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The "safe man" is the one who has the wit to use his knowledge with discretion, provided he has enough knowledge to make discretion necessary.

"The flag will stay wherever it is planted," exclaimed Senator Foraker in his speech as temporary chairman of the republican convention of Ohio. But that is not the important thing. The pillaging chieftains of ancient Rome used to boast in like manner about the Roman eagles. The important consideration is whether the flag, wherever planted, shall wave over American citizens or over American subjects.

The federal authorities are now credited with an intention to put down the trusts, and for that purpose with investigating them secretly. This is not a vaudeville joke. It is serious newspaper information, inspired by the attorney general's department.

Verevstchagin's realistic paintings of battle scenes in the Philippines are said to be completed, and it is understood that he will exhibit them in this country. Some law ought to be found to stop him. It was well enough for us Americans to slaughter men who, like our own forefathers, were struggling against terrible odds for independence; but to have a foreign artist show us in vivid pictures the bloody horror of it all is too much for patriotic good nature.

Now that interest rates in London have fallen, how will our "favorable export balance" theorists account for

the fact that nothing comes back to us for our enormous exports. They cannot say any longer that we have a European credit for them which is allowed to lie in open account abroad for the high rates of interest prevailing there.

Mr. Bryan advocates the nomination of Hanna as the next presidential candidate of the republicans, now that Mr. McKinley declines a third term. He calls Hanna the logical republican candidate. But what would the republican party do with anything logical, even a logical candidate? Its experience and aspirations are not along logical lines.

It is jolly good sport that the administration papers get out of the Manila dispatch, which, in reporting the surrender of Gen. Cailles, described him as shedding tears. Genuine sentiments of patriotism have become so blurred in the American mind lately that the spectacle of a brave man weeping because compelled to surrender his little army after fighting two years for the independence of his country against the great odds of a horde of well-armed invaders, is supposed to be only an object of mirth. At this rate of imperial progress we may yet live to see the memories of Valley Forge ridiculed by American newspaper wits.

Every now and again something favorable to the annexation of Canada appears in the press of the United States. These papers have one thing to learn. Canadians do not want political annexation, and nothing short of successful "criminal aggression" on our part would reconcile them to it. But Canada could be annexed almost as closely to the United States as is any state in the union, without "criminal aggression"

on our part or any less forcible method of annexation. What welds our states to the union is not political but commercial annexation. Abolish free trade between the states and the years of the union would be numbered. But the union would be as closely welded as ever without political association but with free trade. That suggests the way in which Canada could be annexed. Let the tariff laws which separate Canada and the United States be repealed, and Canada would be for all practical and desirable purposes part of the American republic.

Revived activity in real estate transactions indicates to the masses with whom times are hard all the time, that we are now in reality passing through an era of prosperity. The fact that this activity has but recently begun goes to show that the prosperous era we are in does not date back to 1897. Real estate feels the impulse of prosperous conditions in much less time than four years. All the boasts of prosperity with which the papers have been padded since Mr. McKinley's first election were evidently nothing but puffing. Only great trusts and some farmers have been prosperous until recently. And now that "general prosperity" has come, the rise in land values testifies that the landed interests are as usual absorbing its pecuniary benefits.

Regarding the third party movement in Missouri, a word or two may be worthy of consideration. It is to be thought of first with reference to national politics. The organizers of this party appear to contemplate the probability of a split in the next national democratic convention. Their idea seems to be that the reactionary democrats will get control, and that the progressives will thereupon leave the party. That the progressives

would leave the party if the reactionaries got control is doubtless true. It is to be both expected and desired. But if they went out of the old party into any ready-made third party they would break all precedents, and that is unlikely. When parties split, the outgoing members form a party of their own as naturally as a sailor goes to sea. There is another consideration in this connection. By forming a third party for national purposes, the progressive democrats of Missouri facilitate, by so much, the efforts of the reactionaries to get control of the democratic party. They thereby withdraw such strength as they may control from the radical wing of the democratic organization. Only this sort of thing can reinstate the reactionary leaders. In the very nature of the case, as circumstances now are, the democratic party cannot nominate any of the old leaders. Cleveland, Hill, Gorman or any other of that antiquated set of whigs are utterly impossible as democratic nominees, unless premature defections of the radical wing make it possible. The presidential candidate must be either Bryan or a new man without a Bourbon record or Bourbon affiliations. For these reasons we sincerely regret the giving of national character to the new Missouri party. As a state organization, the matter has a different aspect. Even in that connection it would be better to have organized as a wing of the democratic party in resistance to the domination of the state organization by Bourbons. Within the democratic party an organization such as could be formed upon the basis of the Meriwether vote of last spring in St. Louis might put the Bourbons in bad shape at the national convention. But an independent party, repudiating all allegiance to the national democratic party, can accomplish nothing in national politics and will soon fritter away its power locally. Still, the democratic situation in Missouri necessitates some action hostile to the machine, on the part of the radical elements; and in so far as the organization is strictly

local, it is not for democrats in other states to criticise.

The rupture that may yet divide the liberal party of England adds emphasis to the fact, which has long been clear, that the condition of parties in Great Britain and in the United States is much the same. What the Tories are to Great Britain the republicans are to the United States. What the Boer war is there, the Philippine aggression is here. What the liberal party is to Englishmen, the democratic party is to Americans. The latter resemblance holds good with reference even to the diverse political elements of which the liberal party is composed, and to the imminent probabilities of its complete disruption. Just as in this country there are democrats with republican principles, so in England there are liberals with Tory principles. That element has now found a spokesman if not a leader in Herbert Harry Asquith, who has come out openly in opposition to the liberal leader, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. In harmony with the Tories, he approves the annexation of the two Boer republics. The hopeful thing about this incident is the prophecy it bears of a general break-up and realignment along more radical issues than have ever before divided political parties in Great Britain. Signs of a similar readjustment in American politics are not wanting.

Gov. Crane's veto of the Boston subway grab, which we noticed editorially last week, has been sustained in the legislature by a vote of 135 to 98. Even the majority that originally passed the measure melted away under the governor's scathing message. Sixty-six members who had voted for the bill changed their minds and supported his veto.

That affair in Boston brings into bolder relief the shameless action of the Pennsylvania legislature and governor, and the Philadelphia council and mayor, in connection with the

monumental grab which Senator Quay engineered, and on which also we commented last week. John Wanamaker has taken another important step. Ignored by the mayor when he offered \$2,500,000 for public franchises which the mayor was about to present to the Quay gang for nothing, Mr. Wanamaker now renews that offer, with a supplementary offer to buy off the gang for \$500,000, stipulating that in using the franchises he will establish three-cent fares and universal transfers, and will sell back the franchises and equipment to the city at any time within ten years for cost. This great grab promises yet to be a blessing in disguise. It has aroused public sentiment in Pennsylvania to an appreciation in some degree of the iniquity of private franchises in public property; and encouraging developments may be looked for at an early day in the politics and laws of the Keystone state.

The letter in which Mr. Wanamaker conveys his second offer makes good reading. We quote from it enough to show its motive and purpose. It was addressed to Mayor Ashbridge and his associates in the franchise scheme. Mr. Wanamaker says:

You say that I had no charters and that the council should not have made the grants to me. Very well, for the sake of argument, be it so. There is no legal or other objection to you and your colleagues selling to me the franchises of which you are now the donees and owners without recompense to the city. I therefore renew the offer which I made to the mayor, to pay, as therein stated, to the city of Philadelphia \$2,500,000, and in addition thereto I will add \$500,000 as a bonus to yourself and associates personally for the conveyance of the grants and corporate privileges you now possess. There is no strong opposition to this proposition. When you and your associates assign to me capital stock ownership and control of the corporations you now possess, with the engineers' plans, I will pay to you the sum of \$500,000, and you may pay to the city of Philadelphia the \$2,500,000, under the conditions stated in my letter to the mayor, and \$1,500,000 of which amount I should stipulate should be used for the deepening of the Delaware river channel and \$1,000,000 be applied to the building of public schools and for the pur-