

1896 are found today reiterating the senseless twaddle that served the place of argument in the heat of that campaign. And what is most pitiable about it is that the men who slurringly belittle the arguments of the bimetalists are unconscious of the humiliation they bring upon themselves by an exhibition of ignorance from which they would hide their heads in shame if they possessed the least enlightenment whatever upon the subject.

During the past nine years gold has undergone a continuous and rapid depreciation, which has added a corresponding stimulus to production and consumption through constantly advancing prices. Debts have been made easy to pay through the partial repudiation of them resulting from the depreciation of gold. And the rise in prices has in a measure counterbalanced errors in business judgment and rendered solvent many business enterprises which otherwise must have resulted disastrously to those engaging in them.

One thing, however, which must be borne in mind is that the increase in money supply must become greater and still greater each succeeding year in order to even sustain the present price levels because of the already greatly reduced purchasing power of gold and the rapid rate at which population and wealth are expanding. The promise, however, of an adequate money supply appears to be good for some time to come. But it is not too soon for our people to recognize that the end cannot be many years off, when we will be again confronted with the necessity of intelligent political action on the money question if we are to avert a crisis in the business affairs of the country that may prove as disastrous as it is unnecessary. When that day arrives the silver question may again reappear with more vitality than ever before and silver may then become the means of saving from utter ruin many of those who, in the past, have so ignorantly decried it. In the meantime the thing to be avoided in order to postpone the coming of the evil day is to prevent a return to a panic breeding wild-cat currency which the bankers of the east are now clamoring for the privilege of issuing.

GOVERNMENT BY NEWSPAPERS

It is a well recognized fact that public opinion is the governing power in a republic. And as the newspaper is the organ of public intelligence it necessarily follows that its power as a factor in the molding of our laws is very great through giving direction to thought and influencing opinion among its millions of readers. Endowed with power for good or evil beyond that possessed by any other agency in social life the character of the newspapers to which our support shall be given becomes a question of the first magnitude from the standpoint of morals, patriotism, our highest ideals and most deep seated aspirations as individuals and citizens. This calls for the exercise of the highest intelligence and most critical discrimination in the individual making the selection of an influence to which he submits himself and his family.

Newspapers are not cheap because,

perchance the subscription price may be small. The value of a good newspaper can be computed in dollars or cents. Its influence may reach so deep into the lives of its readers as to outreach any such paltry consideration. While on the other hand a bad newspaper is to be avoided as we would avoid a pestilence.

From a moral standpoint the conduct of a newspaper is the highest calling to which any man may aspire. And as an honest man is said to be the noblest work of God, an honest newspaper is most certainly the noblest work of man.

The making of a newspaper involves a responsibility not to be lightly assumed by the conscientious, but which we regret the necessity of admitting is altogether too freely undertaken by the reckless. Thus, while there are many newspapers that represent only good and ennobling influences, there are unfortunately too many that cater to popular error, indifferent to every consideration of morality and decency, regarding dollars and cents as the sole standard and measure of success. Then again many of the newspapers are either owned outright or controlled through patronage of their advertising columns by special interests which prosper through control of the government of our cities, states and of the nation. So that, influences of every sort being represented in the public press, the individual is compelled to exercise discrimination of a high order in the selection of the newspapers that are made daily or weekly visitors in his home and give direction to thought and influence opinion in his household.

Newspapers are increasing in numbers and influence with the advance of time. The number of newspapers that find their way into a given number of homes have shown a constant increase during a number of years, and the number is being greatly augmented from year to year. The influence exerted by the newspaper over the thoughts and actions of our people, and over the institutions and laws under which we live cannot easily be overestimated. As the constant dripping of water wears away the stone upon which it falls, so does the constant repetition of suggestions and arguments modify if not actually mold the opinions of the readers of newspapers.

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It is said that the most positive and universal characteristic of man is intellectual indolence. If this be true, and there is much evidence to prove that it is, then there is ground for the charge that is brought against man in these latter days that he buys his ideas ready made after the manner that he buys his hats and shoes. At any rate there is abundant evidence that the men who are most successful in manipulating the public both in the matter of business and politics invest heavily in newspapers, and regard their aid as indispensable to the success of their undertakings.

The point that we are seeking to impress upon our readers is that the public is responsible for the character of the newspapers that wield so mighty an influence over the affairs of state and nation. When this fact

becomes duly appreciated individuals will so discriminate in their patronage of the press that only such papers as honestly seek the public good will receive the support of intelligent men who have no axes to grind at the expense of the public weal.

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There are many things that subject the public to imposition through the press that are of a nature that readily escape suspicion. For instance, the agricultural paper that is found so helpful to the farmer and his wife is generally non-partisan in politics, as is also the religious paper that contains so much of elevating spiritual food that it finds a secure place in the affections of the family.

It is just such papers as these that are not infrequently employed to mold opinion favorable to the ends of greed by crafty and designing men. When such agencies are employed the matter is prepared by press agents in the employ of the railroads or of the banks or whatever influence is seeking to manipulate opinion favorable to their particular scheme of plunder, and the articles, from which every tinge of partisanship is carefully excluded, are ingeniously prepared by high salaried writers who make their arguments appear so plausible that the impressions they are seeking to make seem to the unwary reader as the only reasonable view to take of the matter.

These articles are sent to the press with a request for their publication. They appear so innocent and harmless that many publishers of agricultural and religious papers fall into the trap and insert them in their columns free of charge, while others detecting their sinister purpose, consign them to the waste basket without comment as such is not in their line. There are other publishers, however, who are less innocent and less scrupulous who publish the articles thus furnished as their own views and charge and collect for the same many times the price charged for the same amount of space when used for legitimate advertisements. Thus non-political papers often prove to be the most insidious means employed by trusts and monopolies to create opinion favorable to their interests.

With the growth of the rural free delivery system the newspaper as a factor in public affairs assumes additional importance and warns the public of a growing power that deserves attention. Remembering that universal suffrage puts us all under bonds to each other to see to it that correct ideas prevail touching public questions, it becomes our duty to use our influence to the utmost to secure readers for such papers as fight our battles in the arena of public debate.

Bearing in mind always that our neighbors will certainly read some papers, it should be the constant endeavor of each to induce their neighbors and friends to subscribe for papers that are intelligent, honest and fearless in fighting the battles of the masses of the people.

The net profits of the railroads of the United States for the past year shows an increase of \$97,000,000 over the preceding year. The net profits

per mile for every mile of railroad in the entire country was \$3,500. Is it not time for the people to demand relief from railroad extortion?

Annuity holders and bondholders the world over are now bemoaning their sad fate because of the decline in the purchasing power of gold. The ghost of a fifty cent gold dollar now haunts their vision.

The railroads don't refuse to pay their taxes because of considering their assessment too high, but because they think they can evade the payment of them and retain the money themselves. They still believe in the efficacy of the free pass to purchase for them immunity from paying their just proportion of taxes for the support of the government.

The Omaha delegation to the democratic state convention were prolific in promises of the great vote that city would roll up to the democratic ticket. But their promises turned out mere fustian. Yet, it would not be surprising to witness a delegation from that city swaggering through the convention hall two years hence with an air of being the whole thing.

The total wealth of the United States, according to the United States census bureau now amounts to \$106,881,415,000, an increase of over eighteen billions in five years. But it must be borne in mind that these figures do not imply that the actual wealth has increased in the ratio indicated by the above figures which are money values. The depreciation in the value, or purchasing power of money accounts for a considerable portion of the increase in the figures.

The independent voter was in evidence in a marked degree in the late election. Candidates generally received gratifying testimonials to their personal worth in the vote of their home counties. The failure of Hall county to send members to the legislature favorable to the candidacy of W. H. Thompson for the United States senate was a great surprise to the democrats of the state who regarded it as a certainty that Thompson would receive the vote of his home county for the high office he aspired to.

Comptroller of the Currency Ridgely in his report to be submitted to the incoming congress says that the savings of the people during the past year were simply marvellous, showing an increase over the preceding year of \$900,000,000. This is another vindication of the claims of the bimetalists of ten years ago. They were bimetalists because the money supply was insufficient to sustain prices. They were not bimetalists because of any affection for silver as a metal, or because they liked white money better than yellow money. The demand was for more money so that the money supply would be adequate to sustain prices and enable men to prosecute legitimate enterprises with safety, which could not be done under a diminishing money supply and its concomitant falling prices.