Wilmington Journal.

WM. L. SAUNDERS, EDITOR.

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A RADICAL REMEDY—MORE CIVIL RIGHTS.

Senator Boutwell, of Massachusetts, the Chairman of the Senate Committee appointed to investigate matters in Mississippi, reported on Monday last that the Democrats had gained possession of the government of that State by force and fraud, and proposed as a remedy to prevent Radicals from losing power, "to remand the State to a Territorial condition, and through a system of public education and kindred means of improvement change the ideas of the inhabitants and reconstruct the government upon a Republican basis."

Precisely what sort of system of public education Mr. Boutwell thinks is best adapted for changing the ideas of a people we already know. Two years ago he deliberately put upon record the declaration that the perpetuity of Republican institutions depended upon destroying all distinctions and prejudices arising from race and color by educating white and negro children side by side in the same school rooms. This is what he means by remanding a state to a territorial condition and changing the ideas of its people by a system of public education. Upon the floor of the United States Senate in 1874, Mr. Boutwell said:

"And therefore I say, if it were possible, as in the large cities it is possible to establish separate schools for black children and for white children, it is in the highest degree inexpedient to either establish or tolerate such schools. The theory of human equality cannot be taught in families taking into account the different conditions of the different members of the parties comprising human society, but in the public school where children of all classes and conditions are brought together, the doctrine of human equality can be taught, and it is the chief means of securing the perpetuity of republican institutions. And inasmuch as we have in this country four million colored people, I assume that it is a public duty that they and the white people of the country with whom they are to be associated in political and public affairs, shall be assimilated and made one in the fundamental idea of human equality. Therefore, were it possible to establish district schools, I am against it as a matter of public policy."

We see now what we have to expect if the Radical party once more gets control of Congress. Democratic States will be remanded to a territorial condition and white children and negro children sent to the same schools until the ideas of our people shall be so changed that whites and blacks will no longer recognize any distinction growing out of race or color. But this infernal condition of affairs cannot be brought about so long as we have a Democratic House of Representatives—a fact that it is well to remember.

THE AMENDMENTS—LET THEM BE ADOPTED.

The seventh article of the Constitution relates to municipal corporations, that is to say, to our county, town and city governments. The amendment proposed to this article of the Constitution is a very important and a very sweeping one, in that it places the power over these several governments once more in the hands of the people. The amendment is in these words:

"The General Assembly shall have full power by statute to modify, change or abrogate any and all of the provisions of this article and substitute others in their place, except sections seven, nine and thirteen."

Section 7, referred to above, forbids any county or town from contracting any debt or levying any tax except for necessary expenses, unless it be done by a vote of a majority of the qualified voters therein. Section 9 requires all taxation to be uniform and *ad valorem*. Section 13 forbids the payment of any war debt.

As no one desired the Legislature to do any of the things forbidden in the restrictions imposed upon its power by the above sections, the Convention wisely left them untouched.

The effect of the proposed amendment it will be seen is to give the Legislature the entire control of the county governments and the election of Justices of the Peace; that is, the General Assembly may continue them as they are now, or change them as they may be instructed by the people. It will have the power to abolish many useless offices and save to the people large sums of money now paid as salaries to the men who fill them and above all it will be empowered to provide that we who live under negro rule may once more enjoy the blessings of honest intelligent government.

The importance of this amendment, we repeat, arises from the power it confers upon the Legislature to abolish the present system of county and township governments, and to substitute another therefor. The Legislature had the same power under the old Constitution, the one that was the handiwork of our fathers, and so have now the Legislatures of a majority of the States in the Union. No harm, but great good came of it in the past and the same will be the case in the future.

The power conferred by this amendment goes so far as to enable the Legislature to establish one system of county government in one county and a different one in another, as the necessities of the case may require, and in this way if no other, will enable the Legislature to free us from negro rule.

Townships and their governments are also put in the power of the Legislature by this amendment and will doubtless be speedily stripped of their unnecessary power of taxation. The people are taxed enough already for unavoidable State and county purposes without having the additional burden of a township tax laid upon them. If the amendments shall be ratified it will be safe to say that there will never be another township tax levied or collected. This township system is and has been exceedingly odious to the people of North Carolina. Indeed there can scarcely be found an intelligent man in the State who is in favor of the present township system, precisely as it stands in the Canby Constitution, who is not also directly interested in its perpetuation as an office holder or from some other selfish motive.

Magistrates too, as to their appointment, come under the control of the legislature by virtue of this amendment. If the amendments shall be ratified we venture to say the days will not be long in the land when white men will have to pull off their hats in negro magistrates' courts. White people do not want negro magistrates, they do not want negro judges, and there is no use to try to disguise the fact. Our very natures as well as our skins will have to change before it will be otherwise. We do not desire to oppress the negro or to wrong him in any way but we certainly do not wish him to sit in judgment upon our lives, our liberties, or our property.

The amendment proposed by the Convention to this article of the Constitution bears out in a striking manner the assertion that the object of the Democratic members of the Convention was to restore their rightful power to the people and to secure an economical expenditure of their money; and most admirably did they succeed, when it is remembered how great and how frequent obstructions were thrown in their way by Radical delegates. If the amendments shall be ratified the Constitution will then be in a bearable shape inasmuch as everything can then be done with the consent of the people, while without that consent nothing can be done.

The amendments distinctly recognize that the will of the people shall be ascertained and not only ascertained but obeyed in framing the Constitution and laws of North Carolina. Many men doubtless laugh at the idea of caring for "the will of the people," but if these amendments shall be ratified that same "will of the people" will once more become a power in the land.

GOVERNOR TILDEN'S LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE.

ALBANY, July 31st, 1876.

GENTLEMEN:—When I had the honor to receive a personal delivery of your letter on behalf of the Democratic National Convention, held on the 28th of June, at St. Louis, advising me of my nomination as the candidate of the constituency represented by that body for the office of President of the United States, I answered that, at my earliest convenience, and in conformity with usage, I would prepare and transmit to you a formal acceptance. I now avail myself of the first interval in unavoidable occupations to fulfill that engagement.

The Convention, before making its nominations, adopted a Declaration of Principles, which, as a whole, seems to me a wise exposition of the necessities of our country, and of the reforms needed to bring back the government to its true functions, to restore purity of administration and to renew the prosperity of the people. But some of these reforms are so urgent that they claim more than a passing approval.

REFORM IN PUBLIC EXPENSE.

The necessity of reform in the scale of public expense—Federal, State and Municipal,—and in the modes of Federal taxation, justifies all the prominence given to it in the Declaration of the St. Louis Convention.

The present depression of business and industries of the people, which is depriving labor of its employment, and carrying want into so many homes, has its principal cause in excessive governmental consumption. Under the illusions of a specious prosperity, engendered by the false policies of the federal government a waste of capital has been going on ever since the peace of 1865, which could only end in universal disaster.

The federal taxes of the last eleven years reach the gigantic sum of 4,500 millions. Local taxation has amounted to two-thirds as much more. The vast aggregate is not less than 7,500 millions.

This enormous taxation followed a civil conflict that had greatly impaired our aggregate wealth, and had made a prompt reduction of expenses indispensable.

It was aggravated by most unscientific and ill adjusted methods of taxation that increased the sacrifices of the people far beyond the receipts of the treasury.

It was aggregated, moreover, by a financial policy which tended to diminish the energy, skill and economy of production, and the frugality of private consumption, and induced miscalculation in business and an unremunerative use of capital and labor.

Even in prosperous times the daily wants of industrious communities press closely upon their daily earnings. The margin of possible national savings is at best a small percentage of national earnings. Yet now for these eleven years governmental consumption has been a larger proportion of the national earnings than the whole people can possibly save even in prosperous times for all new investments.

The consequence of these errors are now a present public calamity. They were necessary and inevitable, and were foreseen and depicted when the waves of that fictitious prosperity ran highest. In a speech made by me on the 24th of September, 1868, it was said of these taxes:

They bear heavily upon every man's income, upon every industry and every business in the country, and year by year they are destined to press still more heavily, unless we arrest the system that gives rise to them. It was comparatively easy when values were doubling under repeated issues of legal tender paper monies, to pay out of the froth of our growing and apparent wealth these taxes, but when values recede and sink towards their natural scale, the tax-gatherer takes from us not only our income, not only our profits, but also a portion of our capital. * * * I do not wish to exaggerate or alarm; I simply say that we cannot afford the costly and ruinous policy of the Radical party in Congress. We cannot afford that policy towards the South. We cannot afford the magnificent and oppressive centralism into which our government is being converted. We cannot afford the present magnificent scale of taxation.

To the Secretary of the Treasury, I said, early in 1865:

There is no royal road for a government more than for an individual or a corporation. What you want to do now is to cut down your expenses and live within your income. I would give all the legerdemain of finance and financiering—I would give the whole of it for the old, homely maxim, "Live within your income."

This reform will be resisted at every step, but it must be pressed persistently. We see to-day the immediate representatives of the people in one branch of Congress, while struggling to reduce expenditures, compelled to confront the menace of the Senate and the Executive that unless the objectionable appropriations be consented to, the operations of the government thereunder shall suffer detriment or cease. In my judgment, an amendment to the Constitution ought to be devised separating into distinct bills the appropriations for the various departments of the public service, and excluding from each bill all appropriations for other objects, and all independent legislation. In that way alone can the revisory power of each of the two houses and of the Executive be preserved and exempted from the moral duress which often compels assent to objectionable appropriations, rather than stop the wheels of the government.

THE SOUTH.

An accessory cause enhancing the distress in business is to be found in the systematic and insupportable misgovernment imposed on the States of the South. Besides the ordinary effect of ignorant and dishonest administration, it has inflicted upon them enormors issues of fraudulent bonds, the scanty avails of which were wasted or stolen, and the existence of which is a public discredit, tending to bankruptcy or repudiation. Taxes, generally oppressive, in some instances have confiscated the entire income of property, and totally destroyed its marketable value. It is impossible that these evils should not react upon the prosperity of the whole country.

The noble motives of humanity concur with material interests of all in requiring that every obstacle be removed, to a complete and durable reconciliation between kindred populations once unnaturally estranged, on the basis recognized by the St. Louis platform, of the "Constitution of the United States, with its amendments universally accepted as a final settlement of the controversies which engendered civil war."

But, in aid of a result so beneficent, the moral influence of every good citizen, as well as every governmental authority, ought to be exerted not alone to maintain their just equality before the law, but likewise to establish a cordial fraternity and good will among citizens, whatever their race or color, who are now united in the one destiny of a common self-government. If the duty shall be assigned to me, I should not fail to exercise the powers with which the laws and the constitution of our country clothe its chief magistrate, to protect all its citizens, whatever its former condition, in every political and personal right.

CURRENCY REFORM.

Reform is necessary, declares the St. Louis Convention, to establish a sound currency, restore the public credit and maintain the national honor; and it goes on to demand a judicious system of preparation by public economies, by official retrenchments and by wise finances, which shall enable the nation soon to assure the whole world of its perfect ability and its perfect readiness to meet any of its promises at the call of the creditor entitled to payment.

The object demanded by the Convention is a resumption of specie payments on the legal tender notes of the United States. That would not only restore the public credit and maintain the national honor, but it would "establish a sound currency for the people."

The methods by which this object is to be pursued, and the means by which it is to be attained, are disclosed by what the Convention demanded for the future, and by what it denounced in the past.

BANK NOTE RESUMPTION.

Resumption of specie payments by the Government of the United States on its legal tender notes would establish specie payments by all the banks on all their notes. The official statement, made on the 12th of May, shows that the amount of the bank notes was 300 millions, less 20 millions held by them selves. Against these 280 millions of notes, the banks held 141 millions of legal tender notes, or a little more than fifty per cent of their amount. But they also held on deposit in the Federal Treasury, as security for these notes, bonds of the United States, worth in gold about 360 millions, available and current in all the foreign money markets. In resuming, the banks, even if it were possible for all their notes to be presented for payment, would have 500 millions of specie funds to pay 280 millions of notes, without contracting their loans to their customers, or calling on any private debtor for payment. Suspended banks, undertaking to resume, have usually been obliged to collect from needy borrowers the means to redeem excessive issues and to provide reserves. A vague idea of distress is, therefore, often associated with the process of resumption. But the conditions which caused distress in those former instances do not now exist.

The government has only to make good its own promises and the banks can take care of themselves without distressing anybody. The government is, therefore, the sole delinquent.

LEGAL-TENDER RESUMPTION.

The amount of the legal tender notes of the United States now outstanding is less than 370 millions of dollars, besides 34 millions of dollars of fractional currency. How shall the government make these notes at all times as good as specie?

It has to provide, in reference to the mass which would be kept in use by the wants of business, a central reservoir of coin, adequate to the adjustment of the temporary fluctuations of international balances, and as a guaranty against transient drains artificially created by panic or by speculation.

It has also to provide for the payment in coin of such fractional currency as may be presented for redemption, and such inconsiderable portions of the legal tenders as individuals may, from time to time, desire to convert for special use, or in order to lay by in coin their little stores of money.

RESUMPTION NOT DIFFICULT.

To make the coin now in the treasury available for the objects of this reserve, to gradually strengthen and enlarge that reserve, and to provide for such other exceptional demands for coin as may arise, does not seem to me a work of difficulty. If wisely planned and discretly pursued, it ought not to cost any sacrifice to the business of the country. It should tend, on the contrary, to a revival of hope and confidence. The coin in the treasury on the 30th of June, including what is held against coin certificates, amounted to nearly 94 millions. The current of precious metals which has flowed out of our country for the eleven years from July 1, 1865, to June 30, 1876, averaged nearly 76 millions a year, was 832 millions in the whole period of which 617 millions were the product of our own mines.

To amass the requisite quantity, by intercepting from the current flowing out of the country, and by acquiring from the stocks which exist abroad without disturbing the equilibrium of foreign money markets, is a result to be easily worked out by practical knowledge and judgment.

With respect to whatever surplus of legal tenders the wants of business may fail to keep in use, and which, in order to save interest, will be returned for redemption, they can either be paid or they can be funded. Whether they continue as currency, or be absorbed into the vast mass of securities held as investments is merely a question of the rate of interest they draw. Even if they were to remain in their present form, and the government were to agree to pay on them a rate of interest, making them desirable as investments, they would cease to circulate and take their place with government, State, municipal, and other corporate and private bonds, of which thousands of millions exist amongst us. In the perfect ease with which they can be changed from currency into investments lies the only danger to be guarded against in the adoption of general assembly measures intended to remove a clearly ascertained surplus; that is, the withdrawal of any which are not a permanent excess beyond the wants of business. Even more mischievous would be any measure which affects the public imagination with the fear of an apprehended scarcity. In a community where credit is so much used, fluctuations of values and vicissitudes in business are largely caused by the temporary beliefs of men even before those beliefs can conform to ascertained realities.

AMOUNT OF NECESSARY CURRENCY.

The amount of necessary currency, at a given time, cannot be determined arbitrarily, and should not be assumed on conjecture. That amount is subject to both permanent and temporary changes. An enlargement of it, which seemed to be durable, happened at the beginning of the civil war by a substituted use of currency in place of individual credits. It varies with certain states of business. It fluctuates, with considerable regularity, at different seasons of the year. In the autumn, for instance, when buyers of grain and other agricultural products begin their operations, they usually need to borrow capital or circulating credits by which to make their purchases; and want these funds in currency capable of being distributed in small sums among numerous sellers. The additional need of currency at such times is five per cent. of the whole volume, and, if a surplus beyond what is required for ordinary use does not happen to have been on hand at the money centers, a scarcity of currency ensues, and also a stringency in the loan market.

It was in reference to such experiences that, in a discussion of this subject, in my annual message to the New York Legislature of January 5, 1875, the suggestion was made that:

The federal government is bound to redeem every portion of its issues which the public do not wish to use. Having assumed to monopolize the supply of currency, and enacted exclusion against everybody else, it is bound to furnish all which the wants of business require. * * * The system should passively allow the volume of circulating credits to ebb and flow, according to the ever-changing wants of business. It should imitate, as closely as possible, the natural laws of trade, which it has superseded by artificial contrivances. And in a similar discussion, in my message of January 4, 1876, it was said that resumption should be effected by such measures as would keep the aggregate amount of the currency self-adjusting during all the process, without creating, at any time, an artificial scarcity, and without exciting the public imagination with alarms which impair confidence, contract the whole machinery of credit, and disturb the natural operations of business.

MEANS OF RESUMPTION.

Public economies, official retrenchments and wise finance are the means which the St. Louis Convention indicates as provision for reserves and redemptions.

The best resource is a reduction of the expenses of the government below its income; for that imposes no new charge on the people.

If, however, the improvidence and waste which have conducted us to a period of falling revenues oblige us to supplement the results of economies and retrenchments by some resort to loans, we should not hesitate. The government ought not to speculate on its own dishonor, in order to save interest on its broken promises, which it still compels private dealers to accept at a fictitious par. The highest national honor is not only right, but would prove profitable. Of the public debt, 985 millions bear interest at six per cent. in gold. The average interest is 5.58 per cent.

A financial policy which should secure the highest credit, wisely availed of ought gradually to obtain a reduction of one per cent. in the interest on most of the loans. A saving of one per cent. on the average would be 17 millions a year in gold. That saving regularly invested at four and a half per cent. would, in less than thirty-eight years, extinguish the principal. The whole 1,700 millions of funded debt might be paid by this saving alone, without cost to the people.

PROPER TIME FOR RESUMPTION.

The proper time for resumption is the time when wise preparations shall have ripened into a perfect ability to accomplish the object with a certainty and ease that will inspire confidence, and encourage the reviving of business. The earliest time in which such a result can be brought about is the best. Even when the preparations have been matured, the exact date would have to be chosen with reference to the then existing state of trade and credit operations in our own country, the course of foreign commerce, and the condition of the exchanges with other nations. The specific measures and the actual date are matters of detail having reference to ever-changing conditions. They belong to the domain of practical administrative statesmanship. The captain of a steamer, about starting from New York to Liverpool, does not assemble a council over his ocean chart and fix an angle by which to lash the rudder for the whole voyage. A human intelligence must be at the helm discern the shifting forces of the waters and the winds. A human hand must be on the helm to feel the elements day by day, and guide to a mastery over them.

PREPARATIONS FOR RESUMPTION.

Such preparations are everything. Without them, a legislative command fixing a day, an official promise fixing a day, are shams. They are worse—they are a snare and a delusion to all who trust them. They destroy all confidence among thoughtful men whose judgment will at last sway public opinion. An attempt to act on such a command or such a promise, without preparation, would end in a new suspension. It would be a fresh calamity, prolific of confusion, distrust and distress.

THE ACT OF JANUARY 14TH, 1875.

The Act of Congress on the 14th of January, 1875, enacted that, on and after the 1st of January, 1879, the Secretary of the Treasury shall redeem in coin the legal tender notes of the United States on presentation at the office of the assistant treasurer in the City of New York. It authorized the secretary "to prepare and provide for" such resumption of specie payments by the use of any surplus revenues not otherwise appropriated; and by issuing, in his discretion, certain classes of bonds.

More than one and a half of the four years have passed. Congress and the President have contined ever since to unite in acts which have legislated out of existence every possible surplus applicable to this purpose.

The coin in the treasury claimed to belong to the government had, on the 30 of June, fallen to less than 45 millions of dollars as against 59 millions on the 1st of January, 1875, and the availability of a part of that sum is said to be questionable. The revenues are falling faster than appropriations and expenditures are reduced, leaving the treasury with undiminishing resources. The secretary has done nothing under his power to issue bonds.

The legislative demand, the official promise fixing the day for resumption have thus far been barren. No practical preparations towards resumption have been made. There has been no progress. There have been steps backward.

There is no necromancy in the operations of government. The home maxims of every-day life are the best standards of its conduct. A debtor who should promise to pay a loan out of surplus income, yet be seen every day spending all he could lay his hands on in riotous living, would lose all character for honesty, veracity. His offer of a new promise or his profession as to the value of the old promise, would alike provoke derision.

RESUMPTION PLAN OF THE ST. LOUIS PLATFORM.

The St. Louis platform denounces the failure for eleven years to make good the promise of the legal tender notes. It denounces the omission to accumulate "any reserve for their redemption" It denounces the conduct "which, during eleven years of peace, has made no advances towards resumption, no preparations for resumption, but instead has obstructed resumption, by wasting our resources and exhausting all our surplus income, and while professing to intend a speedy return to specie payments, has annually enacted fresh hindrances thereto." And having first denounced the barrenness of the promise of a day of resumption, it next denounces that barren promise as a "hindrance" to resumption. It then demands its repeal, and also demands the establishment of "a judicious system of preparation" for resumption. It cannot be doubted that the substitution of a "system of preparation," without the promise of a day, for the worthless promise of a day without "a system of preparation" would be the gain of the substance of resumption in exchange for its shadow.

Nor is the denunciation unmerited of that improvidence which, in the eleven years since the peace, has consumed 4,500 millions dollars, and yet could not afford to give the people a sound and staple currency. Two and a half per cent. on the expenditures of these eleven years, or even less, would have provided all the additional coin needful to resumption.

RELIEF TO BUSINESS DISTRESS

The distress now felt by the people in all their business and industries, though it has its principal cause in the enormous waste of capital occasioned by the false policies of our government has been greatly aggravated by the mismanagement of the currency. Uncertainty is the prolific parent of mischiefs in all business. Never were its evils more felt than now. Men do nothing, because they are unable to make any calculations on which they can safely rely. They undertake nothing, because they fear a loss in everything they would attempt. They stop and wait. The merchant dares not buy for the future consumption of his customers. The manufacturer dares not make fabrics which may not refund his outlay. He shuts his factory and discharges his workmen. Capitalists cannot lend on security they consider safe, and their funds lie almost without interest. Men of enterprise who have credit or securities to pledge, will not borrow. Consumption has fallen below the natural limits of a reasonable economy. Prices of many things are under their range in frugal, specie-paying times before the civil war. Vast masses of currency lie in the banks unused. A year and a half ago the legal tenders were at their largest volume, and the twelve millions since retired have been replaced by fresh issues of fifteen millions of bank notes. In the meantime the banks have been surrendering about four millions a month, because they cannot find a profitable use for so many of their notes.

The public mind will no longer accept shams. It has suffered enough from illusions. An insincere policy increases distrust. An unstable policy increases uncertainty. The people need to know that the government is moving in the direction of ultimate safety and prosperity, and that it is doing so through prudent, safe and conservative methods, which will be sure to inflict no new sacrifice on the business of the country. Then the inspiration of new hope and well founded confidence will hasten the restoring processes of nature, and prosperity will begin to return.

The St. Louis Convention concludes its expression in regard to the currency by a declaration of its convictions as to the practical results of the system of preparations it demands. It says: "We believe such a system, well devised, and, above all, intrusted to competent hands for execution, creating at no time an artificial scarcity of currency, and at no time alarming the public mind into a withdrawal of that vaster machinery of credit by which ninety-five per cent. of all business transactions are performed—a system open, public, and inspiring general confidence would, from the day of its adoption, bring healing on its wings to all our harassed industries, set in motion the wheels of commerce, manufactures and the mechanic arts, restore employment to labor, and renew in all its natural sources the prosperity of the people."

The government of the United States, in my opinion, can advance to a resumption of specie payments on its legal tender notes by gradual and safe processes tending to relieve the present business distress. If charged by the people with the administration of the executive office, I should deem it a duty so to exercise the powers with which it has been or may be invested by Congress as best and soonest to conduct the country to that beneficent result.

CIVIL SERVICE REFORM.

The convention justly affirms that Reform is necessary in the civil service, necessary to its purification, necessary to its economy and its efficiency, necessary in order that the ordinary employment of the public business may not be "a prize fought for at the ballot box, a brief reward of party zeal instead of posts of honor assigned for proved competency, and held for fidelity in the public employ." The convention wisely added that "Reform is necessary even more in the higher grades of the public service. President, Vice-President, Judges, Senators, Representatives, Cabinet Officers, these and all others in authority are the people's servants. Their offices are not a private perquisite; they are a public trust."

Two evils infest the official service of the Federal government.

One is the prevalent and demoralizing notion that the public service exists not for the business and benefit of the whole people, but for the interest of the office-holders, who are in truth but the servants of the people. Under the influence of this pernicious error public employments have been multiplied; the numbers of those gathered into the ranks of the office-holders have been steadily increased beyond any possible requirement of the public business, while inefficiency, peculation, fraud, and malversation of the public funds, from the highest places of power to the lowest, have overspread the whole service like a leprosy.

The other evil is the organization of the official class into a body of political mercenaries, governing the caucuses and dictating the nominations of their own party, and attempting to carry the elections of the people by undue influence, and by immense corruption funds systematically collected from the salaries or fees of office-holders. The official class in other countries, sometimes by its own weight and sometimes in alliance with the army, has been able to rule the unorganized masses even under universal suffrage. Here it has already grown into a gigantic power capable of stifling the inspirations of a sound public opinion, and of resisting an easy change of administration, until misgovernment becomes intolerable, and public spirit has been stung to the pitch of a civic revolution.

The first step in reform is the elevation of the standard by which the appointing power selects agents to execute official trusts. Next in importance is a conscientious fidelity in the exercise of the untrustworthy or incapable subordinates. The public interest in an honest, skillful performance of official trust must not be sacrificed to the usufruct of the incumbents.

After these immediate steps, which will ensure the exhibition of better examples, we may wisely go on to the abolition of unnecessary offices, and, finally, to the patient, careful organization of a better civil service system, under the tests, wherever practicable, of proved competency and fidelity.

While much may be accomplished by these methods, it might encourage delusive expectations if I withheld here the expression of my conviction that no reform of the civil service in this country will be complete and permanent until its chief magistrate is constitutionally disqualified for re-election; experience having repeatedly exposed the futility of self-imposed restrictions by candidates or incumbents. Through this solemnity only can be effectually delivered from his greatest temptation to misuse the power and patronage with which the Executive is necessarily charged.

CONCLUSION.

Educated in the belief that it is the first duty of a citizen of the republic to take his fair allotment of care and trouble in public affairs, I have, for forty years, as a private citizen, fulfilled that duty. Though occupied in an unusual degree during all that period with the concerns of government, I have never acquired the habit of official life. When, a year and a half ago, I entered upon my present trust, it was in order to consummate reforms to which I had already devoted several of the best years of my life. Knowing as I do, therefore, from fresh experience, how great the difference is between gliding through an official routine and working out a reform of systems and policies, it is impossible for me to contemplate what needs to be done in the federal administration without an anxious sense of the difficulties of the undertaking. If summoned by the suffrages of my countrymen to attempt this work, I shall endeavor, with God's help, to be the efficient instrument of their will.

SAMUEL J. TILDEN.

To Gen. John A. McClernard, Chairman, Gen. W. B. Franklin, Hon. J. J. Abbott, Hon. H. J. Spannhorst, Hon. H. J. Redfield, Hon. F. S. Lyon and others, Committee, &c.

GOV. HENDRICKS' LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE.

INDIANAPOLIS, July 24, 1876.

GENTLEMEN: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication, in which you have formally notified me of my nomination by the National Democratic Convention at St. Louis, as their candidate for the office of Vice President of the United States. It is a nomination which I had neither expected nor desired; and yet I recognize and appreciate the high honor done me by the Convention. The choice of such a body, pronounced with such unusual unanimity, and accompanied with so generous an expression of esteem and confidence ought to outweigh all merely personal desires and preferences of my own. It is with this feeling, and I trust also from a deep sense of public duty, that I now accept the nomination, and shall abide the judgment of my countrymen.

It would have been impossible for me to accept the nomination if I could not heartily endorse the platform of the Convention. I am gratified, therefore, to be able unequivocally to declare that I agree in the principles, approve the policies, and sympathize with the purposes enunciated in the platform.

The institutions of our country have been sorely tried by the exigencies of civil war, and, since the peace, by a selfish and corrupt management of public affairs, which has shamed us before civilized mankind. By unwise and partial legislation every industry and interest of the people have been made to suffer; and in the executive departments of the government, dishonest, rapacity and venality have debauched the public service. Men known to be unworthy have been promoted, while others have been degraded for fidelity to official duty. Public office has been made the means of private profit, and the country has been offended to see a class of men who boast the friendship of the sworn protectors of the State amassing fortunes by defrauding the public treasury and by corrupting the servants of the people. In such a crisis of the history of the country I rejoice that the convention at St. Louis has so nobly raised the standard of reform. Nothing can be well with us or with our affairs until the public conscience, shocked by the enormous evils and abuses which prevail, shall have demanded and compelled an unsparing reformation of our National Administration, "in its head and in its members." In such a reformation the removal of a single officer, even the President, is comparatively a trifling matter, if the system which he represents, and which has fostered him as he has fostered it, is suffered to remain. The President alone must not be made the scapegoat for the enormities of the system which infests the public service, and threatens the destruction of our institutions. In some respects I hold that the present executive has been the victim rather than the author of that vicious system. Congressional and party leaders have been stronger than the President. No one man could have created it, and the removal of no one man can amend it. It is thoroughly corrupt, and must be swept remorselessly away by the selection of a government composed of elements entirely new, and pledged to radical reform.

REFORMS NEEDED.

The first work of reform must evidently be the restoration of the normal operation of the Constitution of the United States, with all its amendments. The necessities of war cannot be pleaded in a time of peace; the right of local self-government as guaranteed by the Constitution of the Union must be everywhere restored, and the centralized (almost personal) imperialism which has been practised must be done away, or the first principles of the republic will be lost.

Our financial system of expedients must be reformed. Gold and silver are the real standard of values, and our national currency will not be a perfect medium of exchange until it shall be convertible at the pleasure of the holders. As I have heretofore said, no one desires a return to specie payments more earnestly than I do; but I do not believe that it will or can be reached in harmony with the interests of the people by artificial measures for the contraction of the currency, any more than I believe that wealth or permanent prosperity can be created by an inflation of the currency. The laws of finance cannot be disregarded with impunity. The financial policy of the Government, if, indeed, it deserves the name of policy at all, has been in disregard of those laws, and therefore has disturbed commercial and business confidence, as well as hindered a return to specie payments. One feature of that policy was the resumption clause of the Act of 1875, which has embarrassed the country by the anticipation of a compulsory resumption for which no preparation has been made, and without any assurance that it would be practicable. The repeal of that clause is necessary that the natural operation of financial laws may be restored, that the business of the country may be relieved from its disturbing and depressing influence, and that a return to specie payments may be facilitated by the substitution of wiser and more prudent legislation, which shall mainly rely on a judicious system of public economies and official retrenchments, and above all on the promotion of prosperity in all the industries of the people.

I do not understand the repeal of the resumption clause of the Act of 1875 to be a backward step in our return to specie payments, but the recovery of a false step; and although the repeal may, for a time, be prevented, yet the determination of the Democratic party on this subject has now been distinctly declared. There should be no hinderances put in the way of a return to specie payments. "As such a hinderance," says the platform of the St. Louis Convention, "we denounce the resumption clause of the Act of 1875, and demand its repeal."

I thoroughly believe that by public economy, by official retrenchments, and by wise finance enabling us to accumulate the precious metals, resumption at an early period is possible, without producing an "artificial scarcity of currency" or disturbing public or commercial credit; and that these reforms together with the restoration of pure government, will restore general confidence, encourage the useful investment of capital, furnish employment to labor, and relieve the country from the "paralysis of hard times."

OUR INDUSTRIES.

With the industries of the people there have been frequent interferences. Our platform truly says that many industries have been impoverished to subsidize a few. Our commerce has been degraded to an inferior position on the high seas; manufactures have been diminished; agriculture has been embarrassed, and the distress of the industrial classes demands that these things shall be reformed.

The burdens of the people must also be lightened by a great change in our system of public expenses. The profligate expenditures which increased taxation from five dollars per capita in 1860 to eighteen dollars in 1870 tells its own story of our need of fiscal reform.

Our treaties with foreign powers should also be revised and amended, in so far as they leave citizens of foreign birth in any particular less secure in any country on earth than they would be if they had been born on our own soil; and the iniquitous coolie system which, through the agency of wealthy companies, imports Chinese bondsmen, and establishes a species of slavery, and interferes with the just rewards of labor on our Pacific coast, should be utterly abolished.

In the reform of our civil service, I most heartily endorse that section of the platform which declares that the civil service ought not to be "subject to change at every election," and that it ought not to be made "the brief reward of party zeal," but ought to be awarded for proved competency and held for fidelity in the public employ." I hope never again to see the cruel and remorseless proscription for political opinions which has disgraced the administration of the last eight years. Bad as the civil service now is, as all know, it has some men of tried integrity and proved ability. Such men, and such men only, should be retained in office; but no man should be retained on any consideration who has prostituted his office to the purposes of partisan intimidation or compulsion, or who has furnished money to corrupt the elections. This is done and has been done in almost every country of the land. It is a blight upon the morals of the country, and ought to be reformed.

OUR SCHOOLS.

Of sectional contentions, and in respect to our common schools. I have only this to say: That in my judgment, the man or party that would involve our schools in political or sectarian controversy is an enemy to the schools. The common schools are safer under the protecting care of all the people than under the control of any party or sect. They must be neither sectarian nor partisan, and there must be neither division nor misappropriation of the funds for their support. Likewise I regard the man who would arouse or foster sectional animosities and antagonisms among his countrymen as a dangerous enemy to his country. All the people must be made to feel and know that once more there is established a purpose and policy under which all citizens of every condition, race and color, will be secure in the enjoyment of whatever rights the Constitution and laws declare or recognize; and that in controversies that may arise the government is not a partisan, but, within its constitutional authority the just and powerful guardian of the rights and safety of all. The strife between the sections and between races will cease as soon as the power for evil is taken away from a party that makes political gain out of scenes of violence and bloodshed, and the constitutional authority is placed in the hands of men whose political welfare requires that peace and good order shall be preserved everywhere.

GOV. TILDEN.

It will be seen, gentlemen, that I am in entire accord with the platform of the Convention by which I have been nominated as a candidate for the office of Vice President of the United States. Permit me, in conclusion, to express my satisfaction at being associated with a candidate for the Presidency who is first among his equals as a representative of the spirit and of the achievements of reform. In his official career as the Executive of the great State of New York, he has, in a comparatively short period, reformed the public service and reduced the public burdens, so as to have earned at once the gratitude of his State and the admiration of the country. The people know him to be thoroughly in earnest; he has shown himself to be possessed of powers and qualities which fit him, in an eminent degree, for the great work of reform which this country now needs; and if he shall be chosen by the people to the high office of President of the United States, I believe that the day of his inauguration will be the beginning of a new era of peace, purity and prosperity in all departments of our government. I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant,

THOMAS A. HENDRICKS.

To the Hon. John A. McClernand, Chairman, and others of the Committee of the National Democratic Convention.

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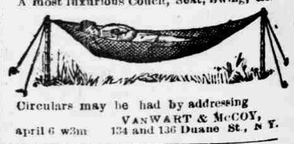

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