

YELLOW METAL HAS NOT APPRECIATED

Revelation of One of the Stock Free Silver Arguments.

THE HIGHEST AUTHORITIES CITED

The Gold Money of the World Shown to Be Four Times as Much for Each Person Now as It Was Fifty Years Ago—Enormous Increase in Production and Coinage.

Has gold "appreciated?" The advocates of the free coinage of silver say that it has. Like the man who thinks his own mark is national because the exchange is moving in an opposite direction, the silver men insist that instead of all other prices declining that of silver has risen, and the value of everything else has stood still. They assert that there has been a steady change in the ratio of a dollar in gold to the quantity of grain, cotton, clothing, food and silver, and argue that since one dollar in gold will buy more of all commodities than the market will bear, that it did in 1870, gold has advanced in value, while the value of other articles has stood still. Hence their constant assertion that gold is more appreciated than silver.

Let us see. To appreciate means to increase in value. Anything which increases in value, does so either because it has grown relatively scarce or because each individual needs more of it for his daily use.

Now has this happened about gold? Fifty years ago, one dollar in gold would buy a certain quantity of goods; now it has a billion and a half. The population has increased fifty per cent. in fifty years.

Has the gold of the world increased at the same rate as the population? If so, have we any right to assume that gold has appreciated? If it has increased more than the population, would it not rather depreciate than appreciate?

GOLD PRODUCTION GREATER.

Let us examine the figures, from the best authorities of the world, Southey, Mulhall, Preston and others. Mulhall, Preston and others, however, do not cite the gold of the world, coined and uncoined, fifty years ago amounted to less than \$2,500,000,000. Taking his figures for that date, the gold in the world today, coined and uncoined, is shown to be over \$7,000,000,000. This will be seen that the world's gold has increased three times as much gold today as it had fifty years ago.

If there had been no increase in population in the meantime, as much gold for each person now as there was a half century ago, but the population has increased 50 per cent., so there is apparently twice as much gold in the world for each individual as there was at that time.

GOLD COINAGE GREATER.

But this is not all. Fifty years ago only 33 per cent. of the gold of the world was coined into money. Now 96 per cent. of it is coined. So it appears that while the per capita of gold in the world has doubled, the proportion of that gold which is turned into coin has also doubled.

This means that there is four times as much gold coin for each individual in the world today as there was fifty years ago.

Does this look as though there was a scarcity of gold? If gold coin is four times as plentiful for each individual today as it was fifty years ago, is it reasonable to assume that the demand for money is more rapidly increasing than the gold increases? There would have been a greater proportionate growth of the other kinds of money, either silver or paper or both, for both are plentiful for every individual for currency everywhere. But their proportion has decreased while the proportion of gold has increased.

"But," say the friends of silver "the more fact that silver money has increased does not prove that it is sufficient to meet the wants of business, because since the time of 1873 in this country and similar crimes about the same date in other countries, the quantity of silver money has decreased."

OTHER MONEY GREATER.

Let us see about that. Preston, the director of the United States mint, estimates that the world's silver money in 1873 was \$1,817,000,000. He estimates the world's silver money today to be \$750,000,000, of which amount \$434,000,000 is full legal tender. Thus the silver money of the world has apparently more than doubled since 1873. This shows the utter fallacy of the argument of the silver people that silver money has been reduced since 1873. It is interesting in this connection also to note that the paper money of the world has tripled in the past half century, having been in 1870, according to Mulhall, \$1,300,000,000, and in 1890, \$3,950,000,000.

There is still another light in which this currency question should be considered. If the amount of silver money has increased, the rent increases proportionately. If it depreciates in value, the rent falls. This rule applies equally to the rent of money, usually termed interest. This test ought to determine the actual value of money and show whether it is scarce or plentiful. In the past fifty years rates of interest have fallen from one-fourth to one-half, according to the locality, thus indicating that there is less scarcity of money to meet business demands than was the case fifty years ago.

The increase in the gold of the world has been something enormous in the past half century. Prior to 1845 the average production seldom exceeded ten millions a year. Since that time it has been from 200 millions a year. Thus the rate of production has increased ten-fold, and in some years twenty-fold, and had in fifty years tripled the amount of gold in the world and quadrupled the amount of gold coined for each individual.

KEPT PACE WITH BUSINESS.

"But," says somebody, "the business of the world has increased enormously at a much greater rate than the gold has increased, and since the amount of gold has failed to keep pace with business, gold has naturally 'appreciated.'"

Let us examine that subject. It is true that the business of the world has increased enormously. The value of the industries of the globe is today, according to Mulhall, three times what it was fifty years ago, and the commerce of the world is six times as great as it was at that time. In that same period gold has only tripled.

NEW BUSINESS METHODS.

But another and very important factor comes into the problem just at this point. That factor is the matter of banking facilities and the use of the medium of exchange which passes between them and their customers and takes the place of the more bulky and less convenient coin. Fifty years ago the man who engaged in business carried with him the gold with which

to make his purchases. He went by stage coach and sailing vessel, and the gold in his leather belt lay idle weeks or months while the tedious journey was being made. Now he deposits his money in bank, the banker loans a given proportion of his deposits to those who desire its immediate use, and as long as the circulation of the money is kept in active circulation meantime. The owner of the gold takes in its stead a slip of paper, a draft or bill of exchange, good wherever it may be presented. His gold is transferred half way around the world on his demand by telegraph, in the twinkling of an eye. The banking facilities of the world have increased ten-fold in the past fifty years, and instead of most of the business being done by a hand-to-hand exchange of money for property, 95 per cent. of the business is performed with that comparatively new medium of exchange, banking paper, whose elasticity, convenience and power as a medium of trade, has revolutionized business and reduced enormously the proportionate demand for gold or other metallic money in the great business transactions of the world.

LARGER USE OF CHECKS.

The use of this new medium of exchange grows nearer to the masses every day. A recent investigation by the comptroller of the currency showed that it was kept in stock by the payments made to retailers, such as butchers, grocers, clothiers, and general dealers, are now made in checks instead of the use of money itself. The money which these checks represented had been deposited in banks by the owners, but only a given proportion of it was kept in stock by the bankers, who know by experience that only a certain percentage of their deposits will be called for at one time, and are thus able to loan out a large share of the money deposited, and so keep it in active circulation.

Thus the stock of money, which has itself enormously increased, is multiplied many times over the fact that it is used over and over again, with ten or twenty times the frequency that it was a half century ago.

Has the stock of money which has grown up during the period in which business has so greatly increased, changes radically the relations of ready cash to the volume of business? It was a prominent feature in business customs when led Mill in his "Principles of Political Economy" Vol. II, Book III, to say:

"The proposition respecting the dependence of the general price level upon the quantity of money in circulation must, for the present, be understood as applying to a state of things in which money is gold or silver, is the exclusive medium of exchange, and actually passes from hand to hand at every purchase, credit in any of its shapes being unknown. When credit comes into play as a means of purchase, distinct from money in hand, the connection between prices and the amount of circulating medium is much less direct and intimate, and such connection as does exist, no longer admits of so simple a mode of expression."

Under this system, the commodities whose value is expressed in terms of the standard of value are exchanged for other commodities whose values are also expressed in the same terms, while actual money, apart from its use as a common denominator of value, does not enter into the transactions. As this great medium of exchange increases in quantity, the value of the commodities which it represents increases.

TRUE MEASURE OF VALUE.

But there is one more test of the actual value of the gold, a test which does not depend upon theories or tedious inquiries as to quantities of money or methods of business transaction, but which is so simple and so important, the most accurate and far-reaching of all those which have been applied. This is the test of the quantity of labor which a given quantity of labor will buy. The real standard of value in the

world is labor. It is in this which measures all commodities, the necessities as well as the comforts and luxuries of life. The food we eat, the clothes we wear, the houses we live in, the conveniences and necessities which a half century ago were considered luxuries, are all the result of labor and the money which is paid for them measures the hours of labor which it cost to produce them. The real standard by which to measure gold. If a day or an hour of labor will buy less gold today than it did fifty years ago, then it may be properly said the gold has "appreciated." If it will buy more gold today than it did fifty years ago, then gold has depreciated, and if each grain of wheat costs more than it did fifty years ago, and also purchase more of manufactured commodities than it did fifty years ago, then the laborer has again multiplied the value of his time and skill.

GOLD HAS DEPRECIATED.

How then can it be asserted that gold has "appreciated?" It has depreciated, and that highest and noblest of all standards, human labor, will today buy more of it than it did fifty years ago. Some of the figures are as follows: In 1840 gold was worth \$200 per day in 1840 were paid \$2.50 in 1890; engineers who received \$2.00 per day in 1840 were paid \$2.25 in 1890, and so on. Taking eleven representative classes of workmen, engaged in the various industries of the United States, known as the Aldrich committee, made a thorough investigation a few years ago into the question of wages and prices, and published a long and thoughtful research made a report, the accuracy of which is everywhere accepted. That investigation showed that a day's labor in nearly all the trades would, in 1890, buy more than double the quantity of goods it did fifty years earlier, and do it with less hours of work in a day. 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