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THE DEMOCRAT.

### M'KINLEY IN A HOLE.

#### PORTO RICAN TARIFF GROWS MORE VEXATIOUS.

Breeds a Bitter Party Wrangle—Republians Would Like to Drop Their Whole Imperialistic Policy—Gold Bill's Passage Overrides Platform.

Washington correspondence:

The Republicans have about concluded to drop their whole imperialistic policy and do—nothing. The wrangle over the Porto Rican tariff grows more vexatious every day. From the Democratic point of view the interesting thing is that it is purely a family row. The Republicans are so absorbed in quarreling among themselves that it really is not necessary for the Democrats to take any active part in the proceedings.

One of the most remarkable features of the situation is that the Republican voters from all sections of the country are coming down to Washington to register their personal protest at the Capitol. They know what they elected their Representatives for, and they cannot be bulldozed by the special interests that seem to have so strong a hold on the administration and its followers. Minnesota keeps a continuous procession of prominent Republican citizens in Washington in order that Senators Davis and Nelson may not forget that their constituents are not only for free trade with Porto Rico, but against imperialism in every shape and form. Senator Beveridge has the same experience with his party supporters from Indiana. In fact, every middle Western State takes good care that the letters and telegrams of protest shall have the personal backing of disinterested Republican citizens who want Congress to remember that it is the creature of the Constitution and not above it.

The Republicans are mournfully concluding that about the best thing they can do is to drop the whole question of legislating for the new insular possessions. They now want to pass the \$2,000,000 relief bill for Porto Rico and leave it under military government until after the Presidential election. This will not satisfy Porto Rico. The people of that island want the independence guaranteed by the Constitution to the United States and say that they are perfectly able to raise whatever revenue is needed by direct taxation. They very sensibly argue that the absent Spanish landlords are the people who should be made to bear their proper share of the burdens of taxation. The plan of continuing military rule in Porto Rico and the Philippines will by no means placate the Republican rank and file. They feel it a most humiliating confession of the incompetency of the administration to deal with the responsibilities which it so eagerly assumed.

The Democrats state their position very briefly: "We never thought it wise to acquire these islands, but if we are to keep them they must of necessity be under the protection of the Constitution."

The single gold standard measure is now a law. The Republicans have assumed responsibility for enacting into law what has been the practice in relation to the gold standard for some time. They will have an interesting time of it explaining how they harmonize this action with the declaration in their platform in 1896. Of course the leaders regarded that as merely a bit of political shrewdness to catch the bimetallic vote. But how about the voters who thought the party leaders were honest in their professions? In a quiet way the intimation is being received in Washington that thousands of indignant voters propose to register their opinion of this piece of party policy by voting for Bryan this fall.

The bill has a number of bad features. It gives the national banks an extension of power which the Democrats think they by no means needed. It permits these banks to expand and contract their currency at will. The farmers and small merchants know how unmercifully this power will be used. The public debt is also fastened on the country for another thirty years and the provision for an endless chain of bonds makes glad the hearts of the Wall street speculators. In one sense the Democrats feel that the bill clears the way for a successful campaign on the financial issue, but as a matter of principle and equity to the people it is thoroughly mischievous in character and will cause untold hardships.

Secretary Root is in Cuba, and the natives have been asking him hard questions. They want to know how long Cuba is to remain under military rule and when it is to have the opportunity to attempt to govern itself. Secretary Root says that "the people of the United States desire that the Cubans should learn all they can about self-government by watching the management of the Americans" there now. Mr. Root means the administration and the trusts when he says "people." They are the only ones who want the Cubans harassed and exploited under military rule.

Gov. Steenberg, of Idaho, is at the Capitol daily, watching the progress of the investigation, by the House Military Committee, of the bull-pen outrages in his State. Gov. Steenberg is a much worried man. He has discovered that the Democrats have entirely repudiated him on account of his readiness to assist the administration in its application of martial law to a district where there was no insurrection. It is admitted that he was probably a tool of trust interest, but he gets no sympathy on that account. Since coming to Washington he has tried to explain to the ex-prisoners of the bull-pen, who are here to testify, that he did not realize how badly they

were treated. But the men sturdily reply that he had every opportunity to know and they believe that he co-operated with Gen. Merriam in replacing civil law by a condition of martial law that would have been a disgrace to Siberia.

Many of the labor organizations of the country have representatives in attendance at this investigation. They believe that if the Idaho atrocities are permitted to go unrebuked, that wage workers may expect martial law and a repetition of the bull-pen in any section where they presume to question the wages or conditions of labor imposed. "Militarism and Republicanism bid fair to become synonymous terms, if the administration does not admit its blunder in this matter and in this Republican Congress does not punish the abuse of power which was displayed in Idaho," said a prominent labor leader, who has carefully followed the progress of the investigation.

Representatives Lentz and Sulzer, two of the Democratic members of the committee, are seeing that the Idaho men get at least an opportunity to testify as to their ill-treatment. It is a sickening story of abuse that would be a disgrace to a penitentiary. And it is not even claimed that these Coeur d'Alene prisoners were guilty of any crime.

The evidences of President McKinley's friendship for Great Britain are more apparent every day. He forwarded the sturdy appeal of the Boers to Lord Salisbury because he could not refuse. But not a word did he say in commendation of these brave people fighting for independence. In fact, the administration wants it very clearly understood that it did not offer to mediate in the matter. It need have no fear. That is understood. It is said in administration circles that President McKinley feels that he has now performed his full duty and that he will decline to even transmit any more messages from the Boers for fear of embarrassing his good friend, Lord Salisbury.

It is also understood that the administration will decline to furnish the information asked in Senator Allen's resolution, as to what correspondence passed between Secretary Hay and Consul Hay, his son, in relation to this appeal by the Boers.

As the administration is engaged in a war of subjugation in the Philippines, it perhaps can hardly appreciate the brave struggle of the Boers. Letters and appeals urging an expression of sympathy for the Boers pour in upon the Senators and Congressmen of both parties every day, showing how strong is the public sentiment in that direction. The Republican members of the Senate, however, were afraid to even discuss Senator Mason's resolution of sympathy except in executive session, and then they concluded that such a resolution might in some way offend Great Britain, so they dropped the matter.

Charles H. Cramp, the well-known Philadelphia ship-builder, is spending some time in Washington in the interest of the Hauna-Payne ship subsidy bill. He is one of those people who believe that an industry which is already booming should be "subsidized" at the rate of \$9,000,000 a year by the government. He says, with the utmost naivete, that his firm doesn't build Russian ships, for instance, because it can do the work cheaper than other people, but because the Cramps are friendly with the "Russian admirals and navy department officials."

The Patriotic Industrial Commission. Soon after the Industrial Commission began its investigations into trusts with a view of killing or curing them, everybody discovered that it was idle in its methods, but now that its full report is in, and its quack remedies given the light of criticism, it turns out to be a "patriotic" commission and its recommendations to Congress utterly brainless. This is the opinion of the New York Journal, and there are many others of a like opinion:

The Industrial Commission, which has an excuse for its existence the probing of evils growing out of trusts and great aggregations of capital, has no excuse whatever for its patriotic record on the money question and thus the perfidy of the administration is completed. —Chicago Democrat.

The commission recommends that corporations be required to make regular reports showing the condition of their business, and to allow their stockholders to have access to their books under proper regulations.

It also recommends that no corporation be allowed to obtain an advantage over its competitors by securing discriminations in freight rates.

It is easy enough to pass such laws, but how shall they be enforced? No matter how much power is given the Interstate Commerce Commission, it cannot prevent the railroad differentials in favor of great corporations like the Armour Packing Company and the Standard Oil Company.

The railroads will violate the law in the future, just as they have in the past, by entering into secret freight agreements with trusts. No law can probe into or prevent these agreements. If you agree to do a similar piece of work for two men for a similar amount of money, and if you happen to be so disposed, what law can prevent you from secretly returning a third or a half of the amount to one of these men? Such a transaction need not appear openly upon your books.

So-called "publicity" will not even scratch the surface of trust evils. We might quite as well attempt to legislate "publicity" into the habits of the ground hog or the chicken thief. There has been enough "publicity" already to call for summary action against several of the trusts, but they continue to flourish.

It has been demonstrated that the cost of delivering gas to customers is only 20 or 25 cents a thousand. Every

body knows what the public pays for it.

"It has been publicly shown that the Standard Oil Company received, and probably still receives, rebates to the extent of many millions of dollars a year from the railroads. The system of rebates has been so improved that at present they are given and received in secret.

"The only effective way to remedy trust evils is for the people to take and operate the railroads and such other great national monopolies as are too powerful to be safely left in private hands."

#### Administration Anxiety.

The Washington correspondents of the McKinley organs are unanimous upon the fact that Mr. McKinley and his official family are very much disturbed and in a great quandary over the political situation. The Hay-Pauncefote canal treaty is just now bringing their nerves up to the strong tension.

The Republicans of the Senate are in a like predicament, and the prevailing belief one day is that the treaty would be abandoned, and then again there is a distinct growth of sentiment in favor of dropping the whole matter, putting treaty and amendment upon the table or in a pigeonhole, and let them stay there.

President McKinley, Secretary Hay and many Senators, public men, writers and thinkers uphold the neutralization idea. Many of the ablest men in the country adopt the other view. "It is as idle," says the correspondent of the Chicago Times-Herald, "to question the sincerity and patriotism of the adherents of one idea as it is to question the sincerity and patriotism of the adherents of the other. This is one of those questions upon which men may honestly differ without asperity or animosity."

"The great fact remains that a majority of the American people—an overwhelming majority—support the view that the canal should be ours to do what we please with. If we cannot have it this way, they say, there is no need of building any canal at all. And public opinion controls governmental action in the United States, and the people who are to furnish the money have a right to say for what purpose and upon what principle it shall be expended."

If the treaty should be amended Secretary Hay and the President would undoubtedly approve the amendment, but deference to the feelings of Secretary Hay will prove an obstacle in the way of his obeying orders and signing the amended treaty. This he may not do, lest Lord Pauncefote's sensibilities be hurt, and so there the thing stands. It does not occur to Secretary Hay to resign, and as in the case of Secretary Alger it does not occur to the President to remove him.

#### That Gold Bill.

The last legislative step has been taken to enact the alleged "reform" in finance and the gold bill has been passed by the House with a vote of 103 to 120. It has been a foregone conclusion that this measure would be pushed through both houses of Congress, and it has been signed by the President. Thus is completed the stultification of the Republican party and of the man who, as a representative, pledged himself to bimetallism and as a President repudiated his sacred pledge.

Democrats in Congress recognized the futility of fighting the bill. Both houses are entirely in the hands of the Republicans and no earnestness of debate, no presentation of logical arguments, no appeal to the consistency of the administration and no protests as to the iniquity of the measure could have influence. Therefore, the Democrats have simply placed themselves on record in a dignified and earnest manner as opposed to the measure and the Republicans, after quarreling among themselves as to the various kinds of robbery contemplated, have at last passed the bill.

Thus the pledge of the Republican party made in its St. Louis platform to uphold bimetallism is broken, thus President McKinley lends his support to a proceeding which negatives all his legislative record on the money question and thus the perfidy of the administration is completed. —Chicago Democrat.

#### The Money in It.

As Mr. Grosvenor, of Ohio, remarked, we are going to make all the money we can out of our new possessions, and for that purpose we intend to keep them until the Democratic party are able to skate in the ice ponds of the world.

Here is some of the money to be made, to quote from the Indianapolitan Senator:

A governor for Porto Rico at a yearly salary of \$10,000, with palace accommodations, satraps, lictors, and headsman galore. Five jobs at \$4,000 each per annum, to wit: Secretary, Attorney, General, Auditor, Commissioner of the Interior and Commissioner of Education.

A chief Justice at \$5,000 per annum. United States District Judge, \$5,000 per annum.

Associate Justices of the Supreme Court, United States Attorney, at \$4,500 per annum.

A marshal of the Supreme Court at \$3,000.

Five members of a commission to codify the laws at \$5,000 per annum each. Scores of officials and deputies and hundreds of territorial employees. All these salaries to be paid out of the