REPUBLICAN CREED ACCORDING TO GEN. HARRISON.

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind., Sept. 11.

To the Hon. M. M. Estee and others, Committee:

Gentlemen:—When your Committee visited me on the Fourth of July last and presented the official announcement of my nomination for the Presidency of the United States by the Republican Convention, I promised as soon as practicable to communicate to you a more formal acceptance of the nomination. Since that time the work of receiving and addressing almost daily large delegations of my fellow citizens has not only occupied all of my time, but has in some measure rendered it unnecessary for me to use this letter as a medium of communicating to the public my views upon the questions involved in the campaign. I appreciate very highly the confidence and respect manifested by the Convention, and accept the nomination with a feeling of gratitude and a full sense of the responsibilities which accompany it.

It is a matter of congratulation that the declarations of the Chicago convention upon the questions that now attract the attention of our people are so clear and emphatic. There is further cause of congratulation in the fact that the convention utterances of the democratic party, if in any degree uncertain or contradictory, can now be judged an interpreted by executive acts and messages and by definite propositions in legislation. This is especially true of what is popularly known as the tariff question. The issue cannot now be obscured. It is not a contest between schedules, but between wide apart principles. The foreign competitors of our market have with quick instinct, seen how one issue of this contest may bring them advantage, and our own people are not so dull as to miss or neglect the grave interests that are involved in them. The assault upon our protective system is open and defiant. Protection is assailed as unconstitutional in law, or as vicious in principle, and those who hold such views sincerely cannot stop short of an absolute elimination from our tariff laws of the principle of protection.

The Mills bill is only a step, but it is toward an object that the leaders of democratic thought and legislation have clearly in mind.

The important question is not so so much the length of the step as the direction of it. Judged by the Executive Message of December last, by the Mills bill, by the debates in Congress, and by the St. Louis platform, the democratic party will, if supported by the country, place the tariff laws upon a purely revenue basis. This is practical free trade—free trade in the English sense. The legend upon the banner may not be "free trade;" it may be the more obscure motto, "tariff reform," but neither the banner nor the inscription is conclusive, or, indeed, very important. The assault itself is the important fact.

Those who teach that the import duty upon foreign goods sold in our market is paid by the consumer, and that the price of the domestic competing article is enhanced to the amount of the duty on the imported article; that every million of dollars collected for customs duties represents many millons more which do not reach the Treasury, but are paid by our citizens as the increased cost of domestic productions resulting from the tariff laws—may not intend to discredit in the minds of others our system of levying duties on competing foreign products, but it is clearly already discredited in their own. We cannot doubt, without impugning their integrity, that if free to act upon their convictions they would so revise our laws as to lay the burdens of the customs revenue upon articles that are not produced in this country and to place upon the free list all competing foreign products.

I do not stop to refute this theory as to the effect of our tariff duties. Those who advance it are students of maxims and not of the markets. They may be safely allowed to call their project "tariff reform" if the people understand that in the end the argument compells free trade in all competing products. This end may not be reached abruptly and its approach may be accomplished with some expressions of sympathy for our protected industries and our working people, but it will certainly come, if these early steps do not arouse the people to effective resistance.

The republican party holds that a protective tariff is constitutional, wholesome and necessary. We do not offer a fixed schedule, but a principle. We will revise the schedule, modify rates, but always with an intelligent provision as to the effect upon domestic production and the wages of our working people. We believe it to be one of the worthy objects of tariff legislation to preserve the American market for American producers and to maintain the American scale of wages by adequate discriminating duties upon foreign competing products. The effect of lower rates and larger importations upon the public revenue is contingent and doubtful, but not so the effect upon American production and American wages.

Less work and lower wages must be accepted as the inevitable result of the increased offering of foreign goods in our market. By way of recompense for this reduction in his wages, and the loss of the American market, it is suggested that the diminished wages of the workingman will have an undiminished purchasing power, and that he will be able to make up for the loss of the home market by an enlarged foreign market. Our workingmen have the settlement of the question in their own hands. They now obtain higher wages and live more comfortably than those of any other country. They will make choice between the substantial advantages they have in hand and the deceptive promises and forecasts of those theorizing reformers. They will decide for themselves and for the country whether the protective system shall be continued or destroyed.

The fact of a Treasury surplus, the amount of which is variously stated, has directed public attention to a consideration of the methods by which the national income may best be reduced to the level of a wise and necessary expenditure. This condition has been seized upon by those who are hostile to protective customs duties as an advantageous base of attack upon our tariff laws. They have magnified and nursed the surplus, which they affect to deprecate, seemingly for the purpose of exaggerating the evil in order to reconcile the people to the extreme remedy they propose. A proper reduction of the revenue does not necessitate and should not suggest the abandonment or impairment of the protective system. The methods suggested by our convention will not need to be exhausted in order to effect the necessary reduction. We are not likely to be called upon, I think, to make a present choice between the surrender of our protective system and the entire repeal of the internal taxes. Such a contingency in view of the present relation of expenditure to revenue, is remote. The inspection and regulation of the manufacture and sale of oleomargarine is important and the revenue derived from it is not so great that the repeal of the law need enter into any plan of revenue reduction.

The surplus now in the Treasury should be used in the purchase of bonds. The law authorizes this use of it, and if it is not needed for current or deficiency appropriations the people, and not the banks in which it has been deposited, should have the advantage of its use by stopping interest upon the public debt. At least those who needlessly hoard it should not be allowed to use the fear of a monetary stringency, thus produced, to coerce public sentiment upon other questions.

Closely connected with the subject of the tariff is that of the importation of foreign laborers under contracts of service to be performed here. The law now in force prohibiting such contracts received my cordial support in the Senate, and such amendment as may be found necessary effectively to deliver our workingmen and women from this most inequitable form of competition will have my sincere advocacy. Legislation prohibiting the importation of laborers under contracts to serve here will, however, afford very inadequate relief to our working people if the system of protective duties is broken down. If the products of American shops must compete in the American market, without favoring duties, with the products of cheap foreign labor the effect will be different, if at all, only in degree, whether the cheap laborer is across the street or over the sea. Such competition will soon reduce wages here to the level of those abroad, and when that condition is reached we will not need any laws forbidding the importation of laborers under contract—they will have no inducement to come, and the employer no inducement to send for them.

In the earlier years of our history public agencies to promote immigration were common. The pioneer wanted a neighbor with more friendly instincts than the Indian. Labor was scarce and fully employed. But the day of the immigration bureau has gone by. While our doors will continue to be open to proper immigration, we do not need to issue special invitations to the inhabitants of other countries to come to our shores or to share our citizenship. Indeed, the necessity of some inspection and limitation is obvious. We should resolutely refuse to permit foreign governments to send their paupers and criminals to our ports.

We are also clearly under a duty to defend our civilization by excluding alien races whose ultimate assimilation with our people is neither possible nor desirable. The family has been the nucleus of our best immigration, and the home the most potent assimilating force in our civilization. The objections to Chinese immigration are distinctive and conclusive, and are now so generally accepted as such that the question has passed entirely beyond the stage of argument. The laws relating to this subject would, if I should be charged with the enforcement, be faithfully executed. Such amendments or further legislation as may be necessary and proper to prevent evasions of the laws and to stop further Chinese immigration would also meet my approval. The expression of the convention upon this subject is in entire harmony with my views.

Our civil compact is a government by majorities, and the law loses its sanction and the magistrate our respect when this compact is broken. The evil results of election frauds do not expend themselves upon the voters who are robbed of their rightful influence in public affairs. The individual, or community, or party, that practises or connives at election frauds has suffered irreparable injury, and will sooner or later realize that to exchange the American system of majority rule for minority control is not only unlawful and unpatriotic, but very unsafe for those who promote it. The disfranchisement of a single legal elector by fraud or intimidation is a crime too grave to be regarded lightly. The right of every qualified elector to cast one free ballot and to have it honestly counted must not be questioned. Every constitutional power should be used to make this right secure and punish frauds upon the ballot.

Our colored people do not ask special legislation in their interest, but only to be made secure in the common rights of American citizenship. They will, however, naturally mistrust the sincerity of those party leaders who appeal to their race for support only in those localities where the suffrage is free and election results doubtful and compass their disfranchisement where their votes would be controlling and their votes cannot be coerced.

The nation, not less that the States, is dependent for prosperity and security upon the intelligence and morality of the people. This common interest very early suggested national aid in the establishment and endowment of schools and colleges in the new States. There is, I believe, a present exigency that calls for still more liberal and direct appropriations in aid of common school education in the States.

The Territorial form of government is a temporary expedient, not a permanent civil condition. It is adapted to the exigency that suggested it, but becomes inadequate, and even oppressive, when applied to fixed and populous communities. Several Territories are well able to bear the burdens and discharge the duties of free commonwealths in the American Union. To exclude them is to deny the just rights of their people and may well excite their indignant protest. No question of the political preference of the people of the Territory should close against them the hospitable door which has opened to two-thirds of the existing States. But admission should be resolutely refused to any Territory a majority of whose people cherish institutions that are repugnant to our civilization or inconsistent with a republican form of government.

The declaration of the convention against "all combinations of capital, organized in trusts, or otherwise, to control arbitrarily the condition of trade among our citizens" is in harmoney with the views entertained and publicly expressed by me long before the assembling of the convention. Ordinarily, capital shares the losses of idleness with labor, but under the operation of the trust, in some of its forms, the wage-worker alone suffers loss, while idle capital receives its dividends from a trust fund. Producers who refuse to join the combination are destroyed, and competition as an element of prices is eliminated. It cannot be doubted that the legislative authority should and will find a method of dealing fairly and effectively with these and other abuses connected with this subject.

It can hardly be necessary for me to say that I am heartily in sympathy with the declaration of the convention upon the subject of pensions to our soldiers and sailors. What they gave and what they suffered I had some opportunity to observe and in a small measure to experience. They gave ungrudgingly; it was not a trade, but an offering. The measure was heaped up, running over. What they achieved only a distant generation can adequately tell. Without attempting to discuss particular propositions, I may add that measures in behalf of the surviving veterans of the war and of the families of their dead comrades should be conceived and executed in a spirit of justice and of the most grateful liberality, and that, in the competition for civil appointment, honorable military service should have appropriate recognition.

The law regulating appointments to the classified civil service received my support in the Senate, in the belief that it opened the way to a much-needed reform. I still think so, and therefore cordially approve the clear and forcible expression of the convention upon this subject. The law should have the aid of a friendly interpretation and be faithfully and vigorously enforced. All appointments under it should be absolutely free from partisan considerations and influence. Some extensions of the classified list are practicable and desirable, and further legislation extending the reform to other branches of the service, to which it is applicable, would receive my approval. In appointments to every grade and department fitness, and not party service, should be the essential and discriminating test, and fidelity and efficiency the only sure tenure of office. Only the interests of the public service should suggest removals from office. I know the practical difficulties attending the attempt to apply the spirit of the civil service rules to all appointments and removals. It will, however, be my sincere purpose, if elected, to advance this reform.

I notice with pleasure that the convention did not omit to express its solicitude for promotion of virtue and temperance among our people. The Republican party has always been friendly to everything that tended to make the home life of our people free, pure and prosperous, and will in the future be true to its history in this respect.

Our relations with foreign powers should be characterized by friendliness and respect. The right of our people and of our ships to hospitable treatment should be insisted upon with dignity and firmness. Our nation is too great, both in material strength and in moral power, to indulge in bluster or to be suspected of timorousness. Vacillation and inconsistency are as incompatible with successful diplomacy as they are with the national dignity. We should especially cultivate and extend our diplomatic and commercial relations with the Central and South American States. Our fisheries should be fostered and protected. The hardships and risks that are the necessary incidents of the business should not be increased by an inhospitable exclusion from the near-lying ports. The resources of a firm, dignified and consistent diplomacy are undoubtedly equal to the prompt and peaceful solution of the difficulties that now exist. Our neighbors will surely not expect in our ports a commercial hospitality they deny to us in theirs.

I cannot extend this letter by a special reference to other subjects upon which the convention gave an expression. In respect to them as well as to those I have noticed. I am in entire agreement with the declarations of the convention. The resolutions relating to the coinage, to the rebuilding of the navy, to coast defences and to public lands express conclusions to all of which I gave my support in the Senate.

Inviting a calm and thoughtful consideration of these public questions, we submit them to the people. Their intelligent patriotism and the good Providence that made and has kept us a nation will lead them to wise and safe conclusions. Very respectfully, your obedient servant.

BENJAMIN HARRISON.

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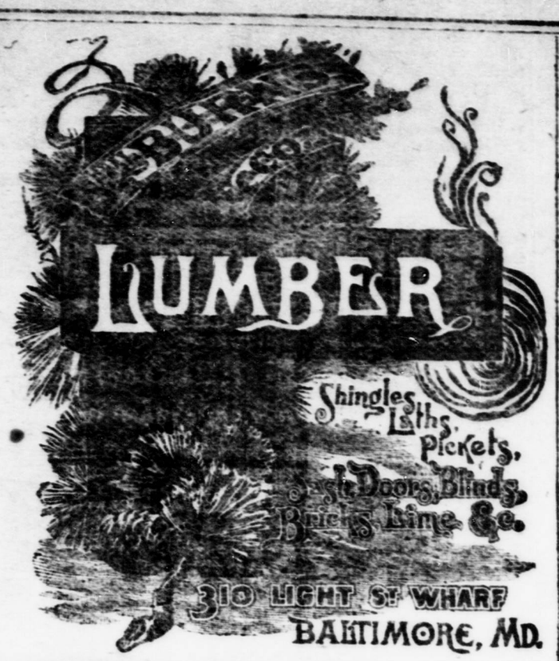

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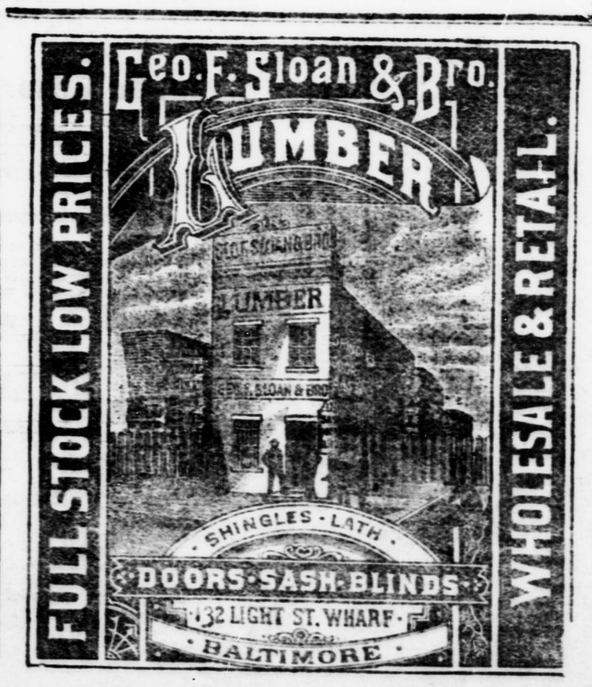

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