

REPEAL OF THE SHERMAN ACT.

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SPEECH

OF

HON. WILLIAM EVERETT,  
OF MASSACHUSETTS,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

FRIDAY, AUGUST 18, 1893.

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WASHINGTON.

1893.



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

Mr. EVERETT said:

Mr. SPEAKER: I wish I could convey to you and to the House the feeling of profound diffidence with which I rise to speak on this question. I do not envy any man his temper, though I may envy him his courage, who could rise and address the House of Representatives of the United States for the first time with a feeling of confidence and boldness and security in himself. It must be, it can not but be, a frightening and depressing task for the moment. It is not merely respect to my distinguished colleagues who have been here, some of them, for many years—it is not merely the memory of the great men who have spoken actually within these walls that overwhelms me, but there comes to me, Mr. Speaker, the thought of those whose honor and whose fame is dearer to me than my own, who spoke in that old Hall that is now filled with the statues of the illustrious dead, and the fear that I may not say what is worthy of those whom I have known and loved, who spoke there of old, that makes me feel like taking my seat before you in the very instant that I arise.

I ought, as a new member, to ask the indulgence of those around me. But I see how readily it is given. I have already found out in these few days that this House is ready with the utmost generosity and kindness to receive every new member and to make him feel like one of yourselves. And I think in behalf of the new members that this confidence is not misplaced. I think that the new members whom we have already heard from on this question have shown that they are worthy of their position.

The gentleman from Colorado [Mr. PENCE] who spoke second in this debate, my friend from New York [Mr. HENDRIX] who represented the banking interest and who showed in his speech that the genius and enterprise of the bankers are not greater than their honor and their candor, my colleague from Massachusetts [Mr. MCCALL] who represents the district in which Harvard College stands, and who, although not a graduate of Harvard, has proved himself thoroughly worthy to speak for the district in which that college stands—all these new members have shown

on this floor that they are worthy of the indulgence that the House has so kindly extended to them.

I have to ask greater indulgence than those members, Mr. Speaker. I have had absolutely no experience in legislative life. This is not only the first time I address this House; it is the first time that I stand at my age to speak to any legislative assembly whatever; and I say fairly to the more experienced gentlemen here, I am not their master or their equal or anything like it in legislative fence. It is perfectly possible for any old member here, by judicious questions and well-thought out interruptions, to deposit me in a cavity out of which I should find it difficult to rise. [Laughter.] If they will allow me, therefore, to make my first effort without resorting to those entirely parliamentary methods of debate, perhaps I shall be able to learn under their experienced tuition to bother and be bothered as well as the oldest member here.

And I feel another difficulty, sir, which many members, I think, must have already felt—that long before I rose my speech has been spoken a great many times over. The work was begun by my friend from Maryland [Mr. RAYNER], in front of whom I have the honor to have a seat. He made my speech in the first quarter of an hour that he spoke. The work was taken up after him by several friends from New York, by my friend from Ohio [Mr. HARTER], who has the reputation of being almost as great a “crank” as I am myself [laughter]; and finally my friend from Florida [Mr. COOPER] made exactly my speech in exactly so many words. And I was delighted to think of it because he, coming from the orange groves of Florida which my father, when I was a child, taught me to think bore the very best oranges in the world, made exactly the same speech; he pictured exactly the same condition of financial suffering; he showed exactly the same distress among all classes, and he drew from it the same inference that I do, representing the old Bay State.

And I am delighted to find that Massachusetts and the extreme Southern State of Florida, that the neighborhood of Boston and the neighborhood of St. Augustine, are suffering in the same way and see the same remedy for their distress. If the extreme South and the extreme Northeast shake hands over this question, I am sure there can be no doubt that we are both in the right.

Now, sir, these gentlemen and many others have presented in a most eloquent and learned way the entire argument as it is derived from books, as it is derived from financial experience, for the repeal of this clause of the Sherman law; and on the other side the gentlemen who are opposed to the repeal of this section, or who favor the free coinage of silver under one ratio or another, or who favor a return to the Bland-Allison law, have presented their economic views and arguments at great length—at great length, sir, and with great ability, and I doubt not with great honesty. I should be ashamed to contest the honesty of the views of any man who is opposed to me. I only claim in behalf of myself and of those whom I represent that we shall be credited with the same honesty of purpose when we advocate the repeal of these clauses and when we oppose the free coinage of silver that they claim for themselves.

I believe that this argument has been stated too often on both sides for the necessity of repeating it. At all events, sir, no one need expect a repetition of these arguments from me. No one need suppose that I get up here as a master of economic science; that I have studied a great many books on the silver question, and other economic subjects, and can lay them on my desk and turn to the dog's-eared pages. It is nothing of the kind. I pretend to no mystery of financial science. I can only give my views of the immediate necessity from what circumstances, that are open to every man to see, have forced upon me. I can only come here and vote as my constituents tell me, because I agree with them and I believe that they are right.

These arguments are well enough, sir, at certain times. If Congress had met at its ordinary time of meeting, on the first Monday in December; if we were called on then to prepare a plan to settle the question of finances in the United States permanently, or even for many years, the arguments to convince one side or the other would no doubt be in place, for the questions to be considered should be heard and discussed at length. But we have been called together for a purpose; not that purpose. We have been called together for no discussion. We have come here to act. From the moment that Mr. Cleveland began his Administration the financial distress began to prevail throughout the land.

It got worse and worse, and presently a popular demand arose that Congress should be called together earlier than the usual time for the purpose of applying an immediate legislative remedy to the distress that has been pressing upon us. The constituency I represent, the section of country I represent, has heard all of these things discussed before. It has heard the arguments of the free silver men, of the bimetallists, and of the gold monometallists. It has read them, it has pondered upon them; and now, having formed its opinion, it comes and calls on Congress to take hold, an immediate hold, and, in a case of pressing need like this, to apply an immediate remedy; and then, later on, when we have had time for more discussion, we can consider more effectively what is to be the permanent treatment of this great subject.

The President, Mr. Speaker, has responded to the call ably. The President as the great Executive of this great country has come up manfully and nobly to the full mark of his duty, as when did he ever fail to do? And now, having done his duty in a way to call forth the admiring remarks from newspapers of every party, and in every part of the country, he leaves it to us to take hold of this great question, to take hold of it and apply a remedy. Now, sir, I repeat, the people want action and that immediately. But how? Who are the people? Why, sir, as near as I can make it out every Representative in this House is firmly convinced that his constituency is the people, that whatever his constituency want the people want, and that the wish of every other member is a matter of no consequence, but that if he could poll them, the people, they would agree with the very constituency he himself represents.

That is fair enough, sir: I am not angry with any member who thinks that his constituency is the whole people. But this is

what I claim, that my constituency has just as much right to be considered the whole people as any other man's constituency in the United States.

It is very easy to call hard names, Mr. President—Mr. Speaker, to be Mr. President. [Laughter and applause.—Mr. OUTHWAITE in the chair.] Most unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the English language, like every other language spoken, is richer in terms of vituperation than in any other substantives, and if anybody has firmly determined that he will ransack the Bible, and Shakespeare, and Byron, and the variety of anonymous writers for vituperative epithets to apply to anybody who differs with him, it is the easiest thing in the world to find a stock of them.

I am determined, sir, to take no such course. Hard words have been thrown at Massachusetts in this discussion. The old Bay State has been subjected to a great many old and to a great many new taunts; and I have been wondering when the burning of witches was to come in, for I thought it must come sooner or later. [Laughter.] Perhaps the antagonists of Massachusetts have found out by this time that we never burned any witches at all.

But, sir, would it not be nice now to get a Massachusetts man, a supporter of Mr. Cleveland, to reply to the hard things that have been said? Would it not be nice, if a man was elected on the Democratic ticket from Massachusetts, and at the same time was voting with the Republicans of Massachusetts—would it not be nice, by a series of hard names, to compel that man to rise to his feet in sharp reply, and either offend his colleagues in the Democratic party or else offend his colleagues in New England who were all standing together? There again is another cavity in which I do not intend to be deposited, Mr. Speaker. [Laughter.] Massachusetts can afford not to reply to attacks. Massachusetts has been called hard names for considerably more than a hundred years, and when many of the States that she has helped to settle and to build up and bring forward were a howling wilderness. They are not a wilderness now, but I sometimes think some howling comes from them. [Laughter.]

But we do not intend to reply to these hard names. Massachusetts men intend, in their party or out of their party, to go on and do what they believe is for the interests of the whole country, and they believe that in time the whole country will come around to their opinion.

But, sir, it is not right, in this Congress of the United States, this attempt to set up section against section and quarter against quarter, and to be talking of the South and West as if they were something opposed to New England and the Middle States.

Why, Mr. Speaker, these very gentlemen who use that language appeal to our patriotism. They call upon us to stand for America against Europe. They ask us to maintain pure American independent theories against the opinions of foreign countries. And how are they going to have a united America against Europe or against Asia or against Africa? How are they going to make every American act with his brothers if they proceed in the next sentence to array the South and West against New England, and try to show that the Union is divided against itself? We are not divided against ourselves, Mr. Speaker. Mas-

sachusetts is not the enemy of the South and the West. She is their friend and their sister.

Why, sir, the people of my State are crowding to the exhibition at Chicago. They delight to see that that great city has the wealth and the power and the wit to attract to her white halls on her new and better Venice the delighted spectators from every country of the world. No State rejoices in that exhibition more than Massachusetts does, and she is proud of it, because she remembers that when Chicago sank in the flames, she assisted the starving citizens with immediate aid; and when Chicago began to arise from her ashes, her capital helped that glorious city to revive; and every man from Boston takes a personal pride when he walks along the avenues of that magnificent city and feels that he is as much at home there as he is in his own New England.

No, sir, you can not make us quarrel with you. We will not do it, no matter how much we may differ in opinions.

Just so, I do not like this trying to set class against class; the poor man against the rich man, the debtor class against the creditor class. It is a cardinal principle of the Democracy that there are and can be no classes in this country.

Most of the gentlemen who have spoken in this debate have informed the House very carefully that they were bimetallists, or monometallists, silver monometallists, or gold monometallists.

I wish to announce, Mr. Speaker, in the beginning of my remarks, and to have it remembered in any remarks that in the future I may have the honor of offering to this House, that I am not an "ist" at all. I am not attached to any "ism." I believe the city of Boston and the country around it is supposed to be rife in "isms." I believe there is a theory that all the "isms" that ever existed in the world sprang up in the neighborhood of Boston. I have the honor to live in the city of Quincy, and that, I believe, has produced more cranks than any other city of the same size in the United States. [Laughter.] And among those cranks it produced two Presidents of the United States, who were born and whose bones are buried there.

But, sir, I am not an "ist." I have no views on the subject of currency that I am not perfectly willing to change if the circumstances of the nation require me to. It is entirely in vain to settle the issues of the present day by appeals to what Mr. Jefferson or Gen. Hamilton thought in 1792, or what Mr. Madison thought in 1816, or what Mr. Webster thought in 1835, or what Secretary Carlisle thought in 1878. The question is what we need now. The question is what the present circumstances require to heal the present wounds, and then at the proper time we will try to restore the patient to health. I should like on that point to remind my friends from the Southern States, all the way from North Carolina and Texas, of certain incidents in the life of John C. Calhoun.

Mr. John C. Calhoun was a great friend of the later United States bank. He was opposed to the policy of Gen. Jackson on finance, and stood side by side with New England and Pennsylvania in those discussions. In the year 1838, when the great crisis of 1837 had turned men's thoughts as they never had perhaps been turned before to the question of the circulating medi-

um, the bill commonly called the subtreasury bill was brought forward by Mr. Van Buren's administration and those in his confidence.

Mr. Calhoun, who had hitherto been known as an opponent of that policy, came forward and supported the subtreasury policy of Mr. Van Buren's administration. It caused profound grief in the hearts of his friends. Mr. Webster, in that ancient Chamber, expressed in terms of affectionate banter his regret that the Senator from South Carolina had changed sides.

Well, sir, time went on. The National Bank of the United States that Mr. Calhoun formerly favored went entirely out of public favor, and is utterly a dead thing, a mere matter of history, at the present day. The subtreasury bill, which became an act, and was then, I believe, repealed and reënacted—that subtreasury system that Mr. Calhoun advocated in 1838—became the law of the land, and is practically the law of the land to this day. The fears and hopes of its enemies and friends alike proved fallacious. Now, was Mr. Calhoun to be taunted with his former views? Will anybody say Mr. Calhoun was not honest, when the fact that he was an honest statesman was proved by the confession of his opponents. Will anybody say that Mr. Calhoun was not an able man? Why, he was a statesman of the first order of genius; but he thought in 1838 that a thing was right that he did not think was right in 1833.

Mr. Speaker, that is the way of every great statesman who has had influence and authority in the United States. It is not by tying yourself down to a particular platform and particular utterance that you will be a great man; it is not by adopting a theory and sticking to it through all the revolutions of time; it is not by tying yourself to the anchor that you will be saved when shipwreck is impending; it is by noting which way the gale blows, and setting your sail and helm like the skilfull mariner, that the ship can be guided in the right direction.

Now, in this case I can only vote as my people say. I can only follow their instructions, I may say their orders, when I agree with them, and I believe they are right.

If the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SIBLEY] is correct in his new census of the United States; if there are 67,000,000 of people who want the free coinage of silver and only 24,000 who wish the unconditional repeal of the purchasing clause of the Sherman act [laughter]; if it is really true that this overwhelming, this uncounted majority of the people are crying and clamoring for the free coinage of silver at the same ratio, and are opposed to the immediate and unconditional repeal of the Sherman act, I would like to know how in New England we have managed to fill over 20 Congressional districts were all the votes that elected all the members to seats to come from his side of the case? I have heard threats—I can not help calling them threats—from the distinguished gentleman from Missouri [Mr. BLAND], who spoke early in the debate, that every member of Congress, every Democratic member of Congress, who voted for the proposition of the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WILSON] would lose his seat in the storm of public indignation, if I understood him correctly. I have not been able to read his speech.

Why, sir, every member from our part of the country, elected

by constituencies as large, as intelligent, as thoughtful, as honest, as progressive, and as orderly as any in the United States, would sweep in indignation from his seat every member of Congress who did not vote for the unconditional repeal of the Sherman act. Now, sir, the district which I represent, the Seventh Massachusetts, is one that, although it is very small in acreage—and I believe that the acres of Massachusetts are as broad as the broad acres in Colorado of which we heard in the debate: I believe there are just as many square feet in the acre in Massachusetts as there are in Colorado, and yet the population if figured out would show that we raise more men to an acre in Massachusetts—I believe that the population of my district is practically a unit upon this question.

That population, sir, is as varied in its industries and its character as any. It contains the city of Lynn, a city of 60,000 people, the head of the leather industry of the country, and now also the head of the electric manufacturing interest of the country. That city attracts to its works laborers from every part of the world, laborers from every country of the earth, who are attracted by its liberal wages and by the high and generous principles on which its establishments are conducted. There are in that district a comparatively small number of great, rich capitalists; there are a very large number of men who are bettering themselves, who are rising from straitened means to moderate means and from moderate means to wealth, and it contains a vast population of laboring men who depend for their living on their daily wages. These are our creditor class.

If there is a creditor class in this country, it is the day laborers in the great manufacturing establishments, it is the small tradesmen that they employ, it is the physicians they have to send for, it is the salaried teachers, who take care of their children in schools; it is those people who are gradually piling up from day to day with their small daily wages the savings that they put into the banks, that are the creditor class of the country, and they depend upon sound finances for their living.

The state of the case as presented by the gentleman from Florida [Mr. COOPER] is precisely the case that prevails in my district. The ordinary wages are stopped, the ordinary collections are stopped; the professional men, the small traders, the laboring men, are all as much in want of money as any of the agricultural clients of my friend from Pennsylvania [Mr. SIBLEY.] Aye, sir, I shall call him my friend. I will not reply to his hard language about Massachusetts. I received my name from the family of a Pennsylvania lady whose name was Sibley, and I would not for a moment say a hard thing against him. [Laughter.]

But, Mr. Speaker, my manufacturing constituents, my professional constituents, my laboring constituents, my seafaring constituents, are united in ascribing their distress to the purchasing clauses of the Sherman act. They are united, rightly or wrongly, in the belief that Congress has gone beyond its true powers. Congress is given by the Constitution the power "to coin money, to regulate the value thereof and of foreign coin;" but regulating the value does not mean undertaking to create value, or, going beyond sound regulation, to give money a value that it does not possess. They feel that Congress has put our coinage

on an unstable base. They feel that they can not depend from day to day on what the value of the silver certificate will be.

It may be redeemable in gold at this moment. It may be, as we are told, at this moment at a premium at certain business centers. But how long that will last, how long the silver certificate will be as good as the gold certificate, my constituents are utterly unable to determine, and they call upon Congress for what they believe is the immediate remedy—not the future remedy, Mr. Speaker; I do not say that. I do not pretend to say, I do not believe, that the repeal of these clauses of the Sherman law will settle this question as to the money of the United States. The financial system of the United States has got to be recast. It has got to be recast carefully and thoughtfully.

But that is not the work for which we are here now. That is work for the regular session of Congress. My constituents tell me that they want these clauses repealed immediately, to see how that will work. They believe that law to be the immediate cause of the distress, and they say that when this repeal shall have been in operation a few months it will then be time to take up the great question and to settle what the future destinies of gold and silver are to be. And why do they believe that, Mr. Speaker? Because they are convinced that the United States—is it “are” or “is?” Justice Fields says it is “are,” but others say it is “is”—they are convinced that the United States is only one nation in the sisterhood of nations.

They believe that we are subject to international laws as well as national laws.

Just as surely, Mr. Speaker, as the Gulf Stream, which is warmed by the churning in the basin of the Gulf of Mexico, affects the climate on the extreme coast of Norway, just as surely as the two hemispheres are bound together by physical laws and the climate of one affects the climate of the other, just so surely the productions, the exchanges, the wages, the financial life of the United States are affected by those of Europe, of Asia, and of Australia; and it is no use talking of our standing outside, whatever our independence and our greatness may be. We are told that we must not be the slaves of England, dependent on England in our financial relations. That is just why I want the purchasing clauses of the Sherman act repealed. It is because I do not want to be at the command of English financiers that I do not want the Treasury to get below its gold reserve and be reduced to a condition of silver monometallism, for then we should indeed be the slave of foreign finance.

We can do nothing with the nations until we go into the sisterhood of nations on the common principles which all nations are adopting, one after another, in a sure and never varying succession. When we do that, then, and not until then, can we pretend to be one among them and to work with them. But we are told that this is against the Declaration of Independence. New England, we are told, has forgotten the Declaration of Independence. The gentleman from Pennsylvania says that if that document were read here it would be strange to some of us.

Why, Mr. Speaker, I had an impression that New England had taken some part in forming the Declaration of Independence. I

had an impression that John Adams had had a good deal to do with forcing it upon the unwilling representatives from the State of Pennsylvania, who were doubtful of the propriety of the measure. [Laughter and applause.] No, sir; no, sir! It is these gentlemen who have forgotten where the Declaration of Independence put us. It did not put us outside the sisterhood of nations. It did not put us on another planet. It did not explode this earth and make a collection of little asteroids, on one of which the United States should be set, and on another Africa. It put us among the nations of the earth, then as the weakest, destined to be the strongest, but still as one of them.

It begins with an avowal of "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind;" it ends by saying, "We will regard Englishmen as we regard the inhabitants of other nations—enemies in war; in peace, friends." Why, sir, those who wish the free coinage of silver will not regard England as either a friend or an enemy; they will not have either peace or war with her; they want to preserve a sullen sort of armed neutrality, and not have anything to do with her if they can help it in one way or another. That is not the Declaration of Independence, Mr. Speaker; that is not the position that John Adams and Thomas Jefferson and the representatives from the South put us in when we were all East and there was no West, or Center, or Pacific Slope in the country at all.

In the Revolution, Mr. Speaker, were we ashamed of foreign nations? Were we determined to work out our independence by ourselves? Would we have nothing to do with "the effete monarchies of Europe?" My remembrance is that the proud and independent United States were uncommonly glad when a Bourbon king gave them some troops to help them in the crowning victory at Yorktown. No, sir; we are one among the nations, and we must take warning and advice from their example.

It has been said correctly to-day and on previous days that some nations are on a gold basis, that others are on a silver basis, and that others are endeavoring to keep up bimetallicism. Be it so. But what has been the historic tendency? What is the road on which nations have generally advanced? Have they not generally been going in the direction of gold? Have they not shown what they regarded as the better way by abandoning silver after they had used it? And suppose there are silver nations, Mr. Speaker; is it with the silver nations that the United States desires to be ranked? Do such nations furnish the model for free and independent countries? China, the Argentine Republic, Peru—are those the nations which we wish to make our models?

Why, sir, we heard to-day in the remarks of the gentleman from Pennsylvania that Russia—silver Russia—had done so much for the cultivation of wheat by her metallic standard, and then in the next breath we were appealed to to consider the condition of the starving poor; and the "gold bugs" and "shylocks" and "robbers" of New England were told that they ought to think more about the poor man. I should like to know if Russia is the model for the treatment of the starving poor? I should like to know if Russia, with her silver and her promotion of the cultivation of wheat, sets New England the example of how the poor man should be treated. I grant that she makes war upon

the Jews as badly as the gentleman from Pennsylvania would; but I think that the way Russia treats the Jews is hardly a model for civilized nations at the present day.

Now, if you want to see a nation that does in some respect furnish an example, Austria, with the danger of national bankruptcy staring her in the face all the time, has passed from a paper basis to a silver basis, and from a silver basis to a gold basis, at tremendous sacrifices; and Austria, in the same period, has gone ahead more in constitutional government than one would believe a despotism would. Austria had Hungary rebellious; she has now got her united on terms of loyalty under her ancient constitution; and the internal state of Austria, in respect of education and the other great elements of social progress, is, I believe, improving every day; and I believe that this improvement is closely connected with her financial improvement.

No, sir; we are not outside the nations. We are one with them in a great republic. Think of that magnificent victory achieved the other day. Think how grand it was when five great nations met together to arbitrate peacefully upon a cause of strife that was all but tearing the United States and Great Britain to pieces. And how peacefully and honorably and candidly we acquiesced in a decision that was against some of our claims, but that gave us the main things in which we were interested. And instead of going to war in the old selfish way, we united in that peaceful settlement of difficulties which it behoves great nations to adopt at this advanced period.

It is a definite thing that we have got to do—to repeal these clauses of the Sherman act; and then I would add, and my constituents would add, to go home and wait. However, it may be well to adopt plans at this moment. I confess that the plan of my friend from Ohio [Mr. HARTER] seems best to me at present. And let me say, as that gentleman from Ohio has been declared by authority to be the only independent member on the floor of the House, the only man who is not a Democrat, or a Republican, or a Populist—I beg to announce myself as just as independent as the member from Ohio. I was not elected upon any platform but President Cleveland. That was the platform upon which I was elected; and he is broad enough and strong enough to uphold any patriot in the country. I never quite clearly made out why I was elected.

Mr. TUCKER. We understand it now.

Mr. EVERETT. There was no man more surprised at my own election than I was myself.

There is one point in this debate, Mr. Speaker, and, I regret to say, in the President's message, too, which my constituents never have been able to understand, and that is this attributing of personality to silver and gold—this talk about the "friends of silver" and the "friends of gold"—"striking down silver," and "trampling on it," and treating it as if it were a sentient being that has a soul, and emotions, and eyes, and nose, and mouth. We do not understand that, sir.

We do not understand how a man can be in love or in hate with a thing. We have no animosity to silver; we have no affection for gold. We are perfectly willing—I say again the people of Massachusetts are perfectly willing—to use silver or gold or both

whenever the exigencies of the country demand either condition. If some better form of circulating medium were discovered—if some new metal—some new substance were brought to light—if the spectrum analysis should disclose the fact that indium, nebidium, or thallium would be a better medium of exchange than gold or silver, the people of Massachusetts want the best and are determined to have it.

My gallant friend, the member from Alabama, Gen. WHEELER, who lets me occupy his seat while retaining his own opinions, which are quite positive and just the opposite of mine, said in his speech that if the Sherman law were unconditionally repealed there would be no mention of silver whatever in any coinage act of the United States. His remarks have not yet appeared in the RECORD and I may quote him incorrectly. But that is the idea as I understood it.

Well, sir, supposing that was correct. Supposing silver were not mentioned in any coinage act hereafter. It might be unwise, it might be unfortunate, but where would it be immoral? Let me put a case. Supposing we wished to increase our Navy. Supposing that there was a well-known sentiment that we ought to have more ships of war, what would these ships of war be, as the Secretary of the Navy would be ordered to issue proposals for them? What would they be made of? Why, they would be made of iron and steel. Would wooden ships be mentioned at all? Would the Secretary of the Navy be called on to build any wooden ships? Not one. They would not appear in the act authorizing them. Well, then, should we get up and say you are not friends to wood; you despise live-oak. You have forgotten the glories of our Navy, our ancient Navy; you have forgotten the Bonhomme Richard. You have forgotten the Constitution. You have forgotten the United States, and the Wasp, and the Hornet, and the Enterprise.

You are untrue to the memory of John Paul Jones, and Stephen Decatur, and Isaac Hull, and all of the old heroes who led you to victory in wooden ships in the days that have gone by. They were good, Mr. Speaker, in their time; but at the present moment, under immediate pressure, I believe that, as with the wooden ships, the time for silver has gone by. I am perfectly willing to have it revived again when the time shall come, but not now.

A distinguished member at the other end of the Capitol said—although it may not be strictly parliamentary to allude to a Senate debate, but it has been stated here in the course of this discussion—that if this act is passed no silver will ever be coined again in the United States. If that is really true, Mr. Speaker, it is the strongest argument against silver that has ever been uttered here or elsewhere. If silver depends for its use as a coinage metal forever and a day, on the vote that we pass in this Congress; if it requires our vote in August, 1893, to maintain it for all eternity; if, after our vote, it will disappear for all eternity, then it is utterly unfitted for coinage metal, and has nothing to stand on if it never can be coined.

But it will come up again. There will be a time when gold will not be sought for as eagerly, and silver will be more desirable. These things come by cycles. They go up and down at

different times. The tendency of things amongst all nations for many years has been rather toward a gold standard, and that it will go back in the other direction by the discovery of new gold fields, perhaps, seems to be eminently probable.

Now, a few words on the subject of bringing politics into this discussion. I am not going to bring in any politics if I can help it, Mr. Speaker. The President of the United States has told us what to do, and as his loyal supporter, who is not afraid to be called his gentleman usher, if my friends see fit so to characterize me, I have no objection; but I will not bring any politics into the discussion. I am amazed at the determination of some gentlemen of all the three parties, Democrats, Republicans, and Populists alike, to find politics somewhere in some part of this discussion. They have a most wonderful nose for the political cat in every bag of meal presented to them.

Why, sir, it reminds me of what happened in a certain very poor religious congregation in England. There was a congregation in England once that wanted to procure new hymn books, but they were very poor and could not afford to pay for them at the ordinary prices. They understood, however, that a certain great advertising house, a business house that made patent medicines, was willing to furnish them hymn books at a penny each if they would allow some advertisements to be inserted in the books. They thought that would be no special harm, that they might have a few pages of advertisements bound up with Watts and Doddridge. Accordingly they agreed to the proposition. The books came, duly printed, and they got down to the church on the 24th of December.

On Christmas morning the model Christians, who had no thought of anything but religion, got up to sing. Their pastor gave out by the first line a very familiar hymn. They all expected that it would be given out. Immediately the congregation arose to their feet and in a few seconds were aghast to find themselves singing—

Hark! The herald angels sing  
Beecham's pills are just the thing.  
Peace on earth and mercy mild;  
Two for man and one for child.

[Laughter and applause.]

No, sir; I am not going to introduce politics into this discussion. There are two kinds of political victories, two ways of making political capital. Men may try by the examination of platforms, by going back on records, by going back as many years as they please to prove some man has been either untrue to his party or to himself.

They may try to win the victory for Democrat, for Republican, for Populist, by proving something wrong against Republican, Populist, or Democrat.

Mr. Speaker, you never can win a game of base ball solely by catching the other side out. That will not give you any positive score. You have got to make the runs off your own bat before you can really win the victory. And so if a great party is to win a victory it must win it by positive and not negative triumph. A great party may find the country in a strait, as the Democratic party finds it to-day, and power has been put into

the hands of the Democratic party. It is called upon to meet a great crisis. It has a great leader. It was chosen to support that leader. It intends to rise, as he has risen, to the occasion. It does not mean to be affected or impaired by any stories of old times and different circumstances that may be told against it. We do not cavil who is responsible for the difficulty in which we find ourselves placed. When a great city is on fire we do not care what old woman's cow kicked over the lantern which may have set fire to it. We care only first to put the fire out, then to clear away the débris, and then to erect in the proper time, after the débris is cleared away, the new buildings that are needed.

Now, sir, if the Republican party choose to help us in this crisis, if they are ready to come forward, as I know many of them are, on the lines that President Cleveland has indicated, as so many of them have generously, in the public press and here, intimated that they would do, we accept and are grateful for their support. If they share the risk and the abuse they will share the glory. We are glad to have them meet us. We shall do our work alone as far as we are able to; but we welcome all honorable allies.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to anyone who hesitates to vote as he thinks right, from the idea that some party platform prevents his doing so, from the idea that he may offend somebody—we do not know how—to anyone who hesitates to go with us when his opinions are with us, I would say, as the mother of the Roman said to him:

If it were so that our request did tend to save the Romans, thereby to destroy  
 The Volsces whom you serve, you might condemn us,  
 As poisonous of your honour: No: our suit  
 Is that you reconcile them: while the Volsces  
 May say, "This mercy we have showed;" the Romans,  
 "This we receiv'd;" and each in either side  
 Give the all-hail to them, and cry, "Be bless'd  
 For making up this peace!" Thou know'st, great son,  
 The end of war's uncertain; but this certain,  
 That if thou conquer Rome, the benefit  
 Which thou shalt thereby reap in such a name,  
 Whose repetition will be dogg'd with curses;  
 Whose chronicle thus writ,—"The man was noble  
 But with his last attempt he wip'd it out;  
 Destroy'd his country; and his name remains  
 To the ensuing age abhorr'd."

We have no threats to make. We have heard threats. We do no threatening back; but we mean to stand firm. We have no feeling of ferocity, no feeling of enmity, no wish to arm one section of the country against the other: but we propose favoring the unconditional repeal of these purchasing clauses, and to stand on our consciences, to stand on our convictions, to stand on the instructions of our constituents.

The gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BRYAN], in his eloquent peroration, introduced the incident of the battle of Marengo, and told how, when the French army was on the point of retreat, a little drummer boy saved it by beating the charge. I would think of another battle fought by the great Emperor, when his fiery cavalry, under the lead of his own brother and of Marshal Ney, charged, with shout and dash and sabers drawn, up to the

hill of Hougoumont, again and again, against the squares of the Iron Duke's army. There they stood, English and Scotch and Irish and Hanoverians, all the loyal subjects of the king, arrayed there for protection of liberty and order, against the common enemy.

There they stood, and charge after charge of the Old Guard and the young guard and the fiery dragoons broke upon them like waves upon the rocks. The French cavalry rode round and round the impregnable squares, and everywhere the steel wall of bayonets was presented against them. At length the charge ended, and those invincible cavalry retired down the slope of the hill. Then at length the "thin red line" arose from the trenches where it had been lying inactive in both sun and rain for ten hours, and charged down the slope in its turn, an unbroken line, and carried victory where victory was never carried before.

Stand firm, friends: do not be dismayed. Maintain your conscience, your opinions, and the directions of your constituencies, and victory will crown our arms too. I thank the House deeply [Applause.]

