

Not the least significant of these is afforded by Congressman Hull, of Iowa, chairman of the house committee on military affairs, who is in close personal, political and official touch with the administration. In an interview published in the Chicago Record of July 17, Mr. Hull said:

I have no doubt that the democratic members of congress will vote for any measure looking to the suppression of lawlessness in China and securing reparation to this government. Any party which would oppose a vigorous course in these circumstances would be swept out of existence, and the party which advocated letting the other powers do the work to be done in China and then we step in and claim part of the fruits would meet a similar fate.

If it is not intended to make the war on our part a war of conquest, why should our chairman of the committee on military affairs be so solicitous to put us in a position to step in, after the work is done in China, and "claim part of the fruits"?

When the imperialists "plead the baby act" by trying to shift responsibility for imperialism upon Mr. Bryan, they expose an unsuspected consciousness of the weakness of their cause. Yet that is what they are doing. Because he advised the adoption of the Paris treaty rather than advocate an amendment which would have involved a nominal continuance of the Spanish war, they charge him with responsibility for the policy of imperialism which McKinley has erected upon the basis of the treaty! Mr. Bryan's advice as he gave it is printed in full this week in our department of Miscellany.

Mr. Bryan may have been wrong in advising the prompt adoption of the Paris treaty. He is not inerrant, like the great and good protege of Mr. Hanna. But if he was wrong, many other anti-imperialists were wrong also. As it has turned out, they do seem to have been mistaken. It would have been far better to force an amendment of the treaty, no matter how long that might have kept up the Spanish war nominally, than to have given McKinley an excuse for

destroying infant republics, subjugating distant peoples, establishing crown colonies and turning the republic into an empire. But who could have foreseen that President McKinley would have done this? Senator Hoar did, indeed, foresee it; but Senator Hoar, as a copartisan and personal friend of McKinley's, was in an advantageous position to know what to expect from such an administration. Bryan was in no such position. He could only infer that the foundation principles of the republic would be respected even by McKinley. The imperialists are in a bad way when they raise this defense. But by no such baby plea can they shield themselves in the coming campaign from full responsibility for the policy of imperialism.

To urge that the McKinley crown colony policy is not imperialism is only to "plead the baby act" in another way. Two federal judges, one in New York and one in Chicago, and both republicans, have recently decided, one as to Puerto Rico and the other as to the Philippines, that these lands are not within the protection of the American constitution, but are foreign countries subject to the sovereignty of the United States. That is the relationship that McKinley is trying to perpetuate, and it is the essence of imperialism. It is the relation that the empire of Rome established with her provinces. If "imperialism" is a distasteful term to our fastidious imperialists let them use another. They might prefer "forcible annexation," "criminal aggression" or something of that kind. But they would be no better off. It is not the name but the essence of the thing that shocks the republican sense of America; and the essence of it is that Mr. McKinley would have the American republic extend its sovereign power over peoples to whom it denies citizenship rights, and who would therefore be American "subjects."

With reference to the boast of the republican platform, commented upon

at page 181, that "in the short three years of the present republican administration an excess of exports over imports in the enormous sum of \$1,483,537,094" has been rolled up, we are asked to explain why that increased excess means increased impoverishment of the country. This is the question:

Of course the persons who manufactured (or grew) and who sold those exports got paid in money, and it was to their advantage to sell them. Then why was it not an advantage to the country at large?

Undoubtedly it was to the advantage of the producers, all things considered, to sell their products. Else they would not have sold them. It is true, also, that they got money or its equivalent in return for their goods. But it by no means follows that the country is richer. To understand this more clearly, consider a tributary country,—such as Palestine, for instance, under the Roman empire. The producers of Palestine got pay for their products, and it was to their advantage to sell them; but the tribute that went out of the province as excessive exports to Rome was of no advantage to Palestine. She was impoverished by it. So with Ireland. The producers there get pay for their products, and it is to their advantage to sell them; but the rents that go from the island as excessive exports make Ireland poor. This is true also of Egypt. The fellahin are paid for their products, and it is to their advantage to sell them; but the interest on Egyptian bonds held abroad is a form of tribute which tends, by making excessive exports, to impoverish Egypt as a whole.

Keeping in mind the principle suggested above, turn to our own country. Our producers are paid for their products, and it is to their advantage to sell them. But some of these producers pay rent to an Astor or a Lord Scully, and products to the amount of the whole or part of that rent are exported, because these men live abroad. That makes no direct differ-

ence to the rent payers as individuals. Since they would have to pay the rent anyhow, it does not immediately concern them individually that it goes ultimately to a man in London, instead of going to a man in New York. Yet the country at large is poorer. That is, there is less wealth in the country if that wealth becomes an export to London without an equivalent import, than there would be if it remained here. This is true likewise if the excessive export be for the purpose of paying tourists' expenses. The tourists have their enjoyment for their expenditure, but the aggregate of wealth in their country is thereby lessened. It is also true of wealth shipped abroad for dividends and interest on stocks and bonds. The individuals who pay the dividends and interest to foreigners are no poorer as individuals than if they paid them to their compatriots; but there is consequently less wealth in the country. And so of all shipments of wealth abroad for which no return shipments of wealth are made. Individuals may be no worse off as such and directly, but the country is thereby drained of wealth.

With characteristic pithiness, Mr. Bryan describes the inner motive of opponents of imperialism who refuse to support the democratic ticket because of the silver plank in the platform, when he says that they prefer a gold standard empire to a bimetallic republic. And he pays to anti-imperialists generally the compliment of believing them to be intelligently patriotic when he adds:

When the test comes I believe that those who adhere to the doctrine that governments derive their just powers not from superior force but from consent of the governed will support our ticket even though they do not indorse the silver plank. A large majority of the democrats believe that a restoration of bimetallicism would prove a blessing, but the anti-imperialists who dispute this will admit that any evils that might arise from bimetallicism could be corrected more easily than the evils which would follow from the deliberate indorsement of militarism and imperialism.

Some voters who, for economic reasons opposed Bryan four years ago, are in doubt as to the course they ought to follow this year. The problem should not be difficult. If they believe in plutocracy, they should vote for McKinley, regardless of any particular issue. If they believe in democracy they should vote for Bryan. Not that Bryan is altogether democratic, nor that McKinley is altogether plutocratic. But Bryan represents the democratic tendency, while McKinley represents the plutocratic tendency; and tendencies are in these times all that anyone can vote for or against. There are political periods when the voter can help along a particular reform by voting for the party that advocates it and against the party that has opposed or betrayed it. But when broad principles are manifestly at stake in party contests no one can by his vote adjust the details of government to his liking. A vote for or against civil service reform, for instance, or for or against a certain ratio in the coinage of gold and silver, counts for nothing at such times. All that the voter can do then is to strengthen one of two great tendencies, and weaken the other. He can this year strengthen the tendency toward plutocracy or the tendency away from it. He can do nothing more. It was the same four years ago, and those who voted for McKinley then have got a taste of imperialism, which is one of the phases of plutocracy.

If it is true, as some of the administration papers are claiming, that the gold standard law enacted last spring is not an honest gold standard law, but that it could be circumvented by a hostile secretary of the treasury, the laugh is on the gold standard democrats. They were assured by Mr. Hanna's party, and they went about assuring others, that the wicked Bryan couldn't possibly disturb their gold fetish for years to come, because Mr. McKinley had put it into a glass case with a time-lock attachment. It must be heartrending to learn now that they were buncoed.

But Mr. McKinley offers to give them a sure-enough gold standard law next time if they will indorse his imperial policy. It is a bargain, a splendid bargain. A yellow dollar for the privilege of turning the republic into an empire! What assurance is there, though, that if Mr. McKinley be given his empire-building authority he will make a more honest gold standard law next time than the last?

We do not wholly agree with the criticisms of Senator Hoar upon his decision to support President McKinley. By this we refer to the man and not to his reasons. Worse reasons could hardly be put together. But as to Mr. Hoar himself, he has grown up in the republican party, and naturally shrinks from severing his relations by an act so supreme as opposing its unanimous choice for the presidency. Some men can do such things. All men cannot. It would be the harder for Mr. Hoar because his alternative is to support a party which in the days of its power was the champion of chattel slavery. Many of us can see that this is not now the party it once was. We know it to be a new liberty party, as truly a new party as if it had been organized yesterday. But all men who love liberty, especially those who went through the antislavery fight with the democratic party as completely dominated by the slave power as the republican party is dominated to-day by the ugly spirit of imperialism, cannot see this change so plainly, and Mr. Hoar is one of them. We sympathize while disagreeing with him. It is to be hoped, however, that though he support McKinley for the presidency he will not allow his partisanship to silence him in this vital conflict for republic or empire.

Attention is called by the Nation to the growing necessity of relegating national conventions to the political lumber room. They have become vast mass meetings which do not and cannot act as deliberate assemblies. In the same connection the old system of nominating presidents by congress-