

all. But suppose there were ten times more than there ever had been at any one time before—yes, a hundred times as much—and it were lying idle in vaults and other secure places, would the mere fact of its existence impart vigor to trade or give renewed life to enterprise? Certainly not. On the other hand, suppose there were much less and it were treated somewhat like the five dollar bill spoken of, would that make a difference of a favorable character? Indeed it would. This would seem to be the whole situation in a nutshell.

The Territory, for example, is sadly in need of several more miles of railway and equipment, and there is enough money to accomplish such work without having to float a bond or negotiate the sale of one share of stock. There are also a goodly number of men who are able and in many cases willing to work who claim they can find nothing to do; the building of such roads would at least leave them with no excuse for remaining longer in the ranks of the "croakers," so that so much good would be accomplished at least, and plenty others could be found who would do the work. These would spend their money principally among our business men, and thus impart a stimulating effect to them; perhaps one of them on the verge of assigning, on knowing that there was such a chance ahead of him, would hold his affairs together a while longer, and then even a slight increase in his trade would enable him to continue until finally he would be out of the mire altogether; whereas, if he were to go down some one else would conclude that he had to go also, and the more of this kind of thing the closer those that have spare cash cling to it. The sales of business men must average within certain times, depending on the amount of stock and character of the trade, a certain percentage of the sums invested, or the date of closing their doors is only a matter of how much or how little they are willing to lose; they cannot get this trade unless the great body of the people have cash or other consideration wherewith to buy, and there as a rule cannot have the means unless they obtain them from the channels of enterprise and speculation. There is money enough and to spare, and if those who have it would only take the proper steps, their investment would not only be bread cast upon the water but would be the means of brightening things up wonderfully.

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

The theory that the so-called star of Bethlehem was Saturn and Jupiter in conjunction, an opinion advocated by Kepler and others, is attacked by Mr. J. H. Stockwell in a recent number of *Astronomical Journal*. He thinks it more likely that the light that attracted the Chaldean magi was caused by a conjunction of Venus and Jupiter. These planets were in conjunction about a year ago, and the phenomenon produced a brilliant effect. An investigation was conducted to ascertain the periods in which these two stars occupied

the same position in the heavens about the time of the birth of Christ, and the result was obtained that the event must have occurred on May 8th in the year 6 before our era. Supposing that the crucifixion occurred in the year 33 A. D., our Savior would have been about 38 years old at his death. The common supposition founded on astronomical calculations fixes the date of his birth some time in the year 4 before our era. It seems, however, idle to endeavor to arrive at the true date by the calculations of astronomy. For it is possible, as many both ancient and modern divines have held, that the "star" which the magi saw was a luminous phenomenon produced by the Creator for that special occasion. At least the author of the Gospel According to Matthew seems to have considered it such. He says the star went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. How Venus and Jupiter or any other planet could be said to go before the wanderers and indicate a particular house out of many in a town, is difficult to understand.

FOR REFORM.

Rev. Charles Martyn, a Presbyterian minister in Chicago, has recently had an idea concerning the work of the Christian church in the present age. He expresses it, according to an exchange, thus:

Begin as Christ did—with the body. Free baths before free Bibles. Soap before tracts. Bread before prayer-meetings. A hungry man is not a fit candidate for grace. Make the church an institution of all. Why should it not rescue from poverty, from ignorance, from coarseness, as preparatory to and significant of spiritual salvation?

Very good. The Christian religion was without doubt intended to help, elevate and save mankind from every evil—moral, spiritual, social and physical. The ministers of Christ were intended to be the instruments in the hands of the Almighty to effect this great and wonderful salvation. But to do this at least three things are requisite: First, that the ministers themselves are, what they ought to be, saved in all these regards; and secondly that they have the true means of salvation at their command; not high sounding theories and flowery figures of speech, but the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the divine authority accompanying it; and thirdly that they are willing to consecrate their lives, not for the obtaining of so many thousand dollars a year, but for the salvation of their fellow men. The Christian ministers should not hope to save the world before their own salvation has been effected.

SOUND AND UNSOUND VOTES.

The *Boston Herald* is an excellent newspaper in most respects, but so rapidly opposed to silver that to read it one would be apt to conclude that our cotemporary had discovered some upas-like quality in the metal. It gauges statesmen by their attitude or

probable attitude on the silver question, forms its estimates of a business man's qualifications in accordance with his liking for or hatred of silver, and is, in short, about as inconsiderate and prejudiced in dealing with this subject as in most others it is fair and impartial. It considers John G. Carlisle's transfer from the Senate to the Cabinet in the light spoken of, saying that that body is pretty evenly balanced on the silver question. Last summer, in the contest over the Stewart free coinage bill, there was a tie on a crucial amendment. The balance finally turned to the free coinage side, but only by a narrow majority of four. Since then there has been some improvement of opinion, yet even now the *Herald* cannot feel sure that on a square test the decision of the Senate would run the "right way." Put in the best light, the margin for "honest money" is very small, and "we fear that it is not likely to show much growth in the next Congress. Under such conditions the loss of a sound vote in the Senate is a serious matter."

A "sound vote" means a vote in favor of Wall street, New York; Lombard street, London; and certain financial headquarters at Frankfurt-on-the-Main, Germany. Per contra, an unsound vote means one that goes to re-establish a drooping western industry and is one of the greatest in the world; to restore a metal to the place provided for it by the Constitution of the United States and recognized by all civilized nations till overthrown by our Congress in the interest of the three places named; to confer upon silver its principal function; and to advance the prices of all agricultural products up to a living standard of profit. Would that we could have more unsound votes!

EXPENSIVE JUSTICE.

A wall "not as wide as a barn door nor as deep as a well" goes up in Chicago over the useless extravagance of some departments of the municipal system. The *News Record* complains that, bad as is the quality of police court justice, the people pay very dearly for it, in which respect the windy burg must not imagine that it has a monopoly by any means. It is claimed that enough money is spent there upon a bad system to secure the best sort of service, "and the worst of it is that the expense of maintaining the police courts increases without any manifest improvement; in fact, perhaps there is a tendency in the other direction." Very likely.

The Fair City luminary gives the following facts and figures in support of its position:

The appropriation for the maintenance of the police courts for 1891-92, the first year of Mayor Washburne's term, was \$31,700. For the second year of his term it was \$48,900.

The increase in one year was \$17,200.

This was not due to annexation, which had taken place nearly two years before. It is interesting to notice how this \$17,200 of the people's money was expended. The two justices at the Harrison street police station got \$500 a year additional salary. The two justices at the Des-