

WHAT MR. CLEVELAND STANDS FOR.

"How is it that you, an original member of the Republican party and an officer in the Union army all through the war of the Rebellion,—how is it that you, with this political and military record, are now a supporter of the presidential candidate of the Democratic party?" This question has recently been put to me; it is a fair question; it comes from a responsible source, and is put, not idly or out of mere curiosity, but because I am believed to be one of a class, more or less numerous, and it is assumed, correctly or otherwise, that the considerations which have influenced me have also influenced those who feel and act much as I feel and act. Though the voice of almost no one carries far amid the tumult of a presidential canvass, I propose to answer the question. But before doing so, and in order to make my answer intelligible, it is necessary to cast a rapid glance backward.

It was in 1856, the year in which the Republican party came into existence—and in which also James Buchanan was elected President—that I cast my first vote. It is needless to say that I did not vote for Mr. Buchanan. My virgin vote was deposited for John C. Fremont, the "Pathfinder," as we then called him. And I may add, by way of reminiscence, that since then, like most men who take an interest always and occasionally an active hand in political movements, I have experienced some disappointments, and at times felt that the bottom, so to speak, of things, if it had not actually already tumbled out, was in imminent danger of so doing. But, looking back over an interval of more than a third of a century, I am now free to say that never at any time do I remember to have experienced so bitter a sense of political disappointment and temporary discouragement as when a merciful Providence, through the result of the Pennsylvania State election of October, 1856, saved the young Republican party from the grave disaster of a premature success. Since that time I have cast my vote in eight presidential elections; six times for the successful candidate and twice for the candidate who failed of success. So, as an adult, I have seen nine such elections; and I have further a most vivid recollection of the two others which immediately preceded those nine.

Passing in review the whole eleven of these conflicts from the standpoint of the threshold of the twelfth, I find myself forced to the conclusion that in the course of them I have been through a great deal of most unnecessary anxiety, and witnessed the expenditure of a vast amount of energy and enthusiasm with very inadequate returns; because, though generally I have been on the winning side, and so at the moment seen my country saved from what appeared to be imminent peril, yet now, looking back over the lines of that country's development and the political battle-fields which marked and more or less deflected those lines, I really cannot help feeling that so far as the country as a whole is concerned, the grand result would in the long run have been about the same whether at any particular election, with one exception only, the party I sympathized with had won the day or whether the other party had won it. The single exception was the election of 1864, the second election of President Lincoln. That election all, I think, must agree was of vital importance; and for the obvious reason, which Lincoln himself either gave or would have given, that it was not politic to attempt to swap horses while crossing a river. The country was most undeniably then crossing a river, a river swift and dangerous, and the transfer of political power from one party to the other at that time would, so far as all human judgment can decide, have been disastrous. But with this single exception, I do not see how a different result in any one of the last eleven presidential elections could have affected the grand course of events further than slightly to hasten or retard it, or possibly to deflect it to an extent in no way material.

Thus in these days of profound peace and great material prosperity, some of us, the veterans now of many noisy but innocuous presidential conflicts and of one actual and awful war—some of us, I say, seeing the general prosperity of the country we fought to preserve, and not being able to shut our eyes to the eager patriotism of the people, no matter by what party lines they may divide themselves—seeing all this, we find it somewhat difficult to work up in ourselves the old enthusiasm, or to be very earnest partisans, or to feel that every fourth year is “the most important in the country's history.” Moreover, so far as the Republican party is concerned, the party of our youth and devotion, the present battle-cries of that organization have to our ears a somewhat unfamiliar sound. It was William M. Evarts, I think, who many years ago, probably during the second administration of Grant, remarked that “the Republican party was like an army

the term of enlistment of which had expired." The saying was as true as it was incisive. As I hold it, there have been only two political parties in the United States since the present National Government was organized which have left behind them the record of a great work of lasting historical importance accomplished. One of those two parties was the original Federal party, the party of Washington; the other was the original Republican party, the party of Lincoln. The Federal party organized and firmly established the Union of the States under a National Government; and the Republican party triumphantly carried that Union and that Government through the crucial stress of a great civil war. All the other parties and party conflicts of these hundred years of national history are, so far as I am competent to judge, mere matters of detail, and will prove hardly deserving of the future historian's notice.

It was to meet the issues of a great crisis then manifestly impending that the Republican party came into existence in 1856, and the young men of the North enlisted in its ranks. The mottoes inscribed on its banners were plain enough and understood by all. Neither was the work before it to do matter for much question. That work it did, and it did it completely—far more completely than it was originally proposed to do it. When the work the Republican party was organized to do was thus done, and fully and irreversibly done, the term of service of those who enlisted literally for that war expired by its own limitation. New issues then presented themselves, new leaders came to the front, new battle-cries were heard, and the name of Republican attached to a party organization became a mere tradition and sentiment—a trade-mark, as it were, representing what might most aptly be described as a very valuable political good-will.

Such are the general conditions of to-day as seen by some of us, original members of the Republican party, and faithful to it until the work it was formed to do was done; then, ceasing to call ourselves Republicans, we have seen no good reason for identifying ourselves with the Democratic or with any other political faction. We have felt satisfied with being simply citizens of that common country which, as members of the original Republican party, we helped to save. Why, then, do some of us now come forward, not calling ourselves Democrats, and earnestly advocate the election to the presidency of the candidate of the Democratic party? My answer is: We do so simply because that candidate is ex-President Cleveland.

What are the political issues of the impending canvass? Some of

them are old, as old as the National Government, and likely long to continue; others are new and of a passing character. These issues, new and old, may be enumerated somewhat as follows: 1. The economic and commercial system, commonly known as protective, based upon the idea that it is the business of government artificially to foster, or even call into existence, various branches of industry. 2. The purification and reform of the civil service; or, as Mr. Carl Schurz once tersely expressed it, "the disestablishment of the spoils system," the system which the Jacksonian Democracy introduced. 3. What is known as the "currency question," now taking the form of a demand for the free coinage of silver at the national mint at an artificial ratio with gold. 4. The pension system.

What is the attitude of Mr. Cleveland so far as these issues are concerned? He has been called upon officially to confront them all, and on no occasion, so far as I know, has he failed to make his position understood, or to give the party of which he was the head a distinct, recognized, and creditable lead. He has not shuffled or vacillated; his voice at least has, upon these issues, emitted no uncertain sound. In this respect the line of responsible public action he has pursued has been in most agreeable contrast with that usually pursued by politicians, not only of the present, but of all time. The crying sin of cattle of that class, especially in these days of many newspapers and much rapid communication, is their constant endeavor to catch quickly and to reflect correctly the passing phases of public sentiment, and neither to think nor to speak for themselves. Continually playing a game of political chess and small party tactics, they are very chary of enunciating any political principles by which they are prepared to stand or fall, unless such principles are time-honored political platitudes or orthodox party shibboleth. But such has not been the practice of Mr. Cleveland. In high public position he has stood forth a clean-cut political character—a man with the courage of his convictions.

Take his course on the question of civil-service reform, that one of the issues enumerated in regard to which his record may seem to be most open to attack. Under the lead of Grover Cleveland the Democratic party came back into power in 1885 after twenty-eight years of exclusion from it. It is no exaggeration to say that those calling themselves Democrats were then simply ravenous for spoils. No more severe pressure for a general turning out of officials and a new distribution of places was probably ever brought to bear upon the head of a government than was brought to bear upon President

Cleveland after his inauguration. I have not the figures before me, nor do I care to look them up, but I think it will be found that the removals during President Cleveland's administration were fewer in number and less dictated by partisan or political considerations than those of President Harrison, who succeeded him. Yet President Harrison represented a party which when Cleveland was inaugurated had been in power for over a quarter of a century, filling every office in the gift of the Government, and many of these officials had held over notwithstanding the change which took place in 1885. President Harrison also represented the party which claims to be and which should be essentially the party of civil-service reform. Yet, so far as the use of party power for political purposes is concerned, the administration of Grover Cleveland will have little to fear from a comparison of its record with that of Benjamin Harrison. It may well be that in this matter there is little to choose as between the politicians of the two great parties; but in view of the record, it cannot but be conceded that Mr. Cleveland, in the trying position in which he was placed, acquitted himself as creditably as any man could have been expected to do. Upon the issue of a reformed civil service he showed himself as much in advance of both parties as it was wise or prudent for the recognized leader of one of those parties to be. He may not have been—probably he was not—on the skirmish line; but then a general in command is not in his proper place on the skirmish line.

On the next issue, that of protection, whether the critic be a protectionist or otherwise, he must still admit that President Cleveland's course was most creditable to him. Indeed, it may well be questioned whether any President, in dealing with an important question of public policy, ever acted from higher or more disinterested motives than did Cleveland when he took the course he did in his annual message of 1887. Before that message was sent in, it was generally conceded that all the President had to do to secure a reelection was silently to bide the time. The course of events and the drift of public opinion were in his favor. The terrible results his opponents had so confidently predicted from a return of the Democratic party to power had not come about. The country was at peace and very prosperous; the South was pacified and loyal; the Treasury was overflowing. All things indicated popular confidence in the administration and unwillingness to disturb it. Nevertheless, when President Cleveland, after the most thorough and careful investigation he could make, had con-

vinced himself that the tariff system needed modification, he did not hesitate to cast all further ulterior considerations aside and boldly to indicate his opinion. It is no sort of consequence whether his so doing was "good politics," as it is called, or "bad politics"; it is no sort of consequence whether, as a question of party strategy, it was a success or a failure; it is no sort of consequence whether by doing as he then did President Cleveland showed skill as a political leader or committed a serious political blunder, his course none the less showed character and courage; and the Anglo-Saxon race has always evinced a proclivity for men of character and courage.

It was the same with the question of silver coinage. That issue was and is unmistakably before the country and has got to be fought out. It was unnecessary for ex-President Cleveland, as he then was, to express in February last any opinion upon it. It was perfectly within his power, by preserving a discreet silence, to hold himself in position where those in favor of a free coinage of silver and those who were opposed to it could equally lend him their support. He might have dodged the issue. Nevertheless, here again the courage and character of the man asserted themselves. His letter of February 10, 1891, to the Cooper Union meeting was, as I look upon it, under all the circumstances of the case, one of the most creditable utterances that ever came from an American public character. He did not want to have his position misunderstood. He did not propose to stand before the country in any false or uncertain attitude. So, again, his voice, when heard, emitted no uncertain sound.

Finally, the question of pensions. On this subject I speak with some degree of feeling, because, having served through nearly four years of the Civil War, I, in common with many others who did the same, feel a sense of humiliation—I may almost say of degradation—in seeing the uniform we once wore turned into a mendicant's garb, and the garb of a very impudent and persistent mendicant at that. Under the administrations which preceded that of Cleveland the pension legislation had, as we thought, been already carried to excessive length. Grant and Garfield, we knew, were of the same opinion. Under it every man who had any reasonable claim to public consideration had received recognition, or the way to recognition was open to him. My own experience, I presume—and, indeed, I know—had in a small way been that of nearly every one else who was in immediate command of men during the Rebellion. We had seen every dead-beat and malingerer, every bummer, bounty-jumper, and sus-

pected deserter we had ever known or heard of rush to the front as the greedy claimant of public bounty. If there was any man whose army record had been otherwise than creditable to him, we soon heard of him as the claimant of a back pension of many hundred dollars or as being in the regular receipt of his monthly stipend. On the other hand, those good and faithful soldiers who, in the day of trial, had been found in the front rank in presence of the enemy—those men had, since the flags were furled away, developed, as a rule, the same characteristics as citizens which had distinguished them as soldiers; self-respecting and self-sustaining, they were reluctant to trade on the patriotism of their younger and better days as on a beggar's claim. They had supported the brunt of battle then, and they were able to support themselves now. Thus there were of us those who felt that this wretched *largess* business, this trading of political hucksters on patriotic self-sacrifice, had gone quite far enough. We therefore felt a keen sense of relief when, in February, 1887, President Cleveland sent in his veto of that Dependent Pension bill, which put a premium on self-abasement and perjury.

But President Cleveland's cogent reasoning in that message failed to commend itself to the army of pension agents, the circulars from whose offices at Washington cumbered the mails and our desks. The Republican party, that party to which we had belonged until it completed its work, took the same view of the subject. Accordingly, so far as could be judged from the outside, the issue made by that party in the campaign of 1888, which resulted in the election of Harrison, was distinct and simple. It set itself in direct opposition to the public policy which President Cleveland had enunciated as respects what may be called the "protected interests" of the country and the pension agents. It turned to those two powerful and wide-spread organizations, saying to the first: "If you will elect our candidate to the presidency and return us to power, you can come to Washington and demand such an increase of your protective duties as you shall see fit; and we will see that it is given to you." It then turned to the army of claim agents in and about the Pension Office, saying to them: "If you will elect our candidate to the presidency and cause the administration of the country to return into our hands, we will allow you the free plunder of the Treasury. President Cleveland, as you see, bars your way to it."

The result was that by a narrow vote President Cleveland was defeated and General Harrison elected to succeed him. The Republi-

can party returned to power. After it returned to power, the record shows that it was as good as its word. Its promises were carried out. The protected interests swarmed to Washington, and in due time the McKinley Tariff bill was reported and passed. In it the demands of every producer, so far as appears, who wished to fatten at the expense of the consumer, were gratified. He had but to ask and it was given. On the other hand, the horde of claim agents ran riot in the Pension Office under "Corporal Joe" Tanner until the Treasury which President Cleveland left only too full bade fair to be empty. The record in this respect is one of which the quondam soldiers of the Republic cannot well feel proud. The Treasury was looted.

Those who feel thus on the questions now before the country feel also that the issue involved in the present canvass is by no means a vital one. Whichever way it goes, the United States will prosper and go on in its course of irresistible development along the lines marked out as the result of the discussions of the century just closed and of the irreversible course of its events. Where they are not purely fiscal and economic, the issues involved in the contest of 1892 seem destined to be largely personal. They can affect nothing which is fundamental to our Government, nor will any mistake made be irremediable. Under such circumstances it has ever been found that heresies and the errors into which people fall in consequence of them can be depended on in due course of time to rectify themselves. The disease is self-limited and will work its own cure. Parties, too, are strangely divided. There is, for instance, a recognized element among the Republicans which favors a modification of the tariff, another which insists on the free coinage of silver, and yet another which looks with alarm and disgust upon new pension raids on the Treasury. So also with the Democrats. Indeed, there is no one distinctive question upon which the whole Republican party is divided from the whole Democratic party, or the whole Democratic party from the Republican. The ranks are mixed. Under such circumstances, the issue is necessarily more or less an issue of individual men: Who is to be the temporary head of the Government for the next four years?

Such being the case, those who feel as I feel, caring far more for country than for faction—for things than for names—see in Mr. Cleveland a man both true and tried, a political leader far in advance of his party, a public character with the courage of his convictions, a statesman whose views on every political issue are definite and well known, a possible President who if elected can have no ulterior political ends

in view, for he cannot be a candidate to succeed himself. Opposed to Mr. Cleveland, we see the partisan candidate of a political party the recent record of which has not served to fill us with admiration. Our pride and patriotism are not stirred at the mention of the diplomatic victories achieved by it in its disgraceful Chilian fiasco; nor does its policy of taxing every human being in the country in the name of protection in order to call into existence an industry in tin plates commend itself to our business judgment, any more than the proposition that a natural and economical desire to buy "a cheap coat" indicates "a cheap man"; while, moreover, we look with absolute and unspeakable disgust, not unmixed with alarm, upon the noisy crowd of thieves and mendicants who, under the lead of an aggressive, well-organized staff of pension agents, constitute the acknowledged camp-following of the latter-day Republican organization, and, as such, beset the doors of the Treasury. Finally, if the published utterances of ex-President Cleveland upon all the leading issues of the day constitute what is now Democracy, then I and those who feel as I do must for the time being submit, for the reasons I have given, to be accounted Democrats. So far as the nominee for the presidency is concerned, we certainly propose next November to vote as such.

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS.

WRITERS AND SUBJECTS IN THE JULY FORUM.

JAMES FAIRBANKS COLBY (*Necessity for Uniform State Laws*), born in St. Johnsbury, Vt., was graduated at Dartmouth College in 1872 and from the Columbian Law School, at Washington, in 1875, and was clerk of the House committee on revision of the laws during the Forty-third Congress. He was instructor in law, economics, and history in the Sheffield School of Yale from 1877 till 1881. He practised law in New Haven, Conn., in 1881-85, and served as instructor in international law in the Yale Law School in 1883-85. Since 1885 he has been professor of law and political science at Dartmouth.

A. A. MCLEOD (*The Coal Supply and the Reading Leases*) is about forty-five years old. He has won his present position as president of the Philadelphia and Reading Railway by his energy and his executive ability. To him belongs the credit for the consummation of the leases of the Jersey Central and the Lehigh Valley railroads.

COL. THEODORE AYRAULT DODGE (*A Glance at the European Armies*) was born in Pittsfield, Mass., May 28, 1842. He received a military education at Berlin under Gen. Von Frohreich, was graduated at University College, London, in 1861, and entered the American regular army as a private, rising to the rank of captain and brevet-colonel. He retired in 1870. He has written, among other works, "A Bird's-Eye View of the Civil War," "A Chat in the Saddle," and studies of Alexander and Hannibal.

WILLIAM C. EDGAR (*Russia's Land System: the Cause of the Famine*) was born in La Crosse, Wis., in 1856, and lived in St. Louis until 1882. Since then he has been connected with the "Northwestern Miller," first as its business manager and since 1889 as its manager and editor. Mr. Edgar was one of the commissioners appointed by Governor Merriam, of Minnesota, and Governor Boyd, of Nebraska, to see that the contributions made through the efforts of his publication were properly distributed. He superintended the transshipment of the food to Russia and then visited the famine district.

WILLIAM SHARP (*Thomas Hardy and His Novels*), born in England in 1855, was educated at the University of Glasgow. Since his graduation he has travelled in Australia, Europe, and in America, has edited "The Canterbury Poets," published a life of Rossetti, several volumes of verse and fiction, and contributed copiously to the leading English and American periodicals.

ISAAC L. RICE (*The Consumer*), born in 1850, is a graduate of the Columbia Law School. He established the Academy of Political Science, and was a lecturer on law in Columbia from 1883 to 1886. He has contributed articles on political economy and philosophy to the "North American Review" and the FORUM, and he is president of the Forum Publishing Company.

ROGER SHERMAN (*The Standard Oil Trust: the Gospel of Greed*) was born in Tennessee in 1839, studied law, and in 1865 settled in Venango County,

Pa. He moved thence to Titusville in 1870, where he has since been practising law. He was the legal counsel for the Petroleum Producers' Associations in their litigations with the railroads and the Standard Oil Company in 1877-80.

MRS. SCHUYLER VAN RENSSELAER (*The Waste of Women's Intellectual Force*) was born in New York City, where she now lives, and was educated in this country and in Germany. She has devoted herself to the study of art and architecture. She is the author of "Six Portraits," a collection of essays on artists and their works, "American Etchers," a life of Richardson, the architect, and she is a frequent contributor to the magazines.

CARROLL D. WRIGHT (*Why Women are Paid Less than Men*), born in Dunbarton, N. H., in 1840, was admitted to the bar in 1865. He moved to Massachusetts, where he served in the State senate in 1871-72. He was chief of the State Bureau of Statistics of Labor in 1873-88, appointed supervisor of the United States Census in Massachusetts in 1880, and in 1885 first commissioner of the Bureau of Labor, in the Interior Department at Washington.

GEORGE W. CABLE (*Does the Negro Pay for His Education?*) was born in New Orleans in 1844. After serving in the Confederate army he engaged in mercantile life in New Orleans, but he abandoned business for literature. He has had notable success as a writer of fiction. Among his novels are "Old Creole Days," "The Grandissimes," "Madame Delphine," and "Doctor Sevier." A few years ago he moved to Northampton, Mass., where he now lives.

JOSEPH ROSWELL HAWLEY (*Mr. Harrison's Sound Administration*) was born in Stewartville, N. C., in 1826. He moved to Connecticut in 1837, to Cazenovia, N. Y., in 1842, and was graduated at Hamilton College in 1847. He then taught school and studied law, and began to practise in 1850. In 1857 he gave up the law and became editor of the Hartford "Evening Press." He served with distinction through the Civil War. In 1866 he was elected governor of Connecticut, entered Congress in 1872, was elected to the United States Senate in 1881 and reelected in 1887. His term expires in 1893.

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS (*What Mr. Cleveland Stands For*), born in Boston, 1835, was graduated at Harvard in 1856 and admitted to the bar in 1858. He won the rank of brigadier-general of volunteers for his services in the Civil War. He has since devoted himself chiefly to railway interests. In 1869 he was made a member of the board of railroad commissioners of Massachusetts, and in 1884 he was elected president of the Union Pacific. He has published a book on railway accidents, and with his brother, Henry Adams, "Chapters of Erie, and Other Essays."

ERRATUM: The sentence in Bishop Potter's article on page 352 of the May FORUM, beginning at line 31, should read: It was not the "enthusiasm of humanity," it was not any doctrine of altruism, it was the touch of that spell of love which they had learned, however obscurely, from the cross of Christ.