

“THE IMAGE AND SUPERScription OF CÆSAR.”

(Speech in the Senate of the United States, Wednesday, January 14, 1891.)

Mr. President: Two portentous perils threaten the safety, if they do not endanger the existence, of the Republic.

The first of these is ignorant, debased, degraded, spurious, and sophisticated suffrage; suffrage contaminated by the feculent sewage of decaying nations; suffrage intimidated and suppressed in the South; suffrage impure and corrupt, apathetic, and indifferent in the great cities of the North—so that it is doubtful whether there has been for half a century a Presidential election in this country that expressed the deliberate and intelligent judgment of the whole body of the American people.

In a newspaper interview a few months ago, in which I commented upon these conditions and alluded to the efforts of the bacilli doctors of politics, the bacteriologists of our system, who endeavor to cure the ills under which we suffer by their hypodermic injections of the lymph of independent non-partisanship and the Brown-Séquard elixir of civil service reform, I said that “the purification of politics” by such methods as this was an “iridescent dream.” Remembering the cipher dispatches of 1877 and the attempted purchase of the electoral votes of many Southern States in that campaign, the forgery of the Morey letter in 1881, by which Garfield lost

the votes of three States in the North, and the characterization and portraiture of Blaine and Cleveland and Harrison by their political adversaries, I added that "the Golden Rule and the Decalogue had no place in American political campaigns."

It seems superfluous to explain, Mr. President, that in those utterances I was not inculcating a doctrine, but describing a condition. My statement was a statement of facts as I understand them, and not the announcement of an article of faith. But many reverend and eminent divines, many disinterested editors, many ingenuous orators, perverted those utterances into the personal advocacy of impurity in politics.

I do not complain, Mr. President. It was, as the world goes, legitimate political warfare; but it was an illustration of the truth that there ought to be purification in our politics, and that the Golden Rule and the Decalogue ought to have a place in political campaigns. "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you" is the supreme injunction, obligatory upon all. "If thine enemy smite thee upon one cheek, turn to him the other," is a sublime and lofty precept. But I take this occasion to observe that until it is more generally regarded than it has been or appears likely to be in the immediate future, if my political enemy smites me upon one cheek, instead of turning to him the other, I shall smite him under the butt end of his left ear if I can. [Laughter.] If this be political immorality, I am to be included among the unregenerated.

The election bill that was under consideration a few days ago was intended to deal with one part of the great evil to which I have alluded, but it was an imperfect, a partial, and an incomplete remedy. Violence is bad; but fraud is no better; and it is more dangerous because it is more insidious.

Burke said in one of those immortal orations that emptied the House of Commons, but which will be read with admiration so long as the English tongue shall endure, that when the laws of Great Britain were not strong enough to protect the humblest Hindoo upon the shores of the Ganges, the nobleman was not safe in his castle upon the banks of the Thames. Sir, that lofty sentence is pregnant with admonition for us. There can be no repose, there can be no stable and permanent peace, in this country and under this Government, until it is just as safe for the black Republican to vote in Mississippi as it is for the white Democrat to vote in Kansas.

The other evil, Mr. President—the second to which I adverted as threatening the safety, if it does not endanger the existence, of the Republic—is the tyranny of combined, concentrated, centralized, and incorporated capital. And the people are considering this problem now. The conscience of the Nation is shocked at the injustice of modern society. The moral sentiment of mankind has been aroused at the unequal distribution of wealth, at the unequal diffusion of the burdens, the benefits, and the privileges of society.

At the beginning of our second century the American people have become profoundly conscious that the ballot is not the panacea for all the evils that afflict humanity; that it has not abolished poverty nor prevented injustice. They have discovered that political equality does not result in social fraternity; that under a democracy the concentration of greater political power in fewer hands, the accumulation and aggregation of greater amounts of wealth in individuals, is more possible than under a monarchy, and that there is a tyranny which is more fatal than the tyranny of kings.

George Washington, the first President of the Republic, at the close of his life in 1799 had the largest private fortune in the United States of America. Much of this came by inheritance, but the Father of His Country, in addition to his other virtues, shining and illustrious, was a very prudent, sagacious, thrifty, and forehanded man. He knew a good thing when he saw it a great way off. He had a keen eye for the main chance. As a surveyor in his youth, he obtained knowledge that enabled him to make exceedingly valuable locations upon the public domain. The establishment of the national capital in the immediate vicinity of his patrimonial possessions did not diminish their value. He was a just debtor, but he was an exact if not an exacting creditor. And so it came to pass that when he died, he was, to use the expressive phraseology of the day, the richest man in the country.

At this time, ninety years afterward, it is not without interest to know that the entire aggregate and sum of his earthly possessions, his estate, real, personal, and mixed, Mount Vernon and his lands along the Kanawha and the Ohio, slaves, securities, all of his belongings, reached the sum total of between \$800,000 and \$900,000. This was less than a century ago, and it is within bounds to say that at this time there are many scores of men, of estates, and of corporations in this country whose annual income exceeded, and there has been one man whose monthly revenue since that period exceeded, the entire accumulations of the wealthiest citizen of the United States at the end of the last century.

At that period the social condition of the United States was one of practical equality. The statistics of the census of 1800 are incomplete and partial, but the population of the Union was about 5,300,000, and the estimated wealth of

the country was between \$3,000,000,000 and \$4,000,000,000. There was not a millionaire and there was not a tramp nor a pauper, so far as we know, in the country, except those who had been made so by infirmity, or disease, or inevitable calamity. A multitude of small farmers contentedly tilled the soil. Upon the coast a race of fishermen and sailors, owning the craft that they sailed, wrested their subsistence from the stormy sea. Labor was the rule and luxury the exception. The great mass of the people lived upon the products of the farms that they cultivated. They spun and wove and manufactured their clothing from flax and from wool. Commerce and handicrafts afforded honorable competence. The prayer of Agur was apparently realized. There was neither poverty nor riches. Wealth was uniformly diffused, and none was condemned to hopeless penury and dependence. Less than 4 per cent of the entire population lived in towns, and there were but four cities whose population exceeded 10,000 persons. Westward to the Pacific lay the fertile solitudes of an unexplored continent, its resources undeveloped and unsuspected. The dreams of Utopia seemed about to be fulfilled, the wide, the universal diffusion of civil, political, and personal rights among the great body of the people, accompanied by efficient and vigorous guaranties for the safety of life, the protection of property, and the preservation of liberty.

Since that time, Mr. President, the growth in wealth and numbers in this country has had no precedent in the building of nations. The genius of the people, stimulated to prodigious activity by freedom, by individualism, by universal education, has subjugated the desert and abolished the frontier. The laboring capacity of every inhabitant of this planet has been duplicated by machinery. In Massachusetts alone we are

told that its engines are equivalent to the labor of one hundred million men. We now perform one third of the world's mining, one quarter of its manufacturing, one fifth of its farming, and we possess one sixth part of its entire accumulated wealth.

The Anglo-Saxon, Mr. President, is not by nature or instinct an anarchist, a socialist, a nihilist, or a communist. He does not desire the repudiation of debts, public or private, and he does not favor the forcible redistribution of property. He came to this continent, as he has gone everywhere else on the face of the earth, with a purpose. The 40,000 English colonists who came to this country between 1620 and 1650 formed the most significant, the most formidable migration that has ever occurred upon this globe since time began. They brought with them social and political ideas, novel in their application, of inconceivable energy and power—the home, the family, the State, individualism, the right of personal effort, freedom of conscience, an indomitable love of liberty and justice, a genius for self-government, an unrivaled capacity for conquest, but preferring charters to the sword—and they have been inexorable and relentless in the accomplishment of their designs. They were fatigued with caste and privilege and prerogative. They were tired of monarchs, and so, upon the bleak and inhospitable shores of New England, they decreed the sovereignty of the people, and there they builded "a church without a bishop and a state without a king."

The result of that experiment, Mr. President, has been ostensibly successful. Under the operation of those great forces, after two hundred and seventy years, this country exhibits a peaceful triumph over many subdued nationalities, through a government automatic in its functions and sus-

tained by no power but the invisible majesty of law. With swift and constant communication by lines of steam transportation by land and lake and sea, with telegraphs extending their nervous reticulations from State to State, the remotest members of this gigantic Republic are animated by a vitality as vigorous as that which throbs at its mighty heart, and it is through the quickened intelligence that has been communicated by those ideas that these conditions, which have been fatal to other nations, have become the pillars of our strength and the bulwarks of our safety.

Mr. President, if time and space signified now what they did when independence was declared, the United States could not exist under one government. It would not be possible to secure unity of purpose or identity of interest between communities separated by such barriers and obstacles as Maine and California. But time and distance are relative terms, and, under the operations of these forces, this continent has dwindled to a span. It is not as far from Boston to San Francisco to-day as it was from Boston to Baltimore in 1791; and as the world has shrunk life has expanded. For all the purposes for which existence is valuable in this world—for comfort, for convenience, for opportunity, for intelligence, for power of locomotion, and superiority to the accidents and the fatalities of Nature—the fewest in years among us, Mr. President, has lived longer and has lived more worthily than Methuselah in all his stagnant centuries.

When the Atlantic cable was completed, it was not merely that a wire, finer by comparison than the gossamer of morning, had sunk to its path along the peaks and the plateaus of the deep, but the earth instantaneously grew smaller by the breadth of the Atlantic. A new volume in the history of the

world was opened. The to-morrow of Europe flashed upon the yesterday of America. Time, up to the period when this experiment commenced on this continent, yielded its treasures grudgingly and with reluctance. The centuries crept from improvement to improvement with tardy, sluggish steps, as if Nature were unwilling to acknowledge the mastery of man. The great inventions of glass, of gunpowder, of printing, and the mariner's compass consumed a thousand years, but, as the great experiment upon this continent has proceeded, the ancient law of progress has been disregarded, and the mind is bewildered by the stupendous results of its marvelous achievements.

The application of steam to locomotion on land and sea, the cotton-gin, electric illumination and telegraphy, the cylinder printing-press, the sewing-machine, the photographic art, tubular and suspension bridges, the telephone, the spectroscope, and the myriad forms of new applications of science to health and domestic comfort, to the arts of peace and war, have alone rendered democracy possible. The steam engine emancipated millions from the slavery of daily toil and left them at liberty to pursue a higher range of effort; labor has become more remunerative, and the flood of wealth has raised the poor to comfort and the middle classes to affluence. With prosperity have attended leisure, books, travel; the masses have been provided with schools, and the range of mental inquiry has become wider and more daring. The sewing machine does the work of a hundred hands and gives rest and hope to weary lives. Farming, as my distinguished friend from New York [Mr. Evarts] once said, has become a "sedentary occupation." The reaper no longer swings his sickle in midsummer fields through the yellowing grain, followed by those who gather the wheat and the tares, but he rides in a vehicle, protected from

the meridian sun, accomplishing in comfort in a single hour the former labors of a day.

By these and the other emancipating devices of society the laborer and the artisan acquire the means of study and recreation. They provide their children with better opportunities than they possessed. Emerging from the obscure degradation to which they have been consigned by monarchies, they have assumed the leadership in politics and society. The governed have become the governors; the subjects have become the kings. They have formed States; they have invented political systems; they have made laws; they have established literatures; and it is not true, Mr. President, in one sense, that during this extraordinary period the rich have grown richer and the poor have grown poorer. There has never been a time since the angel stood with the flaming sword before the gates of Eden when the dollar of invested capital paid as low a return in interest as it does to-day; nor has there been an hour when the dollar that is earned by the laboring man would buy so much of everything that is essential for the welfare of himself and his family as it will to-day.

Mr. President, monopolies and corporations, however strong they may be, cannot permanently enslave such a people. They have given too many convincing proofs of their capacity for self-government. They have made too many incredible sacrifices for this great system which has been builded and established here to allow it to be overthrown. They will submit to no dictation.

We have become, Mr. President, the wealthiest nation upon the face of this earth, and the greater part of these enormous accumulations has been piled up during the past fifty years. From 1860 to 1880, notwithstanding the losses incurred by

the most destructive war of modern times, the emancipation of four billions of slave property, the expenses of feeding the best fed, of clothing the best clothed, and of sheltering the best sheltered people in the world, notwithstanding all the losses by fire and flood during that period of twenty years, the wealth of the country increased at the rate of \$250,000 for every hour. Every time that the clock ticked above the portal of this chamber the aggregated, accumulated, permanent wealth of this country increased more than \$70.

Sir, it rivals, it exceeds the fictions of the Arabian Nights. There is nothing in the story of the lamp of Aladdin that surpasses it. It is without parallel or precedent; and the national ledger now shows a balance to our credit, after all that has been wasted and squandered and expended and lost and thrown away, of between sixty and seventy thousand million dollars. I believe myself that, upon a fair cash market valuation, the aggregate wealth of this country to day is not less than one hundred thousand million dollars. This is enough, Mr. President, to make every man and every woman and every child beneath the flag comfortable, to keep the wolf away from the door. It is enough to give to every family a competence, and yet we are told that there are thousands of people who never have enough to eat in any one day in the year. We are told by the statisticians of the Department of Labor of the United States that, notwithstanding this stupendous aggregation, there are a million American citizens, able-bodied and willing to work, who tramp the streets of our cities and the country highways and byways in search of labor with which to buy their daily bread, in vain.

Mr. President, is it any wonder that this condition of things can exist without exciting profound apprehension? I heard—

or saw, rather, for I did not hear it—I saw in the morning papers that, in his speech yesterday, the Senator from Ohio [Mr. Sherman] devoted a considerable part of his remarks to the defense of millionaires; that he declared they were the froth upon the beer of our political system.

Mr. SHERMAN: I said, "speculators."

Mr. INGALLS: Speculators. They are very nearly the same, for the millionaires of this country, Mr. President, are not the producers and the laborers. They are arrayed like Solomon in all his glory, but "they toil not, neither do they spin"—yes, they do *spin*. This class, Mr. President, I am glad to say, is not confined to this country alone. These gigantic accumulations have not been the result of industry and economy. There would be no protest against them if they were. There is an anecdote floating around the papers, speaking about beer, that some gentleman said to the keeper of a saloon that he would give him a recipe for selling more beer, and when he inquired what it was, he said: "Sell less froth." [Laughter.] If the millionaires and speculators of this country are the froth upon the beer of our system, the time has come when we should sell more beer by selling less froth. [Laughter.]

The people are beginning to inquire whether, "under a government of the people, and by the people, and for the people," under a system in which the bounty of Nature is supplemented by the labor of all, any citizen can show a moral, yes, or a legal title to \$200,000,000. Some have the temerity to ask whether or not any man can show a clear title to \$100,000,000. There have been men rash enough to doubt whether, under a system so constituted and established, by speculation or otherwise, any citizen can show a fair title to \$10,000,000, when the distribution of wealth *per capita* would be less than \$1,000.

If I were put upon my *voir dire*, I should hesitate before admitting that, in the sense of giving just compensation and equivalent, any man in this country or any other country ever absolutely earned a million dollars. I do not believe he ever did.

What is the condition to-day, Mr. President, by the statistics? I said, at the beginning of this century there was a condition of practical social equality; wealth was uniformly diffused among the great mass of the people. I repeat that the people are not anarchists; they are not socialists; they are not communists; but they have suddenly waked to the conception of the fact that the bulk of the property of the country is passing into the hands of what the Senator from Ohio by an euphemism calls the "speculators" of the world, not of America alone. They infest the financial and social systems of every country upon the face of the earth. They are the men of no politics, neither Democrat nor Republican. They are the men of all nationalities and of no nationality, with no politics but plunder, and with no principle but the spoliation of the human race.

A table has been compiled for the purpose of showing how wealth in this country is distributed, and it is full of the most startling admonition. It has appeared in the magazines; it has been commented upon in this chamber; it has been the theme of editorial discussion. It appears from this compilation that there are in the United States two hundred persons who have an aggregate of more than \$20,000,000 each; and there has been one man, the Midas of the century, at whose touch everything seemed to turn to gold, who had acquired within less than the lifetime of a single individual, out of the aggregate of the national wealth that was earned by the labor of all applied to the common bounty of Nature, an aggregate

that exceeded the assessed valuation of four of the smallest States in this Union.

Mr. HOAR: And more than the whole country had when the Constitution was formed.

Mr. INGALLS: Yes, and, as the Senator from Massachusetts well observes—and I thank him for the suggestion—much more, many times more than the entire wealth of the country when it was established and founded. Four hundred persons possess \$10,000,000 each, 1,000 persons \$5,000,000 each, 2,000 persons \$2,500,000 each, 6,000 persons \$1,000,000 each, and 15,000 persons \$500,000 each, making a total of 31,100 people who possess \$36,250,000,000.

Mr. President, it is the most appalling statement that ever fell upon mortal ears. It is, so far as the results of democracy as a social and political experiment are concerned, the most terrible commentary that ever was recorded in the book of Time; and Nero fiddles while Rome burns. It is thrown off with a laugh and a sneer as the "froth upon the beer" of our political and social system. As I said, the assessed valuation recorded in the great national ledger standing to our credit is about \$65,000,000,000.

Our population is sixty-two and one-half millions, and by some means, by some device, by some machination, by some incantation, honest or otherwise, by some process that cannot be defined, less than a two-thousandth part of our population have obtained possession, and have kept out of the penitentiary in spite of the means they have adopted to acquire it, of more than one-half of the entire accumulated wealth of the country. That is not the worst, Mr. President. It has been largely acquired by men who have contributed little to the material welfare of the country and by processes that I do not

care in appropriate terms to describe, by the wrecking of the fortunes of innocent men, women, and children, by jugglery, by bookkeeping, by financiering, by what the Senator from Ohio calls "speculation," and this process is going on with frightful and constantly accelerating rapidity.

The entire industry of this country is passing under the control of organized and confederated capital. More than fifty of the necessities of life to-day, without which the cabin of the farmer and the miner cannot be lighted, or his children fed or clothed, have passed absolutely under the control of syndicates and trusts and corporations composed of speculators, and, by means of these combinations and confederations, competition is destroyed; small dealings are rendered impossible; competence can no longer be acquired, for it is superfluous and unnecessary to say that if, under a system where the accumulations distributed *per capita* would be less than a thousand dollars, thirty-one thousand obtained possession of more than half of the accumulated wealth of the country, it is impossible that others should have a competence or an independence.

So it happens, Mr. President, that our society is becoming rapidly stratified, almost hopelessly stratified, into a condition of superfluously rich and helplessly poor. We are accustomed to speak of this as the land of the free and the home of the brave. It will soon be the home of the rich and the land of the slave.

We point to Great Britain and we denounce aristocracy, and privileged and titled classes, and landed estates. We thought when we had abolished primogeniture and entail, that we had forever forbidden and prevented these enormous and dangerous accumulations; but, sir, we had forgotten that cap-

ital could combine; we were unaware of the yet undeveloped capacity of corporations, and so, as I say, it happens upon the threshold and in the vestibule of our second century, with all this magnificent record behind us, with this tremendous achievement in the way of wealth, population, invention, opportunity for happiness, we are in a condition compared with which the accumulated fortunes of Great Britain are puerile and insignificant.

It is no wonder, Mr. President, that the laboring, industrial, and agricultural classes of this country, who have been made intelligent under the impulse of universal education, have at last awakened to this tremendous condition and are inquiring whether or not this experiment has been successful. And, sir, the speculators must beware. They have forgotten that the conditions, political and social, here are not a reproduction of the conditions under which these circumstances exist in other lands. Here is no dynasty; here is no privilege or caste, or prerogative; here are no standing armies; here are no hereditary bondsmen, but every atom in our political system is quick, instinct, and endowed with life and power. His ballot at the box is the equivalent of the ballot of the richest speculator. Thomas Jefferson, the great apostle of modern Democracy, taught the lesson to his followers, and they have profited well by his instruction, that under a popular, democratic, representative government, wealth, culture, intelligence were ultimately no match for numbers.

The numbers in this country, Mr. President, have learned at last the power of combination, and the speculators should not forget that, while the people of this country are generous and just, they are jealous also, and that when discontent changes to resentment and resentment passes into exaspera-

tion, one volume of a nation's history is closed and another will be opened.

The speculators, Mr. President! The cotton product of this country, I believe, is about six million bales.

Mr. BUTLER: Seven million bales.

Mr. INGALLS: Seven million bales, I am told. The transactions of the New York Cotton Exchange are forty million bales, representing transactions speculative, profitable, remunerative, by which some of these great accumulations have been piled up, an inconceivable burden upon the energies and industries of the country.

The production of coal oil, I believe, in this country has average something like twenty million barrels a year. The transactions of the New York Petroleum Exchange, year by year, average two billion barrels, fictitious, simulated, the instruments of the gambler and the speculator, by means of which, through an impost upon the toil, and labor, and industry of every laborer engaged in the production of petroleum, additional difficulties are imposed.

It is reported that the coal alone that is mined in Pennsylvania, indispensable to the comfort of millions of men, amounts in its annual product to about \$40,000,000, of which one-third is profit over and above the cost of production, and a fair return for the capital invested.

That is "speculation," Mr. President, and every dollar over and above the cost of production, with a fair return upon the capital invested, every dollar of that fifteen or sixteen millions is filched, robbed, violently plundered out of the earnings of the laborers and operatives and farmers who are compelled to buy it; and yet it goes by the euphemistic name of "speculation" and is declared to be legitimate; it is enlogized

and defended as one of those practices that are entitled to respect and approbation.

Nor is this all, Mr. President. The hostility between the employers and the employed in this country is becoming vindictive and permanently malevolent. Labor and capital are in two hostile camps to-day. Lockouts and strikes and labor difficulties have become practically the normal condition of our system, and it is estimated that during the year that has just closed, in consequence of these disorders, in consequence of this hostility and this warfare, the actual loss in labor, in wages, in the destruction of perishable commodities by the interruption of railway traffic, has not been less than \$300,000,000.

Mr. President, this is a serious problem. It may well engage the attention of the representatives of the States and of the American people. I have no sympathy with that school of political economists which teaches that there is an irreconcilable conflict between labor and capital, and which demands indiscriminate, hostile, and repressive legislation against men because they are rich and corporations because they are strong. Labor and capital should not be antagonists, but allies rather. They should not be opponents and enemies, but colleagues and auxiliaries whose coöperating rivalry is essential to national prosperity. But I cannot forbear to affirm that a political system under which such despotic power can be wrested from the people and vested in a few is a democracy only in name.

A financial system under which more than one-half of the enormous wealth of the country, derived from the bounty of Nature and the labor of all, is owned by a little more than thirty thousand people, while one million American citizens,

able and willing to toil, are homeless tramps, starving for bread, requires readjustment.

A social system which offers to tender, virtuous, and dependent women the alternative between prostitution and suicide as an escape from beggary, is organized crime, for which some day unrelenting justice will demand atonement and expiation.

Mr. President, the man who loves his country and the man who studies her history will search in vain for any natural cause for this appalling condition. The earth has not forgotten to yield her increase. There has been no general failure of harvests. We have had benignant skies and the early and the latter rain. Neither famine nor pestilence has decimated our population nor wasted its energies. Immigration is flowing in from every land, and we are in the lusty prime of national youth and strength, with unexampled resources and every stimulus to their development; but, sir, the great body of the American people are engaged to-day in studying these problems that I have suggested in this morning hour. They are disheartened with misfortunes. They are weary with unrequited toil. They are tired of the exactions of the speculators. They desire peace and rest. They are turning their attention to the great industrial questions which underlie their material prosperity. They are indifferent to party. They care nothing for Republicanism nor for Democracy as such. They are ready to say, "A plague on both your houses"; and they are ready also, Mr. President, to hail and to welcome any organization, any measure, any leader that promises them relief from the profitless strife of politicians and this turbulent and distracting agitation, which has already culminated in violence and may end in blood.

Such, sir, is the verdict which I read in the elections from which we have just emerged, a verdict that was unexpected by the leaders of both parties, and which surprised alike the victors and the vanquished. It was a spontaneous, unpremeditated protest of the people against existing conditions. It was a revolt of the national conscience against injustice, a movement that is full of pathos and also full of danger, because such movements sometimes make victims of those who are guiltless. It was not a Republican defeat. It was not a Democratic victory. It was a great upheaval and uprising, independent of and superior to both. It was a crisis that may become a catastrophe, filled with terrible admonition, but not without encouragement to those who understand and are ready to cooperate with it. It was a peaceful revolution, an attempt to resume rights that seemed to have been infringed.

It is many years, Mr. President, since I predicted this inevitable result. In a speech delivered in this chamber on the 15th of February, 1878, from the seat that is now adorned by my honorable friend from Texas who sits before me [Mr. Reagan], I said:

"We cannot disguise the truth that we are on the verge of an impending revolution. The old issues are dead. The people are arraying themselves upon one side or the other of a portentous contest. On one side is capital, formidably entrenched in privilege, arrogant from continued triumph, conservative, tenacious of old theories, demanding new concessions, enriched by domestic levy and foreign commerce, and struggling to adjust all values to its own standard. On the other is labor, asking for employment, striving to develop domestic industries, battling with the forces of Nature, and subduing the wilderness; labor, starving and sullen in cities, resolutely determined to overthrow a system under which the rich are growing richer and the poor are growing poorer; a system which gives to a Vanderbilt the possession of wealth beyond the dreams of avarice, and condemns the poor to a poverty which has no refuge from starvation but the prison or the grave.

"Our demands for relief, for justice, have been met with indifference or disdain. The laborers of the country asking for employment are treated like impudent mendicants begging for bread."

Mr. President, it may be cause, it may be coincidence, it may be effect, it may be *post hoc* or it may be *propter hoc*, but it is historically true that this great blight that has fallen upon our industries, this paralysis that has overtaken our financial system, coincided in point of time with the diminution of the circulating medium of the country.

The public debt was declared to be payable in coin, and then the money power of silver was destroyed. The value of property diminished in proportion, wages fell, and the value of everything was depreciated except debts and gold. The mortgage, the bond, the coupon, and the tax have retained immortal youth and vigor. They have not depreciated. The debt remains, but the capacity to pay has been destroyed. The accumulation of years disappears under the hammer of the sheriff, and the debtor is homeless, while the creditor obtains the security for his debt for a fraction of what it was actually worth when the debt was contracted.

There is, Mr. President, a deep-seated conviction among the people, which I fully share, that the demonetization of silver in 1873 was one element of a great conspiracy to deliver the fiscal system of this country over to those by whom it has, in my opinion, finally been captured. I see no proof of the assertion that the demonetization act of 1873 was fraudulently or corruptly procured, but from the statements that have been made it is impossible to avoid the conviction that it was part of a deliberate plan and conspiracy formed by those who have been called "speculators" to still further increase the value of the standard by which their accumulations were

to be measured. The attention of the people was not called to the subject. It is one of the anomalies and phenomena of legislation.

That bill was pending in its various stages for four years in both houses of Congress. It passed both bodies by decided majorities. It was read and reread and reprinted thirteen times, as appears by the records. It was commented upon in newspapers; it was the subject of discussion in financial bodies all over the country; and yet we have the concurrent testimony of every senator and every member of the House of Representatives who was present during the time that the legislation was pending and proceeding that he knew nothing whatever about the demonetization of silver and the destruction of the coinage of the silver dollar. The Senator from Nevada [Mr. Stewart], who knows so many things, felt called upon to make a speech of an hour's duration to show that he knew nothing whatever about it. I have heard other members declaim and with one consent make excuse that they knew nothing about it.

As I say, it is one of the phenomena and anomalies of legislation, and I have no other explanation to make than this: I believe that both houses of Congress and the President of the United States must have been hypnotized. So great was the power of capital, so profound was the impulse, so persistent was the determination, that the promoters of this scheme succeeded by the operation of mind-power and will-force in capturing and bewildering the intelligence of men of all parties, of members of both houses of Congress, and the members of the Cabinet, and the President of the United States.

And yet, Mr. President, it cannot be doubted that the statements that these gentlemen make are true. There is no

doubt of the sincerity or the candor of those who have testified upon this matter; and it is incredible (I am glad it occurred before I was a member of this body) that a change in our financial system that deprived one of the money metals of its debt-paying power, that changed the whole financial system of the country and to a certain extent the entire fiscal methods of the world, could have been engineered through the Senate and the House of Representatives and the Cabinet of the President and secured executive approval without a single human being knowing anything whatever about it. In an age of miracles, Mr. President, wonders never cease.

It is true that this marvel was accomplished when the subject was not one of public discussion. It was done at a time when, although the public mind was intensely interested in financial subjects and methods of relief from existing conditions were assiduously sought, the suggestion had never proceeded from any quarter that this could be accomplished by the demonetization of silver, or ceasing to coin the silver dollar. It was improvidently done, but it would not be more surprising, it would not be more of a strain upon human judgment, if fifteen years from now we were to be informed that no one was aware that in the bill that is now pending the proposition was not made for the free coinage of silver.

Mr. President, there is not a State west of the Alleghany Mountains and south of the Potomac and Ohio rivers that is not in favor of the free coinage of silver. There is not a State in which, if that proposition were to be submitted to a popular vote, it would not be adopted by an overwhelming majority. I do not mean by that inclusion to say that in those States east of the Alleghanies and north of the Ohio and Potomac rivers there is any hostility or indisposition to receive the benefits

that would result from the remonetization of silver. On the contrary, in the great commonwealths that lie to the northeast upon the Atlantic seaboard, New York, Pennsylvania, and the manufacturing and commercial States, I am inclined to believe from the tone of the press, from the declarations of many assemblies, that if the proposition were to be submitted there, it would also receive a majority of the votes.

If the proposition were to be submitted to the votes of the people of this country at large, whether the silver dollar should be recoined and silver remonetized, notwithstanding the prophecies, the predictions, the animadversions of those who are opposed to it, I have not the slightest doubt that the great majority of the people, irrespective of party, would be in favor of it, and would so record themselves. They have declared in favor of it for the past fifteen years, and they have been juggled with, they have been thwarted, they have been paltered with and dealt with in a double sense. The word of promise that was made to their ear in the platforms of political parties has been broken to their hope. There was a majority in this body at the last session of Congress in favor of the free coinage of silver. The compromise that was made was not what the people expected nor what they had a right to demand. They felt that they had been trifled with, and that is one cause of the exasperation expressed in the verdict of November 4th.

I feel impelled to make one further observation. Warnings and admonitions have been plenty in this debate. We have been admonished of the danger that would follow; we have been notified of what would occur if the free coinage of silver were supported by a majority of this body, or if it were to be adopted as a part of our financial system. I am not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet; but I say to those who are

now arraying themselves against the deliberately expressed judgment of the American people, a judgment that they know has been declared and recorded—I say to the members of this body, I say, so far as I may do so with propriety, to the members of the coördinate branch of Congress, and I say, if without impropriety I may do so, to the Executive of the Nation, that there will come a time when the people will be trifled with no longer on this subject.

Once, twice, thrice, by executive intervention, Democrat and Republican, by parliamentary proceedings that I need not characterize, by various methods of legislative jugglery, the deliberate purpose of the American people, irrespective of party, has been thwarted, it has been defied, it has been contumeliously trodden under foot; and I repeat to those who have been the instruments and the implements, no matter what the impulse or the motive or the intention may have been, at some time the people will elect a House of Representatives, they will elect a Senate of the United States, they will elect a President of the United States, who will carry out their pledges and execute the popular will.

Mr. President, by the readjustment of the political forces of the Nation under the Eleventh Census, the seat of political power has at last been transferred from the circumference of this country to its center. It has been transferred from the seaboard to that great intramontane region between the Alleghanies and the Sierras, extending from the British possessions to the Gulf of Mexico, a region whose growth is one of the wonders and marvels of modern civilization. It seems as if the column of migration had paused in its westward march to build upon those tranquil plains and in those fertile valleys a fabric of civilization that should be the wonder and the admiration

of the world, rich in every element of present prosperity, but richer in every prophecy of future greatness and renown.

When I went West, Mr. President, as a carpetbagger in 1858, St. Louis was an outpost of civilization, Jefferson City was the farthest point reached by a railroad, and in all that great wilderness, extending from the sparse settlements along the Missouri to the summits of the Sierra Nevada and from the Yellowstone to the cañons of the Rio Grande, a vast solitude from which I have myself since that time voted to admit seven States into the American Union, there was neither harvest nor husbandry, neither habitation nor home, save the hut of the hunter and the wigwam of the savage. Mr. President, we have now within those limits, extending southward from the British possessions and embracing the States of the Mississippi Valley, the Gulf, and the southeastern Atlantic, a vast productive region, the granary of the world, a majority of the members of this body, of the House of Representatives, and of the Electoral College.

We talk with admiration of Egypt. For thirty centuries the ruins of its cities, its art, its religions, have been the marvel of mankind. The Pyramids have survived the memory of their builders, and the Sphinx still questions with solemn gaze the vague mystery of the desert.

The great fabric of Egyptian civilization, with its wealth and power, the riches of its art, its creeds, and faiths, and philosophies, was reared from the labors of a few million slaves under the lash of despots, upon a narrow margin four hundred and fifty miles long and ten miles wide, comprising in all, with the delta of the Nile, no more than ten thousand square miles of fertile land.

Who, sir, can foretell the future of that region to which I have adverted, with its twenty thousand miles of navigable water-courses, with its hundreds of thousands of square miles of soil, excelling in fecundity all that of the Nile, when the labor of centuries of freemen under the impulse of our institutions shall have brought forth their perfect results?

Mr. President, it is to that region, with that population and with such a future, that the political power of this country has at last been transferred, and they are now unanimously demanding the free coinage of silver. It is for that reason that I shall cordially support the amendment proposed by the Senator from Nevada. In doing so I not only follow the dictates of my own judgment, but I carry out the wishes of a great majority of my constituents, irrespective of party or of political affiliation. I have been for the free coinage of silver from the outset, and I am free to say that, after having observed the operations of the act of 1878, I am more than ever convinced of the wisdom of that legislation and the futility of the accusations by which it was assailed.

The people of the country that I represent have lost their reverence for gold. They have no longer any superstition about coin. Notwithstanding all the declarations of the monometallists, notwithstanding all the assaults that have been made by those who are in favor of still further increasing the value of the standard by which their possessions are measured, they know that money is neither wealth nor capital nor value, and that it is merely the creation of the law, by which all these are estimated and measured.

We speak, sir, about the volume of money and about its relation to the wealth and capital of the country. Let me ask you, sir, for a moment, what would occur if the circulating

medium were to be destroyed? Suppose that the gold and silver were to be withdrawn suddenly from circulation and melted up into bars and ingots and buried in the earth from which they were taken. Suppose that all the paper money, silver certificates, gold certificates, national bank notes, Treasury notes, were stacked in one mass at the end of the Treasury building and a torch applied to them and they were to be destroyed by fire and their ashes spread, like the ashes of Wickliffe, upon the Potomac, to be spread abroad wide as its waters be.

What would be the effect? Would not this country be worth exactly as much as it is to-day? Would there not be just as many acres of land, as many houses, as many farms, as many days of labor, as much improved and unimproved merchandise, and as much property as there is to-day? The result would be that commerce would languish, the sails of the ships would be furled in the harbors, the great trains would cease to run to and fro on their errands, trade would be reduced to barter, and, the people finding their energies languishing, civilization itself would droop, and we should be reduced to the condition of the nomadic wanderers upon the primeval plains.

Suppose, on the other hand, that, instead of being destroyed, all the money in this country were to be put in the possession of a single man—gold and paper and silver—and he were to be moored in mid-Atlantic upon a raft with his great hoard, or to be stationed in the middle of Sahara's desert, without food to nourish, or shelter to cover, or the means of transportation to get away. Who would be the richest man, the possessor of the gigantic treasure or the humblest settler upon the plains of the West, with a dugout to shelter him and with cornmeal and water enough for his daily bread?

Doubtless, Mr. President, you search the Scriptures daily, and are therefore familiar with the story of those depraved politicians of Judea who sought to entangle the Master in His talk by asking Him if it were lawful to pay tribute to Caesar or not. He, perceiving the purpose that they had in view, said unto them, "Show me the tribute money." And they brought Him a penny. He said, "Whose is this image and superscription?" And they replied, "Caesar's." And He said, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

I hold, Mr. President, between my thumb and finger a silver denarius, or "penny" of that ancient time, perhaps the identical coin that was brought by the hypocritical Herodian, bearing the image and superscription of Caesar. It has been money for more than twenty centuries. It was money when Jesus walked the waves, and in the tragic hour at Gethsemane. Imperial Caesar is "dead and turned to clay." He has yielded to a mightier conqueror, and his eagles, his ensigns, and his trophies are indistinguishable dust. His triumphs and his victories are a school-boy's tale. Rome herself is but a memory. Her marble porticoes and temples and palaces are in ruins. The sluggish monk and the lazy *lazzaroni* haunt the Senate House and the Coliseum, and the derisive owl wakes the echoes of the voiceless Forum. But this little contemporary disk of silver is money still, because it bears the image and superscription of Caesar. And, sir, it will continue to be money for twenty centuries more, should it resist so long the corroding canker and the gnawing tooth of Time. But if one of these pages here should take this coin to the railway track, as boys sometimes do, and allow the train to pass over it, in one single instant its function would have disappeared, and

it would be money no longer, because the image and superscription of Cæsar would have disappeared.

Mr. President, money is the creation of law, and the American people have learned that lesson, and they are indifferent to the assaults, they are indifferent to the arguments, they are indifferent to the aspersions which are cast upon them for demanding that the law of the United States shall place the image and superscription of Cæsar upon silver enough and gold enough and paper enough to enable them to transact without embarrassment, without hindrance, without delay, and without impoverishment their daily business affairs, and that shall give them a measure of value that will not make their earnings and their belongings the sport and the prey of speculators.

Mr. President, this contest can have but one issue. The experiment that has begun will not fail. It is useless to deny that many irregularities have been tolerated here; that many crimes have been committed in the sacred name of liberty; that our public affairs have been scandalous episodes to which every patriotic heart reverts with distress; that there have been envy and jealousy in high places; that there have been treacherous and lying platforms; that there have been shallow compromises and degrading concessions to popular errors; but amid all these disturbances, amid all these contests, amid all these inexplicable aberrations, the march of the Nation has been steadily onward.

At the beginning of our second century we have entered upon a new social and political movement whose results cannot be predicted, but which are certain to be infinitely momentous. That the progress will be upward, I have no doubt. Through the long and desolate tract of history; through the seemingly aimless struggles, the random gropings of humanity, the tur-

bulent chaos of wrong, injustice, crime, doubt, want, and wretchedness, the dungeon and the block, the Inquisition and the stake, the trepidations of the oppressed, the bloody exultations and triumphs of tyrants,

"The uplifted ax, the agonizing wheel,
Luke's iron crown and Damien's bed of steel,"

the tendency has been towards the light. Out of every conflict some man or sect or nation has emerged with more privileges, enlarged opportunities, purer religion, broader liberty, and greater capacity for happiness; and out of this conflict in which we are now engaged I am confident finally will come liberty, justice, equality; the continental unity of the American Republic, the social fraternity and the industrial independence of the American people. [Applause in the galleries.]