for the Cabinet recognizes the fact that its decision will naturally delay the withdrawal of our troops from Cuba. It will, unfortunately, also postpone the organization of the native government of Cuba. One of the initial steps in the organization of that government was to have been taken immediately in the framing of an electoral law by the Havana Convention. It looks as if our Cabinet had made a mistake months ago. If it intended to settle various questions by negotiation with Cuba on terms mutually satisfactory, which would have been the better way, it should have initiated such negotiations before Congress acted, and probably before the Havana Convention was assembled. If it intended to tell the Cubans what were the conditions which must precede the withdrawal of our army, and if it required their acceptance of those conditions, it ought to have formulated the terms before the Convention met, in order that the Convention and the people might have understood that they had no option. A temporary deadlock may be very mischievous. It is believed, nevertheless, that the Cubans will give way—they cannot help themselves; but the humiliation to their pride will postpone the day of warm friendship which it ought to have been the object of statesmanship to cement between Cuba and the United States.

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The Alabama Constitutional Convention

The Alabama Constitutional Convention met last week to formulate a plan by which its members might fulfill three conflicting pledges made to the voters: 1. To disfranchise enough negroes to secure white supremacy everywhere without further election frauds. 2. To disfranchise no white man except for "infamous crime." 3. To obey the Federal Constitution, which provides that the right to vote "shall not be denied or abridged on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." To fulfill any two of these pledges would be an easy task, but to fulfill all three would seem to be a severe tax upon the ingenuity of casuists. When, however, the Convention was about to assemble, Senator Morgan submitted a plan by which to meet the more obvious difficulties. In brief, it was this: Do not abridge the privilege of voting because of race or color, but restrict the privilege of office-holding to white men only, and permit the white registrars of election to determine who is qualified to vote, subject to an appeal to the higher courts. Inasmuch as eligibility to office is not one of the privileges of citizenship guaranteed by either of the equal rights amendments to the Constitution, Senator Morgan's plan seemed to conform with the letter of the Constitution, while the discretion it gave to white registrars seemed at once to secure the indefinite disfranchisement of negroes and to prevent disfranchisement of any white man save for "infamous crime." At first this plan met with great favor, and it may still be adopted; but the speech made by the Convention's President, the Hon. John B. Knox, on taking the chair, indicated a conviction that the Morgan plan created almost as many difficulties as it solved. No part of President Knox's speech called forth more applause than his declaration that the people of Alabama did not wish their elections controlled by election officials. The danger of such control is serious whenever and wherever the white people divide, and the Convention may prefer to fall back upon the Carolina plan of disfranchising illiterates whose family did not possess the suffrage in 1867, or else establish a poll-tax qualification such as would keep the great bulk of negroes from registering. The last plan is the one which would be most acceptable to friends of the negroes, as any poll tax at all acceptable to a majority of the white people would not be entirely beyond the means of a negro determined to vote. Mr. Booker T. Washington and other leading negroes have respectfully asked the Convention that it impose no qualification not applicable alike to whites and blacks, and many members of the Convention recognize the justice of this request.

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The South Carolina Senators

Both Senator Tillman and Senator McLaurin followed their letters of resignation by addresses to the voters of South Carolina announcing the platforms upon which they asked the indorsement of the Democratic primaries for the seat now held by Senator Tillman. These letters promised an overheated campaign during the coming months, for neither Senator

contented himself with the defense of his own policies or the criticism of his opponent's, but each attacked the personality of the other in the manner locally known as "pitchforking." The substance of Senator Tillman's charges was that Senator McLaurin was not a Democrat, but a Republican, and as such was supported by Republican patronage and Republican money. The substance of Senator McLaurin's charges was that Senator Tillman was a political boss who represented, not Southern Democracy, but a political radicalism inconsistent therewith. Senator McLaurin's address closed as follows:

> There never will be anything like unity or quietude among our people until he is relegated to private life. His incendiary appeals to class hatred and prejudice, such as he made at Gaffney to factory operatives, and his dictatorial spirit and utterances, will keep up dissensions and discord in the State. With the aid of the people, I will make a heroic effort to break down bossism with its train of political evils, and I invite all good citizens to assist me to inaugurate an era of free thought, free speech, and independence of action in South Carolina. The senior Senator in the quietude of a farmer's life in Edgefield County could be viewed as a pitchforkless pygmy and a blessing to the State.

A campaign thus begun would not have afforded a fair test of the sentiment of the State upon the dividing issues of expansion, protection, and subsidies, but would to a large extent have registered only the attitude of the people toward the two men. The fact, too, that Senator Tillman supported the Kansas City platform, while Senator McLaurin repudiated it, would have given the former a decided advantage before the Democratic primaries. According to the Charleston "News and Courier," which formerly opposed Senator Tillman, but indorses his antagonism to subsidies and expansion, Senator McLaurin's defeat was practically inevitable. However, even the imperfect test of public sentiment which was offered seems to be denied by Governor McSweeney's unexpected refusal to accept the resignation of either Senator, on the ground that the people want a political rest and not another campaign; they are entitled to "one year of peace and freedom from political battles." Senator Tillman took the ground, however, that the Governor had no authority to reject the resignations. This may be true, but the Governor of the State certainly has authority to appoint the successors of the Senators who have resigned, and therefore has the situation well in hand if he cares to exercise his authority. It has already been suggested that he might appoint two new men, though Senator Tillman's hold upon his party, as indicated by last year's primaries, would make this course perilous. On Monday of this week Senator McLaurin acceded to Governor McSweeny's request and withdrew his resignation.

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Where Senator Quay's Power Fails

When Senator Quay was a candidate for re-election he said:

> It is not possible that there can be any objection by any honest man of any party to any law which, more certainly than the present one, will secure an honest and unbiased expression of the sense of the voters of this State. As yet the gentlemen who are agitating ballot reform as their specialty have not presented their proposition, by bill or otherwise, to the public. Without pretending to control results, I believe that I am able to say that Mr. Guffey, who initiated the proposition of a new law, may frame any fair statute which is a manifest improvement over the present one, and the Republican organization will aid in its passage. We will repeal for him the Baker law and substitute for it the Guffey law, and the legislative action will, I have no doubt, be approved by the Executive who sits beside me.

This, it is true, contained a misstatement of fact, in that the Pennsylvania Ballot Reform Association had since 1893 presented its proposition at every session of the Legislature in the concrete form of a bill, which had as regularly been defeated by the Quay forces. Overlooking this, however, the Democratic State leader, Colonel James M. Guffey, drafted a new bill in which he incorporated in their entirety the principles of the Ballot Reform Association's measure. The Guffey bill was presented to both houses of the Legislature in pursuance of Senator Quay's direct promise. It provided for the abolition of the party column, the grouping of candidates, and the amendment of the "assistance clause" which now permits the division workers to mark the ballots of illiterate and venal voters. We have heard of well-authenticated instances in which such workers have marked, in one case 112 and in another 158 ballots at a single election, and of one case in which