

EDITOR RICHARD L. METCALFE OF THE OMAHA WORLD-HERALD TO
EDITOR NORMAN E. MACK OF THE BUFFALO TIMES.

Omaha, Neb., May 16, 1903.—Norman E. Mack, Editor Times, Buffalo, N. Y.—Dear Sir: Many western democrats were interested in the editorial entitled "The Presidential Nominee," and appearing in a recent issue of the Times. You say that for the democratic party to "incur the hostility of either Mr. Cleveland or Mr. Bryan and their many followers" would be the height of folly, and you add that friends of both these gentlemen "must be willing to eliminate their individual preferences and to join their interests for the good of the party."

You have struck an interesting vein of thought here and I think that democrats throughout the country who admire you as a man and a democrat would be glad to have you go a bit deeper along this line.

We must agree that it is not too much to ask democrats to eliminate "individual preferences" if by this you refer to the candidate; and yet it will also be agreed that the candidate should be a man whose record and character would justify popular confidence that he would honestly endeavor to fulfill the platform pledges. But while very properly advising democrats to yield their preference, so far as the candidate is concerned, would you counsel them to become indifferent as to the character of the platform? I am sure you would be the last to give such advice.

And this prompts me to ask that you present through the columns of the Times a program by the adoption of which the democratic party would not "incur the hostility of Mr. Cleveland and his followers."

In the first place, could these gentlemen be persuaded to support the ticket in 1904 if the nominee for president were a man who had faithfully supported the democratic platform and ticket in 1896 and in 1900? Would you advise that, in order not to incur the hostility of Mr. Cleveland and his followers, democrats generally agree to the proposition that no man who heartily subscribed to the national platforms of 1896 and of 1900 be considered eligible to the nomination?

What would you have democrats do in the construction of their platform in order to avoid incurring the hostility of Mr. Cleveland and his followers? How many of the principles and the policies in which we believe must we surrender in order to avoid incurring this hostility?

Persistent effort has been made to have it appear that the question of bimetallicism is the sole obstacle to harmony so far as the platform is concerned. Nothing has occurred since 1896 to justify the bimetallicist in abandoning his position. On the contrary, the bimetallicist contends that the very prosperity of which the republican leaders boast is chiefly due

to the increase in the volume of money, a thing which in the campaign of 1896 democrats claimed, and republicans denied, would bring us better times; and even though the amount of money has largely increased during the past seven years, there is constant agitation for further increase. Republican leaders would accomplish this result by multiplying the national bank notes, increasing the output to the fullest extent possible by the government bond deposit plan and in addition thereto conferring upon banks the extraordinary privilege of issuing notes on their assets. The bimetallicist prefers to obtain this increase in the democratic way, through bimetallicism. Yet for your convenience, in providing an answer to these questions, let us assume that democrats who believe in bimetallicism would, for the purpose of obtaining harmony so far as the platform is concerned, be willing to omit that question during one campaign.

Do you believe that a platform that made no reference to the money question would avoid incurring the hostility of Mr. Cleveland and his followers?

Do you think that a democratic platform that failed to make explicit reference to the money question could command the respect either of bimetallicists or of single gold standard advocates?

In order to avoid incurring the hostility of Mr. Cleveland and his followers, would it not be necessary for the democratic platform to explicitly indorse the single gold standard, to confess to the world that in the campaigns of 1896 and of 1900 the democratic party was utterly wrong on that question in spite of the fact that its position has been completely justified, at least to the satisfaction of men who have become bimetallicists after careful study and investigation?

But having disposed of the money question, either by complete silence or by an unequivocal indorsement of the single gold standard, do you think it would be possible to retain for the platform of 1904 other important features of the platforms of 1896 and of 1900?

Shall the democrats abandon their position on the Philippine question wherein they promised not to make the Filipinos either citizens or subjects and favored a declaration of the nation's purpose to give to these people, first, a stable form of government; second, independence; and, third, protection from outside interference?

What change would you make in the democratic platform with respect to trusts?

What alteration would you make in the plank relating to national bank currency?

Would you declare in favor of the income tax?

What would you say in regard to propositions involved in measures like the asset currency bill and the Aldrich bill?

Would you strike from the platform the protest against government by injunction, the condemnation of the blacklist, the declaration in favor of the election of senators by the people, and the proviso relating to the initiative and referendum?

What would you advise as to the general tone of the platform? Should it be framed so that to one man it might be interpreted in one way while to another man its interpretation would be quite different, a little device with which democrats became quite familiar in 1892?

I think democrats will very generally agree with you that the presidential nominee should have behind him "a united and not a divided army." But even a united army must have something to fight for, and the soldiers must know what they are fighting for; otherwise it would very soon become a divided army, its victories would be few and far between, and those victories would be of no importance to the people.

When men like the editor of the Times call for harmony, democrats must recognize the sincerity of the demand; and yet you will concede that harmony worth establishing and harmony worth having will be harmony that will endure until the close of the polls. It must be apparent to every one that no genuine progress has been made in the so-called effort at harmonizing the democratic party. No progress can be made on that line so long as the efforts relate solely to the identity of the candidate and ignore utterly the character of the platform.

To be sure, the platform is to be written by the resolutions committee, and yet when genuine harmony on platform and on candidate is so desirable, it is important that democrats who choose delegates to the national convention be informed as to the character of the platform that is to be prepared in their name, by those who say that they are willing to make concessions in order that "a united and not a divided army" may do duty behind the democratic nominee for the presidency.

The question, then, is how many of their principles must democrats surrender, permanently or temporarily, in order to avoid incurring the hostility of men who during two presidential campaigns deserted the party with which they claimed allegiance and gave open and boastful aid to the enemy?

Perhaps no better illustration of the difficulties to be encountered when democrats undertake to avoid incurring the hostility of Mr. Cleveland and his followers could be found than the well remembered second administration. Mr. Cleveland and his follow-

ers have never apologized for the acts that made his second administration odious in the eyes of democrats generally. On the contrary, they insist that the history that, according to republican authority, has vindicated republican policies has likewise vindicated the Cleveland policies.

Do you think it would be possible for the democratic party to maintain its dignity in this day, when men are thinking and reading as they never thought and read before, unless the party set its seal of disapproval in unmistakable terms not necessarily upon the second administration itself, but upon the policies and the methods, the intimacies between the representatives of the government and the representatives of the money power, and other evils that characterized the Cleveland regime?

Do you think that a democratic platform which ignored or dealt apologetically with those evils could provide serious attraction for the people? Do you believe that a platform framed so that it would impress upon the tariff baron and the trust magnate, as well as upon the people, the party's determination to give the people practical relief from the impositions under which they suffer today—impositions that emanate from the same powers that wielded more influence at the White house during Mr. Cleveland's second administration than was exerted by the entire democracy of the country—do you think that a platform so framed could avoid incurring the hostility of Mr. Cleveland and his followers?

I know you do not make the mistake of thinking that democrats who may not entirely agree with you are any less desirous for the termination of republican power than you are. But will the American people, requiring and demanding relief, turn from the republican party to a party that gives them no right to believe that its professions are sincere and that it is determined to re-establish popular government and to dethrone the tariff baron and the trust magnate?

As anxious as you can possibly be for democratic victory, by "a united and not a divided army," I respectfully ask you to present for the benefit of democrats generally, and in the interests of genuine harmony, an outline of what the democratic platform should be in order that it may not incur the hostility of Mr. Cleveland and his followers.

I am sure that in the preparation of these suggestions you will not overlook the fact that while it may be well to win back the impenitent prodigal sons it is somewhat important to remember that the convictions of the faithful boys who remained at home are not entirely unworthy of consideration. Yours truly,

RICHARD L. METCALFE,
Editor World-Herald.

MR. MACK'S REPLY TO THE OPEN LETTER WRITTEN TO HIM BY MR. METCALFE

Buffalo, N. Y., May 18, 1903.—Mr. Richard L. Metcalfe, Editor World-Herald, Omaha Neb.—Dear Sir: In reply to your open letter, addressed to me through the columns of the World-Herald, I beg to acknowledge, first of all, the admirable spirit of frankness which animates its contents, and to assure you that, in response, I will endeavor to be guided by the same sentiment.

On the whole, it seems to me that we are not very far apart in the main, as you say: "We must agree that it is not too much to ask democrats to eliminate 'individual preferences'

if by this you refer to the candidate; and yet it will also be agreed that the candidate should be a man whose record and character would justify popular confidence that he would honestly endeavor to fulfill the platform pledges."

It goes without saying, I trust, that I would counsel the nomination of no man who could not command that confidence. You ask if I would counsel democrats to "become indifferent as to the character of the platform," though doing me the justice to add: "I am sure you would be the last to give such advice. A candidate must

represent his party, and he can do so only by subscribing, honestly and sincerely, to the tenets of that party as laid down in its national platform.

As to that platform: You ask if I believe that a platform which made no reference to the money question would avoid incurring the hostility of Mr. Cleveland and his followers. I do not view the matter in that light. Frankly, I think it would be very unwise to construct a platform without a financial plank, for finance is the bone and sinew of the government. As domestic virtue is that of the nation. Monetary conditions have

changed vastly since the adoption of the Chicago platform, thanks to entirely natural causes, first and foremost among which must be counted the remarkable increase in the supply of gold, by reason of the Klondike discoveries and other developments. This has brought about, practically, the same result which the democratic party sought to achieve through bimetallicism, thereby fully sustaining the position of the platform of 1896. How long this condition will last, no man can say. Should the natural supply of gold fall off to its former di-

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