

# The Dalles Chronicle.

VOL. VIII

THE DALLES, OREGON, MONDAY, APRIL 22, 1895

NO 95

## BLACKBURN ON SILVER

### Kentucky's Senator Declares for Free White Metal.

#### HE CHALLENGES HIS OPPONENTS

They Are Asked to Openly Declare Themselves Upon the Question at Issue.

LOUISVILLE, April 20.—In an interview published in today's Courier-Journal, Senator Blackburn, in unmistakable terms, outlines his position on the silver question and boldly throws down the gauntlet to his opponents for similar candor on the same subject. With his usual aggressiveness the senator almost dares his opponents to meet him on the issue he represents, and it may be assumed the issue will be promptly accepted. The senator has written with his own hand the statement of the position on which he expects to stand or fall in the senatorial race. He declares his position as follows:

"If I have heretofore shown any indisposition to be interviewed by the daily papers of this city, it has not been because of any purpose to conceal from the people my views on any public question, but because I was anxious to avoid, if possible, a perversion and distortion to which my utterances have generally (of course, unintentionally) been subjected. I never had, I have not now, and I never intend to have, any secrets in politics. I am at a loss to understand how any one, especially in Kentucky, can remain in ignorance as to my sentiments upon the silver question if they feel enough interest in the matter to desire such information.

"For the last twenty years, in congress and on the stump, anywhere and everywhere, I have earnestly and persistently insisted upon the restoration of the silver metal to that place in the money system of the country which it held prior to the passage of that disastrous act of demonetization in 1873. It there is one man in public life in all the country whose views on the subject were entitled to be known to all men by reason of his acts and utterances, I had reason to believe I was that man. Upon this subject I have never held an opinion or made an utterance that I have in the slightest degree altered or modified in all these years. Yet, if there is still any uninformed who desires to know my views I will reiterate them in the shortest space possible by saying I am in favor of opening the mints of this country to unlimited coinage of the silver metal on an equality with the coinage of gold. I am opposed to monometalism and just as much opposed to silver monometalism. Without reservation, I am a bimetalist. I want and mean to continue to insist upon the use of both metals on even terms as the redemption money of this country. I would be glad to see this result brought about by the action of an international conference, provided it could be done without delay. I am opposed to this government waiting for any such conference to act. Our experience with such agencies has not been such as to give us either confidence or hope of the attainment of this purpose. Upon the contrary, our participations in such conferences have, in their very barrenness, become farcical and ridiculous.

"In 1796, this country, with only 3,000,000 of people, was bold enough to prove itself able to discard the monetary system of Great Britain and establish one of its own, which for nearly 100 years met every demand and stood every strain that the growth and development of the country put upon it. I believe the destruction (entailed upon us by this demonetization policy) of one-half of our redemption money has contribut-

ed more than any cause to this shrinkage of all values; the depreciation of all property; the stagnation of trade; the paralysis of industry; the financial troubles in which we now find ourselves. While the restoration of silver to its place of unrestricted coinage and unlimited legal tender function may not prove a panacea for the ills that we now suffer, yet I am convinced it will do more, and go further in that direction than any one piece of legislation that has been suggested. I have an abiding faith in the capacity of this metal to work out and maintain its permanent parity with gold, provided the oppressive hand of the law is removed, and the mints of the country thrown open to its coinage. I believe, and always did believe, that the act of 1873 was an unconstitutional measure. I believe that the act of 1873 would have been so held by the supreme court of the United States had not partisan spirit dominated the action in that case. This conviction I have stated in debate on the floor of the senate as broadly as I put it here.

"I agree with Daniel Webster, who, in his day, and even to this day, was and is still held to be something of an authority as a constitutional lawyer. He declared the constitution of the United States made gold and silver the redemption money of this country, and that neither congress nor any state had any rightful power to substitute any other, nor to destroy either the one or the other of these metals. If congress had the power to demonetize silver, it must be conceded that it had the same power to demonetize gold. It has seen fit to exercise this assumed power as to one of these metals. Had it exercised the same power over the other, under the apomalous and somewhat embarrassing condition, they would not have obtained any money at all. If they could strike down half they could strike down all.

"I am in favor of the restoration of the silver metal at the ratio of 16 to 1, believing, in the light of an experience that covers a century, such ratio will establish and maintain permanently the parity between the two metals. I believe we should take this action at the earliest day possible, independent of the policies or views of other nations. I have abiding faith in the ability of my country to establish and maintain its own monetary system, as that which I cherish in its ability to defend its own soil from invasion, or its institutions from assault. In my judgment, we are as independent of foreign dictation or domination in the one as in the other.

"In August, 1893, when the bill proposing to repeal the purchasing clause of what was known as the Sherman act was before the senate, I said, in a speech, then and there, that I wanted the right of coinage for the silver metal, and that without limitation; that if seigniorage was what my opponents demanded, I was willing, not as a matter of fairness but in a spirit of compromise, that the government should take 10 or 15 per cent, or 20 per cent, or even 25 per cent, of the silver bullion presented for coinage; or that if the question of ratio was what was troubling, I was willing, not as a matter of justice, but in a spirit of compromise, if 16 to 1 was not acceptable, to take 17, 18, or 19, or even a ratio of 20 to 1. But the opponents of this metal were not to be placated by any concessions, either on the line of increased seigniorage or advanced ratio. They had destroyed the metal by a process that has never been, in my opinion, successfully justified, and from the hours of its taking effect until now, they have never been willing that it should be reinstated. Let those who will seek to distort and pervert the issue pending, the effort will fail. The American people are not to be hoodwinked or deceived further. They are at last thinking, and the result of their investigation will vindicate the right. No employment of catch phrases will determine the popular verdict. The people are rapidly coming to know that the issue before them is not gold monometalism upon the one side and silver monometalism on the

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other, but it is rather a contest between the advocates of a single gold standard upon the one hand and those who demand the use of both silver and gold upon the other.

"For one to claim that he is a bimetalist, coupled with the condition that bimetalism is to be brought about only as a result of an international conference, is a mere evasion of the situation. That is simply the work of the lawyer who files an affidavit for a continuance.

"My friends in Kentucky, I am sure, know my position upon this and all other public questions, and are satisfied with it. Now, if there be one upon the list of the announced candidates for the senate who will avow himself an opponent of silver coinage and an advocate of a single gold standard, or, in other words, who is in accord with the views held and advocated by your paper, and will so declare himself, I will ask and urge every friend of mine in Kentucky holding these views, and who, in spite of that fact, is now supporting me, to withdraw his support from me and give it to the candidate who is bold enough to make such a declaration; but I apprehend that no one of these worthy gentlemen will make such an avowal unless he couples with it an announcement of his withdrawal from the canvass. If this be true, if no senatorial candidate will espouse or accept your views, what advantage comes to you by continuing a war upon me, because of my convictions, unless you are able to find on that list of aspirants some man who stands on your platform?"

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