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### A DEMOCRATIC OPPORTUNITY

Governor-elect Shallenberger, of Nebraska, in answering an inquiry propounded by the New York World, refers to the democratic victory in a number of states, and says:

"Democracy has a great opportunity for the future if these administrations result in good government and are satisfactory to the people. If successful they should make stepping-stones for party success in the nation when the people shall learn through them that democracy can be safely trusted with legislation and with power."

Governor Shallenberger is right. Democracy has an opportunity and much depends upon the way in which that opportunity is improved. In a number of states democratic senators are to be elected. Where the selection has been made by primaries, the legislature has nothing to do but to carry out the mandate of those primaries; where no selection has been made at the primaries, it is the duty of the legislatures to select democrats who are in sympathy with the purpose of the party and who will reflect with fidelity and ability the spirit that controls the party. A member of the legislature has no right to consider personal obligations when those obligations are opposed to the party's welfare. The welfare of the party ought to be above all personal considerations, and the welfare of the party can only be promoted by the promotion of the welfare of the people at large.

The states which have democratic governors and legislatures have an opportunity to advance the cause of the party by the enactment of legislation which will promote the public welfare. It would be well for each legislator to re-read the Denver platform and then help to crystallize into law every plank of that platform which is applicable to state affairs. Each legislator ought to re-read his state platform also and fulfill to the letter every pledge therein made. A platform is either binding upon those elected upon it, or it is a part of a conspiracy to defraud the public. If a platform does not bind, it ought not to be written, if it does bind it can not be honestly ignored. "Let the people rule," was the slogan of the late campaign, and while circumstances which our party could not control brought national defeat, the democratic officials elected are as sacredly pledged by the platform as if our party had won its national fight.

Governor Shallenberger's interpretation of the opportunity is a correct one, and our party will take a long step forward if in every state the suggestion is followed.



WHICH WILL PREVAIL?

## TARIFF REVISION

We shall now see what kind of tariff revision we are to have when the revision is entrusted to the "friends of tariff." The republican platform pledges the party "unequivocally" to a revision to be made "immediately" after inauguration. The word "unequivocally" is of course an admission that former promises have not been kept, and the word "immediately" is a confession that the patience of the public has been strained to the point of breaking. But the word "revision" may mean anything or nothing according to the opinion of those who interpret it. The tariff may be revised up or down or sideways, and it will be revised. Revision has height and depth; length and breadth; latitude and longitude—it has everything except certainty. Revision may be anything from the change of a comma to the repeal of the entire tariff law. Mr. Taft was very careful not to commit himself by any definite statement on the subject, but said that some of the schedules ought to be raised and others lowered, but this is not a very explicit statement. At another time he said that the revision would be a genuine one, but this, too, admits of interpretation. Again he said that the revision would probably be downward, but "probably" is not a very strong word.

The house of representatives initiates revenue measures, and the house of representatives is likely to be presided over by that pre-eminent standpatter, the Hon. Joe Cannon. The senate must concur in the tariff measure, and that will be presided over by that scarcely less eminent standpatter, James Schoolcraft Sherman. What kind of a tariff revision measure will it

be when it emerges from the hands of these "gods of the things as they ought not to be?"

The interests are already making their wants known; we are already beginning to hear the tales of woe brought forth by those who are standing on the brink of destruction and see catastrophe and universal destruction in any modification of the tariff. The papers that print the news that is paid for at so much a line, to renovate the worn-out arguments in favor of high tariff, will have plenty to do for the next few months piling blue prediction upon predictions blue, and gloomy prophecy upon prophecies of gloom. The confiding readers of the subsidized papers will be nervous wrecks by the time the bill is passed. They will feel that the country has barely escaped an industrial convulsion, and that the refusal of the republican leaders to permit a reduction of the tariff is all that has saved the country from the demnition bow-wows, and then the industries that have shut down and thrown their men out of employment in order to coerce congress will open up and the news columns will tell us of a restored prosperity—all due, as they will reiterate, to the confidence that the public has in republican sagacity. This will be the course if history repeats itself; and then the grinding will begin again—the exploiting will be renewed, and the masses will continue their tribute to the beneficiaries of republican privilege and favoritism. How long, O Lord! how long will it take the voters to understand the influences that dominate the republican party, and through that party, the government? How long must the average man be made the toy and