

The Wilson Advance.

CLAUDIUS F. WILSON, EDITOR & PROP'R.

VOLUME XXI.

"LET ALL THE ENDS THOU AIM'ST AT, BE THY COUNTRY'S, THY GOD'S, AND TRUTH'S."

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NOW WE HAVE IT.

A NEW PLAN FOR A PERMANENT BANK SYSTEM.

A Proposal to Continue the Present National Banks and to Permit the Establishment of State Banks, with Carefully Chosen State, Municipal, and Railway Bonds as Security, in Place of United States Bonds; an Explanation of the Plan in Detail; how it would have worked for the Past Twenty-five years; how it would provide for a Properly Elastic Currency, and have a Salutary Effect on the Management of Bonds Eligible to this Security-ship.

The time has arrived, when by common consent, a very decided change must be made in the volume and control of the circulating money of the United States. The green-back craze and the free silver mania may or may not have run their course; but, that as it may, they both point to changes which must be made before the spirit of currency-urest will be quieted. The printing of legal-tender notes, with no limit but the sweet will of the average congressman, goaded to extreme action by the ever-pressing demand for more money which reaches him from possibly the least thoughtful but most exacting of his constituents, opens up a vision of inflation in volume and of contraction in value which recalls like a nightmare the French assignat, which finally reached a circulation equal to \$72 for every man, woman, and child, while its value declined until it required \$1,000 to buy a pair of boots, and \$150 to pay for a pound of butter. The Argentine Republic experiments of the last few years are still before us, and the world has scarcely ceased to shake with the financial earthquake they brought,—an explosion which threatened Great Britain with bankruptcy, and which has left in our own financial life a multitude of wrecks.

All human experience proves that a paper money controlled solely by the will of a legislature, and issued under the lash of an ever varying public opinion, is in no sense of the qualities which fit it for a measure of value or a vehicle of exchange. If any thoughtful people have not reached this conclusion, their number is small, and it is to be hoped that their influence will always be insignificant.

The next plan, the one under nearly continuous discussion for several years, is to supply the people with a metallic currency, of which silver, to be coined in unlimited quantities, is the important factor. This is open to more objection, perhaps, than a legal-tender paper circulation. Those who have taken the pains to study the history of bimetalism in our own country and Europe have discovered that two metals of varying intrinsic value can be kept in free circulation, side by side, only by limiting the coinage of the cheaper. It is very clear to unexperienced people (and among competent authorities there is substantial union in the opinion) that we have been of late approaching the danger-line with startling speed. To-day no man can with certainty say how long we may travel in our present course without meeting the shock of disaster and the earthquake of bankruptcy which must follow the expulsion from business channels of \$600,000,000 of gold, now a most useful, serviceable, and conserving part of our currency system. The only honest and unselfish man who can contemplate without dread the consequences of an unlimited coinage of silver dollars worth twenty-five per cent. less than the standard (gold) dollar is he who knows nothing of the nature of money, who has never mastered the rudiments of the law of coinage, who is ignorant of the experience of nations, and unacquainted with the infallible operation of Gresham's law.

There is of course a small body of competent, skilful men who favor the free coinage of a debased measure of value; but they are men who have a selfish interest in the matter, and who reason that, if the protected manufacturer under the tariff fallacies of the past thirty years has been enabled by law to compel his neighbor to pay him a dollar for sixty or seventy cents' worth of product, the producer of silver bullion should have the same right to force everybody else to give him a dollar in exchange for his seventy-five cents' worth of silver. The people, however, are awakening to the folly of continued submission to tariff robbery, and as their eyes open they have little difficulty in seeing that free silver is only another method of reducing the value of deposits in saving banks, an effective way of cutting down pensions twenty-five per cent. and generally of fleecing the whole people for the personal profit of a handful of silver-mine owners, bullion producers, and speculators. The position of the free-silver advocates is still better understood when we recall the fact that they do not demand its coinage at its present market or intrinsic value, but ask that they be allowed what it was worth in 1792, 1834, or 1872. It is as if the vender of potatoes in this year of grace should call upon the government for a law compelling all potato-eaters to pay him two dollars a bushel for the twenty-five cent potatoes, because, forsooth, they sold at that high price once or twice during the last decade.

The only other way suggested of increasing the currency and of replacing the national-bank-note circulation (which the payment of government bonds must soon render extinct) is that of Senator Sherman, which has recently been telegraphed through the country. I refer to his proposal, during his conference with Secretary

Foster, to have the government issue treasury-notes to the banks on the deposit of bullion. This can hardly be the well-considered plan of a man of his recognized ability; but if it is, it will not recommend itself, as it carries no promise of efficiency, and it minus the element of profit and self-interest for the banks which could alone make it successful. It requires no prophet to predict its failure in advance, or to foretell that it would simply invite an irresistible clamor for free coinage so soon as its failure was recognized. We may as well recognize the fact, that if the currency is to be increased in volume in a manner which will be either safe or just, neither of these three methods can be followed, for none of them calls for approval, either upon the score of efficiency, safety, or equity.

Another way to reach the end must be sought and found. It may not be amiss, however, to say here that it is far from unlikely that our present circulation of about \$25 per capita is nearly one-half greater than that of the most prosperous nation in the world. And if the methods of doing business and the volume of business done are both considered, as of course they should be, then we have more money in circulation, in proportion to our needs, than any people in the world. France, Holland, Australia, Cuba, and the Argentine Republic have a larger per capita circulation than the United States; but if the actual value of their money, and the volume of business done with it, and the methods under which it is transacted, are studied, it will be found that our per capita circulation is relatively by far the largest in the world. Our currency system, too, is remarkable in the excellent feature, that, up to this time at least, we have managed to keep all our various forms of money at a parity with each other. Whether or not we plead the "baby act" for Americans when we clamor for more money than even the least competent nations find necessary, is left for the reader to determine.

The purpose of this article is to present a plan for the enlargement and extension of the banking system, and, besides providing for its perpetuation, to supply a method by which the circulating money of the country can also be safely increased in amount. As currency makes only eight per cent. of our exchanges, and checks, drafts, bank-credits, and facilities provide the means for transacting the remaining ninety-two per cent. of the business of the country, it is very clear that the volume of actual money whether it is in coin or paper, is quite a secondary consideration. The first need is to provide credit facilities and to maintain the measure or standard of value, which, with us and all other enlightened countries is gold.

Some idea of the value of banks may be fairly drawn from the simple illustration of a river. A great river carries the commerce of a State or a nation on its bosom, and yet it is made up of thousands of streams, fed by perhaps millions of springs, none of them able alone to float a shingle. In like manner, a bank gathers in small and scattered sums of the idle money, made of savings and earnings, and uniting them in its vaults, makes them available in loans, and with them keeps the business of a district going and the wheels of industry revolving. The good which will be done by the adoption of a system which will multiply and increase our banking facilities, and plant them more thickly, especially through the region West of the Mississippi and South of the Ohio, cannot be overestimated.

The plan herein unfolded has been with the writer a hobby of many years' standing, one which has had, like others, to be often overhauled, altered, amended, and recast. It is presented here, rather than to Congress, in order to insure for it a hearing free from prejudice, and to avoid the heat of partisan criticism, which has only too often delayed, and sometimes entirely blocked the way of useful reforms. The plan in its present shape meets the cordial approval of all of the many competent persons to whom it has been submitted. The supreme test of that feature upon which the security of circulating notes depends is that of application; and it is conclusive to say that, had the security it provides been for twenty-five years the sole and only basis for the national-bank-note circulation of the United States, neither the nation nor the note-holder would have lost a penny in the entire quarter of a century, and there is no reason to fear, that, if the plan should become a law, any such loss would occur within the next century. The currency it proposes to supply will not only be safe and stable in value, but it will be ample in quantity, and will remove from the arena of discussion and the halls of Congress the question of currency supply. It provides also—imperfectly, it is true, but better than any previous method—the machinery by which the money of the country may be rendered more elastic and flexible; for, owing in part to two features in it, we shall come nearer than ever before to having two dollars in circulation when we need them, and only one when that suffices. It will not be a just criticism to say that this desirable end is not accomplished perfectly, unless at the same time it is noted that it is at least done better than ever before. Another valuable feature in the plan is, that the increase of the currency it provides for will not, as unlimited silver coinage would, drive other

money of any kind out of circulation; on the contrary, every dollar of money issued under this system would be a distinct and positive addition to the circulation of the country. Instead, too, of making the labor of maintaining the intelligent world's standard (gold) more and more difficult for the government, it would practically lift that entire burden from the nation's shoulders, and place it upon the back of the banking system, where it would be a light and easy load. The system proposed will not be costly and burdensome to the government, but on the contrary, will pour large revenue into the public treasury. It will be seen that the tax upon circulation, for which it provides, is equal to the entire interest which mistaken enthusiasts propose to have paid to the government as interest upon the loans which they demand it shall make to the farmers. How liberally it proposes to make the banks pay for the privilege of issuing perfectly secured notes, in this way meeting all the legitimate needs of every class of our people, will be understood when it is known that it provides for the highest tax on circulation paid by any banks in the commercial world, being about twice what the national banks now pay, and ten times as much as is paid by the Imperial Bank of Germany. It cannot therefore be urged, by either the honest man or the demagogue, that it would endow the banks with a privilege for which they would make no adequate return. The additional income, too, is greatly needed by the government.

Pardon is asked for again referring to the matter of the security of the notes. It is of the same character, but more carefully guarded, as that in which Massachusetts authorizes her saving banks to invest the savings of the poor; and her conservatism is a matter of common remark and approval. The security, in fact, for the note circulation proposed, will be the best in use anywhere; for when the responsibility of the stockholders back of it is taken into the account, and the average money reserves of the banks are added, it may truthfully be said that no other bank-notes in the world will be as perfectly secured as these. Unlike the security now given for national bank-notes, it would always be obtainable, and hence the system may be perpetual. Instead, therefore, of having a banking system, as now, which is constantly threatened with extinction (through the payment of the national debt of the United States), we should have one which would last for centuries, and which would meanwhile be capable of the constant development required to keep pace with a growing country and an increasing business.

There is nothing in the plan which throws it open to the charge of class legislation, for its provisions permit the location of banks in any and every section of the country. And any citizen can become a stockholder, for, if desired, the shares of the banks could be reduced to one dollar, five dollars, or any other fraction of one hundred dollars, thus making it very easy for even the poorest to become interested and to share any advantages which it may be supposed the law confers.

It will be found also that the plan proposes to permit the establishment of local or State banks alongside the national banks in all States where they are desired, and provides for a State bank circulation as amply secured and as free from the taint of irredeemability as the national bank-notes now in circulation. It also provides, through these State banks, the facilities for a rapid increase in the volume of their notes, and therefore adds another elastic element to the money supply of the country. The State banks would contribute at the same rate to the public treasury as they would to the national; and the existence of the two systems alongside of each other would stimulate a most healthy rivalry in management supervision; each local or State government naturally rivaling the general government and those of sister States in the rigid supervision and control of their banks.

The great difficulty in getting action upon such important measures as this is the tendency to throw it into politics; and if it becomes the football of partisanship, the country may be kept from the enjoyment of its provisions for a generation; whereas, if it simply meets that intelligent and business like criticism which any important commercial measure should receive, and is approved, it will be adopted, and within a short time every section of the country and all branches of business will be enjoying its advantages, and millions of new money worth the full value of its face in gold will be flowing in the channels of trade. It would probably, it is true, be considered a Democratic measure, and the country would therefore in the future regard the Democratic party as its benefactor, and come to look upon it again as a conservative and intelligent abettor of enterprises of all kinds, instead of an organization to be dreaded, because prone to take up and help forward schemes that menace trade, commerce, and the prosperous course of business, as it has unfortunately done in connection with the green-back craze and other unsafe financial measures. This would be no just reason for Republican opposition. Republicans should remember that the national banking system, from which they have as a party derived great advantages, is after all but an adaptation, involving few changes, of the Democratic banking systems which Mr. Chase and his friends found in ex-

istence in Indiana, Ohio, and New York in 1862. No more claim can be justly made that Mr. Chase and those about him created the national banking law than could be made by the writer for his connection with the establishment of the system herein proposed, should it become the law, for it makes at least as many and quite as vital changes in the existing system as the Republicans made in the system they found in successful operation at the beginning of the great war of 1861. Honors, indeed, between the two parties, in the line of banking services, are about equal, and both can well afford at this time to engage in a patriotic rivalry in seeing which can do the most to bring about the change needed.

The writer has no selfish interest in the result, beyond that of the average citizen, for he is neither stockholder nor officer in any national bank, and only takes advantage of the recent currency discussion to bring forward a system of banking which he has had under way for over a dozen years, and upon which he has tried to bring to bear the experience, study, and observation of twenty-nine years as bank clerk, private banker, bank officer, and manufacturer. The plan itself is brief and simple, and its very brevity is the excuse for so full an introduction. It is not contended that, if adopted, changes and improvements in it will not be necessary from time to time; but it is put forth in the belief that it is a remedy which will promptly cure the financial ills we suffer from, and that its adoption is free from danger, and beyond valid objection.

The somewhat numerous notes in small type are intended to answer questions which will naturally arise in the mind of the reader, and to point out why, wherefore, and probable results, which would not, perhaps, at once occur to him. The basis we start with is the national banking system as it exists, and only the changes described are proposed. The rest of the present law would remain intact.

The list of bonds acceptable as security for circulating notes should be enlarged so as to include State, county, city, and railroad bonds under the following rules:—

Street-railroad bonds are excluded, because their franchise are usually of short duration; and bonds secured by mortgage upon farms and other real estate have always proved inferior and unusually unsafe security for bank-notes.

(a) All bonds thus rendered available must be registered, and interest must be payable in gold of the present standard of weight and fineness.

There are enough bonds of this kind now in existence and available to increase the bank-note circulation several hundred millions; and most bonds issued by the States would naturally be registered, and payable in gold.

(b) All such bonds must have been listed for at least five years prior to their deposit as security for circulation, upon at least one stock exchange, or in the United States having a population of 500,000 or more.

This would exclude all bonds except those having a well established character, as well as recognized high value.

(c) No bond which has ever been in default for non-payment of interest, or which has sold on any stock exchange below par within five years, or which has sold on any stock exchange at less than a premium of five per cent. above par within three years of its proposed deposit as security for circulation, shall be accepted under this law.

The result of this would probably be that the bonds deposited as security for circulation would have an average gold market value of at least 100, and make them to-day a very much better security for bank-note circulation than United States bonds were from 1862 to '65.

(d) No State bond representing a per capita debt of over two dollars for each of its citizens, no county bond representing a per capita debt of over four dollars, and no city bond representing a per capita debt of over eight dollars, shall be accepted as security for bank notes.

The object of this is to discourage, rather than encourage, the increase of State, county and city debts—a consumption devoutly to be wished.

(e) All railroad bonds deposited must be secured by mortgage, and none shall be of the form known as trust or debenture bonds.

(f) No bank shall have more than twenty per cent. of its bonds on deposit of the issue of any one State, county, or railroad.

used any false statement of the earnings, expenses or condition of said railroad, shall be considered guilty of a felony, and be subject to trial in any court of the United States, and if found guilty shall be sentenced to imprisonment at hard labor for a term of not less than ten nor more than twenty years, and may be fined in addition, at the discretion of the court, in any sum not exceeding \$100,000.

The advantages of this portion of the law, which it is a pity we are compelled to limit to interstate roads, will not be confined to the banking system, but will give a protection to the general public which has long been needed, and which will tend to give far greater stability to American railway investments.

III. In lieu of all other United States taxes each bank shall pay in the usual manner a semi-annual tax of one per cent. (two per cent. per annum) upon the average amount of its notes in circulation.

This will produce a large revenue for the government, and will tend to prevent the creation of new forms of taxation, which will be required to meet its present extravagant expenditures. State money on call falls to one-half per cent or even to one and a half per cent per annum, this rate of taxation will cause Eastern banks to deposit lawful money at Washington for the redemption of their notes, and thus impart an element of elasticity to the general circulation. Experience may prove that this tax can be still further increased, adding to the income of the treasury, and giving still greater flexibility to the volume of paper money.

IV. The present United States tax upon the circulation notes of State banks shall cease provided such notes are secured in precisely the same manner as national bank-notes, by bonds deposited with the auditor of treasurer of the State; and provided also, that the State in which said bank is located shall guarantee the payment of its circulation notes. State banks shall pay the same taxes on their notes, and in the same manner, as national banks.

This would, in every State where there was a demand for it, restore State banking to its old condition of usefulness, and would silence the now well-founded charge that national banks enjoy an exclusive and therefore special privilege,—that of issuing circulating notes.

V. The amount of the notes issued by any State bank shall be under the control of the State in which it is located, and nothing in the law shall restrict the circulating notes of any State bank to ninety per cent. of the par value of the bonds deposited by it to secure the payment of said notes.

This provision will be recognized as sound by most competent bankers, and experience will probably lead to its extension ultimately to national banks. It gives the banks also the power promptly to increase the money in circulation when urgently needed, such extra supply being secured under the influence of the tax burden unless there should continue to be reasonable demand for it; thus having a tendency still further to develop flexibility in our financial system.

VI. State banks shall not be compelled to redeem their notes anywhere but at their own counters.

Should it be deemed desirable in any State to make the circulation of the notes issued by its banks local, and to throw about its influences which would tend to hold them within the bounds of the State, this part of the law would provide a way for doing so.

VII. All State bank-notes issued under this law to be like national bank-notes, redeemable in United States legal tender, coin or notes.—Michael D. Harter in the forum for October.

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PLEASANT, ELEGANT, RELIABLE.
For biliousness and constipation, take Lemon Elixir.
For fevers, chills and malaria, take Lemon Elixir.
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Dr. Moxley's Lemon Elixir will not fail you in any of the above named diseases, all of which arise from a torpid or diseased liver, stomach, kidneys or bowels.
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Returns of an Old North Carolinian.
We were glad to see in the city yesterday Capt. Samuel Timothy Nicholson, who moved from Bracebridge Hall near Culpepper Bridge, Halifax county, N. C., in 1852 to Livingston, Madison county Miss. He married a daughter of Dr. Jigger's family of Oxford, Mr. Nicholson is just from Salem where he carried his daughter to Salem Female Academy. He is an honest, high-toned Christian gentleman. He goes hence to visit his brother Mr. Blake Baker Nicholson of Littleton and thence to the old homestead, where Col. Frank Parker now resides.

The Spring Medicine.
The popularity which Hood's Sarsaparilla has gained as a spring medicine is wonderful. It possesses just those elements of health-giving, blood-purifying and appetite-restoring which every body seems to need at this season. Do not continue in a dull, tired, unsatisfactory condition when you may be so much benefited by Hood's Sarsaparilla. It purifies the blood and makes the weak strong.

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I have become permanently identified with the people of Wilson; have practiced here for the past ten years and wish to return thanks to the generous people of the community for the liberal patronage they have given me. I spare no money to procure instruments that will conduce to the comfort of my patients. For a continuation of the liberal patronage heretofore bestowed on me I shall feel deeply grateful.

NOTICE.
Having qualified as Executor of the last will and testament of Curtis H. Glover, deceased, all persons having claims against said deceased are hereby notified to present them to us, or to our attorney for payment on or before the 20th day of August 1892 or this notice will be filed in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said deceased are requested to make immediate payment.
ZILFRA GLOVER, } Exec.
W. N. GLOVER, }
John E. Woodard, }

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