

TIMELY PREPARATION.

Soon after the re-election of Mr. McKinley he considered it necessary, or politic, to announce that he would not accept the third term of office, which a prominent partisan had already suggested. A little later, in a party assemblage, Mark Hanna was proposed as a suitable successor to the authority which he had so long wielded behind the scenes. And recently President Roosevelt declared his willingness to preside, by future election, over the destinies of the nation, as well as his determination not to attain to such distinction through any dirty work of political demagogues. These facts go to show that the leaders of the republican party are already thinking about and scheming for the election of 1904. On the other hand the hints and manoeuvres of the twice-defeated "Free Silver" candidate show that he is ready to court the "three-times-and-out" failure which is sure to overtake him, and not only himself, but the whole democratic party, if he and his shortsighted theories are again allowed to challenge public opinion. What the democrats want for a candidate is a man of education, experience and incorruptible honesty, and such a man can easily be found. If our republic is to be saved at all, it must be at the next election; a longer following of the present policy would commit us irremediably to "imperialism," with all the worn-out tyrannies which that term implies. And the overthrow of this attempted subversion of the government can be effected only through the advocacy and successful development of certain vital issues which are suggested by the present condition of affairs.

1.—Our financial system must be firmly established on the gold basis. The overweening conceit of a large proportion of our citizens, joined to their profound ignorance of the teachings of history upon this subject, lead them to demand a separate currency for our nation, in order to make our silver mines pay to the utmost, and to discharge the public debt at our own valuation. But the experience of the world is against such isolated attempts, and to yield to this senseless clamor would be to bring distress and ruin upon our industries and discredit upon our financial relations with wiser governments.

2.—Our colonial policy must be renounced and abolished at once and without reserve; not only for our future security as a republic, but also to wipe out the stain of deceit and treachery with which our recent "criminal aggression" has besmirched our national honor.

We know now that the great body of our people was tricked into the war with Spain, and that the war might easily have been avoided, had it not been for

the ambition of a few politicians and the greed of a few capitalists; we know too that the Filipinos trusted us to help free them from oppression, and that we returned their confidence by claiming them as our own booty. The whole world appreciates these facts, and our moral reputation has suffered infinite harm by our sharp practice, while our people as a whole show increasing indifference to the noblest ideals of national development and are becoming brutalized through familiarity with the degrading influences of war. It will take generations to undo the evil effects of this outburst of imperialism—well for us if we are able to check the tendency in time to avert complete and final disaster!

3.—An imperative need for the future security and worthy progress of our people is the entire and definite secularization of our public schools. We have trifled long enough with the sacred rights of our citizens in our attempt to mingle religion with the necessary instruction in practical knowledge, an attempt which never can satisfy anybody and which is a decided wrong to a large proportion of taxpayers. There is no use in saying that a simple, non-doctrinal service ought not to offend any person, of whatever belief. The fact is that it does offend.

Catholics do not accept the Protestant version of the Scriptures; Jews do not recognize the New Testament; Mohammedans, Confucians, Buddhists, Free Thinkers, ignore the whole Bible, and yet all of these have the same right to the privileges of the public school as the Protestants, who, as they have thus far been, and still are, in the majority, consider themselves competent to lay down the law for the whole nation. Even in states and communities where religious instruction in the public schools is forbidden by law, that law has been openly and persistently transgressed and never more boldly than within the last few years; each teacher evidently feeling that prevalent opinion, from the White House down, would sustain that rebellion. There must be an end of this! The religious character, or the sectarian bias, of the President should not be allowed to influence the conduct of persons appointed to direct the education of the young. There is not the slightest evidence that such religious exercises have any improving effect upon the pupils. If they think of anything serious at all, their minds are at work upon the lessons which are to follow the prayers, when success or failure in recitation means something of present practical importance. The solemn impressions which may be evoked by worship in a church or even at the family altar, have no chance to develop amid the suggestions of the school room. The stubborn adherence to the old custom of "opening school with prayer" is dictated by the superstitious notions

of teachers and officials who ignore the changed conditions which bestow a free education upon a free people, made up of almost every variety of nationality, custom and belief. Moreover, the school hours are only too short for imparting necessary secular knowledge; there is no time for training in visionary speculation, and, for that matter, morality can be better taught through the unchanging laws of natural science than by appeals to what is unknown and unknowable. A child learns something of sincerity and truth in the mathematical formula, "Three times one are three;" but is only bewildered by the paradoxical statement, "Three are one and one is three." But whatever arguments may be advanced for the continuance of religious teaching in the time allotted to secular instruction, these are all nullified by the evident and indisputable fact that the public school belongs to the whole nation and hence should be forever freed from whatever does not pertain to the scientific knowledge which it is necessary for all citizens to acquire.

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SEWARD'S JUSTIFICATION.

When William H. Seward thirty-four years ago negotiated with Russia the treaty for the purchase of Alaska for \$7,000,000, he provoked an outburst of sarcastic mirth throughout the land. As well pay seven million for the north pole, men said; there was nothing in Alaska but ice and mountains, some seals and a few tribes of very dirty Indians. No good thing could come out of Alaska, white men would not live there, trade was out of the question, Secretary Seward had thrown away our money.

Years afterward it was admitted that the seal herds were worth, perhaps, what we had paid for the territory whose waters they inhabit; but up to the time of the Klondike gold developments the general opinion as to Alaska remained unchanged. Although the seal herds are on the way to extinction, trade with the territory is now rapidly developing and new possibilities continually appear. The report of the Secretary of the Interior contains a great deal of interesting matter about Alaska. The new Nome gold district adds this season \$7,000,000 worth of the metal to the national wealth. The product of the salmon canneries for the year 1900 was valued at \$6,000,000, and the suggestion is made that salmon hatcheries be established by the government. Silver and platinum have been found and their are mountains of iron, to which, of course, nobody will pay any attention during the gold fever. Copper mines have been opened and Secretary Hitchcock is of the opinion that there should be a commissioner of mines for Alaska.—New York Times.