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CONVERSE'S GREAT IDEA. A whole sermon on the value of political pledges is to be found in the remarks of the Hon. George L. Converse, of Ohio, on the propriety of giving Senator Payne a "vindication" by re-electing him to the United States Senate.

During the Ohio campaign the declaration was made, time and again, that Senator Payne would not stand for re-election. To have understood otherwise would bring the Standard Oil Company and the proceedings which gave the Senator his seat to prominently into the campaign. But notwithstanding all these denials, the Democrats have not been in possession of their victory a week until Mr. Converse perceives the necessity of retaining the amiable old gentleman who has not for six years been able to make the short speech required to ask for an investigation of the charge that his seat was purchased one.

No one will be likely to dispute that Senator Payne is in need of vindication. How his re-election, either at the same price as his first one, or free of expense, will disprove the charges of the past use of money, is something that the statesmanlike Converse does not need to explain. But it is certain that such a candidacy would make business active in the Democratic caucus of this winter.

It is not vital whether the reports of this project are exactly correct or not. It is possible that such a combination may lead to further consolidations. But it is plain to see that the Standard Oil Company is squeezing out competitors by freight discriminations, every purchase that it makes of competing concerns is only a premium for new ones. No sooner is the report heard of a purchase of the Craig-Elkins interests, under circumstances which assure that, if the sale is a reality, a fair price must have been paid, than a \$12,000,000 competitor springs into sight. If that is bought up another week will be placed, and the Standard falls to its own weight.

Of course, if the Standard could choke off these competitors by freight discriminations it would do so. As it does not, the inference is permitted that the inter-State commerce act is making itself felt on the petroleum monopoly as it has already done on the Cotton Seed Oil Trust.

THE AFRICAN QUESTION. The appeals of Cardinal Lavergie and Sir Samuel Baker to the civilized world, with reference to the redemption of Central Africa, start from slightly different motives, but have a similar object. The Cardinal's crusade is simply against the slave trade, and he calls upon Christendom to suppress that great iniquity by armed force. Sir Samuel Baker's article includes that point, but takes in also the restoration and preservation of the work that has been done in opening up Central Africa.

It is a point of much gravity to civilization that the work which was commenced in 1861 by the explorations of Burton, Speke, Grant and Baker, in exploring the upper Nile and lake regions in Africa has been nearly all lost. The last station on the upper Nile was lost with Emin Pasha. The route to the equator has been closed by the war which has broken out on the Zanzibar coast. What remains to civilization is its hold on the Congo, secured by Stanley's land discovery; and it is more than suspected that the control of the upper part of that river by Tippee Trib places it in hands that cannot be relied upon.

It is hardly possible that the civilized world should abandon a region of such immense possibilities to the horrors of the slave trade and the darkness of barbarism. It would be well to be in haste, not the generation which opened and explored that great continent when it was a vast mystery ought to be succeeded by one which is able to preserve the results of those discoveries to civilization.

THE TOPICAL TALKER. A Quaint Local Story Taken to Faint a Sundry School Moral—A Wall From Allegheny and an Answer to It.

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