

THE REPUBLIC, PAST AND PRESENT

By CORNELIUS J. KANK.

"Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

Truly these patriotic lines of Goldsmith have never before been applied, never before directed with so much force as at the present time against the conditions prevailing in the United States. It is unquestionably beyond the experience of these people to have ever before undergone so severe a trial and so disastrous a period as that which they have lived through during the past three years.

From a condition of the highest degree of prosperity to one of the most unparalleled distress they have been reduced within this brief period, and their boasted industrial supremacy and inborn spirit of content have received so severe a shock as will retard their national growth a full decade.

The causes which have led up this this unlooked-for reversion of public prosperity, as well as some of the efforts flowing therefrom, will be of interest to students of political economy as well as mankind in general. The principles involved in the drafting of the American Constitution and the foundation of the Government were of the sublimest character; the incorporation in the prime document of the new government of the cardinal principle, that all men were entitled to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," gave Gladstone occasion to remark that this document was the grandest ever struck off in a given time by the brain of man; and such were the early successes of the new Government that Milton, in writing on the Liberty of the Press, remarks: "He thinks I see in my mind a noble puissant nation, rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks; he thinks I see her as an eagle renewing her mighty youth and kindling her endazzled eyes at the full midday beam." In the spirit of the constitution all men and things prospered; the bark of state floated proudly on the waters of unrestricted liberty; and save the cloud of civil strife which hovered over her some thirty years ago, her career has been one of uninterrupted peace and happiness until now. To-day she seems fast in a Saragossa Sea, with the flot-sam of every clime pressed thick about her and the winds of commerce stilled: Murmurings of discontent are heard on every side; some condemn the course they have traversed, while some the course they have to go; idleness and want, full sisters of anarchy, raise their horrid front, perplexity is stamped upon every countenance, and their chosen leader cries: "Infinite wrath, infinite despair, which way shall I fly."

Up to the year 1890 the commercial importance of the United States had been increasing annually to an extraordinary degree, nourished with the milk of a protective tariff that was framed to meet the exigencies of civil war and left unchanged upon the statute books until its substitution by the ultra-radical high protective policy of which McKinley of Ohio was the arch advocate, and which was sanctioned as law during the middle days of the Harrison Administration. Until the enforcement of the McKinley law, which has been styled the "culmination of class legislation," our march was a glorious triumph; the coffers of the Latin speaking nations to the South, as well as of many European and Oriental countries, all paid tribute to this industrial Rome.

When, during this year, it was announced that our exports of cereals and merchandise had far exceeded any previous records in our history, and that the balance of trade had finally turned in our favor; when, with exultant pride, we learned that for the first time we had surpassed England in the manufacture of raw and finished

iron and steel, truly did we think that the wheel of commerce revolved about us, and that our glory as a nation was about to begin.

The McKinley law was undoubtedly a conscientious effort enacted upon the theory that the higher the rate of import duty, or more properly speaking, the more prohibitive the tax on imports the greater would be our domestic prosperity. It was designed principally to the offset the growing tendency of the populace towards the Democratic motto of tariff for revenue only by showing forth the contrary side, practically to satisfy the money power, and ostensibly to advance the condition of the laboring classes.

An instance of the singular effects of this piece of legislation is shown from the clause increasing the duty on imported manufactured tin plates. During the six months immediately succeeding the enforcement of the law the increased amount of import duties paid by the American people for this one article alone was twenty-four millions of dollars; and in turn for this premium paid for an endeavor to plant the industry on home soil we had the satisfaction of seeing not a single attempt made in this direction, and even to-day, when the full benefits of the bill should be produced, the total production of tin plate in the country does not equal one-fifth in value the amount of the surplus tax exacted for the first six months following the date of enforcement.

Directly following in the wake of this law wages throughout the country immediately began to fall, causing spasmodic uprisings amongst the working classes. Still capital applied the thumb screws to labor, more gradually, but none the less vigorously faint echoes of discontent were heard from every side, and they grew in voice and number until they finally broke out in that agonizing cry which emanated from Homestead during the summer of 1892, when a mob of hireling and a body of locked-out workmen clashed with a frightful loss of life and the exhibition of cruelties that find no parallel in recent days. So serious did the affair become that it was found necessary to place the locality under martial law, and the constant presence of 8,000 State troops was needed to suppress violence.

This unfortunate affair intensified public sentiment and furnished a practical illustration of the workings of the McKinley law. The people evidenced a serious dissatisfaction with the then existing laws, and vainly cast about for a means of egress from the darkness in which they wandered. At this period their reappearance in the political firmament the star of Grover Cleveland, and at sight of it the people immediately fell into political idolatry and worshipped in the light of this "man of destiny." He was looked upon as holding the panacea for all their ills, as the Moses who could rain the manna of peace from above and strike the waters of prosperity from the rock of depression—the desired of the people, who should lead them into the land of promise. The subsequent election of Cleveland and his party followers to full control of both the executive and legislative branches of the Government, while proclaimed by the largest popular vote ever before rendered a presidential candidate, was received with exclamations of mingled rejoicing and regret—joy of the humbler classes as the harbinger of a more prosperous era, and regret on the part of the money-power, within sight of the decadence of their rule. The remaining days of the outgoing Administration were directed to cover up the absolute dearth of the National treasury—the strenuous avoidance of an issue of bonds to escape public opprobrium—all resulting from the abnormal appropriations of the then dying "million-dollar Congress."

Simultaneously with the inauguration of the new party it was made public that serious inroads were being made on the Government's Gold reserve of one hundred million dollars, arising from the monthly purchases for several years before of four and one-half million ounces of silver, made obligatory on the Government by the provisions of the Sherman law. The new Congress was accordingly convened in extraordinary session and immediately repealed the silver purchasing clause of this law; and all the energy of the ruling powers was directed to a modification of the tariff laws, which, as then existing, were assailed as the source of all the evils afflicting the body politic.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

St. Joseph's Church, Hamilton

St. Joseph's Church, which was consecrated June 24th, is situated on the north-east corner of Locke and Herkimer streets, is of Gothic design and in the early English style of architecture, comprising nave, chancel and transept, with baptistry, west and south porches, also pastor's and boys' vestries. The building is 45 x 110, exclusive of transepts and porches, and is constructed of brick with elaborate cut-stone trimmings. The entire roof is of slate, while the ridge is finished with ornamental cresting. In the west front is a handsome wheel window, also other windows of Gothic design. The front gable terminates with a handsome bell cot, finished with slate and copper trimmings, over all being a neat gilt cross. Immediately above the transepts is a pretty ventilating Fiebbe, roofed with slate, having copper trimmings and a gilt cross. The entire windows of the church are filled with cathedral glass in pleasing designs. The whole outside of the church presents a neat and inviting appearance, while the inside even surpasses it for artistic beauty. The interior is finished in natural colors and varnish. The ceiling of nave is in the Hammer Beam style, finely moulded and varnished. The ceiling of the church is a pretty piece of work, being Gothic in design, richly moulded, paneled and finished in cherry, white and gilt. On each side of the church are the chapels of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph. The main altar is an artistic piece of work, being finished in white and gold. In the niches in the altar are statues of St. Joseph, the patron of the church, the Sacred Heart and St. John. Immediately over the front entrance is a large and commodious choir gallery, and in the west porch is located a beautiful granite holy water font, kindly donated by Mr. H. N. Thomas, of Hamilton. Conveniently situated in the transepts are the confessionals, and also entrances to the sanctuary and vestries. The nave is furnished with neat and comfortable pews finished in oak, and the church has a seating capacity of about 600. Ample provision is made for the heating, ventilating and lighting of the edifice. The acoustics, which are unfortunately sometimes neglected in buildings of this nature, are excellent and all that can be desired. In every way the church, for its size, is one of the best proportioned structures in the diocese, at least, and is a credit to the indefatigable architect, Mr. Robert Cluecy, who prepared the plans and supervised the work of construction, also to Bishop Dowling and the zealous pastor, Rev. Father Hinchey, and people of the new parish, who have worked so courageously in the erection of the church, which is justly their pride.

C. M. B. A.

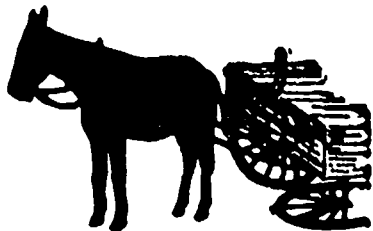
At the last meeting of Branch 15, C.M. B.A., the following resolution of Condolence moved by Chancellor Rooney, seconded by Treasurer O'Hearn was unanimously adopted: Whereas it has pleased Almighty God in His infinite wisdom to call to her eternal reward the wife of our esteemed Brother James Pape.

Resolved that the members of Branch 15 extend to Brother Pape their heartfelt sympathy in this sad hour of trial, and while deeply regretting the great loss which he and his family have sustained in the death of a loving wife and mother, we feel assured that they will bear with Christian resignation to the divine will of the Almighty in their great affliction. Further

Resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to Brother Pape; a copy entered in the records of the branch, and a copy sent to the CATHOLIC REGISTER for publication.

CHAS. N. RYAN, Rec.-Sec.

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