it would require $42,000,000 increased circulation each year to keep pace with the increase of population; but as the increase of population is accompanied by a still greater ratio of increase of wealth and business, it was thought that an immediate increase of circulation might be obtained by larger purchases of silver bullion to an amount sufficient to make good the requirement of bank notes and keep pace with the growth of population. Assuming that $54,000,000 a year of additional currency is needed upon this basis, that amount is provided for in this bill by the issue of Treasury notes in exchange for bullion at the market price.

This amount, by the fall in the price of bullion silver, has been largely reduced. Shall we wipe it out entirely? He insisted that the Sherman law gave to the

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people more money than the Bland law, and upon that ground its passage was defended before the people. Could it have been passed had it given less than the Bland law? Who would have dared to defend it if it had provided for no money at all?

What provision shall be made for the future? Upon that question our opponents are silent. The bill which they have proposed leaves us with no increased currency provided for. Some of the advocates of a gold standard, in the defense of their theory, find it necessary to dispute every well-established principle of finance.

We are told that as civilization increases credit takes the place of money and that the volume of real money can be diminished without danger. That recalls the experience of the man who conceived the idea that a fish could be made to live without water. As the story goes, he put a herring, fresh from the sea, in a jar of salt water. By removing a little every morning and adding rainwater he gradually accustomed it to fresh water. Then by gradually removing the fresh water he accustomed it to air and finally kept it in a cage like a bird. One day, in his absence, his servant placed a cup of water in the cage in order that the fish might moisten its food; but alas! when the master came home he found that the fish had thoughtlessly put its head into the water and drowned!

From the arguments of some of our opponents we might be led to the conclusion that the time would come when money would not only be unnecessary but really dangerous.

REAL OR CREDIT MONEY?

The question, Mr. Speaker, is whether we shall increase our supply of primlary money, as we do when we increase our gold and silver, or whether we shal increase our promises to pay real money, as we do when we increase national bank notes.

Mr. BLAND. Will the gentleman permit a suggestion?

Mr. BRYAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. BLAND. The Treasury notes is ued under the law for the purchase of the silver bullion are legal tender for all debts, public and private, and not like bank notes, mere credit money.

Mr. BRYAN. I understand that. I say they are primary money; although if it were construed to mean that they were merely a promise to pay gold, then they would be simply credit money to that extent.

Mr. BLAND. The distinction I wish to draw is this. that those Treasury notes issued in purchase of silver bullion are legal tender while a bank note is not.

Mr. BRYAN. And the distinction is a very just one.

The larger the superstructure of credit, as related to the basis of metal, the more unsubstantial our system. If we present a bank note for payment we receive a greenback; if we present a greenback for payment, the treasurer has a right to pay in silver dollars, and now our opponents want it understood that a silver dollar is only a promise to pay a gold dollar. Is that sound money?

No, Mr. Speaker; if metallic money is sound money, then we who instist upon a base broad enought to support a currency redeemable in coin on demand, are the real friends of sound money, and those are "dangerous fiatists" who would make the metallic base so narrow as to compel the Government to abandon it for the preservation of its people. If all the currency is built upon the small basis of gold those who hold the gold will be the masters of the situation. [Applause.] We have a right to demand that the future financial policy shall be a part of the repealing act, so that we may choose between it and what we have and reject it if it is less favorable than the present law. And I may add in the language adopted by the bimetallic league a few days ago—

> The refusal of the opponents of bimetallism to propose any substitute for the present law, or to elaborate any plan for the future, indicates either an ignorance of our financial needs or an unwillingness to take the public into their confidence.

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THE GREAT OBJECTION.

But, sir, more serious than any other objection which can be made to the unconditional repeal of the Sherman law is the incontrovertible fact that a suspension of silver would tend to lower the price of silver bullion and thus make the restoration of bimetallism more difficult. That this will be the effect is proven not only by reason but by the utterances of Mr. Herschell's committee in discussing the finances of India. That report says:

In December last, a bill was introduced in the Senate to repeal the Sherman act, and another to suspend purchases under it. Whether any such measures will pass into law it is impossible to foretell, but it must be regarded as possible; and although, in the light of past experience, predictions on such a subject must be made with caution, it is certainly probable that the repeal of the Sherman act would be followed by a heavy fall in the price of silver.

The first question for us to decide then is, are we in favor of bimetallism or a universal gold standard? If we are in favor of bimetallism, the next question is will a fall in the bullion price of silver as measured by gold help or hinder bimetallism? We are told by those who want a gold standard that it will help bimetallism; but the query is, if it would, "why do they favor it?" It is sufficient to arouse suspicion when every advocate of gold monometallism favors unconditional repeal, and the more emphatic his advocacy of gold the more earnest his desire for repeal. Is any subsequent legislation in behalf of silver intended? If so, why not propose it now? What money loaner, loaning upon a mortgage, would be willing to let the money go upon a promise that the mortgage should be delivered next week? Or what business man would cancel an obligation to-day on the promise of having the money paid to-morrow? Shall we be more careless in protecting the sacred interests of our constituencies than a business man is in transacting his business?

What excuse can we give to our people for releasing what we have with the expectation of getting something in the future when the advocates of repeal boldly demand, upon this floor, the adoption of a universal gold standard, and predict that its coming is as certain as the rising of to-morrow's sun. Read the utterances of these leaders in the crusade against silver. Read the famous article of the distinguished gentleman from New York [Mr. COCKRAN]. Read the article in the Forum of last February, from the pen of Hon. George Fred Williams, who, in the last Congress, spoke for those demanding unconditional repeal:

In the efforts which have thus far been made towards a repeal, a single question has been repeated by the silver men so often as to give a plain indication to the situation. What, it is asked, do you propose to put in place of silver purchases? There never was a time more opportune to answer definitely this question with the single word, nothing.

Let me join issue upon this question, and say that the time will never come in this country when that word "nothing" will be accepted as a satisfactory answer.

GARBLING.

They tell us that our platform demands repeal, but does it demand repeal only? Shall we take away the "cowardly makeshift" before we restore the real thing for which that "temporary expedient" was substituted? As well denounce one kind of food because it lacks nourishment and then refuse all food to the patient. They shall not be permited to thus mutilate the platform. No such inexcusable attempt at garbling has been witnessed since the minister took from the sentence "Let him which is on the house-*top not come down* to take anything out of his house" the words "topnot come down," and inveighed against the feminine habit of wearing the hair in a knot on the top of the head. [Laughter.] They demand of us unconditional repeal. They demand that we give up all that we have in the way of silver legislation before we know what we are to receive. Shall we surrender on these terms?

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ARE WE CARTHAGENIANS?

Rollin tells us that the third Punic war was declared by the Romans and that a messenger was sent to Carthage to announce the declaration after the army had started on its way. The Carthagenians at once sent representatives to treat for peace. The Romans first demanded the delivery of three hundred hostages before they would enter into negotiations. When three hundred sons of the nobles had been given into their hands they demanded the surrender of all the arms and implements of war before announcing the terms of the treaty. The conditions were sorrowfully but promptly complied with, and the people who boasted of a Hannibal and a Hamilcar gave up to their ancient enemies every weapon of offense and defense. Then the Roman consul, rising up before the humiliated representatives of Carthage, said:

I cannot but commend you for the readiness with which you have obeyed every order. The decree of the Roman Senate is that Carthage shall be destroyed.

Sirs, what will be the answer of the people whom you represent, who are wedded to the "gold and silver coinage of the Constitution," if you vote for unconditional repeal and return to tell them that you were commended for the readiness with which you obeyed every order, but that Congress has decreed that one-half of the people's metallic money shall be destroyed? [Applause.]

They demand unconditional surrender, do they? Why, sirs, we are the ones to grant terms. Standing by the pledges of all the parties in this country, backed by the history of a hundred years, sustained by the most sacred interests of humanity itself, we demand an unconditional surrender of the principle of gold monometallism as the first condition of peace. [Applause.] You demand surrender! Ay, sirs, you may cry "Peace, peace," but there is no peace. Just so long as there are people here who would chain this country to a single gold standard, there is war—eternal war; and it might just as well be known now! [Loud applause on the Democratic side.] I have said that we stand by the pledges of all platforms. Let me quote them:

POPULISTS, 1892.

The Populist platform adopted by the national convention in 1892 contained these words:

We demand free and unlimited coinage of silver and gold at the present legal ratio of 16 to 1.

As the members of that party, both in the Senate and in the House, stand ready to carry out the pledge there made, no appeal to them is necessary.

THE REPUBLICAN POSITION.

1888.

The Republican national platform adopted in 1888 contains this plank:

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.

1892.

The same party in 1892 adopted a platform containing the following language:

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

The interests of the producers of the country, its farmers and its workingmen, demand that every dollar, paper or gold, issued by the Government, shall be as good as any other. We commend the wise and patriotic steps already taken by our Government to secure an international parity of value between gold and silver for use as money throughout the world.

Are the Republican members of this House ready to abandon the system which the American people favor "from tradition and interest?" Having won a Presidential election upon a platform which condemned "the policy of the Democratic

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administration in its efforts to demonetize silver," are they ready to join in that demonetization? Having advocated the Sherman law because it gave an increased use of silver, are they ready to repeal it and make no provisions for silver at all? Are they willing to go before the country confessing that they secured the present law by sharp practice, and only adopted it as an ingenious device for preventing free coinage, to be repealed as soon as the hour of danger was passed?

THE DEMOCRATIC POSITION.

1880.

The Democratic platform of 1880 contained these words;

Honest money, consisting of gold and silver, and paper convertible into coin on demand.

It would seem that at that time silver was honest money, although the bullion value was considerably below the coinage value.

1884.

In 1884 the Democratic platform contained this plank:

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

It would seem that at that time silver was considered honest money.

1888.

In 1888 the Democratic party did not express itself on the money question except by saying:

It renewed the pledge of its fidelity to Democratic faith, and reaffirms the platform adopted by its representatives in the convention of 1884.

Since the platform of 1884 commended silver as an honest money, we must assume that the reaffirming of that platform declared anew that silver was honest money as late as 1888, although at that time its bullion value had fallen still more.

1892.

The last utterance of a Democratic national convention upon this subject is contained in the platform adopted at Chicago in 1892. It is as follows:

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 discrimination 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 the payment of debts; 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.

Thus it will be seen that gold and silver have been indissolubly linked together in our platforms. Never in the history of the party has it taken a position in favor of a gold standard. On every vote taken in the House and Senate a majority of the party have been recorded not only in favor of bimetallism, but for the free and unlimited coinage of gold and silver at the ratio of 16 to 1.

SHALL WE REPUDIATE OUR PLEDGES?

The last platform pledges us to the use of both metals as standard money and to the free coinage of both metals at a fixed ratio. Does anyone believe that Mr. Cleveland could have been elected President upon a platform declaring in favor of the unconditional repeal of the Sherman law? Can we go back to our people and tell them that, after denouncing for twenty years the crime of 1873, we have at last accepted it as a blessing? Shall bimetallism receive its deathblow in the

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House of its friends, and in the very Hall where innumerable vows have been registered in its defense? What faith can be placed in platforms if their pledges can be violated with impunity? Is it right to rise above the power which created us? Is it patriotic to refuse that legislation in favor of gold and silver which a majority of the people have always demanded? Is it necessary to betray all parties in order to treat this subject in a "nonpartisan" way?

The President has recommended unconditional repeal. It is not sufficient to say that he is honest—so were the mothers, who, with misguided zeal, threw their children into the Ganges. The question is not "Is he honest?" but "Is he right?" He won the confidence of the toilers of this country because he taught that "public office is a public trust," and because he convinced them of his courage and his sincerity. But are they willing to say, in the language of Job, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him?" Whence comes this irresistible demand for unconditional repeal? Are not the representatives here as near to the people and as apt to know their wishes? Whence comes the demand? Not from the workshop and the farm, not from the workingmen of this country, who create its wealth in time of peace and protect its flag in time of war, but from the middlemen, from what are termed the "business interests," and largely from that class which can force Congress to let it issue money at a pecuniary profit to itself if silver is abandoned. The President has been deceived. He can no more judge the wishes of the great mass of our people by the expressions of these men than he can measure the ocean's silent depths by the foam upon its waves.

THE MASSES OPPOSE UNCONDITIONAL REPEAL.

Mr. Powderly, who spoke at Chicago a few days ago in favor of the free coinage of silver at the present ratio and against the unconditional repeal of the Sherman law, voiced the sentiment of more laboring men than have ever addressed the President or this House in favor of repeal. Go among the agricultural classes; go among the poor, whose little is as precious to them as the rich man's fortune is to him, and whose families are as dear, and you will not find the haste to destroy the issue of money or the unfriendliness to silver which is manifested in money centers.

This question can not be settled by typewritten recommendations and suggestions made by boards of trade and sent broadcast over the United States. It can only be settled by the great mass of the voters of this country who stand like the Rock of Gibraltar for the use of both gold and silver. [Applause.]

There are thousands, yes, tens of thousands, aye, even millions, who have not yet "bowed the knee to Baal." Let the President take courage. Muehlbach relates an incident in the life of the great military hero of France. At Marengo the Man of Destiny, sad and disheartened, thought the battle lost. He called to a drummer boy and ordered him to beat a retreat. The lad replied:

> Sire, I do not know how. Dessaix has never taught me retreat, but I can beat a charge. Oh, I can beat a charge that would make the dead fall into line! I beat that charge at the Bridge of Lodi; I beat it at Mount Tabor; I beat it at the Pyramids; Oh, may I beat it here?

The charge was ordered, the battle won, and Marengo was added to the victories of Napoleon. Oh, let our gallant leader draw inspiration from the street gamin of Paris. In the face of an enemy proud and confident the President has wavered. Engaged in the battle royal between the "money power and the common people" he has ordered a retreat. Let him not be dismayed.

He has won greater victories than Napoleon, for he is a warrior who has conquered without a sword. He restored fidelity in the public service; he converted Democratic hope into realization; he took up the banner of tariff reform and carried it to triumph. Let him continue that greater fight for "the gold and silver coinage of the Constitution," to which three national platforms have pledged him. Let his clarion voice call the party hosts to arms; let him but speak the language of the Senator from Texas, in reply to those who would destroy the use of silver:

> In this hour fraught with peril to the whole country, I appeal to the unpurchased representatives of the American people to meet this bold and insolent demand like men. Let us stand in the breach and call the battle on and never leave the field until the people's money shall be restored to the mints on equal terms with gold, as it was years ago.

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Let this command be given, and the air will resound with the tramp of men scarred in a score of battles for the people's rights. Let this command be given and this Marengo will be our glory and not our shame. [Appluse on the floor and in the galleries.]

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

Well has it been said by the Senator from Missouri [Mr. VEST] that we have come to the parting of the ways. To day the Democratic party stands between two great forces, each inviting its support. On the one side stand the corporate interests of the nation, its moneyed institutions, its aggregations of wealth and capital, imperious, arrogant compassionless. They demand special legislation, favors, privileges, and immunities. They can subscribe magnificently to campaign funds; they can strike down opposition with their all-pervading influence, and, to those who fawn and flatter, bring ease and plenty. They demand that the Democratic party shall become their agent to execute their merciless decrees.

On the other side stands that unnumbered throng which gave a name to the Democratic party and for which it has assumed to speak. Work-worn and dust-begrimed, they make their sad appeal. They *hear* of *average* wealth increased on every side and *feel* the *inequality* of its distribution. They see an over-production of everything desired because of the underproduction of the ability to buy. They can not pay for loyalty except with their suffrages, and can only punish betrayal with their condemnation. Although the ones who most deserve the fostering care of Government, their cries for help too often beat in vain against the outer wall, while others less deserving find ready access to legislative halls.

This army, vast and daily vaster growing, begs the party to be its champion in the present conflict. It cannot press its claims 'mid sounds of revelry. Its phalanxes do not form in grand parade, nor has it gaudy banners floating on the breeze. Its battle hymn is "Home, Sweet Home," its war cry "equality before the law." To the Democratic party, standing between these two irreconcilable forces, uncertain to which side to turn, and conscious that upon its choice its fate depends, come the words of Israel's second lawgiver: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." What will the answer be? Let me invoke the memory of him whose dust made sacred the soil of Monticello when he joined

> The dead but sceptered sovereigns who still rule
> Our spirits from their urns.

He was called a demagogue and his followers a mob, but the immortal Jefferson dared to follow the best promptings of his heart. He placed man above matter, humanity above property, and, spurning the bribes of wealth and power, pleaded the cause of the common people. It was this devotion to their interests which made his party invincible while he lived and will make his name revered while history endures. And what message comes to us from the Hermitage? When a crisis like the present arose and the national bank of his day sought to control the politics of the nation, God raised up an Andrew Jackson, who had the courage to grapple with that great enemy, and by overthrowing it, he made himself the idol of the people and reinstated the Democratic party in public confidence. What will the decision be to-day? The Democratic party has won the greatest success in its history. Standing upon this victory-crowned summit, will it turn its face to the rising or the setting sun? Will it choose blessings or cursings—life or death—which? Which? [Prolonged applause on the floor and in the galleries, and cries of "Vote!" "Vote!"]

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