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BLAINE DECLINES.

Republicans Have Many Good Men to Select From, However.

The position of Mr. Blaine on the presidency is no longer a matter of uncertainty. In a letter over his own signature, addressed to Mr. Carlisle, he states positively that his name will not go before the national republican convention. He does not feel called upon to enter into any explanation, but his declination is unequivocal, leaving no possible room for misunderstanding.

It is not improbable that Mr. Blaine has before him many years of usefulness. His letter of declination is by no means a farewell to public life. But it is a confirmation of the general opinion that his strength has been so far impaired by hard work and advancing age that he cannot stand the strain and burden of a national campaign. The reasons which impelled him to "ding away ambition" in 1888 apply in 1892, only with additional force. He has been a prodigious worker for over thirty years, and now he must husband his strength. That he has reached that stage of life is a matter of profound and poignant regret to an innumerable multitude of his fellow citizens. No other public man has so large and so ardent a following. For many years he has been the leading champion of republicanism, and the admiration for his genius made his name a torch to kindle popular enthusiasm. The animosities which were inseparable from the aggressive ambition of his earlier manhood have gradually died out. He may be said to have outlived those animosities. They are interred with the bones of his presidential ambition.

So long as Mr. Blaine's candidacy was a matter of doubt the consideration of the presidential question by the republican party was seriously embarrassed. His final and definite withdrawal from the fight leaves the republicans with no lack of good material for a ticket, and the various candidates can now be canvassed upon their merits and availability. The convention at Minneapolis will have no occasion to ask: "Is Blaine a candidate?" That question has been answered, once for all, more than three months in advance of the convention, thus giving the people ample time to look over the field and for the development of public opinion.

So long as Mr. Blaine's position was uncertain little progress could be made in a popular choice between the several aspirants. His great personality and the devotion with which his friends and admirers stood by him overshadowed everything and made concentration anywhere impossible. It is well known that President Harrison would like the endorsement of a second term, and he has a host of friends who would have preferred him even if Blaine became a candidate. Certainly fair-minded men will admit that he has given the country an able and clean administration that has stood for distinctly republican ideas. Even the democrats must concede this much. He has been thoroughly true to the principles of the republican party, and whoever the candidate may be republicans will necessarily fight upon the line of battle laid down by his administration. But no man has claim upon the nomination at Minneapolis, and if the national convention thinks it would be politic to nominate some one else it should not hesitate to do so. There is no lack of good material. Ohio has in Gov. McKinley a great and magnetic statesman. He is in fact the representative man of the leading ideas on which the campaign will be fought. Secretary Rusk would make a remarkably available candidate. He would be a great vote-getter. Illinois in Senator Callom, with his strong resemblance to Abraham Lincoln, a candidate whose qualifications should not be overlooked, and Gen. Alger has done much to make himself popular with the old soldiers. But these names do not exhaust the list. It is not too late for men unmentioned, perhaps unthought of, to spring up and become formidable candidates. Several famous presidential races have been won by horses so dark as to be quite indistinguishable at this distance from the convention. Certainly there is no good reason for republicans who expect to be delegates to the Minneapolis convention to go into mourning for the want of candidates. The able and available statesmen who are willing to lead the campaign in 1892 are legion. It only remains for the convention to choose wisely.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

A PARTY OF KICKERS.

Democracy, Having No Ideas of Its Own, Merely Objects.

The national democratic party presents at the present time a remarkable spectacle. It came into power in the house of representatives on a "tidal wave," and has an immense majority in that body. Most of its representatives there were elected, or supposed they were, as "tariff reformers." A majority of them were chosen, partly because they believed in the coinage of silver and gold equally and freely by our mints at the ratio of sixteen to one. It was natural to expect, therefore, that the house would proceed at once to smash the tariff and open our mints for coinage to the silver of the world.

But the democratic party is queer. When it is out of office it professes allegiance, occasionally, to a definite principle, and commits itself to a certain line of action. When it is in power it never does anything. It has no principles, except to get in office and stay there. It has never developed an affirmative policy in any direction. It has never initiated a progressive measure. It never will.

It is not so surprising, therefore, after all, to those who know something of the past history and present composition of the democratic party, that in the body where it has complete power it is now showing signs of paralysis. We are told that the democratic triumvirate that controls the party in the senate and manages to control it in the nation, Messrs. Gorman, Hill and Brien, have agreed with the triumvirate in the house, which, under the new rules, if they are ever adopted, will control all the legislation of that

body—the democratic members of the committee on rules—that it is not desirable for the house to do anything at this session on the silver and tariff questions. Action of any kind might split the party. The New England and most of the New York democrats are against fraudulent free silver; the democrats of the south and west are in favor of it. The democrats of Pennsylvania, and some in other states, are against free trade; the rest of the democrats are in favor of it. Therefore, the passage of a free-coinage bill by democratic votes in the house would be dangerous; it might alienate eastern voters. The passage of a "Mills bill" would antagonize business interests and precipitate a tariff campaign, and that would be dangerous, too.

No this party, as represented in congress, and having in the popular branch a clear majority of fifty votes, actually dares not pass a bill that would commit it to any definite policy. This is only a new and rather striking illustration of the very old fact that the democratic party is simply the "against party"—the party of opposition, the party of negation, absolutely incapable of positive action, of constructive legislation or of adherence to any principle.

In 1864 it ran for president a union general on a secession platform; in 1868 it ran a hard-money man on a platform of repudiation; in 1872, on a platform that contradicted every principle it had ever professed, it ran Horace Greeley, its life-long and most bitter foe. In 1888 it was held by the throat by Grover Cleveland on a positive platform, and was defeated. The defeat has knocked out of it whatever courage it temporarily possessed, and now it is going back to the old plan of simply "kicking" at what the republicans have done, without proposing anything definite as a substitute.

The Fiftyeth congress, under Speaker Carlisle, was described by a democrat in the house just the other day as a "do-nothing" congress. The Fifty-second congress, so far as now appears, and so far as the house of representatives is concerned, will be also a do-nothing congress.—N. Y. Mail and Express.

POLITICAL DRIFT.

Whoever may be the standard bearer, Mr. Blaine will be in the field working for the principles of the great party he has done so much to advance and with which his name is so completely identified.—Cleveland Leader.

Speaker Crisp is a reformer. His son holds a three thousand-dollar clerkship. Similar charges have been made against Springer and Catchings. Democrats are always "reformers" during campaigns, but never afterward.—Iowa State Register.

Democrats in congress were awfully afraid of one "Czar Reed." They are now arranging to appoint "ten czars," and leave the rest of the fellows nothing to do but talk, whittle sticks and execute the supreme will of their bosses.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

The action of Mr. Blaine does not leave the way clear for Mr. Harrison. The president is unpopular, and the chances are that as regards the nomination the presidential toga will fall upon a head not now visible above the political horizon.—Council Bluffs Globe.

David Hill will press the button and his "kodak" convention will do the rest. Then Cleveland will follow up with a "Little Detective" convention and take a snap shot at the delegation. But the real fun will come in the Chicago convention.—Detroit Journal.

In the last year of Cleveland's administration the United States bought \$33,000,000 more from foreign nations than it sold to them, whereas in 1891, under republican rule, the sales exceeded the purchases by \$142,000,000. Such figures need no comment.—St. Louis Globe Democrat.

Grover Cleveland has emerged from the Louisiana woods with politically closed lips. It is very likely that for some time Mr. Cleveland will talk of his wing shorts at Joe Jefferson's retreat with much vigor, but will get into his shell and close the lid when politics is mentioned. He won't write a ny political letters either for a while.—Minneapolis Journal.

Every official report from the pension department gives the positive evidence that the republican party is loyally keeping faith with the disabled union soldiers. The statement for the last six months of 1891 shows that during that period there was issued from the department 151,851 pensions, of which 89,192 were under the general law and 112,659 were under the act of June 27, 1890. The first payment on these certificates aggregate \$20,897,589, or a little over \$134 to each pensioner.—Iowa State Register.

A majority of the democratic members of the house committee of ways and means have agreed to Mr. Springer's plan of tariff tinkering. But this decision, while it may be more or less binding upon the ways and means committee, is not binding upon Mr. Mills, the Breckinridges, or other distinguished free traders on the floor of the house, and Mr. Springer cannot be at all sure that somebody will not offer the old Mills bill as a substitute for Mr. Springer's little free-wool bill, and so precipitate a general tariff discussion.—N. Y. Mail and Express.

Triumph of Republicans.

The United States supreme court struck a heavy blow at the Louisiana state lottery by its decision affirming the constitutionality of the anti-lottery act passed by the Fifty-first congress. The correspondence of the lottery company is by this law entirely excluded from the mails. The decision upholding the law was unanimous. This salutary act was passed, let it be remembered, by a republican congress, urged thereto by a republican president; and the law has been efficiently applied by a republican postmaster general. Does anybody suppose that if we had had a democratic president and congress such a law could have been passed? The decision puts new heart into the anti-lottery campaign in Louisiana, and may have a decisive effect on the coming election.—N. Y. Mail and Express.

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