STATE OFFICERS.

Governor

AND PERSONAL

SENATOR DAVIS' VIEW.

The Democratic Platform Strikes at the Government's Foundation.

FREE SILVER NOT BIMETALLISM.

Condition of Affairs Worse than War Would Result from Democratic Success.

In a speech delivered at St. Paul August 4, Senator C. K. Davis pointed out very clearly the fact that free silver is not bimetallism and showed what evil results would follow Democratic success. He said that for the first time since the election next preceding the great Civil war, we are required to guard the very foundations and bulwarks of national stability, of commercial honesty, of financial conduct. The Democratic party which met at Chicago in convention in July suffered a wonderful change in that convention. The old oracles and guides of the party were rudely turned aside. It was occupied and demoniacally possessed by a new spirit—something which has not raised its head in the political conventions of either party for thirty years. If there was any one thing which the 2,000,000 of men who went out to defend this country thirty years ago thought that they had entirely obliterated when they returned, it was the malign doctrine of state rights, which lay at the bottom and was the impetus of the greatest rebellion which ever reared its head against a civilized government. Lo and behold, in that convention, from the state of South Carolina, as of yore, you find the declaration of the same state rights, in the same spirit as in the ancient time, and done in a connection, my fellow citizens, which must appeal to the resentment and repugnance of every liberty-loving and country-loving man. Everyone who knows anything about me knows that I am not a political admirer of Grover Cleveland; but if there was any one act of his administration which, after the contentions of history have ceased to rage about his acts and his memory, that will remain star-bright forever, it was his action, when the pulse of business beat low, when commercial intercourse was cut off by rioters in Chicago, by which, upon principles and precedents laid down by George Washington 100 years before, he evoked the strong arm of the United States to restore law and order in this country. [Applause and cheers.]

This act is covertly (and covertly is too mild a word) denounced in the Chicago platform. More than that. If there is anything in this country or in any nation upon which the stability of the government depends, the very keystone of the great arch upon which the ranged empire stands, the ultimate principle of absoluteism that must exist somewhere in all governments, it is the courts of our land, where men sequestered from political concerns and political ambitions, holding the scales of justice even between contending passions and contending rights, decide for their fellow citizens what the law is. And for more than 100 years the Supreme court of the United States has sat in that exalted position, midway in the capitol of the nation between the Senate and the House of Representatives, a typical object lesson of their position and of their sublime capacity to restrain either, and has done more to conduct the government to the high plane which it occupies, I was going to say, than all the statesmen which this country has ever produced. (Applause.) The Chicago platform strikes at that court, strikes at all courts, and caunciates its malign prophesy of the reorganization of that court and of any other court if necessary, to register the fitful and passionate and repudiating edicts of mistaken and misguided men, of mistaken and misguided parties.

A Crisis is Impending.

And worse than that, my fellow citizens—worse than that! If there was another thing which the veterans of the last war thought they had achieved and which the loyal sentiment of the North thought it had achieved, it was the obliteration of all sectionalism in this country; we were to have no South, no North, no East, no West, any more. The whole country was to be a unity. But in these later days, we see the solid South coming up to the banks of the Ohio and the Missouri as before the war, and with sectional demands upon an economic issue, precisely such as was made before the Rebellion. And now, with the pitchfork of Tillman stirring up the doctrine of state rights, with the bomb of Altgeld in the denunciation of our courts and of President Cleveland thrown under the very fabric of our government, they have chosen to put forward as an issue something which touches more immediately the conviction, the passions, the cupidity and the honesty of men, and which in itself contains more disintegrating influences to our prosperity than all the causes combined that I have mentioned. The Democratic convention, or the Democratic party, as now organized, has joined the Populist party in bonds of unholy wedlock upon the demand that the United States shall take a position upon the currency of this country which I, speaking to you under the responsibility of a man who is speaking to his neighbors, say that I believe is fraught with more disaster to this country than the greatest foreign war could possibly bring about. (Applause.)

And that is the subject that I have been asked to talk to you tonight about. I am going to do so, as I said in the beginning, not with any attempt at decorative speech, not denouncing any men who may choose to differ from me, for I tell you, my fellow citizens, that many and many a thousand men who differ from us today on this matter one year from now will be wondering why and how they came to do it. (Applause.) And so I shall go on. I may be tedious. I am going to give you facts and figures. I am not going to draw on my own imagination for my facts at all. The facts that I shall give you will be impregnable. It is for you to judge whether the deductions I shall draw from them can be refuted.

Now what is the question? For a correct understanding of the question is always the first step towards the solution of the controversy. The question is not whether there should be the free and unlimited coinage of silver in the mints of all the nations, by the consent of the principal commercial nations of the globe upon a ratio to be agreed upon. That is not the issue. We all might agree that when this is brought about, as it will be, if the United States conducts itself with judgment upon this question, I say we might all agree that that would be an excellent thing. The Republican party has pledged itself in successive platforms to labor to bring about international agreement. The most advanced thinkers upon financial questions in both hemispheres are advocating, especially in foreign lands, the resumption of the coinage of silver, by united action of nations who, before we did, long ago, independently of us, and uncontrollable by us, suspended or limited the further coinage of silver; and I want to say one thing to you—that not one of these professors in foreign universities, not one of these economists whose name and fame are world-wide, and not one of those great financiers who have given days and years of thought to this subject, not one, and nobody except the leaders of the modern Democracy and Populism, has ventured to advise his own country in Europe to undertake that task alone. (Applause.)

The question is this, and nothing more: Shall the United States, alone, undertake the free and unlimited coinage of silver at a ratio of 16 to 1? (A few cries of "yes" and "no," and repeated cries of "no.") Now, see you gentlemen over there who called "yes," and you gentlemen here who called "no," shows the difference of opinion upon this subject (laughter), and to you over there who come to listen to me, you will listen dispassionately, you will digest my arguments, and I hope finally that by the time you have done so thoroughly that you will be inclined to shout "no" with the gentlemen who responded when you responded. (Cheering and applause.)

Now, let us be entirely good-natured about this. I am going to try to give you the facts, and I repeat it, the issue is whether the United States shall attempt to do that thing alone, in the face of the controlling fact that every civilized commercial nation upon the face of the earth, except the Central American and South American states, years ago and before we did abandoned it utterly. And if I shall succeed in convincing any of our friends that we are not in position to do it without inflicting upon the country and upon us all injuries which it will take a generation to repair, I shall be more than rewarded for the pains that I have taken, the observations that I have made, the studies I have gone through and the reflections which have brought me to my present convictions. (Applause.)

Shall We Go Backward or Forward?

Shall we, for our own interests stand along with those nations with which we have classed ourselves and who are leading the march of humanity, or shall we go with Mexico, South America, China and Japan, the rearward half of the great army of human progress, and join those imperfect and rudimentary civilizations, which are an occular demonstration that no nation ever undertook alone the coinage of free silver that did not deprive itself of gold entirely. (Applause.) And you have but to glance upon the map of your school boy or school girl, your little son or daughter, to see the fact recorded there for the education of youth, to know that every one of those nations stands upon a lower scale of progress than the nations which have declared the policy upon which the United States now stands.

My fellow citizens, the warnings of history are all against it. The present examples of nations who singly are endeavoring to sustain themselves under a single standard forbid us to enter upon a voyage upon, I was going to say, untried waters, but no, upon a voyage which we can plainly see other nations are making at the present time, where we can plainly view rocks of distress, the shoals and quicksands of their course from the secure mainland upon which the American people now stand, and from which our opponents are attempting to lure them by false lights and false alarms. (Applause.)

Now we have got to take facts exactly as they are. We are not dealing with glittering and glowing generalities. We are administering society and human concerns; society, a being perfectly concrete, infinitely practicable, somewhat selfish, and I am going to appeal to the selfishness of this audience to know whether they will assist in bringing about that which I think I can prove will result from the arts of the gentlemen who are attempting to mislead them.

Now, my friends, the world is divided, just as sharply as it is by oceans and mountain chains, between the gold countries, who employ concurrently with gold more silver money than all the silver countries contain or circulate. (Applause.) I say that the gold countries of this world, including the United States (and I call them gold countries for the purpose not of definition, but of clearness of expression), employ and circulate more silver than all the silver countries of the world employ, contain or circulate.

I make another proposition. I appeal to history and to contemporary facts which no man can dispute, that every free coinage country is on a silver basis. Isn't that so? (Cries of "Yes.") I make another statement for you to think of, for I am not going to elaborate it—I am going to get into the figures pretty soon—every gold country uses silver and gold in amounts nearly equal by money nations. Isn't that so? (Cries of "Yes.") Isn't that so in the United States? (Cries of "Yes.") In France? (Voices "Yes.") I make another statement for your calm and cool reflection, that no silver standard country has any gold money whatever. (Applause.) Don't take my word for it. Go and investigate this subject. I say that no silver country has any gold money whatever, and you can search from Mexico to Cape Horn and find that this statement is correct.

Another statement—and I make it upon a sense of my responsibility after an exhaustive examination of statistics, investigations and records—that in every silver standard country wages are pressed down to the very minimum of a wretched subsistence. It is so in Mexico, it is so in Japan, it is so in South America. I say that in every silver country wages are pressed down to the very minimum of a wretched subsistence.

The Reasons.

Now if it is true (I will not go into the reasons for it), but if it is true as a concrete, absolute fact, that no silver country, no country which has adopted the silver standard has any gold circulation whatever, I say that it follows that the only practicable bimetallism on the planet is by the nations with which the United States has classed itself, and it is this bimetallism in the United States which the new Democracy and Populism are endeavoring to destroy by substituting a silver monometallism. (Applause.) The bimetallism which this country and the nations of which I have spoken enjoy is the bimetallism of fact and actual enjoyment extending to that full extent which human judgment, human experience, human apprehension—call it what you will—teach is the proportion in which the metals can be employed in a degree that one will not destroy or drive out the other and that both can co-exist together. (Applause.) For there is, my fellow citizens, an unquestionable dividing line—I shall prove it further along, though it is not necessary for men who have read history, even cursorily, for me to prove it—there is a dividing line beyond which you cannot pass in the employment of the metal of less value without its driving out the other and entirely supplanting it. And I say that he who insists (I say it logically) that the United States shall or can, acting alone, coin silver without limit, as required by the Democratic and Populist platforms, is not a bimetallist; he is a silver monometallist, who, after spending years in attacking what he deems the idol of the dark idolatry of monometallism, ends by immolating himself upon its altar. (Applause.)

Now let me right here—not exactly in the logical connection—throw out a thought which to me has a great deal of consequence. It is represented that gold has become a tyrant, that its power has become omnipotent, absolutely selfish and cruel; that it has become a metal which great combinations, perhaps of nations, perhaps of capitalists, hoard and gather for the oppression of mankind. Now let me call your attention to one fact. The free-coiners assert, when they are told that the increased output of gold is going to tend very much and by natural processes to solve this question, that from one-half to one-third of the gold annually produced in the world goes into the arts. This statement is probably an exaggeration. It is probable that one-quarter of the gold of the world produced annually goes into the arts, and it has been doing it for centuries. Consider for a moment, my fellow citizens, what an enormous sum, enormous aggregate—three billions, perhaps four billions, of dollars are lying in the shape of golden ornaments, thousands of dollars of them in this room tonight. Now I want to ask you this question, if there is a gold famine, if the power of gold is so absolute and tyrannical as it is claimed, if its possession in the shape of coin gives its owner such sway over the destiny and fortune of his fellow man, how is it that this enormous amount of gold, perhaps one-third of that which is in existence, has not shown the least symptom yet of going into the melting pot to be turned into coin?

But we hear a great deal about the demonetization of silver, and one would think to hear our free-coiner friends declaim that silver had been entirely demonetized, that by some malign influence the money function of silver throughout the world had been entirely abrogated, and it is a very catching phrase. It has been a very catching assumption, for I will not call it an argument.

Now, I say, my fellow citizens, that, properly considering facts, that statement is inaccurate, not to say untrue. I assert that silver has never been demonetized in the sense in which that charge has been made. (Applause.) Demonetization means to divest of standard value as money, and I say this has not been done with any dollar of silver coin that was ever minted at any mint. (Applause.) It is true that many nations who have approached the danger line of which I spoke a few moments ago, when one metal drives out another, that many nations have told the owners of silver which lay concealed in the earth we will not longer buy it at a certain ratio and at a certain price. Even that has not been entirely done, and I repeat my statement that the assertion that silver has been demonetized is one calculated to mislead, and is not true in fact.

"The Crime of '73."

All our woes are dated from 1873, the period when the free-coiners persuade their disciples that, to use their stock expression, silver was demonetized, or that one-half of the aggregate wealth of the world was struck down at a blow. Now let us bring this statement to the crucial, absolute test of figures, of what records and statistics say upon this subject, and not trust to the vague declamation of any person. The value (and I will give you my authority for this statement in a moment), the value of all silver coin in the world in 1873 was $1,877,000,000. In 1895 it was $4,100,000,000. The value of all the gold coin in the world in 1873 was $3,045,000,000; the value of all the gold coin in the world in 1895 was $4,200,000,000. Of this quantity of silver current in the world in 1895, $3,439,300,000 was full legal tender. Now attend to me for a moment while the mathematical deduction is made. By this statement it appears that the quantity of gold in the world increased, between 1873 and 1895, only $1,200,000,000, while the increase of silver coin for the same period was $2,283,000,000—more coined in the twenty-three years since 1873 than remained up to that time of all the coinage of the world since Noah left the ark. (Applause.) And nearly double more silver has been coined than gold since 1873. What becomes, then, of the assertion of the equal and equable production of silver and gold from year to year since time began, and of the demonetization of silver since 1873, in the face of this showing that, between 1873 and 1895 the coinage of silver was nearly twice greater than that of gold? They talk of the demonetization of silver since 1873 in the face of a silver coinage throughout the world since that year of over $2,000,000,000, of which $538,444,467 was minted by the United States! (Applause.) And of gold the United States minted during the same period $937,460,633. And here, also, is answered a statement confidently made and plausibly maintained, and yet erroneous in fact, that there has in all this time been an enormous contraction of the currency all over the world, yet these figures conclusively demonstrate that that statement is not true. Now, my friends, I have not taken this from the statistics of any other speaker or from any other book. I know where the statistics are gathered with the care which commands the respect and confidence of the civilized world, and on the 29th of July (only a few days ago) I telegraphed to the director of the mint regarding information upon these subjects, and he answered me:

"Hon. C. K. Davis, St. Paul, Minn.: The total value of all silver coined in the world in 1873 I estimate to have been $1,817,000,000 and 1895 $4,100,000,000. The world's stock of gold in 1873 is estimated to have been $3,045,000,000 and 1895 about $4,200,000,000. R. E. Preston, director of the mint." And these figures I have just given you are the figures which I have just read in the telegram of the director. The greatest business transactions in the way of finance on the face of the earth are made upon statements like that, and when what I have said is discussed the only answer that will be made to it is probably that Mr. Preston and the United States government is one general universal gold bug. (Laughter.)

Now let me give you another statement. The coinage of the nations of the world in 1892, 1893 and 1894 was as follows: Gold, $172,473,124; silver, $155,517,347; 1893, gold, $232,420,517; silver, $137,952,690; in 1894, gold, $227,921,032; silver, $113,095,783. A total in three years of $1,039,389,498. With all deductions for recoinage this output of coined money is of immense volume.

Now I have thrown out these suggestions and will pass from that branch of the discussion and call your attention to another assertion of the free coiners: I alluded to it cursorily a few moments ago, but I propose to now treat it in the same manner in which I have treated the last preceding question. The free coiners assert that contraction has inflicted all the financial and economic miseries that mankind has endured since 1873. Now I say that they themselves coolly propose to bring about a contraction of currency in the United States unexampled in the world's history. I say that they propose to bring about a contraction in the United States unexampled in the world's history and fraught with more evils than are recorded in the annals of human woe. In that case, if that is the logical result and inevitable destiny of what they propose, I want to know wherein the goldbug is worse than the silver eel?

Here is the Proof.

Now you ask me for my proof and I will proceed to give it. The unlimited and free coinage of silver in this country will drive out the gold. This is as indisputable as any law of physics, such as the law of gravitation. It has driven out gold in every country which has unlimitedly coined silver. Do you want the historical and clear proof of it? In fact, there is not an enlightened gentleman who will talk to you in advocacy of free coinage of silver who does not admit that this will be the inevitable result, but they say it will only last two or three years, that the patient will probably survive two or three years, and will probably survive to take the new medicine in abundance. But I say that they admit themselves—any intelligent speaker upon that subject admits that the inevitable and irresistible tendency and result of the free coinage of silver in this country will be to drive out the gold. Now let us see how they propose to obviate it. It has always struck me that one of their most enlightened champions was Mr. St. John of New York. He has been largely and copiously quoted by them—he was president of a national bank and was president of the recent silver convention at St. Louis and by the bill which he procured to be introduced in Congress and which had the endorsement of the silver and Populist sentiment there, they proposed to bridge over this yawning chasm which they themselves admitted would open beneath their feet by issuing interest-bearing treasury notes of the United States, secured by deposits of uncoined silver or gold bullion, or by deposit of United States bonds to be issued of course for that purpose. Now let us look at this coolly and calmly and figure upon it a little, like men of sense who are infinitely interested in this matter as one of business concern and let us see how this project would work; whether it would not merely

Skin and film the ulcerous sore,
Whilst rank corruption mining all beneath
Infects unseen.

We have $620,000,000 of gold in the United States. I think more. It would disappear at once in the face of free silver coinage, or even the certainty of it. Let this election go Democratic-Populist, let the American people record their will that the coinage of silver shall be free and unlimited, long before Mr. Bryan and his cohorts could place the edict into the form of law, the just financial fears of mankind, of people here in this audience and of people everywhere, at home and abroad, would draw that gold from every vault wherein it lies protected and it would sink into the earth as the waters which came down from heaven last night. I say it would disappear at once. This bill of Mr. St. John so admits, and that disappearance is the very ailment which he proposes to remedy. But in this universal absconding of gold there would be no gold bullion to deposit, people would not take it out of hiding to exchange it for any paper money whatever of the government which proposed to make all these obligations payable in silver. (Applause.) This remedy is counteracted so far by the assumption and admission that gold will disappear.

Now as to deposits of silver bullion. The world's product of silver in 1894 (commercial value) was $216,892,200. If we could get the world's entire product (as we could not), it would take three years to fill the void of $620,000,000 of vanished gold. The nations of the world will not melt down their coined silver to deposit it in the United States treasury and receive merely a silver certificate.

Some of the Evils.

But the third alternative is one of most malign portent. It is proposed to use the interest-bearing bonded debt of the United States in order that the miner or owner of silver may take his bullion to the mint meanwhile and get evidences of public debt two for one—a privilege not granted to or claimed by any farmer, artisan, manufacturer or producer upon God's heritage. I say it is proposed to use the interest-bearing bonded debt of the United States. Now, what does this mean? It means an increase of the bonded debt. People who have got their bonds as investments to get their living from in the way of their annual income, or anyone else, are not going to put their bonds on deposit in the treasury to get a treasury certificate.

And so the chasm could not be filled in that way, neither by gold, by silver or by the illimitable issue of bonds. So this chasm could not be filled. They admit it will last three years. What will take place meantime, in the very face of the danger of it? We are in the midst of commercial distress almost unexampled in our history; a panic such as the world has seldom seen. It would throw 3,000,000 of men out of employment. It would depress and starve the wage-earner, and it would deprive him of being the best consumer and purchaser that the American farmer has, and by that reflex action inflict unexampled misery upon our agricultural population. (Applause.)

In that state of things the abyss must be filled. No nation could stand such a contraction. The most radical remedy would be absolutely necessary to restore it, and there would only be two—one is to get back to the honest, solid standard on which all the commercial nations, including the United States, stand now, or to use an irredeemable paper money, perfectly limitless or illimitable in its amount. And when that comes to pass silver will vanish in the face of paper as gold vanished in the face of silver. (Applause.) And then you would have another chasm, another issue of money. The wreck is complete, and the United States stands entirely on an irredeemable paper money basis, precisely the place we occupied before the war, and from which we struggled with so much passion of honesty and love of national honor to emancipate ourselves. Do you want that again? (Cries of "No, no.")

But, my friends, to look a little deeper into this subject. The misery goes further that would be inflicted. I have been talking heretofore about lawful money, and I mean by that, money issued by the governments of the world, the United States included. But did you ever think how little of the business of this world or of any community like St. Paul and Minneapolis is done on what is called lawful money? Statistics would seem to show that 95 per cent. of the transactions between man and man in civilized nations, especially in the United States, is by way of checks. In cities they are balanced against each other in the clearing house, and a few thousand dollars balanced money closes the day's transactions. Where clearing houses do not exist— I mean in towns and villages—the depositing of the checks in the banks, and the collections of the banks adjust balances in the same way.

Now, this is the greatest currency of civilization. Numbers are inadequate to express its infinite superiority in numerical relation to the lawful money of which we have been talking. This is the currency that no statutory fiat can expand, although it can contract it. But it is a currency which will contract instantaneously to its very minimum by the operation of the Democratic and Populistic theories as announced in their platforms. Now what does that mean? It means simply that the merchants, the manufacturers, the employer, the man of every kind who pays out money to his fellow-men for labor, or for material will cease so far as he is concerned to emit that currency which rules all business. The lack of confidence will produce that contraction in that currency. The clearings in the United States last week were $811,000,000. In the clearing houses alone, mind you, and not through the influence of interposition of the banks where there are no clearing houses. The clearances of the city of St. Paul last week were something over $4,000,000. Does any man think that such amount of money as that was used in St. Paul last week—$4,000,000—or in the nation, $811,000,000, to transact their business? It was done by this currency of civilization which no nation can produce, which no nation can regulate or control, and I say that this currency, more important than silver or gold or national paper, will be struck down at a blow if the shallow projects of the Democratic and Populist platforms be realized.

But you have heard from our free coinage friends here that other nations have done this. And there are many good people who believe that France is doing it, and that the Latin union—so-called—is doing it. Now, I would like to know why they can't tell the entire truth about this matter. Let us not deceive each other and let nobody deceive us. The Latin union is composed of France, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland and Greece. It was formed in 1865 by treaty between those powers, whereby each agreed until the year 1880 to take the coins of the other powers at the ratio of 15½ to 1.

But Germany demonetized silver; she had ceased to coin it, and so, in 1873, those great nations, headed by France (the most scientifically-governed country in the world, and the one which has the most accurate financial ideas), I say those countries, after Germany had demonetized silver in 1873, limited their silver coinage, and by 1876 they suspended it entirely. They, those great European nations—France, the strongest monetary nation in the world, with her allies—undertook with all their power to do precisely what the free coiners of the United States are asking this government to undertake in the light of such conspicuous failures of other nations.

Invariable Standaads Needed.

Now, everybody admits—I think the most rampant free-coiner declaimer would admit—that the money unit should remain as nearly invariable as possible. Now, I say gold has so remained. Silver has fallen commercially like other articles. This is denied. They say silver has not fallen, that gold has risen; Now, that is the way you look at it. You can look at it through the deluding glass of idealism, and it may appear that way, but it is an optical illusion. Now let me put an illustration from nature. The waters of Lake Superior, that great inland sea which floats so much of our commerce and is such an element in our prosperity, have for many years been falling, until now they are lower than they have been at any time for fifty years, and everything on their surface has fallen. The waters of Lake Superior, like the universal, spread-out plane of humanity, bearing everything upon its surface—those waters bear the fleets, vessels and craft of all kinds, and vessels and craft and fleets of all kinds have fallen with the water. What would you think of a man standing on the deck of one of those vessels saying, "This vessel has not fallen; this vessel stands just where it did, but the universal shore of Lake Superior has risen?" [Laughter and applause.]

Now, I say, my friends, that since the Latin union, from 1873 to 1876, abandoned free coinage, there has existed in European nations and the United States the only practical bimetallism. Let me repeat this. I feel that I cannot bear it into your minds too often or too urgently that these nations, including ours, are the only nations on the face of the earth that have any bimetallism whatever. And why? Because they went to the danger line, as we went, and then stopped. [Applause.] The universal teaching of history demonstrated that there was a dead line, beyond which silver could not be pressed without the immediate annihilation of its companion, gold, as a useful, working money medium. And when any man gets up and dreams and soliloquizes and philosophizes before me and tells me he knows it won't be so if we try where others failed, I tell him that an ounce of fact is worth a ton of theory, and that something bodily is worth a million of disembodied ghosts. [Applause.]

What is Ratio?

And yet these gentlemen favor, in the face of these historical examples and warnings, that the United States shall make the unit of coinage the silver dollar at the ratio of 16 to 1.

Now, what is ratio? It is not $16 to $1, as some people claim. (Laughter.) Ratio means this: That there shall be sixteen times more silver in weight in a silver dollar than there is weight of gold in a gold dollar. Or, to put the definition in another form, that sixteen ounces of silver, when coined, shall be the equivalent of one ounce of gold when coined. When gold measured by silver is worth $16 per ounce, no disparity in value can exist; but when measured by silver the ounce of gold is worth $31 an ounce commercially, disparity results. Such is the present condition, and yet the free silver men assert that it will be no such thing in case legislative fiat endeavors to make two and two five instead of the old-fashioned result, two and two four.

The trouble is that our friends have confused the ratio of weight with the ratio of value, and are trying to confuse the people with it. The ratio of weight and the ratio of value were once the same, but they have changed. They changed more than thirty years ago. Other nations saw it and obeyed the imperial behest of that change before we did, and the ratio is now throughout the world 32, or about 32, to 1.

Now I say that no legislative fiat whatever—it does not lie in the power of man (I was about to say something more extreme than that, which it would not be proper to say)—it does not lie in the power of man to enact that a given dimension, volume or capacity shall be a hair's breadth greater than the laws of the Almighty have fixed it from the beginning. (Applause.)

It is necessary that the ratio or proportion of value should be invariable. It is necessary for the production of the thing itself called money, speaking of it in its great volume, as the volume of money in the United States. We see analogies everywhere; we see an analogy in nature. Take the air we breathe. It is a compound substance, made up from oxygen and nitrogen at the ratio of about 77 to 23, and while this ratio lasts it is from it we all draw our lives and have our being. But change to any material degree and, instead of being the vital, life-giving air, it becomes a deadly and destructive miasma.

But the free-coiners assert that unlimited coinage of silver will restore it to a parity with gold. It has been tried by many nations of the world. Has it done it in a single instance? Not one. They said the same thing when Congress passed the Sherman act of 1890. They said buy of us freely 4,500,000 ounces a month, or 54,000,000 ounces a year, and you will see that silver will go up to $1.29 an ounce immediately. In the face of clamor, in doubt as to what might be the result, in willingness, (it went too far) to give such claims every opportunity to be demonstrated whether they were correct or incorrect, that legislation was enacted. And silver did go in the course of about ten days to $1.19 an ounce (Applause by one man) and the free-coiners were exalted, and said, "I told you so." But, my friends who applaud at that delusive statement, it lasted but a short time. Silver proceeded to fall lower than it ever fell before. (Great applause.)

It did not take it long to do it. The annual average production in the United States for ten years before that act was passed was 44,000,000 ounces, in 1891 it ran to 54,000,000 ounces, and in 1892 to 62,000,000 ounces, nearly 20,000,000 ounces more than we produced in the average of ten years up to the time when that bill was passed, and it was then seen by all wise men, by all men who had the stability of the currency and the prosperity of their country at heart, with intelligent vision, that that immense volume would break down—indeed it did break down—the very theory upon which the bill was passed. (Applause.) It produced the panic of 1893, put distrust into the minds of men. The silver men said before we passed that bill in 1890, that silver would go at a parity with gold if you will only give us a limited purchase of 54,000,000 ounces a year. It did not go to a parity. How can they say now, and look the American people in the face with steady eye, that where it failed then it is going to work entirely different and satisfactorily now?

BRYAN ON THE RATIO.

He Sang a Different Song on the Subject When He was in Congress.

On the 16th of August, 1893, on the floor of the House of Representatives, Mr. Byran said:

"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 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."

Legislation in favor of debtors or of creditors, as a class, would be class legislation and wholly unjustifiable. Questions between debtors and creditors are properly settled in the courts; and every court will hold that what is right for the one is right for the other also. Mr. Bryan, therefore, did well to disclaim advocacy of any change of the existing ratio. Should a change be made at any time hereafter it cannot and ought not to affect contracts antedating such change.

But in advocating the unlimited coinage of silver bullion, at the present ratio, for the owner and without cost to him, Mr. Bryan does propose a change of the entire basis upon which business is transacted. We are informed by him that there are three ways by which the ratio between gold and silver coin can be altered: 1. The shrinkage in size of the gold dollar. 2. The enlargement of the silver dollar. 3. Making a change in the size and weight of both dollars. Either of these three methods contemplates a nearer approximation of the coinage ratio to the commercial ratio and is so far forth honest. If this approximation of the two ratios were carried to the point of ideality, the change suggested by him would be absolutely honest—provided that it is not retroactive in its application to outstanding debts.

This is not, however, the change which would follow the adoption of free coinage at 16 to 1. There is still another possible change to which Mr. Bryan made no reference in his speech, namely, the shrinkage of the silver dollar. A silver dollar containing 371¼ grains of pure silver, worth 53 cents in gold, which nevertheless passes current for 100 cents in gold, is an anomaly in finance, unless explained. The explanation is simple. Fifty-three cents of the current value of this dollar is visible; 47 cents of its value is invisible, and consists in credit. Free and unlimited coinage would destroy this credit. In advocating free coinage at 16 to 1, therefore, Mr. Bryan proposes to make the silver dollar smaller—not to the eye, but in fact.

This would be a change of ratio in the purchasing power of the silver dollar, as compared with a gold dollar, from 16:1 to 31:1.

To avoid this result Mr. Bryan gravely proposes that we should do one of two things: double the weight of the silver dollar, or else coin gold dollars half their present weight. Anybody can see that one of these would have to be done, in order that identity should be established between the coinage ratio and the commercial ratio.

Which of these two expedients does Mr. Bryan favor? He tells us that enlarging the silver dollar would help the creditor. It could only help him by maintaining the present standard of value. He also tells us that halving the gold dollar would help the debtor. If so, it would be by a change in the present standard of value. Finally, he tells us that he prefers the latter expedient, because the debtor has rights superior to the rights of the creditor.

The Lesson of 1892.

What happened in 1892? Everybody had money, plenty of money; and then they came to you and whispered in your ear that although you had plenty of money and plenty of work that you were not buying what you bought cheap enough; that they were taxing the many for the benefit of the few, and too many of the American people listened to it. It was the arousing of the class of employers against the employed; and the employed against the employer; and we had the change. They gave us the cheap stuff, but in what condition did they leave the American people?

It reminds me of a colored gentleman who wanted to cross the Arkansas river, and had no means. He sat down awhile upon a log and waited until someone should come up. Shortly a white gentleman approached. He says: "Boss, I want to cross this river; will you please give me two cents? I haven't a cent in the world." "Well, sir," he said, "if you haven't a cent in the world it don't make a damn bit of difference which side of this river you are on." And so it is with all cheap goods that these gentlemen furnish us. They fill the stores with their clothing, made of shoddy, brought in under an ad valorem law by which the importer is made to swear that it is worth nothing, and it is worth nothing. It is made out of old hats picked up out of the streets and alleys of our foreign cities, of rags from Switzerland and rotton socks from Italy. It is sent over to be placed upon American backs. That is not the civilization we want. We want American wages, American clothing and American civilization. Now, in 1896 they came to us. We had plenty of money before, now we have no money. They come to us and say they are going to give it to us; and they propose this doubling of the face value of silver.—From a speech by Congressman Fowler of New York at Milwaukee.

Carlisle's Five Points.

I.

"There is not a free coinage country in the world today that is not on a silver basis.

II.

"There is not a gold standard country in the world today that does not use silver as money along with gold.

III.

"There is not a silver standard country in the world today that uses any gold as money along with silver.

IV.

"There is not a silver standard country in the world today that has more than one-third as much money in circulation per capita as the United States.

V.

"There is not a silver standard country in the world today where the laboring man receives fair pay for his day's work."