

FREE COINAGE OF SILVER.

---

SPEECH

OF

HON. JOHN L. McLAURIN,  
OF SOUTH CAROLINA,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

MONDAY, AUGUST 21, 1893.



WASHINGTON.

1893.



SPEECH  
OF  
HON. JOHN L. McLAURIN.

---

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. McLAURIN said:

Mr. SPEAKER: Being a new member, I had intended to leave the discussion of the silver question to more experienced heads. I can not hope to add much that is new, in figures or statistics, to a question which has been so exhaustively discussed, nor do I propose to weary the House by the attempt. The gravity of the situation demands that every section should be heard from, and I think that, in what I shall say, I voice the sentiments not only of those I have the honor to directly represent, but that I voice the sentiments of the great masses of the Southern people.

The President tells us that we are in the midst of a panic. That—

Our unfortunate financial plight is not due to any of the afflictions which frequently check national growth and prosperity. With plenteous crops, with abundant promise of remunerative production and manufacture, with unusual invitation to safe investment, and with satisfactory assurance to business enterprise, suddenly financial distrust and fear have sprung up on every side.

This depicts a strange condition of affairs to produce a panic. Whose panic is it? Can it be, Mr. Speaker, that we have advanced to that high state of civilization where we not only produce artificial rain and make artificial eggs, but when a few financial wizards can precipitate an artificial panic. This is not the people's panic; they disown it; it is preeminently the rich man's panic.

MR. GOULD EXPLAINS THE PANIC.

Mr. George Gould, the other day, upon his return from a trip to Europe, gave the New York World some information upon the subject of the panic. Mr. Gould said:

To sum up briefly, I should very much dislike to be compelled to raise \$10,000,000.

Well, so should I, gentlemen.

I doubt very much if I could do it by Monday or Tuesday.

I am sure I could not.

Mr. BRYAN. He has got down to a common level.

Mr. McLAURIN. Yes; has got where the balance of us have been all the time.

The situation—

Said Mr. Gould—

is extremely bad. There will not be any improvement, either, until the Sherman law is repealed or so modified as to restore confidence; and the financiers of the country completely lack confidence just now, and it is natural, too, that they should. You do not want silver. I do not want silver. Gold is the only honest and equitable currency for the people, and gold we want.

It is not the people who want gold. I deny that. It is not the people who lack confidence. I know men just as patriotic as he, and who add infinitely more to our material wealth than Mr. Gould, who yet have confidence in their country and her institutions.

There have been some of the most remarkable arguments adduced upon the floor of this House in favor of a gold standard that I ever heard. But the gentleman from Florida [Mr. COOPER] capped the climax, the other day, when he said that we must destroy the gold which enabled these men from the East to go down to Florida, for in Florida they depended for their support upon a winter's crop of Yankees. [Laughter.]

In other words, Mr. Speaker, if you want to pluck the goose, you must feed him. Our staple crops in South Carolina are cotton and corn. We have no Yankee goose feathers for our winter supply; but from my experience, brief though it was, with the Florida hotels, they need not only a goose with plenty of feathers, but one that lays a golden egg, and the gentleman from Florida [Mr. COOPER] was right. [Laughter.]

Mr. Speaker, I charge that even under this so-called make-shift silver has not had a fair chance. I say that silver has been stabbed with a Brutus dagger in the house of those who, if platforms amount to anything, ought to be its friends.

A BRUTUS DAGGER FOR SILVER.

The President says that under the operations of the Sherman act between May 1, 1892, and July 15, 1893, \$54,000,000 of Treasury notes were put out, and \$49,000,000 of them were redeemed in gold. Is it any wonder that the gold reserve is depleted? The law provides for the purchase of 4,500,000 ounces of silver bullion each month, and for an issue of legal-tender Treasury notes against the same. These notes are redeemable in coin, and certainly coin is either gold or silver; yet silver was kept locked up in the vaults while the notes were redeemed in gold. And this in the face of the provision of law that "no greater or less amount of such notes shall be outstanding at any time than the cost of the silver bullion and the standard silver dollars coined therefrom then held in the Treasury purchased by such notes."

PANACEA OFFERED.

The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HARTER] says:

That we ought to extend to the national banks this privilege of issuing circulating notes up to 100 per cent of their bonds deposited as security for their notes.

\* \* \* \* \*

The next thing to be done is this: I believe that, as prudent business men, we ought to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States,

with the concurrence of the President, at any time, in any amount, and at any price, to sell "3-30" year 3 per cent bonds of the United States for two purposes: First, to maintain the parity of all the paper and coined money of the United States, and, second, to meet the debts of the United States as rapidly as they mature. This measure would forever maintain the credit of the United States, and yet I doubt whether, under its provisions, there would be in the next twenty years \$200 of United States bonds offered for sale by any Secretary.

It is not hard to discover why this lack of confidence on the part of these financiers. An issue of gold bonds payable in gold is the panacea offered; or else they propose to authorize the national banks to increase their circulation to the full value of their bonds. In either case the remedy is at the expense of the producer, and there will be no increase in our currency except as these national bankers see fit. No money outside of national-bank notes and gold. In other words, as one of the speakers so forcibly said, "put the gold of the world upon the auction block and sell it to the highest bidder." Throw away as worthless for money our own silver that we may build up a system of credit money based upon gold and entirely within the control of the holders of gold.

The farmers and laborers of this country have done their duty. The President says, "Crops were never more plentiful," and yet financial statesmanship of the party proposes to borrow gold from abroad to keep the governmental machinery in motion.

#### BONDS PAYABLE IN GOLD.

In less than fourteen years about five hundred and fifty million of our bonds became due. Our bonded debt was contracted upon a currency basis, many of them costing the original holders from 40 to 70 cents on the dollar in gold. In the Fortieth Congress Senator SHERMAN said:

Every State, without exception, has made its contracts upon a currency basis since the legal-tender clause.

And again:

If the bondholder refuse to take the same kind of money with which he bought the bond, he is an extortioner and repudiator. No bond or other Government obligation was made payable in gold. The interest upon the bond was payable in coin, the principal of the original bond in "lawful money," and of the refunding bonds in coin.

Can it be that the astute holders of these securities, looking fourteen years ahead, through the demonetization of silver, propose to become the "extortioners and repudiators" spoken of by Senator SHERMAN. There are two kinds of repudiation—one by the debtor, the other by the creditor. When gold becomes the only legal-tender coin, and its representative the only lawful money, then all public and private debts become payable in gold.

#### POOR WORKINGMAN.

It is refreshing to note how wonderfully tender these advocates of monometallism are of the poor "workingman" who has to buy in this "depreciated coin." As long as it buys \$1 worth of meat and flour, why is it not just as good as any other dollar? If they are sincere, and think it is such an injustice to the workingman, why does one of the gentlemen propose that silver shall be legal tender for all sums under \$10? In other words, this "poor workingman" they shed such tears over shall receive his

Saturday night's wages in this despised silver, but the interest and principal of their bond shall be wrung from the sweat of the same workingman in gold. [Applause.]

I have been amazed to hear gentlemen attempt to justify the demonetization of silver in 1873 and eulogize those who were responsible for it. Truly, it is a pretty sight; a sight to make devils laugh. The lion and the lamb lie down together; their swords are beaten into golden pruning hooks. The senior Senator from Ohio [Mr. SHERMAN], the arche type of Republicanism, spokesman of a Democratic Administration in the other end, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HARTER], the high priest of tariff reform, excusing Republican infamy in this end! The story of how this was accomplished has been told too frequently upon the floor of this House for me to now rehash it. I will simply say that the masses of the people believe that it was done by fraud, and that President Grant did not know when he approved the bill that it struck down at a blow one-half of the money of the country; that at a stroke of the pen he doubled the debts of the people, with a corresponding increase in the wealth of the creditor class.

#### DEMONETIZATION IN 1873.

Last summer there went the rounds of the press the affidavit of one Fred. A. Luckenbach, setting forth the part Ernest Seyd played in the drama of demonetization; which I give as follows:

STATE OF COLORADO, *County of Arapahoe, ss:*

Frederick A. Luckenbach being first duly sworn, on oath deposes and says: I am 62 years of age. I was born in Bucks County, Pa. I removed to the city of Philadelphia in the year 1846, and continued to reside there until 1866, when I removed to the city of New York. In Philadelphia I was in the furniture business. In New York I branched into machinery and inventions, and am the patentee of Luckenbach's pneumatic pulverizer, which machines are now in use generally in the Eastern part of the United States and in Europe. I now reside in Denver, having removed from New York two years ago. I am well known in New York. I have been a member of the Produce Exchange and am well acquainted with many members of that body. I am well known by Mr. Erastus Wyman.

In the year 1865 I visited London, England, for the purpose of placing there Pennsylvania oil properties in which I was interested. I took with me letters of introduction to many gentlemen in London—among them one to Mr. Ernest Seyd, from Robert M. Foust, ex-treasurer of Philadelphia. I became well acquainted with Mr. Seyd, and with his brother, Richard Seyd, who, I understand, is yet living. I visited London thereafter every year, and at each visit renewed my acquaintance with Mr. Seyd, and upon each occasion became his guest one or more times—joining his family at dinner or other meals.

In February, 1874, while on one of these visits, and while his guest for dinner, I, among other things, alluded to rumors afloat of parliamentary corruption, and expressed astonishment that such corruption should exist. In reply to this he told me he could relate facts about the corruption of the American Congress that would place it far ahead of the English Parliament in that line. So far, the conversation was at the dinner table between us. His brother, Richard, and others were there also, but this was table talk between Mr. Ernest Seyd and myself. After the dinner ended he invited me to another room, where he resumed the conversation about legislative corruption. He said: "If you will pledge me your honor as a gentleman not to divulge what I am about to tell you while I live, I will convince you that what I said about the corruption of the American Congress is true." I gave him the promise, and he then continued: "I went to America in the winter of 1872-'73, authorized to secure, if I could, the passage of a bill demonetizing silver. It was to the interest of those I represented—the governors of the Bank of England—to have it done.

"I took with me £100,000 sterling, with instructions if that was not sufficient to accomplish the objects to draw for another £100,000, or as much more as was necessary." He told me German bankers were also interested in having it

accomplished. He said he was the financial adviser of the bank. He said: "I saw the committee of the House and Senate and paid the money, and staid in America until I knew the measure was safe." I asked if he would give me the names of the members to whom he paid the money, but this he declined to do. He said: "Your people will not now comprehend the far-reaching extent of that measure, but they will in after years. Whatever you may think of corruption in the English Parliament, I assure you I would not have dared to make such an attempt here as I did in your country." I expressed my shame to him for my countrymen in our legislative bodies. The conversation drifted into other subjects, and after that—though I met him many times—the matter was never again referred to.

(Signed),  
Subscribed and sworn to before me at Denver, this 9th day of May, A. D. 1892.

FREDERICK A. LUCKENBACK.

(Signed)

JAMES A. MILLER,  
Clerk Supreme Court

But this is foreign to the merits of the question, and is only alluded to in order to show what the people think.

#### HONEST DOLLAR.

The advocates of the gold standard are fond of the virtuous, the "honest dollar." We, too, believe in an "honest dollar." The "honest dollar" is the silver dollar, the only metal through all these twenty years which has retained relatively the same proportion to the commodities which it would buy, through the manipulations of a dishonest gold dollar, which is always rising in value while the prices of the products of this country have steadily fallen and the debts steadily increased.

The dollar is nothing but the representative of so much cotton or so much wheat, and the dollar of debt which was contracted when one bushel of wheat equaled a dollar is a dishonest dollar when it takes two bushels to pay the debt. [Loud applause.]

The House has been wearied with statistics, and I will give none, but content myself by appending to my remarks tables demonstrating the truth of these statements:

TABLE 1.—Showing relative values in years named.

Year.	Silver, per ounce.	Wheat, per bushel.	Cotton, per pound.
1873.....	\$1.29	\$1.17	\$0.20½
1876.....	1.14	1.05	.12
1879.....	1.11½	.83	.10½
1890.....	1.09	.92	.11½
1891.....	1.01	1.01	.07½
1892.....	.83	.73	.07½
1893.....	.75	.68	.07½

January 1, 1873.—Cotton in New York was 20½ cents per pound; \$1 in gold bought 4.93 pounds.

August 16, 1893.—Cotton was worth 7½ cents per pound; \$1 in gold would buy 13½ pounds.

Our people remember the flush days when cotton was high and they had plenty of money. They have pondered over these figures, showing that wheat and cotton have gone down with silver, and have connected the two in their minds. They have seen that in 1873, wheat, cotton, and silver steadily fell together, while gold staid at the high-water mark. They remember that in 1873, when silver was \$1.29 an ounce, wheat was \$1.17 a bushel, and

cotton, the king, was 20 cents a pound. They have connected these things in their minds, and have seen it take 4 pounds of their cotton to buy a dollar in 1873 under the double standard, and they see now that it takes 15 pounds of the same cotton to buy the same thing.

The statistical abstract for 1892 fails to give the figures upon cotton for the years mentioned, but the figures on corn will illustrate the point; and surely a man from South Carolina and Marlboro County may even speak of corn in the presence of the Representatives of the great corn countries of the West, when in my county Mr. J. Drake had the honor of making the largest yield of corn that was ever made in the world and was awarded the prize of \$1,000 for raising 255 bushels on a single acre.

In 1873 South Carolina had in corn 973,158 acres, and raised thereon 9,245,000 bushels, the value thereof being \$8,690,300.

In 1892 South Carolina had in corn 1,591,677 acres and raised thereon 16,713,000 bushels, the value thereof being \$9,526,000. Thus we have as between 1873 and 1892 an increase of over 63 per cent, an increase in bushels of over 80 per cent, with an increase in value of less than 10 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, no people ever bore with more patience their burden than the Southern people, since the war. They recognized that as a conquered people, like the children of Israel, to "make bricks without straw" was their fate. We can stand the drain no longer, and by the eternal justice of an omnipotent God, we will stand it no longer. [Loud applause.]

#### IT IS ENGLAND'S SCHEME.

When silver is worth 80 cents per ounce, it takes 600 grains of it to buy 23.32 grains of pure gold, which is the amount in a gold dollar, or 25.84 grains of silver to one of gold. Now, suppose the United States under present pressure establishes a ratio of 25 to 1, then she fixes the value at 80 cents per ounce. England can buy it at that price, send it to her mints and coin it into rupees at \$1.46½ per ounce, and use it to pay for wheat and cotton, rice and jute, thereby fixing the prices of these products. I affirm, and will give a mathematical demonstration of the proposition, that with free coinage, and the United States keeping silver at \$1.29 per ounce, our cotton would be to-day 15 cents per pound instead of 6½ cents, and wheat \$1.50 per bushel instead of 50 cents.

#### A GRAND EXPOSE.

A pound of cotton or a bushel of wheat of the same quality is of equal value to the English whether they lay it down from India or America. Suppose a Manchester cotton spinner wants some cotton for his mill and wheat for flour on which to feed his operatives. He writes to his London broker to buy him, say, 10,000 ounces of silver and to ship it to his broker at Bombay. At 85 cents per ounce it costs him \$8,500 in gold. He writes his broker in Bombay on the arrival of the silver bullion to take it to the mint and have it coined into rupees and invest the product in cotton and ship it to him.

His Bombay broker, on the arrival of the silver, obeys instructions, and, after paying 2 per cent seigniorage for having it coined, received in rupees \$14,374 worth, which he invests in cotton and ships to Manchester. On its arrival, counting first cost of silver, freights, brokerage, insurance, etc., say it costs 10 cents per pound in gold to lay it down. An American offers him cotton, and, if he buys it from him, he will have to pay for it in gold; so he says:

"I am laying my cotton down from India at a cost of 10 cents per pound in gold, and, other things being equal, I would prefer to patronize our own colonies."

Therefore, if an American sells, he must offer the same quality at a lower price, or a better quality at the same price. And the price at which the Englishman can lay his cotton down from India is what enables him to fix the price on our cotton.

#### FREE COINAGE WOULD STOP IT.

We will assume for the present that if we had free coinage of silver that an ounce of it would be worth \$1.2929, and if it was, then 10,000 ounces of it would cost \$1,2929 in gold, and when sent to Bombay and coined into rupees and seigniorage was paid, would only give \$14,374 worth in rupees, the same as when the first cost was \$8,500, and there being no more rupees it would pay for no more pounds of cotton or bushels of wheat; the freight, insurance, seigniorage, and brokerage being the same in both cases, the difference in the cost of the same amount of cotton would be the difference in the first cost of the silver; \$8,500, at 10 cents per pound, would buy 85,000 pounds of cotton, but 85,000 pounds of cotton, the cost of the silver to pay for which was \$12,929 would make it cost, laid down in gold, 151 cents per pound, and if wheat can be laid down from India at \$1 per bushel, when silver costs 85 cents per ounce, when it would cost \$1.2929 per ounce wheat laid down from India would cost \$1.52 per bushel, and if it costs 151 cents a pound, and \$1.52 per bushel to lay cotton and wheat down from India, then American cotton and wheat would certainly be worth 15 cents per pound and \$1.50 per bushel.

#### ASTONISHING STATEMENTS.

A pound of cotton yarn of the same quality is of equal value to the inhabitant of China or Japan, whether spun in India or England, and as the same money that would pay for 100 pounds of cotton yarn in England would buy and pay for 136 pounds of yarn of the same quality in India, the Chinese and Japanese merchants, being sensible men, bought their goods where their money would go farthest to pay for them. (Will some patriotic Democrat bar the doors of the White House to the office-seeker until President Cleveland can get this idea into his mind? The perpetuation of the party in power and the commercial supremacy of the nation depends upon it.)

The result is that India in 1892 had in operation 88 cotton mills, running 2,380,000 spindles, and built 8 more cotton mills during that year, so that there are now 96 cotton mills in operation in India, as against 18 when silver began to decline. These mills are all spinning Indian cotton with Indian labor, fed upon Indian products, and the markets they supply take the place of that much of the products of the English mills. The result is that while 8 new cotton factories are being pushed to completion in India, the English cotton mills were closed in a lockout for six months, and were it not for the cheap cotton and wheat that low silver enables them, at our expense, to supply themselves, their condition would be much worse.

What is the imperial Anglo-Saxon blood to do? Commerce, when free, does not examine the color of the skin of those who best serve her wants. Great Britain in 1890, after supplying her own 40,000,000 of home people with cotton goods, sold to the rest of the world \$352,529,975 worth of cotton products. Is she going to sit still and see these yellow sons of Shem rob her of this her greatest industry, that has taken her more than three hundred years to develop? Great Britain, who, when she first began the manufacture of cotton goods, passed a law that prohibited all of her citizens from wearing any cotton goods not manufactured in their own country, and as soon as she captured India levied a tax on all cotton looms there, which taxed them out of existence and gave the trade to her own people, and never removed the tax until the discovery of the use of steam and Arkwright's invention enabled them to manufacture better and cheaper goods than any country in the world?

Oh, no; it is not to the tunes of retreat that the British banner has been placed where it is first to kiss the rising sun on every meridian of the earth's face. Something must be done to retain this supremacy. The English money lenders, while controlling the government, and successfully plotting in their own interests, are bankrupting her farming and cotton manufacturing industries, and "a house divided against itself can not stand." How can all her industries be made to strike the chord of prosperity in unison is the question. And let us see how the ingenious English mind approaches the subject:

Parliament appoints a commission, of which Lord Herschell was chairman, to investigate and report. This commission has been gathering information and studying the subject for more than eight months, and has recently reported, recommending:

First. That the mints of India be closed to the coinage of silver for individual account.

Second. That the Government buy silver bullion and coin it into rupees at the mints of India, and sell the rupees at 32 a piece in gold.

Third. That a tariff be levied on the importation of all silver into India not introduced by the Government.

#### A TERRIBLE RAID.

Now each of these measures has a special service to perform. First, the stoppage of the free coinage for individuals is to depress the value of silver bullion and give the Government the control of the supply of rupees. At 31 pence an ounce for bullion, the price quoted yesterday, the silver in the rupee would cost the Government 20 cents, and if sold at 32 cents would give the Government 12 cents profit on each rupee, or about 38 cents profit on each ounce she coined into rupees. Sixty per cent profit should certainly be satisfactory to the Government. Having made this sum herself, she hands the rupees over to her customers with a stamp on them authorizing said customers to pay their debts due her Indian subjects with these rupees at a valuation of a fraction more than 47 cents per rupee. The aggregate ravages upon India of the three invasions of Alexander, Pompey, and Lucullus did not cost India one-half the treasure that this measure will, if submitted to without a revolution.

A tariff on the imports of silver shipped by individuals to India will force Chinese and Japanese merchants to quit India's mills, and buy their cotton goods and yarns in England. This will bankrupt every cotton factory in India, and build up the British factories. It will force India to export all of her cotton (except home consumption), and every bale that is so exported takes the place of an American bale. Unless America comes to the rescue, it makes England mistress of the commercial world for the next century. It gives her the same power over American freemen that she has over her Indian helots. England is accustomed to large transactions, and utterly unscrupulous where her financial interests are concerned, as shown by her legislation in reference to American colonies, Ireland, and India. Were we disinterested spectators, we might "catch our breath" at the enormity of the scheme and "plod on," but when all of our giant industries are bowing their towering heads, and being stripped of their green leaves and succulent shoots, we cannot fold our hands and idly float upon the current.

These figures are studied at every humble fireside in the South and every eye is turned upon this Congress, and gentlemen who advocated free silver and so suddenly changed front will have to answer how these figures lie. They are not sending petitions like the boards of trade, but are doing some quiet watching and thinking on their own account. We understand that the difference between the price of cotton in 1873 and 1893 represents the difference in a large degree between bimetallism and monometallism. That in the last cotton crop it represented the difference between five hundred and twenty and two hundred millions of dollars. Yes, gentlemen, our people understand that destroying one-half of our money doubles the purchasing power of the other half always at the expense of the producer.

#### VOLUME OF CURRENCY.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as to the volume of currency, a word: The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HARTER] said that "the volume of currency was of no consequence when you kept the standard of currency sound;" and cited the nations with a small per capita circulation as examples of greatest prosperity. The gentleman told us all about Lycurgus [laughter] and seems profoundly versed in classic history, but I will read a page to him.

From the report of the monetary commission, on pages 49 and 50, it says, in regard to contraction:

CAUSE OF THE DOWNFALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

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

"History records no such disastrous transition as that from the Roman Empire in the Dark Ages. Various explanations have been given of this entire breaking down of the framework of society, but it was certainly coincident with a shrinkage in the volume of money, which was also without historical parallel. The crumbling of institutions kept even step and pace with the shrinkage in the stock of money and the falling of prices. All other attendant circumstances than these last have occurred in other historical periods, unaccompanied and unfollowed by any such mighty disasters.

"It is a suggestive coincidence that the first glimmer of light only came with the invention of bills of exchange and paper substitutes, through which the scanty stock of the precious metals was increased in efficiency.

"But not less than the energizing influence of Potosi and all the argosies of treasure from the New World were needed to arouse the Old World from its comatose sleep, to quicken the torpid limbs of industry, and to plume the leaden wings of commerce. It needed the heroic treatment of rising prices to enable society to reunite its shattered links, to shake off the shackles of feudalism, to relight and uplift the almost extinguished torch of civilization.

"That the disasters of the Dark Ages were caused by decreasing money and falling prices, and that the recovery therefrom and the comparative prosperity which followed the discovery of America were due to an increasing supply of the precious metals and rising prices, will not seem surprising or unreasonable when the noble functions of money are considered.

"Money is the great instrument of association, the very fiber of social organism, the vitalizing force of industry, the protoplasm of civilization, and as essential to its existence as oxygen is to animal life. Without money civilization could not have had a beginning; with a diminishing supply it must languish, and, unless relieved, finally perish."

Our people are centuries ahead of the gentleman in his financial theories, for they understand that a contracted volume of currency means a few very rich men and a nation of paupers. [Applause.] Well does the historian say:

The conditions of life were so hard that individual selfishness was the only thing consistent with the instinct of self-preservation.

It is easy to see that after a man has made his fortune the less other people have the more highly prized and valuable are his accumulations. One can well imagine in those days preceding the Dark Ages some learned and wealthy Roman senator entertaining his colleagues with the same argument. Human nature is ever the same, and "when self the trembling" balance holds interest, conscience, and judgment run near together. [Applause.]

DANGER TO THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

For the first time since the war, the Democratic party is in full possession of every department of the Government. The people recognize the fact that we are not responsible for thirty of Republican misgovernments, and are willing to give the Democracy a fair trial.

But, Mr. Speaker, they will stand no deception upon the silver question. The recent revolt against the Republican party,

as the party in power, will be a gentle zephyr to the cyclone which will occur in 1896 if we are unfaithful to the pledges contained in the platform upon which we were elected, and you might just as well attempt to twist a Western cyclone round the wrong way as to stem the tide.

That plank of the platform was as follows:

**SILVER PLANK.**

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

In South Carolina we accepted in good faith this plank, pledging the party to maintain the parity of metals. Had Mr. Cleveland then announced that "silver and gold must part company," the solid South would have been a thing of the past, and he would never have been elected President of these United States, and you know it. [Applause.]

**THE PRESIDENT SURRENDERS TO WALL STREET.**

Mr. Speaker, some of the press are doing, I fear, the President a great injustice. I read:

[Special Dispatch to the Traveler.]

WASHINGTON, D. C., August 14.—President Cleveland has determined to apply his most heroic influence to bring about the speedy adoption of the silver repeal bill.

He has issued instructions to all of his cabinet officers that there shall be no more appointments made upon the recommendation of men in Congress about whose vote upon the silver problem there is any doubt.

He has gone even further, and has directed that there shall be extended no official courtesy whatever to any one in Congress until it is known how his vote is to be cast upon the silver question.

Two Senators from the far West called upon Secretary Hoke Smith the other day, and asked to have enforced certain laws adopted by the last Congress relating to Indian reservations, and they were surprised to be informed by the Secretary of the Interior that the Department would take no action upon the request of men in Congress until after the Sherman law was repealed.

The Senator attempted to explain to Secretary Smith that there was not the slightest partisanship or personal favor to them in the request made, but the Secretary of the Interior replied that he was carrying out instructions, and there would be nothing done except the routine of the Department until after the silver question was disposed of.

Mr. Speaker, if heroic treatment is to be applied, let it be met by heroes. Let us teach Mr. Cleveland that we and not he are the representatives of the people. [Loud applause.]

**THE PROBABLE RESULT.**

Mr. Speaker, if the great influence and power of the Executive is to be used to strike down one-half of the metal money of the country, it is too dear a price to pay for a party triumph, and can only be regarded in the light of a national calamity.

In 1878 John G. Carlisle, now Secretary of the Treasury, said:

The movement to totally demonetize silver is a stupendous conspiracy conceived by the moneyed interests of all countries to increase the value of

one-half of the world's metallic money by destroying the other half. The successful consummation of that conspiracy would be more disastrous to the people of this world than war, pestilence, and famine.

That eloquent tongue is silenced by a cabinet officer.

Representatives like the gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. PATTERSON] have suddenly found out that "consistency is the hobgoblin of the fool," and gone to the other side. We are gravely told that the silver plank means nothing—"catch-words and glittering generalities."

"Platforms are a good thing to get in on," and I would remind the gentlemen that the late Republican party found platforms a good thing to get out on. Let us be brave; let us be honest. The message of the President is a bitter disappointment—a complete surrender to Wall street. The issue is plainly and sharply drawn. It is well that it is so.

Necessity will force the West and South to unite, and then the domination of the East in national affairs is gone forever. The people can not be again deceived with "catch-words and glittering generalities." The gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. PATTERSON] reminds us how much we owe New York for help in reconstruction times. We are profoundly grateful to our brethren of the East for the help rendered in freeing us from negro domination and carpet-baggism, but we can not show our gratitude by becoming industrial serfs, to manufacture more Goulds and Vanderbilts.

For thirty years we have tackled our car to Eastern Democracy; but this straw will break the camel's back, and you will force us to the great West, whose soul is fashioned in the likeness of her boundless prairies and mighty mountains—not confined within the narrow rim of a gold dollar.

It was the great common people in 1776, with "confidence" in their country, who secured our independence from Great Britain. The same people to-day are ashamed and humiliated at the admission of the right and power of England to force upon us a financial policy which enriches foreign security holders at the expense of our own people. The next thing in order is for some one to propose that these United States be annexed to the Dominion of Canada. We are in exactly the same condition we were in 1876, except that now we seek to eliminate the tyranny of King Gold, instead of King George. Fifteen-sixteenths of our railroad lines are now controlled by foreign capitalists, and we have even more cause for discontent than we had then. Millions are drained from us annually in interest and rents, and what England failed to do with her sword she accomplishes with her money. Are we to be forever a tributary province, a puny, sickly baby, with spasms every time mother England has hysterics? Let us rather clip the umbilical cord with a pair of silver shears, and assume the proportions of full manhood: One thing more, and I am done. I will not repeat the words of Mr. Ingalls concerning silver, so frequently quoted upon the floor of this House.

Ex-Senator Ingalls, in a speech in the Senate February 15, 1878, said:

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

navies are not maintained by gold. In times of panic and calamity, shipwreck and disaster, it becomes the agent and minister of ruin. No nation ever fought a great war by the aid of gold. On the contrary, in the crisis of the greatest peril it becomes an enemy more potent than the foe in the field; but when the battle is won and peace has been secured gold reappears and claims the fruits of victory.

In our own civil war it is doubtful if the gold of New York and London did not work us greater injury than the powder and lead and iron of the enemy. It was the most invincible enemy of the public credit. Gold paid no soldier or sailor. It refused the national obligations. It was worth most when our fortunes were the lowest. Every defeat gave it increased value. It was in open alliance with our enemies the world over, and all its energies were evoked for our destruction. But as usual, when danger had been averted and the victory secured, gold swaggers to the front and asserts the supremacy.

The present situation is no exception. Gold has hidden its head in time of trouble and silver is at a premium instead of gold, as they predicted. I read an extract from the New York World, which certainly can not be accused of being friendly to silver. The occurrences were so exceptional that it may be well to recall some of them by way of illustration.

It is not so long ago that apprehension was felt that the continued purchases of silver by the Government would send gold to a premium. A hoarding of the yellow metal resulted in consequence. Last week, however, gold was actually worth less than the Government promises to pay, or paper money, and even the discredited silver dollars commanded a larger premium.

There was also witnessed during the week the anomaly of unprecedentedly heavy imports of gold with the rates of sterling exchange practically on the same basis as when Europe took millions from this country. Bankers were enabled to import at the high rates simply because of the premiums commanded by currency for local purposes. In a comparatively short time between \$20,000,000 and \$25,000,000 gold have been contracted for, no less than \$13,000,000 having arrived during the week just closed. Far and beyond everything else was the premium on silver dollars, which served to bring out clearly the seriousness of the currency famine. It was not a pleasant thing to contemplate.

Mr. Speaker, I favor the free coinage of silver at a ratio of 16 to 1. I am opposed to increasing the ratio, first, because we can maintain the parity at 16 to 1 as easily as at a larger ratio. I despise compromise. Brazen, impudent wrong and timid virtue are the parents of compromise. Second, because it would result in a shrinkage of probably \$200,000,000 in the coin now in circulation, which would all have to be re-coined. Third, because just to the extent that the size of the dollar was increased there would be a contraction in the money metals of the world, and a corresponding increase in the debts. In other words, every man now owing a debt would be forced to pay in a dishonest dollar, one that had appreciated in value, since the debt was contracted, in proportion to the increase in ratio.

#### DUMPING GROUND.

Unfortunately, we would not be the dumping ground for silver. India coins at \$1.37½, France at \$1.33½, and the United States at \$1.29 per ounce. Therefore, it would cost from 4 to 8 cents per ounce to ship silver here, besides depleting the circulation of the countries from which it came.

But suppose that silver did come here. Would not our competitors, India and Egypt, be driven out of the wheat and cotton markets of the world? Every buyer would come here to buy with silver, and how long could these countries stand a contracted currency, with the markets of the world closed to their products? Would not the price of every American product be enhanced even

in this debased coin, which is now selling at a premium in New York? Would not the clamor from their colonies force England and Germany to us, hat in hand, and we then realize that "iridescent dream" of international bimetallism, with which the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BRYAN] taunted the advocates of monometallism.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad the time for debate has nearly closed. The country has its eyes turned anxiously upon Congress, and it wants us to do something or else adjourn and go home. What we do we should do promptly, and let the country know what to expect. There can be but one thing worse than inaction, and that is the unconditional repeal of the Sherman act. I for one am prepared to stay here the balance of my term before I vote for unconditional repeal.

Mr. Speaker, these times are not without their compensating advantages. Discontent and agitation are the parent of progress. The very air we breathe bears upon its bosom the restless discontent of the masses.

Our beautiful capital city has its wide avenues, its grand marble palaces.

Back down the dim corridors of the past lie the ruins of other great cities, the wrecks of mighty nations, perishing upon the shores of time because of the destruction of the homes of the people. The homes of our people are now at stake. Oh, ye money kings and wise financiers, I appeal to you, heed the warning. Belshazzar—feasted and intoxicated with the subtle essence of power, the golden goblets from the temple of the Lord were polluted with the lips of the harlot. Belshazzar is a type. When the beautiful night came down over Babylon, and he delighted himself with music and feasting, there were strange lights on the horizon line, but none noted them save the gloomy seers, and these called them the watch fires of the army of the great Cyrus. There are strange lights now upon the horizon line. The deep mutterings of a mighty storm, the fierce discontent of a hungry people, come to us like a cry for help from out of the night. Oh, my friends, will you heed the warning, will you listen to the voice of the people, or will you wait until a Daniel strides into the judgment hall, and reads the doom of a great nation and a mighty people? My friends let us rise above section, above party. In this hour of a nation's supreme need let us forget self and the fleeting present. Let us build wisely, so that generations yet unborn will rise up and call us blessed. [Loud applause.]