THE ISSUES OF 1896.

I. A REPUBLICAN VIEW, BY THE HON. THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

THE next Presidential campaign will be remarkable, if for no other reason than because in it the Democratic party will have to ask retention in power upon the ground that, if so retained, it will undo most of what it has done during the years that it had free governmental control. A party always bases much of its claim to public support upon the shortcomings of the the opposite party; but the Republicans may safely leave the tale of their foes' shortcomings to be told by their foes themselves. Next year it seems as if the Democracy would achieve the distinction of running, at one and the same time, both on the issue that it will hereafter keep the promises which hitherto it has failed to keep, and also on the issue that it is perfectly safe to trust it, because it never has kept its promises, and does not intend to, and therefore need not be taken at its word by any man who fears a convulsion in our financial or economic policy.

This last must certainly be the attitude it will take on one of the great questions before the country—the tariff. The majority of Democrats are sincere believers in a low tariff looking toward free trade. However, few of them venture openly to champion free trade as a present-day possibility, and, as a whole, they have united only in demanding that vague entity known as «tariff reform,» which may mean anything or nothing. Undoubtedly, however, at the last election the great majority of Democrats understood tariff reform to mean a sweeping and general reduction in import duties, and the great majority of their leaders gave fullest and frankest expression to this view. The bitter disappointment they felt over what they deemed their betrayal by some of the Democratic leaders in Congress is too fresh in mind to need more than an allusion. No denunciation of the Fifty-third Congress by Republicans can compare in violence with the denunciation heaped upon it by leading Democrats everywhere. Much the most serious argument advanced against a policy of high tariff is that it puts a premium upon the sacrifice of the general welfare to the selfish interests of particular individuals and particular businesses or localities, and the most forceful plea advanced for a policy of low tariff is that it does away with this scramble of greedy and conflicting interests. Yet the tariff bill of 1894 was passed amid scenes more scandalous than had attended the passage of any previous bill. Never before was the general welfare so contemptuously disregarded in dealing with special industries. Never before did United States senators appear so openly as the guardians of, and attorneys for, those peculiar aggregates of capital which are commonly styled «trusts.» The result proved the truth of the statement made by the brilliant Republican leader on whom there fell in the House the chief burden of opposing the passage of the tariff bill. Mr. Reed, in denouncing the queer measure which finally received the sanction of President Cleveland's signature, said that «protection was proper as a principle, but infamous as a preference.» The Wilson-Gorman Bill was described with exact nicety in this condemnation. It was largely a protective measure, for protection was yielded to certain industries in varying degree as a matter of preference and bargain and sale, but not as a matter of principle. It was a free-trade measure in spots, also; for here and there, where an industry had no special champion in Congress, or where it flourished in a district in which it was hopeless to expect Democratic votes, the duties were greatly reduced; but wherever an industry possessed a sufficiently formidable champion, and was willing to pay the price, it had little to fear. There were entirely disinterested believers in free trade, or in a low tariff, in both the upper and the lower house; but in the actual event the power rested with their foes. One group of senators might demand much and another little. One might represent the immense wealth of the sugar trust, while another stood for the iron manufacturers, and yet a third merely for a single business interest, such as the manufacture of collars in some given town. But they all got what they wanted. The result was a law which nobody defended and everybody condemned, and which the majority of Democrats ridiculed and disliked even more than did the Republicans.

It is needless now to recite the events of last year's election. The Democratic party had been in complete power for the first time since the civil war. The Senate, House, and President—all had been theirs. They had passed their own tariff bill; they had done whatever they deemed proper on the question of finance; and the result was that the country went through such a time of business disaster as it had not seen since 1857. As to the exact causes of the depression men disagreed; but they were all agreed that the tariff agitation and its outcome played a big part therein. Some contended that the bill was iniquitous because in so many directions it kept and even increased the protective duties. Others saw in its free-trade provisions a menace to the prosperity of American workingmen. But they were all agreed in condemning it. Accordingly, at the polls in 1894 the Democrats received an even more crushing defeat than had befallen the Republicans four years previously. The result did not make entirely clear what the American people did want, but it left no kind of doubt as to what they did not want.

On the tariff, therefore, the Democrats enter the next campaign handicapped by the fact that they repudiate their own handiwork. All of their leaders who are entitled to receive respectful attention denounce the Wilson-Gorman Bill, and promise to supplant it by another. They cannot take any other position. They are traitors to their own principles unless they denounce as treachery to these principles the work of their own hands. All they can promise is further agitation, further change and unrest, with all the attendant misfortunes of such change and unrest to the business community and to the world of workingmen. The Republicans, on the other hand, stand for a policy of commercial rest. They wish to continue the protective policy. They have no desire to carry the principle to unreasonable extremes. All they intend to do, if they have the power, is to remodel the present law wherever it is absolutely necessary to do so in the interests of impartial justice, so that all sections and all industries shall be treated alike.

At present, however, the financial question bids fair to overtop the tariff in interest. If business had continued in its depressed condition, and if there had been a failure of crops in the West, the financial question would have been all-important, and the fight would undoubtedly have resolved itself into a straight-out contest for and against free silver, the Democrats championing and the Republicans opposing unlimited coinage of the depreciated metal. The partial return of prosperity, however, has checked the free-silver craze. The Republicans have always been overwhelmingly against any form of «cheap» currency, whether under the guise of fiat paper or short-weight silver. All of the presidential candidates on the Republican side are and have been against it—Reed, Morton, McKinley, Harrison, Allison. The free-silver Republicans are important only because they are concentrated in a number of the Rocky Mountain States. These States are sparsely populated. They count for little in a party convention or in a national election, but they count for a great deal in the Senate; and it is this disproportionate representation in the Senate that has given the free-silver people any weight at all in the Republican party. With the Democratic party affairs are widely different. In most of the great Democratic States there is a very strong and real sentiment in favor of free silver. In some of these States the free-silver men are in the majority, and have complete control of the party machinery. In other States they form merely a large minority. In yet others the two sides are evenly balanced, which sometimes results in rather droll complications; as in Kentucky, where the Democratic convention compromised the matter by running a free-silver candidate on an anti-free-silver platform.

In very many of the Democratic strongholds—notably in the South and Southwest—the Populist organizations seriously threaten Democratic supremacy. The Populists really represent very little except an angry but loose discontent with affairs as they actually are, and a readiness to grasp after any remedy proposed either by charlatanism or by an ignorance as honest as it is abysmal. The Populist party, therefore, waxes and wanes inversely as prosperity increases or declines; that is, the folly of certain voters seems to grow in inverse ratio to their need of displaying wisdom. At present, affairs over the country seem to be on the mend, and the Populist party is therefore losing power. The Democratic attitude toward free silver, in turn, depends very much upon the Populists' strength. Wherever and whenever the Populists are a distinct menace to the government, the Democrats try to outbid them by declaring in favor of unsound finance; but as the Populists become weak, the mass of the Democratic statesmen grow ready once more to stand by their party, even should that party decline to announce itself as un-

restrictedly as they wish in favor of dishonest money. It seems likely, therefore, at present, that the Democrats will make no open fight for free silver; and as their leading men occupy every conceivable position upon this as upon all other public questions, it is quite impossible to foretell what any Democratic nomination will really mean.

The Republican party's attitude, on the contrary, is absolutely clear. It does not depend in the least upon whether the crops are good or bad, upon whether the business community is or is not in a flourishing condition. It does not even depend upon who is nominated. From Iowa east every Republican State has declared, or will declare, in some shape, against the adoption of a free-silver platform; and even west of Iowa the majority of Republicans, in all save the few rabid silver States, are against free silver and in favor of sound finance. Every Republican whose nomination is a possibility is against the free coinage of silver, and has proved his faith by his votes and actions in time past. President Cleveland, like ex-President Harrison, has shown himself a stanch friend of sound money. But in Congress, under Republican and under Democratic control alike, the great majority of the Republicans have been found ranged on the side of an honest currency, and the great majority of the Democrats have voted for that species of partial repudiation, the unlimited coinage of short-weight silver dollars. The Republican party, when assembled in a national convention, will certainly not declare for free silver. In my opinion it ought to declare unqualifiedly against it. But possibly the anti-free-silver men, knowing that they have the substance, will not refuse to give half of the shadow to the Rocky Mountain Republicans. Their presidential nominee will be a man who would veto any free-silver bill that passed Congress; their nominees for Congress itself will be men who would strenuously oppose such a bill. Refusal to be for free silver means, of course, that the party is resolutely against it; and the majority may rest content with this state of affairs, and spare the minority humiliation by refraining from denouncing in so many words the free coinage of silver. I should prefer that they did denounce it; but the denunciation is really a matter of small consequence when the attitude of the party is so clear, not alone from its present actions, but from its actions in the past. The Republican party, as a party is, as it always has been, unflinchingly against the free coinage of silver.

Probably the convention will declare a desire for an international agreement to further bimetallism. Some of the anti-free-silver men, the extreme gold men, are as unreasonable in their fanaticism as any representatives of the Rocky Mountain mine-owners. These men violently oppose any scheme looking toward international bimetallism, and, indeed, at times seem to object to it almost as much as to free silver. Such conduct is mere foolishness. The financial question is far too complicated to permit any persons to refuse to discuss any method which offers a reasonable hope of bettering the situation.

The question of the free coinage of silver is not complicated at all. Very many honest men honestly advocate free coinage; nevertheless, in its essence, the measure is one of partial repudiation, and is to be opposed because it would shake the country's credit, and would damage that reputation for honest dealing which should be as dear to a nation as to a private individual. But the question of bimetallism stands on an entirely different footing. Very many men of high repute as statesmen and as students of finance, both at home and abroad, believe that great good would come from an international agreement which would permit the use of both metals in the currency of the world. No one is prepared to say that such an agreement would do harm. There is grave doubt as to whether the agreement can be reached; but the end is of such importance as to justify an effort to attain it. The people who oppose the move are, as a rule, men whom the insane folly of the ultra-free-silver men has worked into a panic of folly only less acute.

These good people have come to a condition where they are apt to confound names and things, and to forget the relative importance of words and of acts. A curious instance of this is afforded by their attitude toward ex-Speaker Reed during the last few months. Mr. Reed has occupied a position not too common among the public men of the country, because of his consistent and unflinching support of honest finance. His vote and speech have invariably been against every free-coinage bill, and against every other measure to depreciate the currency which has been introduced in Congress. When he was Speaker he actually, by the force of his iron will and commanding personality, stopped the passage of a free-silver bill through the lower house, and thus prevented its going to President Harrison. The President would have vetoed it; but the mere passage of the bill by Congress would have been a very serious shock to our credit, and

would have invited commercial disaster. Parties were very closely divided in the Fifty-first Congress, and the Democrats, with the exception of a bare handful from the Northeast, supported the measure. Half a dozen Republicans from the Rocky Mountains also supported it. But Mr. Reed, by sheer weight of personal influence kept the immense majority of his party firm, being heartily backed by Mr. McKinley and every other Republican leader on the floor. The two sides were almost evenly balanced. Indeed, for two days. the free-silver men seemed to have a majority of one. The Democrats, assisted by the few free-silver Republicans, exhausted themselves in the effort to pass the bill. All of their leaders—Mr. Crisp, Mr. Mills, Mr. Springer—put forth every effort to force through the bill, and, for the moment, even such usually consistent hard-money Democrats as Mr. Wilson of West Virginia abandoned their faith and turned in with the silver men. Not another man in the country could have barred the passage of the bill. But Mr. Reed did bar it. With indomitable resolution he stopped its passage for three days, until at last he rallied the bare majority necessary to kill it.

Finally, Mr. Reed voted for the gold-bond resolution rendered necessary by the peculiar terms in which President Cleveland couched his contract with the syndicate that took the United States bonds. Like very many men, both Republicans and Democrats, he did not approve of the terms of this contract, and he was not able to express the unmeasured approbation which its friends seemed to demand. The important thing, however, was his vote; and his vote was given, as it always had been, for sound finance. Not even the fact that the bulk of his party associates broke away from him and joined with the bulk of the Democrats in refusing to support the gold bond, swayed Mr. Reed. His personal dislike to the terms of the contract did not prevent him from casting his vote in accordance with what he deemed, on the whole, the best interests of the country. Yet the extreme gold people of the Northeast actually condemned his action, failing to see, what to a disinterested observer is self-evident, that his conduct proved conclusively that even in the most trying emergencies he can be relied upon to stand firmly for honest money. Truly the attitude of his critics affords another instance of «the infinite capacity of mankind to withstand the introduction of knowledge.» No man deserves more at the hands of believers in sound money than Mr. Reed; and his views are the views of the great mass of Republican voters. In the next presidential campaign the Republican party will stand for sound finance, for honest money, and against the free coinage of the depreciated silver dollar.

It is earnestly to be hoped that the Republican party will also make an aggressive fight on the question of America's foreign policy. A policy of buncombe and spread-eagleism in foreign affairs would be sincerely to be deprecated; but a policy of tame submission to insult is even worse. In its foreign policy the present Democratic administration has offered a most unpleasant contrast to the preceding Republican administration. The very Democrats who have stood stoutest in warring against the great majority of their own party for sound finance have also been unpleasantly conspicuous in forcing their party to adopt a thoroughly improper and un-American tone in foreign affairs. Unfortunately, very many decent men in the country, and especially in the Northeast, are too timid, or too unpatriotic, to wish the United States to play the part it should among the nations of the earth. America must never play the part of a bully; but even less must she play the part of a coward; and it is this last most unpleasant part which, during the last two years of Democratic administration, she has once or twice come near playing.

We should build a first-class fighting navy —a navy, not of mere swift commerce-destroyers, but of powerful battle-ships. We should annex Hawaii immediately. It was a crime against the United States, it was a crime against white civilization, not to annex it two years and a half ago. The delay did damage that is perhaps irreparable; for it meant that at the critical period of the island's growth the influx of population consisted, not of white Americans, but of low-caste laborers drawn from the yellow races. We should build the isthmian canal, and it should be built either by the United States government or under its protection. We should inform Great Britain, with equal firmness and courtesy, that the Monroe doctrine is very much alive, and that the United States cannot tolerate the aggrandizement of a European power on American soil, especially when such aggrandizement takes the form of an attempt to seize the mouths of the Orinoco.

This does not mean a policy of bluster. No American President or Secretary of State, no American legislative body, should ever make a threat which is not, if necessary, to be backed by force of arms. Honorable peace is

always desirable, but under no circumstances should we permit ourselves to be defrauded of our just rights by any fear of war. No amount of material prosperity can atone for lack of national self-respect; and in no way can national self-respect be easier lost than through a peace obtained or preserved unworthily, whether through cowardice or through sluggish indifference.

The conduct of our foreign affairs under President Harrison was, on the whole, admirable. Our attitude toward Germany in the Samoan incident, and toward Chile later, raised our standard high. We behaved in each instance with great moderation, but with entire firmness, and in each our conduct was rewarded with excellent results. We preserved the same attitude toward the great European empire and the spitfire South American republic. In the latter case, indeed, it was only our timely firmness that prevented the Chileans forcing us into a position which would have certainly meant war. All of this stands in striking contrast to the behavior of the present administration toward Hawaii and Nicaragua, and in the dispute between England and Venezuela. The one failure of President Harrison's administration was in the Bering Sea case, and this failure was due to our over-anxiety for a peaceful settlement, and consequent willingness to yield what we ought not to have yielded. Had we taken the stand which was advocated by the Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Tracy, and which had already been advocated by Mr. Phelps when minister to England under President Cleveland, there would have been no war, the seals would now have been alive, and there would have been no danger of the extinction of the greatest industry of the North Pacific. We ought never to have agreed to an arbitration; but we did, and the present administration has, of course, made matters worse. It is not a page of American diplomacy upon which we can look back with pride; but it offers a most wholesome lesson. It should teach us to beware, beyond all others, of the peace-at-any-price men. It should teach us to be exceedingly cautious about entering into any arbitration. Above all, it should teach us the lesson of courteous but resolute insistence on our rights, at no matter what cost.

The Republican party will go into the next election as the champion of the only foreign policy to which self-respecting Americans can subscribe; and the Democratic party, on this issue, will either have to condemn without reservation its own immediate past, or else must stand as the apologist of a policy of national humiliation.

More important, almost, than any specific measure or policy is the general attitude of the Republican party toward good government. A party is much more than its candidate or its platform. It is even more than the men who, in the aggregate, compose it at the moment; for it is a bundle of traditions, tendencies, and principles as well. Every act of an organized Republican body in any portion of the Union has some effect upon the general party welfare. Republicans, and specially Republican politicians, in and out of office, must, if they have the welfare of the party at heart, feel that a heavy responsibility rests upon them. They must take the right side on every issue that arises, local or State or National. It is a discredit to the whole party when Republicans put into office a scoundrel of any kind. It is a credit to the whole party when they work in any place disinterestedly for good government. They must feel this, and they must show that they feel it. Everywhere they must stand for law and order. The law-breaker, whether he be lyncher or whitecapper, or merely the liquor-seller who desires to drive an illegal business, must be made to feel that the Republican party is against him. Every ballot-box stuffer, every bribe-taking legislator, every corrupt official of any grade, must be made to feel that he is an outcast from the Republican party. The party must stand firmly for good government in our cities; and in many cases this good government can only be obtained by the sinking of partizan lines in municipal contests. The Republican party must stand by the civil-service law, National and State. Republicans of every grade must feel that it behooves them to see that their party representatives in every office are clean and honest men; and for the sake of the welfare of the party they must rigorously punish the scoundrels who use the party name to cloak their own base purposes. On the great national issues of the day—the tariff, finance, and foreign policy—the Republican party has all the advantage of position in the presidential fight upon which we shall shortly enter. All Republicans must be specially careful to strengthen this position by making it their duty to see that the dishonest and unworthy representatives of their party are punished, and to see that in every locality the Republican party stands for honesty, decency, and good citizenship on whatever may be the issue for the moment.

Theodore Roosevelt.

II. A DEMOCRATIC VIEW, BY EX-GOVERNOR RUSSELL.

THE American people like politics—not the running of the political machine, but the discussion of public questions and of public men. A few like to run the machine; the vast majority like to smash it, asserting an independence which will not stand being bound and gagged, especially by selfish, ignorant, or corrupt control. By machine is meant, not spontaneous party organization or selected personal leadership, which is necessary and useful, but self-assumed control, often in the name of party, which grinds out candidates, dictates their opinions and action, gets, holds, and uses political power for selfish and personal ends, and dominates its constituency instead of guiding and uplifting it. Between the two there is a wide difference. The one is Statesmanship, leading by principle for the public good; the other Bossism, controlling by tactics, and with an iron hand, for its own purposes.

Our political experience of the past ten or twelve years has been helpful in emphasizing this difference, and in arousing public spirit, developing political courage, and reviving the interest of the people in their government, National, State, and local.

We have seen old and false issues discarded. The «bloody shirt,» which never had a soul or truth within it, has been relegated to the lumber-room, to indulge in reminiscence with the old hats, torches, and banners of many a forgotten campaign. No longer can a President be made by impeaching the loyalty and patriotism of any section of our country, or by dire prediction of evils which time has abundantly falsified.

We have seen parties and leaders with the courage of their convictions. Questions which for years they feared to touch, which were straddled in platforms and abandoned in campaigns, have been boldly thrust to the front; and neither the timidity of politicians nor the threat of factional division has stopped their progress «upward still and onward» to successful, victorious solution.

We have seen the people take the deepest interest in intricate public problems. The time has passed when campaigns can be waged upon the personality of candidates or the past of political parties. Abuse and vituperation, brag and bluster, have given way to education—the serious, intelligent discussion of principles and measures. In the vigorous agitation over living issues, «pointing with pride» to what a party has been or has done excites only ridicule, unless coupled with proof and pledge that it now has a sound policy, which it definitely declares and means courageously to enforce. Who would have believed ten years ago that the tariff would become a subject of popular discussion, or that its details could be satisfactorily settled by popular vote? Yet for six successive years it monopolized the attention of the people. On the farm and in the workshop, in village store and city factory, the voters were debating the merits of protection and free trade, and their effect on prices, wages, and industries. The campaign speaker could hardly get a hearing who did not discuss the principles of taxation and the details of tariff schedules. «Free raw material,» «the home market,» «McKinley prices,» and «pauper labor» were phrases more familiar to the public than the names of candidates; and candidates became important only as they represented definite views on this one absorbing topic.

We have seen the steady growth of a reform sentiment which, not content with criticism within the quiet of the scholar's cloister, has gone forth to wage battle and win wholesome victories; a keener demand that political power shall be used only for the benefit of the governed, not for personal or party advantage; the uprooting of old abuses; and, with all of this, greater independence in political action, inflicting defeats welcomed as blessings by patriots of whatever political stripe.

We have seen, in the marvelous career of a firm and brave man, how popular is political courage, and how loyally the people follow resolute leadership. More conspicuously than any of our generation has stood forth one who has had strong convictions, with the courage always to declare them and everywhere to fight for them; who has achieved success by character and ability, not by offices or office-holders; who, in the midst of factional discord and partizan abuse, has confidently relied on an appeal from faction to the rank and file, and from the partizan to the people; who has stood for principle without compromise, and for sound policies against heresy inside or outside of his own party; and who has impressed himself upon the people because they believed that he stood steadfast for the public welfare, without regard to personal or political consequences. One or two familiar incidents in his later life will illustrate my meaning. The campaign of 1888 was about to begin, in which he was to be a candidate for reëlection. He had given the country an honorable

and successful administration; a Democratic victory seemed certain. The one thing needful was not to raise new questions nor disturb existing conditions. So prudence and timidity suggested; so party leaders and associates advised. But, disregarding such advice, Cleveland issued his historic message of December, 1887—a bold challenge to wealthy, powerful, and favored interests, but a trumpet-call marshaling the intelligence and patriotism of the country to the consideration of the most important question of a generation, which politicians and parties had hitherto feared to touch. That message was not the product of political expediency, but of conscience, conviction, and courage. It led to temporary defeat; but it gave his party new life and vigor, made him its trusted leader, immeasurably raised the standard of politics, and finally won the hearty support of the country, giving to Democracy its first opportunity since the war for important constructive legislation. Again in 1891, when the free coinage of silver was imminent, and politicians—especially would-be candidates for President—were reluctant to declare their position, Cleveland, with characteristic courage and directness, denounced «the dangerous and reckless experiment.» His party was badly split upon the question. To many his action gave great offense; by many more it was thought to be political suicide. But soon the party made him again its leader, and under such leadership won a notable victory.

These influences which have been at work are still operative. The people have not taken their government into their own hands, and fully experienced the pleasure and benefit of governing themselves, only now to relax control and permit government to become «a close corporation of politicians for exploiting the public to their own advantage.» Nor have they once demanded that parties shall discard dead issues and take definite position on the living questions of the day, only now to relapse into indifference and be content with idle generalities and halting candidates. The reform impulse for better men and better government is not ephemeral, but the best product of past campaigns, and bound again to exert a healthy and potent influence; and the people still like courage, character, ability in politics as in everything else, and despise trimming and time-serving.

In the next presidential campaign the Democratic party, if guided by past experience, must and will nominate candidates of courage and character, of definite, outspoken opinions on living questions, and upon a platform which means something, and expresses it with a directness and emphasis not to be mistaken. The people wish, and have a right to know, the exact position of parties on silver, the tariff, a foreign policy, civil-service reform, and other main issues. The time is over when a party can get or hold power by the mere momentum of its past. We may assume, then, that the campaign of '96 will not be seriously affected by ancient political history, nor an alert, intelligent people deceived by mere boasting, exaggeration, or false pretense. Not that all this will be absent from the campaign. On the contrary, I fancy I can now see the Republican orator setting up his men of straw—the Southern brigadier, the free-trader, the English sycophant; I hear him again denouncing as un-American everything and everybody outside the Republican lines; I hear him claiming all prosperity as a Republican gift, and all adversity as Democratic deviltry; I laugh with others at the sarcasm and drollery of the gentleman from Maine, as he again contrasts virtue and vice, patriotism and disloyalty, industry and idleness, wealth and poverty, and then, with vivid imagination and cool assurance, gives each a party label. But all of this is only the *ad captandum* dramatics of the campaign orator, which amuse himself, with little effect on his audience and less harm to his opponent. Meanwhile the thoughtful citizen is asking, Which party preached and practised extravagance, squandered the surplus, raised taxation, unsettled the currency, emptied the treasury, and left behind it, if not the deluge, an established financial and economic policy which was bound to bring panic and disaster? He is also comparing dates and conditions—'93, a year of distress, with Republican laws and policy in full force; and '95, a year of marked prosperity, with such laws and policy repealed. To such voters—who, after all, decide elections—the Democratic party in '96 will gladly submit the record of its administration. What is that record? It has had to deal with a business depression for which it was in no way responsible; it has applied the remedies demanded by the conservative opinion of the country; and it has done this bravely, against bitter opposition within and without its party lines. It has repealed the Federal Election law, thus giving to the States the right to control their elections, and the responsibility for their proper conduct. It has ended McKinley protection, reducing taxation and reversing the tariff policy of the country. It has repealed the Sherman silver law, which stood as a great and growing menace to the stability of our fi-

nances; and it has by drastic measures, necessary and wholesome, sustained the treasury reserve and the credit of the nation, and saved business and the country from untold loss and suffering. This record of a party seeking the renewed confidence of the people will necessarily enter into the next presidential campaign.

So much for the past. Of more consequence are the questions now imminent, and the position of the parties upon them. Of these the most important, no doubt, is the silver question. Our country can adjust itself to any kind of a tariff, but it never can adjust itself to a dishonest dollar. Fortunately the question has become at last the subject of constant and serious discussion. The people have put on their thinking-caps, and with characteristic earnestness and thoroughness are going to think the problem out, and settle it permanently without evasion or compromise. Parties must and will adapt themselves to this situation. It is not difficult to foresee the course of the Democratic party. It has on its hands a radical difference of opinion and a first-class fight. It has had this before. It was divided on the tariff question. It fought this out within its ranks to a right conclusion, then became stronger, united, and victorious. It never would have made any progress if it had feared to face the fight or halted because of dissenters. It is now repeating that experience. Everywhere it is debating the silver question. The recent victories for sound money in Kentucky, Iowa, and Ohio show the effect of full discussion, and make it certain that the Democratic party will not commit itself to the silver heresy, nor weaken its credit and standing by seeking harmony through compromise of principle. Harmony will come, as it did on the tariff, when the party, through struggle, takes and obstinately holds a sound position. I confidently predict that in '96 the Democratic party, in its national platform and candidate, will stand for sound money, and will oppose the free coinage of silver. Both principle and expediency suggest this course. It is in line with the traditions and past of the party; with its platforms and principles; with the whole record of its administration, for which it is responsible; with its own action in opposing and repealing the Sherman law; and with its devoted loyalty to one who for eleven years has been the most conspicuous and valiant champion of honest money and sound finance. Any other course invites discreditable defeat. The party can stand defeat, and even grow stronger by it. It cannot stand the discredit of committing itself to a passing heresy born of hard times, which time and prosperity will surely kill, but which, if successful, would unsettle business, impair credit, reduce all savings, and the value of all wages. It has now a splendid opportunity to render the country a further service, and, following the lead of Jackson and Cleveland, its past and its present, to educate and agitate for sound principles of finance as it has for a sound policy of tariff taxation. In such position it will be at issue with the Republican party. Not that that party will advocate the free coinage of silver; that would be standing for some principle, however erroneous, and the Republican party to-day is a party of compromise and expediency. But, judged by its past, it will trim and evade, to satisfy an aggressive minority deemed necessary for its success. At the critical moment the Republican party yields to financial heresy in its ranks, and the Democratic party conquers it. Through such weakness have come the many compromise measures as to paper money, inflation, and silver, which have been a constant menace to the stability of our finances. It led to Republican criticism of Cleveland's first administration for its unflinching stand for sound money; it was expressed in the Republican national platform of '88, which arraigned the Democratic party for its hostility to silver, and in the speeches of leaders like Mr. McKinley, who, in February, 1891, denounced his opponents for « dishonoring one of our precious metals, one of our greatest products, discrediting silver and enhancing the price of gold,» making « money the master, everything else the servant »; it accounts for the present ominous silence of Republican statesmen with presidential aspirations, while the Democratic administration and party are pursuing a vigorous and successful campaign of education. The old Republican malady of timidity and compromise has paralyzed Republican speech; its ambitious leaders remain silent, useless, with their weather eye open only for any little favoring breeze which may drift them onward. It is time for them to trim ship and set a course.

I write in the fall of '95. It is possible that before the next presidential campaign has opened, the silver question, through Democratic work and returning prosperity, will have lost its importance, and the two parties will vie with each other in emphatic expression of the country's settled and sound conviction. I do not, however, anticipate such a happy result. It is more likely that the question will be the leading subject of the cam-

paign. If so, I believe that the Democratic party, through discussion, education, and a struggle, will make its way to a safe and strong position, and nominate a sound candidate upon a sound platform. I as firmly believe that the Republican party will drift into compromise, not favoring free silver, but throwing a sop to its silver contingent, and nominating a non-committal candidate of doubtful record and of cautious speech, who will be expected to hold both Colorado and Massachusetts. Democratic promise will be backed by the record of the party in administration, and will win the support not only of the conservative sentiment and business interests of the country, but of the growing body of independents who place the public above any partizan interest, and who insist that candidates and conventions shall take definite position on the questions of the day. It ought to carry every doubtful State. If, on the other hand, the party is committed to free silver, it discredits its own administration, and, I believe, goes to certain defeat.

While the silver question is likely, in the next campaign, to be uppermost in the public mind, the tariff will, no doubt, as in the past, be an issue between the parties and the subject of much discussion. Between the parties there is a radical difference on the principles involved; but just how important the issue is to be depends largely on the action of the Republican Congress and National Convention. The burden rests upon that party. The Democracy, after a long contest over the tariff, has passed a law which, though a very conservative measure, is a long advance in the right direction. Business and industries have accepted it, and are contented and prosperous under it. Democrats are anxious to give it the test of time and experience. Will the Republicans acquiesce in this, or do they propose to turn backward to McKinleyism? Should they nominate McKinley without repudiating his tariff views, the tariff will at once become the vital issue of the campaign. He represents distinctly one idea. His nomination would be a challenge to the country to return to a tariff policy which it has defeated and discarded. The Democratic party would gladly accept the challenge and fight the old battle over again; but this time it would have with it the business interests, which have adapted themselves to present conditions and demand a rest from further tariff changes. The issue would be between a fair trial of a successful tariff and a return to a discredited policy. Should the Republican platform advocate reënactment of the McKinley law or repeal of the present law, the same result would follow. The convention is not at all likely, however, to do anything so specific or dangerous. It will content itself with criticism of free trade, the usual eulogy of protection and the home market, and the usual claim that the Republican party alone represents American ideas, interests, and patriotism. This raises no very definite issue, except, perhaps, one of truth and good taste. At the same time the tendency of the Republican party is for protection always, and plenty of it, whenever it has the power and courage to carry out its purpose. Already a movement is on foot to couple with Republican protection of manufactures bounties to shipping and to agricultural exports, so as to distribute more widely the taxes Republican policy exacts, and to bind other interests to public support, all at the expense of the whole people. The Democratic party is at issue with this Republican policy. Discussion and education will go on, until with substantial agreement we get back to the sound principles and policy of the tariff of '57. The Democratic party will advance slowly in this direction, by urging, not another general revision of the tariff, but specific measures such as for free coal and iron ore, and gradually reducing taxation as time again proves the benefit of such a policy.

One other question is likely to be an important issue in the campaign, namely, the foreign policy of our country. Until a comparatively recent date there was substantial agreement that such policy should not be one of conquest or aggression, but should avoid « entangling alliances,» and make Washington's farewell words, and the proper assertion of the Monroe doctrine, the bulwark of national safety and honor. The San Domingo fiasco of Grant's administration was believed to have ended permanently any other course. But recently Republican leaders have revived a defeated and almost forgotten Jingoism, and proclaimed a policy of foreign interference and annexation. By annexation of the Hawaiian Islands they would have the country try the experiment of governing a distant, divided, foreign people, and of assimilating them and their institutions. By interference at Samoa they would involve us in entangling alliances with Germany and England, and in a responsibility unusual and unnecessary. By assisting Nicaragua in resisting payment of England's claim and English occupancy they would pervert the Monroe doctrine and establish a precedent which would force us into the foreign quarrels of every petty, irresponsible

republic of Central and South America. How far these views of Republican Jingoists permeate and control that party will be determined in its next convention. The Democratic administration, in its conduct of our foreign affairs, has met constant, bitter criticism, but has resolutely refused to depart from the traditional policy of our country, and to involve her in novel and everlasting foreign complications. It has not believed that conquest or colonial acquisition is conducive to her strength or welfare, nor national honor best upheld by tyranny over a feeble but friendly power. The Republican party may make an issue over this Democratic record. If so, a most important question of far-reaching consequences will demand serious attention. For one, I believe it will take much more than the bluster of Jingoism to persuade the people that it is wise, safe, or patriotic to plunge our country into the maelstrom of international strife and ambition, and to abandon a course where we have found peace with honor, and have grown to be the most powerful, prosperous, and happy of the nations of the world.

Finally, in view of Republican declamation and assumption, it is certainly desirable that we should discuss seriously and thoroughly what is a sound American policy, what is the true American spirit, and which party is its better representative. Americanism, patriotism, is a thing of action, not of declamation. It does not become the exclusive property of the party claiming it, nor condone political crimes committed in its name. We have seen the term misused to justify a policy of sectional division and hatred, and, in violation of the Constitution, to supplant the rights and duties of the States, either by force of arms or gifts from the National treasury; to excuse a wild career of profligate public expenditure; to defend a «spoils system,» which places influence against merit, and makes partizanship, not efficiency, the test of tenure of office; to uphold a system of taxation which benefited the few at the expense of the many, and imposed burdens unequal, unjust, and unnecessary; to encourage a policy which would restrict the inventive genius, the marvelous industry, and the energy of our people to a home market rather than let them place our nation at the head of the markets of the world and make America the mistress of the sea. And now this much-abused term is summoned to lead us away from the peaceful traditions and policy of the past out into the field of conquest and annexation, of strife and war. This is not the true American spirit, but the spirit of bravado; not a sound American policy, but a policy of recklessness.

The true American spirit welcomes with fraternal love the reunion of the whole country in loyalty, happiness, and prosperity; it stands fast to the Constitution against those who would violate it for partizan or sectional purposes, and guards the people's money against the wild raids of selfish schemers; it still believes there is virtue in thrift, and that it is better that government should lift the burdens of taxation rather than set the people an example of riotous living; that taxation is not a blessing, but a necessary evil to be lessened by prudence and economy; that it is not to be used to take from one to give to another, nor to be controlled by selfish interests, but it is to be levied justly, equally, according to men's means, not their necessities, and for public purposes only. The true American policy would open the public service to all upon their merits, and make the office-holder neither the slave of the politician nor the master of the people. It urges us to a «vigorous prosecution of the pursuits of peace,» and competition with all nations in the markets of the world; but not to follow their bloody footsteps in a struggle to conquer or control lands or peoples beyond our borders. It upholds, as it always has through many a Democratic administration, the national honor. It is nonsense to argue that in this there is division on party lines, or that Republicans monopolize patriotism. Let us through discussion get at the real Americanism, extol and follow it, exposing and avoiding the shams and demagogism masquerading in its name.

I have not ventured to predict who will be the candidates in the next campaign. In view of the earnest personal struggle within the Republican party, and the sectional difference of opinion within the Democratic party, he would be a bold man who would say who either candidate will be, or from what section of the country he will hail. This much we may gather from the past: the Democrats will nominate a candidate of positive and well-known convictions on pending questions and upon a platform equally emphatic; the Republicans will compromise upon their candidate and platform. This much also we may predict: that the Democratic party will have no right to demand or expect that he who has so gallantly led them in three campaigns, and twice to victory, will again be their standard-bearer. His own wish, no doubt, will be to retire on the laurels he has well won to a rest he has well earned.

William E. Russell.