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searching discussion. Important legislation would thus be lifted above the domain of party or partisan leaders; legislative jobs would be minimized and a check nearly absolute would be put upon profligate legislation.

These are some of the advantages. The disadvantages are such, mainly, as would be urged by those who habitually seek benefits through the present legislative system, and who object to the relinquishing of existing opportunities. The Oregonian believes that upon study of the subject by the people this amendment will prevail; but it must be remembered that in this, as in all similar cases, a majority of the electors voting at the particular election in which an amendment is submitted, must be recorded for it, in order to carry it.

USELESS AND DISCREDITABLE.

The Senate committee on the Philippines is not to be congratulated upon its decision in favor of a billion-value dollar for the Philippine Islands. Nothing good can be expected from this coin, which is almost certain to follow the equivalent and false path laid out for the similarly devised trade dollar, and nothing satisfactory is discerned by the committee's evident desire to placate the silver Senators who have hitherto opposed the Government's Philippine policy.

The arrangement is a vicious compromise between the gold standard pure and simple and the free coinage proposals of the silver party. It even falls short of the moderate proposals of Mr. Conant, the Administration's competent and wholly trustworthy currency expert sent to the islands for investigation and report. He advocated a 50-cent dollar to be maintained at 50 cents. This worthy plan, however, was opposed by practical bankers in Manila and Hong Kong, who manifest the same blind predilection for the silver standard that the Indian Government's procedure, except that our task would be lighter in two ways. The volume of silver to be cared for would be less, and while India maintains her silver at a relatively difficult ratio of 2 to 1, the basis of 90 cents an ounce, instead of \$1.29 (154 to 1), the rupee's nominal value, or the easier figure of 64 cents an ounce (22 to 1), Mr. Conant's scheme contemplated a 50-cent dollar, which would not ordinarily vary far from the present billion value of silver. Mexican dollars sold at San Francisco Saturday at 44 1/2 cents. This is a quotation conveniently below the present value of the silver dollar, and the undervaluation of the silver in the Philippine coin, yet not so far below as to impose upon the Philippine treasury any very formidable burden.

The Senate's proposal is free coinage morally, though not technically; for, while the Government will coin what Philippine dollars it needs on its own account, and not on private account, it shall have the duty of coinage, and demoralizing spectacle of United States silver coins turned loose upon the world to rise and fall with every fluctuation of the markets, like the Mexican dollar and the despised peso. The Philippines know, and if they don't they will soon be informed, that fluctuating coinage, which we will on no account tolerate for ourselves, we consider good enough for them. The apparent silver is timely, in view of our recent high-handed action with the Philippine tariff bill.

To pursue the Senate proposal would be to neglect a golden opportunity to establish in Asia the reputation that a coin of the United States is worth everywhere and always what it purports to be on its face. The hoped-for benefit to our silver interests is too paltry for serious consideration. It may be that the silver dollar, as the American Chinese or Mexican mints supply the debased coinage requisite in the Philippines. The silver consumed would be the same in either case. This discredit to the coin, if Congress finally agrees to it, will not cause the shadow of turning in the price of silver at any market in the world.

FIRST THE COLUMBIA'S MOUTH.

The river and harbor bill, as it has been prepared by the House committee, appropriates for the Delaware River \$500,000, available for immediate use, and a continuing appropriation of \$200,000 a year, for a total of \$2,000,000, which is to be used in making a 30-foot channel to the sea. There is a similarity in the position of Portland and Philadelphia regarding river improvements in the respect that both cities have expended large sums of money in improving the channel, which rightfully should have been expended by the Government. In mentioning this phase of the matter the Philadelphia Free Press says:

But Philadelphia has always been willing to help in this matter, and every dollar the city has expended has been, like every dollar the National Government has expended, for the benefit of the city. The city is willing to do more, and expects to. In the new law just approved by the people provision is made for the improvement of the city, and it is not improbable that \$500,000 or \$600,000 may be had from the state for the same purpose when the next Legislature meets. The state is as much interested as the city is, and doubtless the last Legislature would have made an appropriation had not lack of money been made an excuse.

Portland followed out the work of river improvement on similar lines, but, unlike Philadelphia, has never been favored with state aid. The work of this city on the Columbia River channel to the sea, even with Portland money, has been retarded and hindered by the clamorings and misrepresentations of a few residents of Oregon towns to such an extent that it is impossible to secure aid from the state, and difficulty has been experienced in getting anything from the Government. The Delaware River is a short, sluggish stream, carrying at its mouth a volume of water that is insignificant in comparison with that which the Columbia sends seaward. Two hundred miles from its mouth the Delaware is wandering through a country that is easily tributary to New York or to Baltimore.

With the Columbia the case is vastly different. Western Oregon and a few of the richest counties in Washington have no other outlet to the sea, and the only other outlet afforded Idaho, Eastern Oregon and Washington is by a roundabout route over a high mountain range. The mouth of the Columbia is the only natural outlet for an empire greater than that drained by any other American river except the Mississippi. Portland has spent thousands and hundreds of thousands of dollars in making a channel from this city to Astoria. The channel has been improved to such an extent that 800-ton steamships come and go without delay, where 100-ton vessels were grounding twenty years

ago. Petty jealousies and the vigorous "knocking" of Puget Sound cities combined to retard and hinder the improvement of this channel to Astoria with her own money.

But now the scene for action has shifted. Chairman Burton, after a thorough and practical examination of the situation, has decided that the improvement at the mouth of the river is paramount to all other projects in connection with the navigation of the stream. As not only Portland, but every city, town and hamlet in the Columbia Basin will profit by the removal of the obstructions at the entrance from the ocean, there is excellent reason to believe that the Government will appropriate sufficient money to give us a channel from Astoria to the sea in keeping with the channel from Portland to Astoria. Any further improvement on the upper reaches of the river will be of small help to us until the entrance to the river is deepened quite materially.

REMEDY ALWAYS WITHIN REACH.

The Oregonian has always said and now says that Cuba is entitled to generous treatment by the United States in tariff matters. Yet after all is said and done there is one complete remedy for Cuba's ills that is always within her reach. That remedy is annexation—statehood.

Men with honorable impulses like the President, and other men with deep sympathy for Cuba growing out of intimate relationship, like Governor Wood, are apt to be carried in their enthusiasm farther than the facts will justify them. We hear a great deal about the rights of Cuba. Yet it would be difficult for any sponsor of the island to show where any pledge, specific or implied, was made to Cuba concerning low tariff rates on her sales to us. We made one very distinct pledge, which, mischievous and foolish as it was, we are now trying to carry out. That was a pledge of her independence. But independence does not carry with it the privileges of independence and none of its burdens, not on the other hand, the benefits of annexation with none of its drawbacks.

Everybody on an anti, or what comes to the same thing, an unreasoning enthusiast, knows that Cuba's natural and inevitable lot is part in the American empire. Annexation is the best thing for her and the best thing for us. It will simplify our control of the island, and it will give her the same rights and privileges that we give to our other possessions. It will give her the same rights and privileges that we give to our other possessions. It will give her the same rights and privileges that we give to our other possessions.

The sole and simple reason why Cuba is not annexed is found in the desire of certain "patriots" and "statesmen" there to strut their little day about in the garb of the emulous nation of rule. They want to be a "Nation." Well, let them be. Let them be to us a foreign country. If they want the benefits of statehood, let them accept its governmental restrictions. The tail goes with the hide.

Within limits we are under heavy obligation of honor to deal fairly with Cuba. We have taken from her much property and she has had to stand in Spanish markets, we have refused to allow her to exercise absolute independence in her foreign relations, and we certainly should refuse to permit her to accept part with or protection under any other great power. Therefore, we cannot treat her as stiffly as we would if these limitations did not exist. We are under some moderate obligation as the wayside to the coast for the result will be the nomination of the son of United States Senator Proctor. Dr. W. Seward Webb may thank his association with Percy Clement, of Rutland, for the opposition offered by Senator Proctor to his nomination.

Clement has always been hostile to Senator Proctor, and Proctor has therefore bowed out Clement's candidature for Governor. Senator Proctor is a very astute politician.

The young King of Spain is in good health, and will be crowned according to law on his coming birthday, which will be May 17 next, when he will be 16 years old, and, being then of age under the law, he will take the coronation and his mother's regency will cease. The young King is already 5 feet 3 in height, and gives promise of being still taller. He is bright, active, of amiable disposition, is a fine horseman, and at army reviews frequently spends eight hours in the saddle.

"And now," says the Salem Journal, "The Oregonian is explaining the difference between the two factions at Portland." Mistake. The Oregonian is not trying to explain. It is not necessary to explain. Everybody knows what the difference is. Each faction wants to ride the party horse, and the one that has been riding hitherto, time out of mind, doesn't want to give the other a turn.

A large number of the liberal tariff opinions reprinted the other day from the American Machinist came from Ohio manufacturers. President McKinley, doubtless, knew how strong a sentiment was behind him when he made that speech at Buffalo.

Bankers generally are opposed to the Fowler bill for currency reform—disinfecting the money market, and those financiers in Oregon and elsewhere who are scandalized at it as a scheme wholly in the banks' interests.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., likens the church to a trust, which suggests that possibly the Rockefellers are trying to introduce the newest business methods into organized religious work.

The "Candidate in the Manger" is the characterization given a certain eminent Democrat by the Kansas City Star in a tone of complaint, and it is easy to guess who is meant.

"Hungry Joe" is the title of an editorial in the Brooklyn Eagle, which, on closer inspection, however, we find not to be, as was feared, an attack on an Oregon Senator.

Grandma Jones seems to be beaten for re-election in Arkansas. Yet some profess doubt as