

# The Public

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"Some men," wittily observes the Rev. Thomas E. Cox, of Chicago, "would rather pay taxes to the assessor than to the collector." If no one else understood the allusion, these men and the assessors would.

All persons who oppose the McKinley policy in the Philippines are guilty of giving aid and comfort to the enemy, and are therefore traitors. No traitor should be allowed to vote. Consequently the right to vote should be limited to persons who intend to vote for Mr. McKinley.

Upon reporting last week at Washington, preliminary to taking charge of the department of the lakes, with headquarters at Chicago, Gen. Otis predicted early peace in the Philippines. Gen. Otis has been making this prediction at frequent intervals for 18 months. If he keeps on predicting and the Philippine war does not last forever, he may yet prove to be a true prophet.

One of the magazines of the current month tells of the development of submarine navigation. The success of this nautical departure seems now to be assured; and the consequent disappearance from the ocean of great men-of-war to be almost certain. No nation can be mistress of the seas after whole fleets are at the mercy of a few submarine boats, costing little to build and but a trifle to man. Even the weakest nation can then defend her coast and shipping against the attacks of the most powerful, and navigation of the ocean, like riding safely upon rails on land, will depend not

upon the good will of nations with immense navies, but upon common consent.

A gambling-house magnate of Colorado proposes to contribute his mite to the Christianization and civilization of the Philippines by setting up in Manila one of the finest gambling houses in the world. Having observed with pain the barbaric character of the gambling now prevalent in those benighted islands, he offers to relieve the situation. Faro and roulette are therefore to supplement Bibles, hymn books and bullets in the work of redeeming our heathen subjects of the orient. Why not grant him an imperial subsidy?

Tyndall's ridiculous "prayer gauge" is outdone. Two sets of pious people are proposing to organize an endless chain, one to pray for McKinley's defeat and the other for his election. Is a more degrading conception of prayer possible? Apart from pulpit prayers for military success and imperial power, probably not. These performances are not prayer. They lack every characteristic of communion with a being of infinite wisdom and love. At the best they are nothing but pagan invocations.

In his Labor day speech at Chicago Gov. Roosevelt made one generalization which can be unstintingly commended. "Let us strive," he said, "to make the conditions of life such that as nearly as possible each man shall receive the share to which he is honestly entitled and no more." If Roosevelt would make that sentiment the ideal of his life, he would be a better man and a safer leader. It is as much nobler than his "strenuous life" ideal as the aspirations of a devoted physician are superior to the ambitions

of a human gamecock. But Mr. Roosevelt has given no earnest of his own belief in this exalted and exalting sentiment. He is himself a beneficiary of life conditions that give him annually a much larger share of the world's annual earnings than he is honestly entitled to, in consequence of which others have less than they are honestly entitled to. No blame attaches to him for that. But what does he propose by way of changing these conditions? Nothing. How, then, do we know that he believes in the sentiment he phrases?

Carl Schurz, who contributed so efficiently to the election of Mr. McKinley on the gold standard issue four years ago, has driven Secretary Gage into a controversial corner from which Mr. Gage does not find it easy to escape. It will be remembered that Mr. Gage recently published an interview in which he said that—

Mr. Bryan, if elected president, could order his secretary of the treasury to make payment in silver of all the public debt payable in coin, and for all current disbursements of the government as well, which amount to \$1,500,000 or \$1,750,000 per day, and that he would give such an order, too, is very certain, if he is in the same mind that he was in 1896.

Mr. Gage added that this would practically put the government on a silver basis, ruin its credit, and bring incalculable disaster upon the business interests of the country. Replying in an open letter to that interview, Mr. Schurz severely rebukes Secretary Gage for using a possible flaw in the gold standard law of last spring for the questionable but "evident purpose of alarming the business community and the possessing classes generally" for political effect, and he denies that the danger set forth in the Gage interview really exists. In support of his denial he directs Mr. Gage's attention to the fact that the

supposed flaw in the gold standard law can yet be remedied by the republicans themselves. On this point Mr. Schurz says:

I call your prediction of the probability specified by you and of the disasters sure to follow, a false alarm for a very simple reason. Whoever may be elected president on November 6, there will be another session of congress before he will take office on March 4, 1901. The republicans will have strong majorities in both houses of that congress. The executive, too, will be in their hands. They will, therefore, be able to make such laws as they please. They will then have full power and ample opportunity to pass any legislation required to make it utterly impossible to any president to break down the gold standard in the way you, Mr. Secretary, describe in your interview.

The reply of Secretary Gage to Mr. Schurz's letter, given out on the 5th, would have been a disappointment had it been supposed that the point Mr. Schurz raised could be answered. The secretary attempts to answer it in two ways. He says (1) that in the event of Bryan's election any attempt of congress to perfect the gold standard law next winter would be "new legislation by a party whose policy would have been rejected by the people through their last expression at the polls," and (2) that "the free silver minority would be justified by their constituents in using all the resources of dilatory procedure to prevent such legislation, and against such tactics affirmative legislation such as you suggest would probably be impossible." This is the sum and substance of Mr. Gage's reply. He says other things, but nothing else to the point.

Now consider these two pleas in reply to Mr. Schurz. When did Mr. McKinley's party acquire so much respect for public opinion as to be sensitive to its expressions when they are not mandatory? And why should the party shrink from perfecting the gold standard law it confesses having botched in the making—why should it shrink because of Bryan's election upon another than the money issue as paramount? Surely Mr. Gage is hold-

ing the Hanna party to political standards of unwonted delicacy. And then as to the practical possibilities of perfecting the botched gold standard law between the first Monday in December and the fourth day of March. There could be no serious difficulty in the senate, where the republicans outnumber the democrats two to one. Some delay there might be, but none which it would not be within the power of the republicans to avoid before the 4th of March. If they could force through the kind of gold standard law they wanted last winter, and, without any effort to rush it, could do so as early as the 6th of March, they can certainly correct their botch work next winter in a senate in which they have a stronger majority. Since the free silver minority in the senate could not stop gold standard legislation last winter, it cannot stop gold standard tinkering next winter. Then as to the house, the republicans there have absolute power. A free silver minority could not delay their action by so much as a day. They could pass a bill within a week after its introduction. Of this power of the republican majority in the house and of its disposition to use the power even to the cutting off of fair debate in the most important matters, it has given us more than one illustrative instance since Mr. McKinley's inauguration.

The effect of Mr. Schurz's letter, an effect which Secretary Gage fails to destroy, is to place all responsibility for any departure from the gold standard upon the republican party. Not alone because that party, either astutely for questionable partisan purposes or because its leaders are incapable of making an effective gold standard statute, has enacted a law which upon Secretary Gage's interpretation Mr. Bryan could legally disregard, but because it still has the power to cure the defect which Secretary Gage thinks he has discovered. If the republican gold standard law is not defective, then Mr. Bryan as president could not put the country upon a silver basis.

If, on the other hand, it is defective, then the republicans can amend it before President McKinley goes out of office next winter. It follows, that if Mr. Bryan should in the event of his election place the country upon a silver basis, the primary responsibility will rest upon the republican party, which, with full power up to the 4th of next March to tie his hands, neglects to do so.

In addition to this consideration put forth by Mr. Schurz, it should be observed that Mr. Bryan—though his opportunities for proving it are only those of a private citizen, albeit a great party leader—is a statesman and not a pettifogger. He believes in bimetallism and he would establish it in this country if he could. But he believes in it as a policy of wise and honest statesmanship and not as a trick in a conjuring politician's repertoire. It is safe to predict, therefore, that he would not demean himself nor discredit his cause by a "turn" in executive legerdemain. Under existing law we are either on a gold basis or we are not. If we are not, it would be the part of honest statesmanship for Bryan as president to pursue a bimetallic executive policy. But in that case the responsibility would rest upon the republicans who, after four years of complete power, had not only neglected but refused to put us on a gold basis. If, however, we are upon a gold basis, it is certain that such a straightforward man as Bryan has amply proved himself to be would not try to put us on a bimetallic basis by a treasury department trick. His boldly declared and ably defended policy is to establish bimetallism honorably and honestly and constitutionally through the law making power. It is not the Bryans but the McKinleys who have pettifogged with the money question.

The futility of the efforts of the Hanna-McKinley combination to minimize the paramount issue of imperialism by stirring up a "sound money" scare, is impressively indicated not only by the consistent posi-

tion which men like Schurz have maintained ever since President McKinley set out upon his imperial policy, but also by the declarations of other great gold standard leaders. One of these leaders is William L. Wilson, Cleveland's postmaster general, who opposed Bryan vigorously in 1896, but who supports him now upon the principle that the issue of imperialism casts all other issues into the background. Another is Richard Olney, Cleveland's secretary of state. He also opposed the election of Bryan in 1896, and through his great influence in business circles contributed materially to McKinley's election. But now, in a letter published on the 6th, he declares that in the defeat of the republican party in the coming election lies the only hope of the reversal of dangerous policies and a return to more wholesome conditions. He believes that the election of McKinley would "sanction a syndicated presidency—a presidency got for the republican party by the money of a combination of capitalists intent upon securing national legislation in aid of their particular interests;" that it would confirm the plundering tariff legislation; that it would encourage land grabbing schemes in contempt of the rights of alien peoples, and approve the brutal Philippine policy of the past two years; that it would be an endorsement of militarism, a condemnation of civil service reform, an invitation to tumble into international complications, and a cringing submission to the power of money in politics. Though Mr. Olney finds many reasons for denouncing McKinleyism and coming to the support of Bryan, the impelling one is evidently the same that has moved Schurz and Wellington and Wilson and Boutwell, and all the other gold standard men who nevertheless do put the man above the dollar. They would, in the language of one of their number, "rather live in a silver basis republic than in a gold standard empire."

If the demonstration of workingmen at Chicago on Labor day was at

all indicative of general opinion, Bryan will score a sweeping victory in November. The discrimination in his favor and against Roosevelt, both by the marchers in the parade of organized labor and by the audience at the labor mass meeting, was so marked as to be painful. The republican candidate for governor of Illinois, Mr. Yates, and the democratic mayor of Chicago, Mr. Harrison, were cheered vastly more than Roosevelt, while the cheering for Bryan was a marvel of enthusiasm. So pronounced a preference had not been looked for. It had been supposed that Roosevelt's reputation as a cowboy and rough rider would guarantee him a warm reception even from men who did not share his political sentiments. But that was a mistaken notion. He hardly attracted notice. Though he sat almost at Bryan's side during the parade, and Bryan's name was shouted in a continuous cheer by the procession of labor unions as it passed, Roosevelt's was seldom heard, and all attempts to evoke cheering for him were humiliating failures. The same spirit was manifest at the mass meeting. Bryan could hardly get through the crowd to the platform, so great was the pressure to grasp him by the hand; but Roosevelt passed through without difficulty and without much observation. When they spoke, there were only a few unseemly interruptions. But while Roosevelt was listened to with attention and was occasionally politely applauded, Bryan's points were applauded vigorously and heartily again and again. And when they left Roosevelt passed through the crowd as he had come; but Bryan, to the music of continuous cheering, was lifted above the swaying and cheering crowd and carried to his buggy. One peculiarly remarkable thing was the fact that many men who wore McKinley buttons covered their buttons with their hands while they shouted and cheered for Bryan.

Roosevelt's speech, in comparison with Bryan's, was a poor performance. Though Bryan's speech was

political, it was not partisan. It did not trespass upon the proprieties of the occasion, but was a statesman's speech, with the Declaration of Independence as its ideal—one which discussed public questions freely and vigorously, but only in so far as they affect labor interests. Government by injunction, for example, was a subject upon which Mr. Bryan enlarged. Gov. Roosevelt, however, in an effort to be nonpartisan became insipid and patronizing. He seemed not to know how to be at once nonpartisan and public-spirited. His speech was an excellent specimen of the style which mission school superintendents adopt when they tell ragged little street boys how important it is to be good.

The unexpected and unprecedented demonstration for Bryan in the very presence of Mr. McKinley's strenuous and spectacular running mate will doubtless result in an attempt on the part of Mr. Hanna to get up a McKinley labor parade in Chicago during the campaign. It has already been proposed. The idea suggested is that it be called a "prosperity procession," and that it be made up of the working forces of the different Chicago factories. There should be no difficulty in surmising what this means. The men are to be ordered out, as they were five years ago; and that none may dare stay away, the hint is to go around that this is a case of "no parade, no job." Prosperity for working men is about as scarce in Chicago as it well could be, and as scarce as anywhere unless in Mr. Hanna's own city of Cleveland. But the power of the employer is none the less on that account. It is greater. To control a job in times like these is very close to owning a man.

The condition of affairs in China is as enigmatical now as when the allied troops were marching upon Peking and the correspondents of London papers were setting the pagan Chinese an example in Christian lying. The only difference is that whereas then the safety of the foreign