

He must be blind, indeed, who cannot see that this much talked of increase in wages is a voluntary contribution to Mark Hanna's campaign fund. There is no increase among the employes of competitive business. It is only employes of trusts whose wages are advanced. That is proof enough that the increase is given voluntarily by the trusts, and not forced by conditions of the labor market. And being given voluntarily by the trusts, the inference is plain that their object is to remove from the minds of working men the deepening impression that McKinley prosperity is for trusts and speculators alone.

We speak advisedly when we say that in competitive businesses wages are not being raised. An illustrative instance is afforded by one of the largest competitive mercantile houses of Chicago. Its sales have immensely increased. There is every appearance in its business of exceeding prosperity. But its working force has been only slightly augmented, the old force being obliged to handle most of the new business at the old wages. And the wages of employes whose earnings depend upon their sales have declined, though their sales have increased. One salesman whose sales last year were fully \$10,000 greater than the year before, made something like \$200 less; and the firm, of course, reaped a smaller profit upon his larger volume of sales than they had the year before upon his smaller volume. This house is doubtless a fair example. It would appear to be true enough, then, as one of the McKinley trade papers pleasantly explained last summer, that the peculiarity of McKinley prosperity is that it means more business at a lower profit, and harder work for less wages.

In some instances the pretended increase of wages by the trusts, for political effect, is an unblushing fraud. The vaunted increase in the Cleveland factories, for example, still leaves wages there lower than they were when President McKinley took

his oath of office. Of how many other instances the same thing is true we are unprepared to say; but it is doubtless true of most, and we shall not be surprised to learn that when all things are considered the beneficiaries of this arbitrary increase of wages, now so assiduously advertised, will find their annual incomes no better than in 1896, and worse than in 1893.

As to employes who are not classed as "laborers" and are not organized in unions, their wages have notably fallen. Minor experts, clerks, bookkeepers, minor business men, all have suffered; and they are doomed to suffer more. From good incomes to poor ones, from well paid clerkships to badly paid ones, from \$50 a week to \$25, from \$25 to \$18, from \$18 to \$15, from \$15 to \$12, or \$10, or \$9, or even \$6,—that has been the course of wages for employment outside the mechanical and unskilled grades. And the end is not yet. Are these men to be bamboozled by the parrot cry of "prosperity?"

When trusts raise wages because they can't get help without doing it, workingmen of all grades may hopefully welcome better times. But when trusts raise wages out of their own goodness of heart, workingmen who are wise will ask themselves what kind of trap it is that the trusts are thus baiting with small chunks of generosity.

That bloody lesson which the Americans administered to the Filipinos on the 4th and 5th of February was by no means so effective as it was then expected to be. Six weeks have gone by and the Filipinos are still fighting. Not only do they keep up an irritating sharpshooting fire upon the American outposts, and almost daily engage the American line at one point or another in skirmishes, but they fight also within the American lines. Their marksmanship is observed to be improving, and American casualties are increasing.

Gen. Otis is now reported as estimating that this Philippine war, which was to have been over in a day, will be ended in three months. He is arranging, it is said, to utilize the reinforcements now arriving, by penetrating the jungle with parallel columns and driving the Filipinos out. That is more likely a movement of newspaper than of military design. It is exactly the kind of movement, at any rate, that the Filipinos are apparently trying to tempt Otis into making. So far as they are concerned, it could result only in scattering them temporarily; while it would carry many a poor American soldier to his death by exhaustion and disease.

The real trouble at Manila, as some of the reports begin to complain, is that the Filipinos refuse to play according to the rules of the deadly game. If they would only meet the Americans in a square stand up fight, the Philippine question could be settled quickly with modern guns. But they obstinately refuse to do this. It suits their purpose better to worry the American troops, which they appear to be succeeding in to their entire satisfaction. That at any rate is the inference to be drawn from the guarded official reports and the censored news dispatches.

American imperialists may congratulate themselves upon the approval which Cecil Rhodes bestows upon their policy, and increase their sanguinary enthusiasm as they contemplate the programme he marks out for them. Premising that it is the duty of the United States to help to give barbarians "a white man's government," he predicts that in the performance of that duty the United States will not stop with the Philippines, but will go on conquering until by force of arms Mexico, Central America, and all South America, as well as the West Indian islands, have come under its rule. This sounds like the passionate wail of an anti-expansionist. But it isn't. It is the hearty, whole-souled prophecy of as villainous an imperialist as ever tramped