

### THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL PLATFORM.

WE remarked upon the platform adopted by the St. Louis Convention that it was not chargeable with ambiguity in its method of dealing with the tariff question, since it endorsed the President's message and the Mills bill without variableness or shadow of turning. The Chicago platform is entitled to like commendation, for it goes further in its sanction of what its framers call protection and what we hold to be tariff robbery than any other platform ever adopted since the Government was founded—further, we think, than any party in any government ever went before. The Republicans in Congress have been hesitating all these months since the President's message was delivered, doubting whether they should attack the surplus by lowering the sugar duties or by repealing the internal tax on intoxicating liquors. Hitherto nobody but Judge Kelley has avowed himself in favor of the latter policy. The Convention has resolved all these doubts by demanding the repeal of the whiskey tax rather than that of any protective duty great or small.

It almost takes one's breath away to read such a platform. It is so at variance with all former deliverances of the party, with scores of resolutions of State Legislatures under Republican control, with hundreds of speeches and votes of Republican statesmen now living, with the report of the Republican Tariff Commission only five years ago, and with the recommendations of successive Republican Presidents and Secretaries of the Treasury, that the party can be likened only to the man who made a monster of which he became the unhappy victim. Protection is the Frankenstein of the Republican party. It has taken possession of and will destroy its maker as utterly as any party was ever destroyed in all history. We have the utmost confidence that this insensate platform will array the intelligence, the common sense of the country on the opposite side. It is an appeal to stupidity, ignorance, and prejudice. Consequently, it was stronger the first hour of its promulgation than it will ever be again. All institutions of learning will work against it, consciously or unconsciously, day by day. Even the manufacturers whose interests it is intended to support, cannot unite in favor of a platform which proposes to petrify the existing tariff, and allow no reductions and no changes except in the way of an increase of duties. By so petrifying the tariff without regard to its character or its effect upon particular industries, particular classes or sections, but taking the whole thing as a "Thus saith the Lord," the Chicago Convention has passed the baton of Progress over to the Democratic party, and has made itself the representative of inertia as well as of excessive and unjust taxation.

We confess that the platform goes much further than we had supposed it was possible for any party to go. It has been a common saying that when it became necessary to reform the tariff, the Republicans would do the work if they should then be in power. But this platform binds

them *not to do it* even when they are in power; and logically they cannot, because the vote that carries them into power will be a vote in support of a platform which declares the present tariff to be exactly right, or not susceptible of amendment except in the way of increase. Now, if this sort of doctrine is to be defended through a long campaign, and in other campaigns to come, there will be many a seat in Congress, now securely occupied by members who have held out the hope of some moderate amendment by and by, that will be lost, in spite of all the money the protected classes can raise for political ends. And yet we would not have the platform different if we could. We like a "square fight," and there can be none unless the issues are sharply drawn. Free whiskey versus taxed necessities of life is a plain issue, one that everybody can understand, and the one that Mr. Cleveland invited in his last annual message. His supporters can ask nothing better.

Nothing matches the high-tariff and free-whiskey plank in the platform better than the demand for large appropriations to carry off the Treasury surplus. For the first time in the history of parties extravagance is declared to be a good thing. For the first time economy in the public service is deprecated, and by the plainest inference denounced as inapplicable to national administration. More pensions, more river and harbor bills, national aid to State education, fortification bills, navy bills, and everything else that will take money out of the Treasury, are either openly demanded or plainly hinted at as part of a desirable national policy. Need we say that all this points the way to the very saturnalia of corruption in public life? Does it not add startling force to all that has been said about the dangers of a surplus revenue? Does it not give new point to the saying of James Russell Lowell that a public surplus is "a Pandora's box of infectious demoralization"? It is astonishing beyond measure that a great party, embracing at a former time by far the larger share of public intelligence and virtue, should declare itself in favor of schemes whose purpose is to squander the public revenue in order to make opportunity for high and unnecessary taxes. We do not believe that such a policy will ever be ratified by the American people.

"The Republican party is in favor of the use of both gold and silver as money," and condemns the policy of the Democratic Administration in its efforts to demonetize silver," further says the platform. This is about as unmeaning as anything in the literature of finance, but it conveys, nevertheless, a compliment to President Cleveland's Administration. The use of gold and silver as money is tolerably well established in this country, and nobody is now seeking to discontinue it. As silver has not been "monetized" in this country, and cannot be until free coinage of that metal is established by law, neither Mr. Cleveland nor anybody is likely to demonetize it. But Mr. Cleveland has shown sufficiently and repeatedly that he is opposed to free coinage, and also that he is opposed to the coinage of any more Bland dollars

than there is a public demand for. It will be considered by all intelligent men of business in the East, and by scholars and financiers everywhere, a fine compliment to Mr. Cleveland that the Chicago Convention has drawn attention to his position in this important matter, although the platform does not state the position of the Republican party on the silver question, except by inference. So far as inference goes, the implication is that the Republican party differs from Mr. Cleveland as to silver coinage. If any strong impression to this effect were made by the platform, it would add a great many votes to the Democratic ticket in New York and New England this year. On the other hand, it is easy to see that this plank is not the kind of deliverance that the silver-producing States and Territories wanted.

The plank relating to the fisheries is not only a menace to the peace of nations, but, argumentatively considered, is in conflict with the recent speech of Senator Frye on the same subject. The platform affirms that the pending treaty is "a pusillanimous surrender of the essential privileges to which our fishing vessels are entitled under the Treaty of 1818, and the reciprocal maritime legislation of 1830, and the comity of nations." Mr. Frye said that the Treaty of 1818 was itself a pusillanimous surrender of those privileges. It is not denied by anybody, except these platform-makers, that the pending treaty gives us more privileges than the Treaty of 1818 did. The platform to this extent asserts a downright falsehood. And why? Can the reason be anything else than a desire to catch the votes of the Irish dynamite faction? Probably the party would not declare war against Great Britain. The vote in the Senate the other day in favor of arbitration of international disputes would seem conclusive that war is not intended by keeping open the fisheries question. But the platform means that the war spirit shall be fanned, that disturbers of peace shall be encouraged, and that the country shall take the chances of peace or war during an exciting political campaign. This, we say, is a crime against civilization. If the country gets through the next five months without a breach of international peace, the good fortune will be due to the prudence of President Cleveland, and the good temper which the pending treaty itself has cultivated between the peoples of the two countries.

### THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES.

THE ticket nominated at Chicago after such prolonged agony is not of a kind to excite much enthusiasm, but is, nevertheless, a very respectable one, and for this we return thanks without reserve or stint to the Republican Convention and the Republican party. It is an ideal condition in politics when the public have reasonable assurance that, whichever party is successful, the dignity of the nation will receive no harm from the character of the occupant of the Presidential office. When it is remembered how much has been escaped, how narrowly one great party has avoided a candidacy which would have again

made the personal issue the absorbing one of the campaign, the feeling of thankfulness is deepened. Mr. Harrison is a fair representative of his party—not the best one, not so good as Gresham would have been, not so commanding a figure as Sherman, but infinitely better than Blaine. He has not the personal qualities that attract the multitude, nor has he accumulated the renown which belongs to an extended public career; but, on the other hand, he has made none of the antagonisms which are usually inseparable from a long period of public service, and since his "record" is comparatively brief, his opponents will find few points of attack and his supporters will have little to defend. In brief, Mr. Harrison is not stronger than his party, but he is not weaker than his party. His nomination leaves the field open for the freest discussion of the principles which divide the American people. Mr. Cleveland is stronger than his party, but not so much stronger that the issues are likely to be obscured. It will be the merit of the coming campaign that it will be fought more distinctly on principles than any other since the first election of Gen. Grant, which determined the reconstruction of the Southern States.

The most important speech made by Mr. Harrison during his Senatorial term was that in which he attacked President Cleveland's civil-service record. This was a strong speech, regarded merely as an attack, but it gave no promise of betterment in case the Republican party should succeed in overthrowing the present Administration. All its implications and intensions were of the opposite character. The principles of "a clean sweep" were, if not fully avowed, at least clearly implied, and certainly Mr. Harrison is the man who might be most confidently expected to carry out this principle to the letter, for he was reputed to have the most insatiable appetite for offices that ever haunted the departments at Washington. So rapacious was his quest for places for relatives and friends that Mr. Blaine, when Secretary of State, is reported to have said that "Harrison had asked for thirteen more first-class missions than there were on the diplomatic list." So far as civil-service reform is concerned in the campaign, we should expect, in the event of Mr. Harrison's election, to see the practices of Andrew Jackson's first term repeated with something bordering on fury.

But the civil-service question, important as it is, will not be the decisive one of the campaign. The real question is the tariff and the surplus. It may be assumed that the American people are in favor of sufficient protection to counterbalance the higher wages paid in manufacturing employments here as compared with like industries abroad, but not sufficient to create monopolies, trusts, and "combines." The impression has been cultivated, as the Oregon election has shown, that the Mills bill, which still leaves 40 per cent. average duties on manufactures, as against 47 1-10 per cent. now prevailing, is a free-trade measure, and that the whole tariff is coming down by the run. This is so gross a perversion of facts that it

cannot last through a campaign. The Republicans have done much in their platform to dissipate the illusion and to prove that protection is not upheld for the sake of wages, but for the sake of protection. Their doctrine, stated broadly and without disguise, is, that if there were no Government expenses at all, it would still be desirable to tax imports by as much as 47 1-10 per cent. average and without much regard to the kind of property imported. There could not be a fairer issue, or one offering better opportunity for national education. We think that Mr. Cleveland and the Democratic party will gain votes continuously as the campaign proceeds and the truth is made clear to the people that taxes, however laid, are burdens on industry, and that the country cannot get rich by increasing and multiplying such burdens.

Of Mr. Morton we have only to say that while he is an eminently respectable man, who would fill the place in which it is proposed to put him with dignity and tact, it is probably not to his fitness, so much as to his wealth, that he owed his selection. The Republican "workers" in this city are more in need of funds than they have been at any time since their organization; but we trust Mr. Morton has had sufficient experience of them and their ways to see that his contributions to campaign expenses are sent to the Chairman of the National Committee only.

#### A PARTY OF SPECIAL INTERESTS.

"GOVERNMENT of the people, by the people, for the people," was the ideal which Abraham Lincoln, in his Gettysburg address, presented as the highest aim of our institutions. The party which had elected Lincoln to the Presidency was an organization which might well profess such an aim, for it was in its origin a party of the people, by the people, for the people. Its great object, its sole excuse for existence, indeed, was the restriction of slavery, which was in itself a crime against the people. It was the conviction of what Lincoln called "the plain people" that slavery was a wrong to them as well as to its victims, which brought the Republican party into being and carried it into power.

In his 'Twenty Years of Congress,' Mr. Blaine clearly points out this distinguishing characteristic of the Republican party in the days of its youth. In speaking of its National Convention in 1856, he says: "The Democracy saw at once that a new and dangerous opponent was in the field—an opponent that stood upon principle and shunned expediency, that brought to its standard a great host of young men, and that won to its service a very large proportion of the talent, the courage, and the eloquence of the North." Of the Chicago Convention of 1860 the same writer well says: "It was a representative meeting of the active and able men of both the old parties in the North, who had come together on the one overshadowing issue of the hour. Differing widely on many other questions, inheriting their creeds from

antagonistic organizations of the past, they thought alike on the one subject of putting a stop to the extension of slavery. In the entire history of party conventions, not one can be found so characteristic, so earnest, so determined to do the wisest thing, so little governed by personal considerations, so entirely devoted to one absorbing idea."

It would be hard to imagine a greater contrast than that between this picture of the Convention of 1860 and the spectacle presented at Chicago last week. The personnel, the officers, the tone of the gathering were those of another party. The delegates were, more largely than usual, men unknown beyond their own districts or States, and who had no claim to be better known. Flanagan himself was there—the immortal Flanagan, whose inquiry in the Convention of 1880 has become historic, "What are we here for except for the offices?"—and with him a host of Flanagans, whose only idea of politics was to get a share of the spoils, which is all that a party victory ever means to them. Another numerous class was composed of the men whose only request of the party is, that it shall adopt a policy which shall put money into their pockets—the protected classes, who, as President Foster of the Republican League has frankly confessed, are the persons "who are most benefited by our tariff laws," and as a United States Senator, quoted by Mr. Foster, says, are "getting practically the sole benefit, or at least the most directly important benefits, of the tariff laws." A third class consisted of the men who represent great corporations which seek unfair advantages from the Government. Take out these three classes—the professional politicians who are after the offices, the representatives of the protected classes, and the representatives of the corporations, all of whom are "governed by personal considerations"—and but little of the Convention would have been left.

The Convention was called to order by a manufacturer whose firm is one of the seven members of the combination which, by the help of a high tariff, fixes the price of steel and iron beams. Its temporary Chairman was a man whose only prominence has come from the unsavory reputation he has acquired as counsel of a Pacific railroad. Among the candidates for the Presidential nomination was a millionaire who had gained the wealth which alone made him a candidate, by the unjust tariff upon lumber.

Incidents illuminate the character of an assembly. Two may be cited which reveal the low tone of the Chicago gathering. The character of the delegates from the Pacific Coast, who were the loudest Blaine howlers, was thus described: "The Pacific Slopers are a noisy lot. They are furnished with ammunition enough to keep up a howling racket for a month. A space 10x20 in their headquarters is the magazine. In it are scores of cases of Burgundy and gin and brandy stacked up to the ceiling. It's as free and untrammelled as the humidity of the Queen City. It's rum in thirteen different ways, and more rum if wanted." For a companion picture, take the night