

the Cubans; and Senator Hoar describes them to be probably better fitted than any race on the two American continents south of ourselves. In other words, freedom is to become, for the new republican party, a matter of complexion. If this doctrine is to prevail, what hope is there for the colored race in the United States? The answer is easy; there is in that case no hope at all. In the name of the old anti-slavery sentiment, we call on you to resist this great danger, even if you have, for that purpose, to turn your backs on the party you once had reason to love.

The undersigned, trained from youth in the strictest school of anti-slavery conviction, are following up the same early training when they now write to you. We wish to warn you that the imperialistic republican party of to-day is not the liberty-loving party of that name which set the American negro free 40 years ago. The time is past when you can safely give to it your implicit support. We warn you that the American negro must henceforth think for himself and must cut adrift from every organization which wars on darker races, as such, and begins to talk again of "the natural supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon."

Congressman Hull, of Iowa, an ardent imperialist and chairman of the military committee in the lower house of congress, when talking to a Chicago Record representative on the 4th, denied, as reported in the Record of the 5th, that he is advocating the retention of the Philippines for the protection of business interests of his own in the archipelago, but admitted—

being at the head of a company organized for the purpose of developing Philippine timber lands. . . . he declared that there was absolutely no connection between his position as chairman of the military committee and his private business.

Think of the impudence of it! This man, as chairman of the military committee of congress, is pushing with all his might a policy of militarism which has for its immediate purpose the conquest of distant lands in which he has acquired speculative private interests; yet he says there is no connection between those interests and his official position. He may be angelic enough to draw fine distinctions between his public duty

and his private speculations, when they conflict, but who believes it? Time was when the discovery of a double relationship like this would have driven the best trusted man in the country out of public life. That time passed, however, when McKinleyism came. Hull is not the only man in responsible public position whose private speculations depend for a profitable outcome upon his official actions.

Hanna's assertion in a Chicago speech that there are no trusts has been taken much more literally by the public than he intended. He is supposed to have stated as a fact what he knew to be false; whereas he only intended to deceive with a play upon words. Originally, trusts were combinations of corporations which had placed their stock in the hands of trustees so as to concentrate the control of their business and destroy competition between them. That kind of trust does in fact no longer exist. But trusts exist, nevertheless. They are formed now not by the intervention of a body of trustees managing many corporations, but by the merging of many corporations into one. The same effect is produced. Control is concentrated, and competition is destroyed. And properly enough the name which the intervention of trustees gave to the original trusts has in popular usage attached to these unified corporations that have taken their place. Mr. Hanna understood this. He knew that the essence of the trust evil is not trustees, but combination for the destruction of competition. Yet he said there were no trusts, because he knew that trustees are no longer a factor in corporate combination. It is by such indirect, misleading and fraudulent statements that public men of the Hanna type expect to make fools of the people. In this instance he overreached himself. The great gullible public is not quite so unsophisticated as to believe that there are no trusts. It knows that business is concentrated and competition strangled, and whether that is done through trusts

or through charters of incorporations it doesn't care.

It is discouraging to thoughtful men to find in the New York Nation a sneer at Bryan's assertion that if Americans are glad to lend money abroad at four per cent. it shows that profitable investments at home are few. The reason this is discouraging is not political. It is economic. A mere political organ might be expected to assume that low interest rates imply prosperity. On this point even populist organs go astray. So also a Wall street trade paper, bloated with pretentious assumptions of financial wisdom, might be expected to regard the matter. To the denizen of Wall street, to whom interest stands for nothing but money premiums, and whose financial horizon is limited by its gambling operations, low interest means plenty of chips, or easy money, and high interest means scarcity of chips, or tight money. But the Nation has a well deserved reputation for economic intelligence. It may make mistakes. It often does. Yet it is exceptionally intelligent when dealing with economic questions. Nevertheless, in one of its editorials of the 27th, while with more or less reason excoriating Bryan for his money theories, it assumes that low interest is one of the surest signs of prosperity.

"If money for long-time investment goes begging at four per cent.," argues the Nation, "the western farmer will not have to pay more than six or seven on his mortgages (instead of ten or twelve some years ago); the business man can borrow at the bank on commercial paper for five; new manufacturing industries can be launched on more favorable terms than ever before; rents will be lower; capital will be in search of the thrifty user of it." All this assumes that interest cuts no figure in economics except between borrower and lender. But the truth is that when capital searches for the thrifty user of it, offering itself at low rates of interest, it searches almost in vain. The

thrifty user of capital knows that when interest rates are low, profits in productive enterprises are low also. Or if he does not know it in advance, he discovers it when the sheriff sells him out. He may get his capital cheaply, but he cannot use it profitably. So far from being "one of the surest signs of national wealth and well being," as the Nation declares, low interest rates are one of the surest signs of industrial depression. Low interest has always been an accompaniment of hard times, and high interest of good times. What our low interest rates mean essentially is this, that capitalized speculative values have risen to such a high point—are so loaded with "water," to use a term that may be better understood—that the margin for interest is crowded almost to zero. The prevailing low rates of interest testify, more positively than anything else, to the completeness of the monopolization of natural opportunities for production. So complete and comprehensive is this monopoly, and so high are monopoly-buttressed capitalizations, that the profitableness of production has declined and interest has declined accordingly.

Among the McKinley campaign speakers is James H. Eckels, whom Cleveland made comptroller of the currency and who is now a Chicago banker. One night last week he spoke for McKinley at the Chicago Auditorium, putting the dollar above the man—the flag, the constitution and the declaration of independence below the banking trust. Mr. Eckels took occasion to say that he submitted—without fear of successful contradiction, that a bank, whether it be a national, state or private one, properly conducted and honestly managed, instead of being a cause of detriment to any community or harmful to any interest, is a source of strength and benefit.

And who has ever denied that? He might with equal ingenuousness have submitted, "without fear of successful contradiction," that a reservoir, "properly" secured and "safely" man-

aged, instead of being a menace to any community is a convenient source of water supply. The sticking point is at the adverbs. There is no issue regarding banks "properly" conducted and "honestly" managed. The objection is to banks that are not properly conducted nor honestly managed. It is urged that banks which are invested by statute with money issuing privileges are not and cannot be properly conducted or honestly managed. The privileges themselves are improper and dishonest. That is the point for Mr. Eckels to meet. Statutory privileges are public crimes, and their beneficiaries are to that extent public parasites. Let Mr. Eckels defend banking all he pleases, but let him fairly meet the real issue, which is not the usefulness of banks, but the burdens of statutory privileges conferred upon banks and the viciousness of a banking ring which corrupts congress to secure, to buttress, to extend and to perpetuate those privileges.

In speaking at Stourbridge, England, on the 9th, Joe Chamberlain summed up Great Britain's policy in these words:

To remain on friendly terms with every great country in Europe, and on something more than friendly terms with the United States.

When one nation is on "something more than friendly terms" with another, they have either an open alliance or a secret understanding. Does either relationship exist between Great Britain and the United States? There is certainly no open alliance. Is it true, then, that what Chamberlain, referring to the same subject, described some time ago as "an understanding between statesmen," really subsists between the McKinley administration and the tory ministry? If it is true, the American people ought to know it. We of this country would like to hold friendly relations with the English people. We tried to once, in the truest way—through free trade. But McKinley would have none of that. As a protectionist he preached enmity to England. But

now that there is an opportunity to form an alliance, not openly for free trade and peace with the people of England, but secretly for war and conquest with the tory ministry, it would appear from what Mr. Chamberlain says and from all the circumstances that Mr. McKinley has jumped at the chance.

The Chicago Federation of Labor, in responding to a request for an opinion on the subject, made by the Chicago street railway commission, takes strong ground in favor of municipal ownership of street railway franchises and against compensation to the city for granting franchises. On the latter point it truly says:

Compensation is merely a form of robbery. It is using the street railway company as a tax collector to extort from those who must ride on the cars a charge over and above the value of their ride, to be paid into the treasury to relieve the property-owners from paying just that amount of taxes. It is robbery pure and simple under the form of law and an abuse of the power of taxation that should not be tolerated for a moment. The cry for compensation, under the surface, is merely the cry of the downtown landlords for a share in the amount extorted from the people by a franchise holder.

The acting secretary of war, G. D. Meikeljohn, is another aspirant for notoriety who tries to hitch his donkey cart to Mr. Bryan's chariot. Mr. Bryan having spoken of the Sulu treaty as recognizing slavery, Mr. Meikeljohn writes an open letter to remind him that in October, 1899, President McKinley "confirmed and approved, subject to the action of congress," the Sulu treaty, with the reservation "that this agreement is not to be deemed in any way to authorize or give the consent of the United States to the existence of slavery." And Mr. Meikeljohn appears really to suppose that that quotation from McKinley refutes Bryan's charge. He seems totally oblivious to the fact that McKinley can be quoted on both sides of nearly every public question with which he has been officially connected, and that when he cannot be quoted on both