

for which the nature of trusts, when examined and understood, clearly affords no excuse—it is often urged that it is in harmony with prevailing tendencies. But that is not a good reason. There are tendencies and tendencies. Some are good and some are bad. It is never enough, therefore, in order to justify a policy, to urge that it is in harmony with a tendency. No policy is justifiable unless it is in harmony with good tendencies. Bad tendencies must be controlled and discouraged. Consequently, the argument which refers to tendencies must not only premise the tendency but also that the tendency is good. We agree, of course,—no body can deny it—that centralization of power at Washington is a tendency just now, a marked and strong tendency. But so at some times and in some places is the bubonic plague. The crucial question is not whether the tendency exists, but whether it is beneficent; and on that question the advocates of centralization dare not state their case in explicit and comprehensive terms. They dare not advocate the principle of concentration. What they do is to advocate specific infractions of the principle, such infractions as a federal trust law would be, and then, by piling one precedent upon another, they bring down upon us the burden of all the evils and oppressions of the very centralization which they dare not defend in terms. In addition to this objection, federal supervision is precisely what the trust magnates want and what some of their representatives advocate. While it is true that all advocates of federal control are not friends of the trusts, yet most friends of the trusts are advocates of federal control. This fact deserves thoughtful consideration, and that is what it appears to have received from the Pennsylvania Grange.

The November report of American exports and imports is calculated to make renewed demands upon the intellectual agility and statistical dexterity of the “favorable balance” ex-

perts. This report is for the eleven months of the current calendar year, and shows that the excess of exports—merchandise, gold and silver, all included—is \$553,407,425. None of that great outgo comes back to us in “pure gold,” as the lamented McKinley explained with reference to our exports in general, for gold is included. In fact, the exports of gold alone have exceeded gold imports thus far during the year by \$2,790,195; and silver exports are \$22,548,466 in excess of silver imports. How then are we enriched by our boasted exportation also of over 500 millions more merchandise than we have imported? If our country were getting equal or greater values back, we could understand the boast. But it is getting nothing back. On the contrary, it is shipping silver and gold. If we were paying off our debts, then we could understand the boast. But our old excess of imports has been paid off over and over since the balance shifted, some thirty years ago. If we were establishing a credit abroad, then the boast would be explicable. But we are not. The surmise that we are doing so is no longer entertained by financial men. The New York Herald, for instance, in a financial review on the 17th of the stock markets, speaks of “the enormous sum which is owing abroad,” of “the enormous foreign borrowing” of our bankers, of the curious spectacle of this country “borrowing and deferring payment to impoverished Europe,” and gives warning that “this foreign money must be repaid some day.” There appears to be nothing to show for our excessive exports but a little matter of tourists’ expenses and some payments for foreign freights. Will some one kindly rise up and explain, with veracity as to facts and common sense as to conclusions, what there is in our excessive exports to boast about and why this balance is called “favorable”?

Wilbur F. Wakeman, the appraiser of the port of New York, has had a surprising experience. Knowing that

the Republican tariff laws are for “protection”—that is, to discourage Americans from buying foreign-made goods when they wish to,—and that it is the function of his office to enforce those laws in letter and spirit, and being withal a conscientious protectionist himself, he enforced the laws. Not only did he enforce them strictly against commercial importers, thereby seeing to it that comparatively poor Americans are properly fined for buying foreign-made goods of American merchants; but he enforced them also and with equal severity against rich travelers, who buy their foreign-made goods on the other side. Thereupon a howl rent the air. Not at protection. Bless you, no! Protection is a bulwark. But at this enforcement of protection against the luxurious classes. Had Mr. Wakeman confined his attention to steerage passengers, that would have been different. But this obtuse protectionist, in his zeal for the cause, actually invaded the privacy of the cabin. So his resignation has been demanded. Mr. Wakeman’s reflections are probably confused. At any rate he declines to resign.

Mayor Johnson is being attacked by the Republicans in a new direction. His administration has been so successful that they are without hope of ousting him at the ballot box, so they are trying to get rid of him by revolutionizing the government of the city and leaving him as mayor without any power. Some ten years ago, an act was passed by the Republican legislature of Ohio which gave to Cleveland a government on what is known as the federal plan—in imitation, that is, of the federal government of the United States. The mayor was made elective and given full administrative powers, including the appointment of “directors” of various departments who bear to the mayor in some measure the relation of the cabinet of the United States to the president. This law has been in force ever since. All the mayors elected under it down to Johnson’s time have been Repub-