

THE POLITICAL CURRENTS APPARENTLY CHANGING.

Whenever the actual living issues of the day present an uncertain outlook the politicians very frequently try to run a presidential campaign upon some reminiscence by which the popular feelings can be excited. The indications at the moment are that that is the condition now of the Democratic party, which by reason of its success in 1882 is conceded to have the political right of way. The living issues, exclusive of monopoly, upon which both parties seem to be agreed, though neither can be said yet to have formulated a programme for the national treatment of the subject, are two in number, namely, the tariff and prohibition. These issues, says the *Bulletin*, are of such a nature that one, the tariff is likely to injure the Democrats, and the other, prohibition, to seriously reduce the Republican strength. The short course run by the Democrats this year on the question which they are beginning to regard with dismay is quite significant. They commenced in Iowa, where they have not the ghost of a show, with a flat-footed declaration in favor of a tariff for revenue only, which is merely a convertible phrase for the free trade which is established in England. They have brought up in Ohio with an ambitious platform intended to evade the issue. The platform is so constructed that both free traders and protectionists can find comfort in it.

It may be noted that the people and the politicians view public questions from totally different standpoints. The people look upon party organizations as the means for the establishment of principles. On the other hand, the politicians look upon principles as the means of getting into office. Whenever things get into the condition that the real issues of the hour are considered dangerous, recourse must be had to reminiscence. There is no other way by which the people can be divided. If the present is not to be handled, the past must be taken up. But the Democracy at present is not rich in reminiscences. Its little bit of military glory—the battle of New Orleans—has faded out beside the gigantic struggles of the civil war. The only thing it can rake up from the past is the alleged political wrong of 1876. It is thought that an appeal more or less effective can be made for the Presidential ticket, which they hold was really elected in that year. A call can be made on the eternal verities for support. The whole story of the 8 to 7 arrangement can be ripped up with advantage. It is true that much of the record relates to the stupidity of that party. But even that may not be out of place in an organization demanding justice at the hands of the American people.

The course of the Republicans on prohibition has been somewhat similar. They commenced this year in Iowa—which seems to be a starting point for both parties, but from causes diametrically opposite—with an unequivocal approval of prohibition; and they have just come to a full stop in Pennsylvania without any reference to the subject at all. In the circuit from one state to another, as among the Democrats on the tariff, the issue shades off nicely. In Ohio prohibition takes the form of high license, with a lien on the premises; in Illinois, high license, pure and simple; in Nebraska, high license, graded by population. There can be no doubt of the significance of these two movements. The Democrats do not wish to fight the Republicans on the tariff—the Republicans have no inclination to measure swords with the Democrats on prohibition. They are on the one side or the other—either taking refuge in unmeaning generalities or dropping the subject altogether.

If Tilden should be renominated by the Democrats in 1884 the Republicans are certain to make

the fight on a like basis. They have an enormous stock of available reminiscences yet on hand. It is of all characters—military and civil. But the military is always the more preferable, for it is not subject to analysis. It is always taken for granted that the great military leader, sword in hand, led his troops to victory. The election of Grant twice signified the final triumph of the government over the Rebellion. But there are subordinate events which have not yet been utilized. There is a large amount of effective work in the "March to the Sea." Sherman's bummers could be brought on the stage to soften the general effects. And W. T. Sherman is a peculiar and somewhat original character. He is an angular but at the same time a strong man. If he were president he would have things pretty much his own way. His career indicates that he would not fall so completely under the influence of his immediate friends as Grant did. But he has one drawback of which men speak in undertones. That drawback is that his wife is a Catholic and his son a priest. For a long time in England the question of religion went to the very root of the social structure. A Catholic priest on the throne meant revolution. So far as researches have been made in our history no such conditions ever existed in this country. The objection seems to have been inherited, but to what extent has never really been demonstrated.

The most remarkable thing about our politics, however, is the readiness with which the people seem to fall into whatever lines the party managers may assign them. If it should be decided by the Democrats to abandon the real and vital issues of the time and fall back on the reminiscences of 1876, the war will at once be opened all along the line on Kellogg, the Louisiana Returning Board and the Electoral Commission. The return fire is sure to be quite as hot. Nephew Pelton will be resurrected. Cronin's rubicund nose will again fill a large space in political literature. But of one proposition eastern sentimentalists may be assured:—there is a definite and practical question in the Pacific states, which swallow up all others. The candidate who is not sound on that proposition, no matter whether he may be put forward as the exponent of a practical question, or the incarnation of a reminiscence, will not stand any chance whatever in this part of the republic. That proposition is the continued exclusion of the unassimilable pagan foreigners from China, and the stopping up of the holes which the small men of the present administration have succeeded in drilling in the act relating to that subject.

General Raun, ex-commissioner of internal revenue, speaking of the effort toward the abolition of the stamp tax, is quoted as having said, a day or two ago, that the revenue to be derived from whisky and beer would probably amount to \$100,000,000, and that the repeal of all other internal revenue tax laws can be made with safety. It is the purpose of certain republican members of congress to introduce, at the next session, a bill abolishing all internal revenue taxes, except those upon malt and spirituous liquors.

The presidential party will leave Rawlins on the Union Pacific the 3d of August. It will consist of President Arthur, Governor Crosby of Montana, Secretary Lincoln, General Sheridan, Chancellor Rollins of New York, and Senator Vest. They will travel over the mountains of Wyoming to the Yellowstone park, and then east over the Northern Pacific.

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An Australian Walking Tour.

A walking tour of a very remarkable character has just been completed by Mr. Ernest Morrison, son of Mr. George Morrison of the Geelong Scotch college. He had already achieved some reputation as a traveler, having a few years ago, during a holiday vacation, walked overland from Queensland to Adelaide. On this occasion, however, he undertook, and has successfully completed, the ambitious task of traversing the continent of Australia from the Gulf of Carpentaria to Melbourne.

Leaving Normantown on the week before Christmas, he passed through Clonacary, followed down Diamantina and the Thomson, and struck the Bulloo at Thargomindah and the Paroo at Hungerford. Following then the Paroo he crossed the Darling at Wilcannia, the Lachlan at Booligal, the Murrumbidgee at Hay, and the Murray at Echuca. He walked the entire distance alone and unarmed generally sleeping in the open air. He was caught by the heavy rains above Thargomindah, and for 359 miles had nearly as much wading through water as walking. The journey of over 2,000 miles occupied just 120 days, his rate of traveling being greatly impeded by the weight he had to carry.—*Melbourne Argus*.



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