

Continued from First Page.

limits of the small but select circle of relatives and friends with whom he surrounded himself. Mr. Adams was quite successful in turning the Clerk's office into a Kentucky colony, but in all other respects he was pretty conclusively set down as a failure by the almost unanimous verdict of those who were qualified to judge or entitled to a vote in the premises. His competitor, Mr. Caldwell, on the other hand, comes into the field with a clean record, a powerful backing, and the aid of the force of his own friendships and Adams' enemies. He will be chosen by the caucus probably no less through the determination of members to oust Adams and his unfortunate ally, than through the desire of his own friends to promote him. Mr. Caldwell is every way fitted for both usefulness and ornament in the position to which he aspires. He has some peculiarities not common to the general class of politicians, among which are an scrupulous regard for his word and a fine sense of personal responsibility in public position; but, unless I mistake the signs of the times, these peculiarities are not so disadvantageous now as they might have been in some canvasses of the past.

For DOORKEEPER there is one candidate who seems to have a solid support, one who has the prestige of possession, which is said to be the point of the law, and about a dozen who have neither support that is tangible nor prestige that may be discerned. That is to say the two leading contestants are Col. John W. Polk, of Kansas City, and the present incumbent, Mr. Morrison. So far as I can discern, Mr. Polk has more actual votes at his disposal than any other three aspirants, and when the members get together, compare notes and weed out the patch of all hopeless candidates, he will probably be left practically unopposed. His advantage lies in the fact that while every other aspirant is to a greater or less degree involved, geographically or otherwise, in the contests over the other offices, Col. Polk is free from all entanglement and will not be affected by any nomination which precedes his contest. Personally the colonel is well known in New Orleans, where his family has or had large property interests. He is the son-in-law of the general, better known on my side of the late diversity of sentiment as "the fighting Bishop." He was a Confederate, of course, but since the war has been decidedly conservative in his politics of Missouri. His character is that of a self-respecting, educated gentleman, and his social position is sufficiently attested by the foregoing mention of the fact that he is of the family of the late Governor of Missouri. Doorkeeper I vouch for it that he will never bring down the laughter of the civilized world upon the National Democracy by spelling "bigger" with one "g." There is no candidate or any other in the gift of the House who can count on many votes entirely untrammelled by outside considerations as he has.

Gen. B. B. Simmes, of New Orleans, has also been to the front as a prominent candidate. This office he developed in a considerable strength, and his candidacy makes very material changes in the situation as herein presented. Gen. Simmes affable and agreeable manner makes him quite popular. While he finds a strong support from his old Democratic friends and associates. As to THE SERGEANT-AT-ARMS, John Thompson is as good as re-elected beforehand, provided, of course, that Mr. Sayer does not win the clerkship. And even if he should, which seems to me to be a remote contingency, it is by no means certain that Thompson would not be re-elected, as he was elected by acclamation and regardless of the map of the United States. For POSTMASTER OF THE HOUSE, the present incumbent, Col. Stewart, of Virginia—or, to be more specific, of Alexandria—seems to have the inside track. So far as I have been able to ascertain, there is not much real contest for the place, the only having, by a sort of common consent, allotted to the ancient and honorable city of Alexandria, which has no other visible means of support. This completes the list and is doubtless exhaustive of the situation at this writing, unless we abandon the coast of actual fact to embark upon the boundless ocean of surmise and speculation, which is always repugnant to men who dislike the mechanical labor of pen-drawing as heartily as I do. A. C. B.

WASHINGTON, October 7, 1877. THE CONTEST FOR THE SPEAKERSHIP has begun to develop with some degree of positiveness, and great impetus has been added to the contest by the arrival of the Hon. Hill Morrison, of the Old Hickory of Illinois, who seems to be gathering around himself all THE ELEMENTS OF OPPOSITION TO RANDALL. The combination is already perfected. It is Cox, Sayer, Blackburn and Morrison vs. Randall, and indications multiply that the final test will be given between Hill and Morrison. The latter, as you remember, is the man who made Kerr Speaker of the last House, and Kerr in turn made him chairman of Ways and Means. He has always opposed Randall, but in his own right, and for his own sake. He is the quickest, sharpest worker in the House, and his marvelous faculty of changing the face of things in short order after he gets on the ground is proverbial in Washington. I have had a long talk with him, of which the following is an exact report. The frankness with which he states his views, and the directness with which he makes his canvass in striking contrast to the tactics of his competitors. The interview will be interesting for its unique frankness and sincerity if for no other reason. Meeting COL. MORRISON at the Western Union office, where he was engaged writing a message in a very bad hand to some member whom he said he canvassed "was detained upon some other business." I was invited by him to call over to Willard's to his room. Arrived there, after the ordinary commonplace, the following conversation took place: "Col. you are announced as a candidate for the Speakership. There is a general public desire to ascertain the views of candidates upon certain questions likely to be presented to this Congress for legislative action. It has been observed that most of the candidates maintain reticence or reserve upon these topics, and the reticence of at least one of your competitors has been so adroitly maintained as to give him the benefit of a status on both sides of one of the most important of the questions. Are you also keeping your own counsel?" "I suppose you refer to the QUESTIONS OF SUBSIDY, the Mississippi levees and finance, inasmuch as those are the only important questions that have been directly introduced into this canvass. You ask me to keep my own counsel. I answer that I am keeping my own counsel. I suppose you refer to these topics, viewed as matters of public concern. I shall give you the benefit of entire frankness. I have no concealments to make of my views upon the topics suggested by you, and if the public is interested in knowing my sentiments, the press is welcome to them. I am a Democratic candidate for the Speakership of a Democratic House. I suppose the word Democratic means devoted to certain principles, which to cut a long story short, were set forth in the last national platform adopted by the Democratic party in convention at St. Louis. I believe, first of all things, that the principles of the Democratic party as a national organization should be honored in the make up, observed in the deliberations, and embodied in the action of the Democratic House. If we are going to preserve the party and perpetuate what we regard as its prosperity and usefulness, we must preserve the principles upon which it was founded. If we are going to abandon the principles, we may as well let the party go with them. I take it to be the prime object of every Democrat, North and South, to pursue such a course as will insure the triumph of the party in 1880, and restore the Democracy to THE CONTROL OF NATIONAL AFFAIRS. This object can be realized only by straight-forward dealing on the part of the party, through its representatives, with the public, and these dealings must be upon a square, consistent basis of principle—principle which

may be defined alike to the voters of Maine and of Texas, or Oregon and of Florida. It is idle to imagine that the Democratic party can ever succeed upon the basis of one set of principles for one section and another set for another section; or upon the strength of a certain set of principles to be preached, for example, at the North, and a set of practices, at variance with those principles, to be followed, for example, at the South. "None, nor to rumors in general. For example, it is stated that: "We are told that the South will demand almost unanimously that the Speaker omit himself in favor of what is known as THE TEXAS PACIFIC RAILWAY SUBSIDY, generally called for short Tom Scott's scheme; that the South will not support any candidate who refuses to do this. Now I don't believe any such statement. I don't estimate the quality of the Democracy of the South upon any such sordid basis. I expect the support of several Southern men. I shall receive the votes of several members whose constituents would derive much material benefit from the construction of the Texas Pacific road. And yet I do not hesitate to say that I shall not commit myself to any such scheme, but on the contrary, shall antagonize all public subsidies to private or corporate interests in all sections of the country and for any purposes whatsoever, and I will not be guilty of the crime of granting subsidies cannot be made consistent with the declarations of principle upon which the Democratic party stands before the country. You say, colonel, that you do not believe the South will, with any approach to unanimity, demand a commitment of the Speaker in favor of the scheme or schemes under consideration. Are you sure of that? "I am sure of it on two grounds: First, because it would not be sound statesmanship; and second, because it would not be shrewd policy for the Democratic representatives from the South to take such ground at this time. "It is assumed that the South has a majority in the caucus, and in order to get power in the House. Well, that is one branch of the government only. Meantime the other legislative branch trembles in the balance, with chances in our favor, while the executive branch, as far as I can discern, is in the hands of old-fashioned Radicalism, may be gained by us in 1880, or it may be regained by old-fashioned Radicalism, according as we behave in the use of what power we already have. Now, in my judgment, any attempt on the part of the South to force any conclusions at this time would be a regular hand to mouth policy. Our Southern friends are too keen politicians not to understand the great fact that the more a party has to lose the more it should be careful to guard its position. Just now the Democratic party has very little to lose and hence the South, though holding a majority in the caucus, would find the minority very difficult to coerce. But let the party obtain a majority in the caucus, and it would have a great deal at stake. If the South still held a majority in its councils that majority would be worth something. "The policy of the last campaign was to count on many electors as were from the 'old South' and then figure just out of the Northern States to elect the ticket. This, as we have all discovered to our grief, was a hand-to-mouth policy too. I think it is generally agreed among Democrats now that we must have a large margin of success in order to win in a national contest. It is idle to talk about 'not tolerating another count-in' by the Radicals. If another presidential election should be held in the month of August, and if the last one was, they would count their man in again, just as they did before. I believe they would undertake to count on anything less than sixty electoral majority, for example, and hence I say we must have a large margin of success in order to win. Now we cannot hope to gain this additional margin in New England; we cannot get it in the Middle States, because we already have them except Pennsylvania, and we can never get that State in a national election until somebody smashes the counting machine of the Cameron ring in Philadelphia; we cannot get it in the South because that it is already sold. We have then only the central West and Northwest to look to for the gains necessary to our success. OHIO, ILLINOIS AND WISCONSIN are the States to which the Democratic party must look for its only chance of winning in 1880. Those States can be won by straightforward, consistent devotion to Democratic principle, but they can never be gained by a vote of Democratic principle on one side which are violated by Democratic practices in another. "Nobody need misunderstand your attitude on the Tom Scott question, Col. Morrison. Will you be equally frank about the 'LEVEES OF THE MISSISSIPPI?' "That is another question. The Mississippi is a very important artery of commerce, penetrating nearly all sections and of direct and palpable importance to all. As such the use of the national energies and resources for its improvement is a perfectly legitimate and in accord with the strictest interpretation of Democratic principles. An important part of the improvement of the river for purposes of navigation consists in confining its waters, and thereby retaining its levees to a certain extent. The burden of this work falls upon riparian owner or upon States, but should be assumed by the National Government. I will not, indeed, favor any special appropriation beyond the needs of navigation, and designed purely to assist the private property in real estate; but I will go to all reasonable bounds in the improvement of the navigable character of the stream. "Well, colonel, that definition of your views is certainly of a very high order, and I complete the platform by informing the public how you stand on THE CURRENCY QUESTION? "I am for resumption of specie payments pure and simple. To resume means to return to some previous state. Therefore, when men speak of resumption they properly mean a return to the monetary system that prevailed in this country, say, prior to 1861. They do not mean the adoption of any new system. The old system involved what is called a double standard, in which gold and silver jointly and severally served as the monetary standard of the country. It has been proposed, on the one hand, to abandon coin as a monetary basis and substitute the paper of the Federal Government. I oppose that. It has also been proposed to adopt a standard of gold coin alone. I am equally opposed to that. As I said before, for resumption in the proper sense of the term, and that means a return to the monetary standard of, say, 1860; which means the use of gold and silver interchangeably as the coinage of the realm. "So, that is your platform is it, Col. Morrison?" "It is the National Democratic platform, and I am a National Democrat; neither a Western, nor a Southern one." "What are your chances for the Speakership?" "I really cannot tell with any accuracy. I hope they are good; that the publication of such outspoken views as you have just imparted to me will militate against your chances?" "No; I don't want any chances which will not stand a publication beforehand of my views and opinions regarding public questions of importance! To make a homely saying, I do not present myself as a candidate for public honors and ask the people to take me as if they were buying a pig in a paragon, or a pig in a paragon. Those who are afraid of them will probably not vote for me." "Perhaps those who cannot trust their own views will be impelled by a natural sympathy to vote for Mr. Randall," remarked your correspondent, with a rising inflection. "Mr. Morrison's reply was limited to a smile, which was pensive and childlike. "What do you think of THE FIELD?" "I think the 'old ticket,' as they would say at Albany, will substantially stand or fall together. The friends of Messrs. Caldwell and Polk can secure no prospect to win in the old ticket goes under throughout and there is any contest. But I suppose this survey would not include John Thompson, who was elected by acclamation and has no opposition. "What of the contest for the Speakership?" "Well, I have been frank with you in relation to matters of policy and of principle; but I could not discuss the question you have just put without becoming personal towards gen-

men who are my personal friends. On that point I must be excused from commenting. I can say this, however: The real contest will not last over sixty hours. It will begin Thursday morning and close Saturday night. Nobody is elected now, and there is no telling who will be. All assertions to the contrary of this position are the mere idle boasts of interested parties! "There is no end to these boasts, colonel. "None, nor to rumors in general. For example, it is stated that: THE TEXAS PACIFIC INFLUENCE will be paramount. Now this is sheer foolishness. What good would it do the Texas Pacific to secure the organization? Do you suppose that its bill could ever pass the Senate with twenty odd Senators' terms expiring and all of them candidates for re-election, opinion from States naturally hostile to subsidies in general and that one in particular? If the caucus were to invite Col. Scott to select his own Speaker and then adjourn, the Texas Pacific bill would be just as far from becoming a law as it is now. Such bills always get through by log-rolling, and in order to get this bill through the South would have to give the North, East and West twice as much more. It is impracticable in politics to say nothing of the principle of the thing, cannot conceive how far-sighted men like Lamar, for example, can seriously contemplate such a thing as possible in the present state of public opinion in the condition of political parties. I don't think that the Texas Pacific influence will amount to much when the real pinch comes. I think the House will be organized upon a basis of national Democratic doctrine, and will upon the necessities of business corporations. "Well, colonel, you have certainly put yourself in a fair way to test the strength of the Texas Pacific influence. "All right, I'm willing that it should be tested in that manner. Whereupon I bade the outspoken Illinoisan good night or good morning—for it was nearly 2 a. m., and withdrew. A. C. B.

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