

lican party be continued in power, there seems every reason to believe that our present national prosperity will increase rather than diminish.

I shall vote for Harrison and Reid.

JOHN CLAFLIN.

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#### MR. McCLURG'S PREFERENCE.

WHILE I cannot suppose that it is of any great importance to the public how I may intend to vote in the coming presidential election, I cannot refuse a request to state the reasons which will govern me in casting my vote for one of the candidates in preference to the other.

The coming election must be regarded by all as one of unusual importance. It used to be said, not many years ago, that there was but little difference between the doctrines, policy, and purposes of the Republican and the Democratic parties. This can no longer be said, for the difference is now radical. At last the platforms of the two parties make clearly defined issues and use language that cannot be misunderstood. The two candidates just as clearly represent the issues which are made in the platforms. Mr. Harrison has long been and still is an ardent supporter of a high protective tariff; he has been and, unless he has greatly changed his opinions, he still is an advocate of what is known as a force bill; he is also in favor of lavish pension legislation, for he signed the dependent pension bill.

Mr. Cleveland, on the contrary, has been the leader of his party to a strong and definite opposition to high protective duties; he is unmistakably against the so-called force legislation; he is opposed to extravagant pension legislation, for in the face of an overwhelming majority in both houses of Congress he vetoed a dependent pension bill. These three issues at least are clearly and fairly joined, and they are so important as to call for the careful consideration of every intelligent voter. The course of legislation on these subjects is likely to be fixed not only for the next four years, but probably for many years to come, by the result of this presidential election. The man who believes in high and increasing protective duties, who thinks that more good than ill would come from the enactment of a force bill, and who looks without apprehension on our rapidly increasing pension expenditure, must vote for Mr. Harrison; while the man who believes that our tariff duties are already too high for the interests of the mass of the citizens, who thinks that much evil would come from the interference of the National Government in elections in the separate States, and who believes that the pension laws are already much too lax and

extravagant, and who would deprecate further reckless progress in the same direction, must as certainly vote for Mr. Cleveland.

These are simple questions of policy, easily understood by common minds, and should be settled by careful and intelligent discussion. It is not a campaign in which there should be need on either side of brass bands, uniformed marching clubs, and Roman candles. What is needed is straightforward discussion and conscientious and fearless voting. While parties are unquestionably useful and necessary in a popular government like ours, they can never be safely trusted as constant mentors and guides of the intelligent voter when new questions of policy force themselves to the front; and assuredly, with such questions before us as those to be settled in the present campaign, this is no time for any man to follow blindly the lead of his party on either side, if that party represents a policy on these vital questions different from that which his judgment approves. The past glories of Democracy have nothing to do with the questions whether we should have higher or lower custom duties or greater or less expenditures for pensions, nor have the noble achievements and the brilliant record of the Republican party in the trying days of the war anything to do with these momentous questions. Let them be settled by the intelligence and conscience of to-day just as the great questions of the past have been settled by the intelligent and conscientious action of the voters of the past.

For myself, while reared in the school of strict protection, I have long believed that the high protective duties of recent years ought to be gradually lowered. The old doctrine of the protectionist was that high duties could and should be reduced when the home industries had become firmly established. To-day that idea seems to be abandoned, and the McKinley bill must be taken as an indication that duties are to be limited only by the abilities of the lobbies of the protected interests to secure further increase. These interests have grown so strong that they are now the greatest menace to the purity of our elections. They are naturally called upon for lavish contributions to campaign funds, on the ground that the party is doing everything for them. When these large contributions have been made and the friendly party is again in power, additional favors in the way of higher protection are demanded of the party and must be granted. And so the reciprocal benefits go on and must go on until a halt is called by the determination of the people, expressed at the polls, that the time has come when duties must decrease instead of increasing.

• It is impossible in a brief paper to go into any extended discussion of the force legislation which came so near being enacted and which Mr. Harrison ardently approved. The evils which it was intended to cure are undoubtedly great, but they are gradually curing themselves. Such troubles under such conditions are inevitable so long as human nature is what it is; and similar troubles would, in my opinion, have occurred in any section of the country under similar conditions. The proposed legislation would be almost certain to aggravate instead of curing the evils, and would be full of danger to the Republic.

It is unquestionably true that many Republicans, as well as Democrats, view with much alarm the recent progress of pension legislation. For myself, I can never think that the man who has lost a leg or an arm or has been otherwise really incapacitated by wounds or sickness incurred in the war of the rebellion is now overpaid by any pension he receives; nor would he be overpaid if that pension were doubled; but the ability even adequately to pension such men is curtailed by the loose, extravagant, and reckless legislation which has enabled hundreds of thousands of men to draw pensions who are in no way entitled to them. The dependent pension bill can be looked upon only as a reckless bid for votes. Its extravagance is condemned by thinking men in both parties and by those who were soldiers as well as by those who were not. It is in its temptations destructive to self-respect and to manhood. It is a bid for the profession of imbecility and for dishonesty. It is an insult to the self-respecting soldier. Think of a bill which has enabled claim agents to send out, as they now do, to those veterans whose chief glory in life it is that they unselfishly and faithfully served their country in the hour of her supreme danger, circulars containing in large, bold, and black type, "Soldiers or officers dishonorably discharged or dismissed from the service can now get pensions." Can disgraceful legislation now go further?

These three issues seem to me the vital ones upon which the intelligent voter must decide his action. So far as the candidates are concerned, they are both thoroughly good men and represent the best elements of their parties. The nomination of each was a victory for the best element of each party, while that of Mr. Cleveland was splendid evidence of the admiration of the masses of a party of bold and rugged honesty and capacity in a party leader. Both candidates are eminently safe on the important subject of silver legislation; and yet I cannot help thinking that Mr. Cleveland in the presidential chair will have far more influence in guiding legislation on this sub-

ject than Mr. Harrison, for Mr. Cleveland has shown himself to be an unusual leader and moulder of men.

After this detailed statement it is scarcely necessary for me to say that I look forward hopefully to the election of Mr. Cleveland, and shall not only vote for him but will do all a private individual can to secure his election.

ALEXANDER C. McCLURG.

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#### MR. SWING'S PREFERENCE.

I WOULD express here my intention to vote for Mr. Harrison. The pleasure of casting such a vote will be much lessened by the fact that he is a candidate for a second term. When many noble men ought to be honored by a call to that one high office, it does not seem generous in Mr. Harrison or Mr. Cleveland to ask an *encore* from their country.

In voting for Mr. Harrison I shall not be oppressed by the feeling that the nation will be ruined should Mr. Cleveland be elected. To very many Republicans he seems a man of honesty and ability. Nor shall I be elated by the notion that the Republican party, if successful in November, will usher in the long-expected golden age.

Mr. Harrison possesses personal merit, ability, and integrity, and to these virtues he adds the merit of entire faithfulness to that party which has always seemed the friend of mankind. The progress of wisdom resulted many years ago in the creation of a Whig party. In England it brought about the abolition of the slave-trade, it set free the Catholics, and repealed the corn laws. It supplied with great truth such men as Burke and Fox, and, making at last our Republic, it has supplied it with a long line of statesmen, orators, and soldiers. It has written down in history many names between those of Edmund Burke and Abraham Lincoln.

It adds to the claim of Mr. Harrison that his party stood firmly by these great truths in all those years of peril which ended in 1865, and that when those great world-wide ideas culminated in war he offered his own life to the peril of battle. He comes as a "plumed knight" in a vivid realism, and thus wins the vote of many a man who has developed that acumen which can distinguish the plumed cap of a soldier from the silk hat of a gentleman.

The tariff and free trade do not with me figure in the pending case. Both the great parties are bound to the practice of the protective doctrine. The nation ought to have begun its career with free