

simple," in the interest of dignity and morals. "Do away entirely," the Gazette says, as quoted by Izwi Labantu, "with the restrictions imposed by a Christian marriage, these are not necessary, and if the Natives understood the difficulties introduced by a Christian marriage they would hesitate to obtain the sanction of the Church to their union." The Native custom of dowry, for example, according to the late Rev. H. H. Dugmore, "is not a mere purchase. The cattle paid for the bride are divided among her male relations, and are considered by the law to be held in trust for the benefit of herself and children should she be left a widow. She can accordingly demand assistance from any of those who have partaken of her dowry, and her children can apply to them on the same ground for something to begin the world with. Nor can the husband ill-treat her with impunity. On experiencing any real grievance she can claim an asylum with her father again, until her husband has made such atonement as the case demands." "With the removal of dowry" under the Marriage Laws made for the Kafirs by the Europeans, says Izwi Labantu, "went the interest of the parents or guardians in the supervision of the conduct of their children, for putting it on its lowest ground that of self-interest, the dowry as a possible asset was always an incentive to the parents or guardians to protect their women folk." Izwi Labantu continues:

It is useless for the civilizee to sneer at these customs, either as being crude or un-Christian. The Christian marriage is an ideal union, to which only those aspire who have accepted the Christian faith, and are guided by Christian principles. But they are wrong who imagine that sound principles cannot be found at the root of so called Pagan customs, and it would speak better for the Christianity of the present day if it would put aside much of its pharisaical holiness and in its civil and ecclesiastical methods condescend for once to admit that there is much in Kafir custom which, with a judicious excision of bad features and the regulation of the good, would immensely improve the present native marriage laws, and besides adding to the status and self respect of women in native society, would raise the social standard of the people themselves.

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### Labor and Land.

Sir Oliver Lodge has a narrow view of what it would mean to Labor to get back to the land. Like a good many other people, he thinks of land in terms of gardens and cottages and never in terms of mines and forests and factories and railroads and skyscrapers—in a setting of small individual production, and never in one of gigantic industrialism specialized. But he does perceive, nar-

rowly though it be, that land monopoly and dis-employment are correlative conditions, and that the former is the cause of the latter. After all, that is enough to perceive—to begin with.

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### The Single Tax in Glasgow.

In an editorial article recently (p. 603) on the single tax movement in Great Britain, we stated that "there is no longer a distinct single tax majority in the Glasgow city council." This is a mistake. "Land Values" for November gives the facts:

At no time has the Glasgow Town Council been stronger for the question, or more emphatic. The very last pronouncement it made in favor of the Government's land values policy, on December 12, 1907, the vote was 45 to 24 in favor. The resolution was in the following terms:— (1) To re-affirm their previous resolution in favor generally of the principle of Taxation of Land Values; (2) to memorialise the Government to re-introduce and press forward in the next session of Parliament their bill of last session for the ascertainment of Land Values, or a bill on similar lines; and (3) to appoint a sub-committee to report to the Parliamentary bills committee if, and when, any proposal is introduced in the next session of Parliament on the subject of Land Values. The Council has since been inactive on the question. No doubt they take the view that the question is now in the hands of the Government; but there is nothing to prevent them again bringing the matter before the powers that be at St. Stephens. In view of the coming municipal elections, the Scottish League has issued a fighting manifesto to the electors on the need for action by the Council, which will no doubt provoke some healthy discussion in the various wards to be contested.

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### AMERICAN POLITICS—LOOKING BACKWARD IN ORDER TO GO AHEAD.

That "history repeats itself" has become a commonplace—so much of one that we are all prone to deny to the idea the value it really possesses. At the best it seems fatalistic; yet its scientific soundness might be demonstrated. The phrase is significant at any rate of something which may be profoundly true.

We know, for illustration, that the history of mineral crystallization is repetitional, that the history of vegetation is so, and that the history of individual animals is likewise so in physical form. For crystallization follows an order or law under which like conditions produce like results, and so do vegetation and animal life—not identical results, for conditions vary; but like results in so far as conditions are like. Though no object re-

produces itself in physical reproduction, its reproductions resemble it on a higher or a lower level according to the progressive or the reactionary influences by which it is in part conditioned. Such things we know. They are scientifically demonstrated, and rationally explainable. There is no fatalism about the matter, except as natural law and order may be called fatalistic. In the physical realm of evolution, therefore, history does repeat itself.

Why, then, should we consider it fatalistic to say that social "history repeats itself"? Are there not social as well as physical laws? Is there not an order of social development under which, analogous to physical growth, like conditions produce like results? And may not this order be rationally explained by the hypotheses that human nature is always the same? Given the unchangeableness of human nature as a factor, and must not any set of social facts, proceeding as all facts do from anterior or ancestral sets of facts, produce in social history like results from like conditions? Isn't it some such correlation, indeed, that determines social evolution and fixes its landmarks of progress or reaction?

Without attempting, however, to follow this fundamental thought, but accepting as essentially true the observation regarding human society that "history repeats itself," American voters may find it advantageous to cast a glance, in that light, upon the present condition of party politics in the United States. Let them look backward, in order that they may go ahead.

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#### Political "Eras of Good Feeling."

There have been four eras of single party dominance in the political history of the United States, and the misty outlines of a fifth seem now to be visible.

By single party dominance we allude to political junctures at which there is no effective or hopeful opposition to the party in power,—the former party in opposition having gone out of existence or become moribund, and no reorganization or new organization having yet evolved from this one-sided state of party politics.

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The most definite of these eras, that which ended with the second term of President Monroe, is historically known as "the era of good feeling." It was in fact an era of the bitterest feeling. Although contests between parties had come temporarily to an end, factional controversies within the unopposed party in power were ferocious. To

characterize such a period as an "era of good feeling," is to take liberties with language.

But as an arbitrary name for periods of single party dominance, it will do as well as any other; all the more so, perhaps, since all such periods are essentially like that to which this name has been attached distinctively. We shall therefore refer to these periods in American political history as "eras of good feeling," meaning however not to characterize them but only to name them for identification.

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#### First "Era of Good Feeling"—1776-83.

The first American "era of good feeling,"—using the term simply as a name and not as a characterization—was in the period of the Revolutionary War.

The Tory party had been "licked to a frazzle," as President Roosevelt might have expressed it if he had been at Yorktown to receive the sword of Cornwallis. Only the Whig party remained, and as this had no opposition party to contend with, there was an "era of good feeling."

But even in the midst of war, the Whig party was torn by faction.

When peace returned, those Whig factions generated new party organizations. They did so spontaneously under the impulse of a new practical question which involved the principle that underlies every realignment of political parties,—the principle of aristocracy or democracy, of government of all "by the best" or government of all by all.

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The practical question which in the contest between Whig and Tory had given form to the underlying principle, was the question of independence. Like their Scottish prototypes, our Whigs were opposed to monarchy, but our Tories supported it.

When this concrete issue had been settled at home by the Declaration of Independence, the Tory party disintegrated, leaving the Whigs in practically undisputed possession of the political field; and when its settlement had been confirmed abroad as well as at home by the British surrender at Yorktown, the Whig party itself was without a function.

Conditions were ripe, therefore, for alignment of the Whig factions into opposing parties; and this took place as soon as the old principle of aristocracy or democracy had evolved a new and burning practical question.

Thereupon the first "era of good feeling" came to an end.

**Second "Era of Good Feeling"—1789-96.**

Organic federation or an inorganic league of States, the burning question which terminated the first "era of good feeling," led on to the second.

Since the aristocratic tendency is toward centralized or imperial power, and the democratic tendency is away from centralization and toward local self-government, Whigs of aristocratic mind naturally espoused the cause of federation, and those of democratic mind as naturally opposed it.

To be sure, all federationists were not aristocrats, nor all anti-federationists democrats, nor was either body extremist as a whole. We are describing the tendency of the two movements and the natural impulses of their voters, not the fundamental philosophy of persons nor even of parties.

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This controversy between the Federalist and the Anti-Federal parties, which sprang out of the Revolutionary Whig party as already stated, was of short duration. The adoption of the Federal Constitution settled it.

But the Federalist party did not disintegrate then, as the Whig party had when the Revolution was over. It became the only party, and during Washington's two administrations it remained in power unopposed.

So the administrations of President Washington marked our second "era of good feeling."

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But as before and since, factional feeling within the Federalist party ran high. It found expression among the people, in Congress, and between Hamilton and Jefferson in President Washington's cabinet. A new and burning question embodying in concrete form the old principle of aristocracy or democracy, had arisen.

Over this question factions fought within the Federalist party, and upon it an opposition party was formed. The question hinged upon the opposing contention of "loose" or "strict" construction of the Constitution,—upon whether that document should be interpreted loosely, so as to give power to the Federal government by mere implication; or strictly, so as to withhold all power from the Federal government except such as the States had already or might thereafter confer in express terms.

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One faction of Federalists were loose constructionists; the other were strict constructionists. The organization by the latter of an opposition

party, marked the end of the second "era of good feeling."

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**Third "Era of Good Feeling"—1816-28.**

Democratic-Republican was the name of the new party. It ultimately absorbed the Federalists and came into unopposed power, thereby giving to American history the third "era of good feeling."

In those days "democratic" had disagreeable connotations, and as the new party grew into respectability with its growth in power through accessions of un-democratic Federalists, it called itself simply Republican.

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At the first Presidential election after this split into parties, the Federalists were victorious. They elected John Adams. But four years later, in 1800, they were defeated by the Republicans under Jefferson; and in 1804 they received only 14 electoral votes in a total of 176.

After that, the Federalists were an opposition party in little more than name. Their electoral vote was only 47 out of 175 in 1808, rising to 89 out of 217 in 1812, but falling to 34 out of 217 in 1816, and to a single vote out of 232 in 1820.

With the latter election, the Federalist party went out of existence and the third "era of good feeling" set in, the one to which that name is distinctively given.

Once more there was only one political party of any power or hope of power, and this was the Republican.

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But political parties are only aggregations of persons. The dissolution, therefore, of the Federalist party meant merely that its sympathizers had floated into the old Republican party of Jefferson, carrying with them their loose construction ideas. In fact, during a large part of the period when the Federalists were engaged in a futile struggle to regain power, the Republican party was losing its democratic principles with the Democratic part of its name, through accessions of men of un-democratic principle from the weaker party. The fundamental issue of aristocracy or democracy began therefore to agitate the old Republican party within, just as it had the old Whig party and the old Federalist party when opposition fell away without.

The practical question again was loose or strict construction; but the specific subjects of factional contention had passed from points relating to personal liberty and foreign aggressions, to

protective tariffs and sectionalism tinged with slavery problems.

At the Presidential election of 1828, factionalism having again generated partyism, our third "era of good feeling" passed into history.

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#### Fourth "Era of Good Feeling"—1860-76.

The dominant faction of the old Republican party appeared at the election of 1828 as the National Republican party, with President John Quincy Adams for its candidate; the weaker faction appeared as the Democratic party. Both the Federalist and the Republican parties had now passed away.

About 1834 the National Republicans, the Anti-Masons, and some of the Democrats came together in a new party, calling itself the Whig, a name which by this time had ceased to imply democracy, as it did when used in contradistinction to Tory. It had now come to imply an aristocratic trend. Meanwhile Jackson had been elected as the Democratic candidate in 1828 and re-elected in 1832; and not long afterwards party conventions were substituted for Congressional caucuses for making Presidential nominations.

The new Whig party lost the election of 1836 to the Democrats under Van Buren, but gained that of 1840 with Harrison by an electoral vote of 234 to 60. The popular vote, however, was 1,275,017 to 1,128,702—a Whig plurality of only 146,305.

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By this time slavery questions had raised the underlying issue of aristocracy or democracy to a white heat. But it remained an underlying principle. The form it took had to do with superficial problems, as is the rule.

Only one party stood for the bare principle, and this party died. As early as 1833 the National Anti-Slavery Society had become active. About 1839 one of the factions of this society advocated political action, and in 1840 the resulting Liberty party polled a vote of only 7,059 in an aggregate of 2,410,778. It polled a much larger vote in 1844—62,300 in an aggregate of 2,698,611—but in 1848 merged with the Free Soil party, made up primarily of the "barn-burners" of New York, who were in local contention with the "hunkers," both of the Democratic party. The Free Soilers polled 291,263 votes in 1848, out of nearly 2,900,000, and in 1852 fell to 156,149 out of nearly 3,000,000.

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The Whigs had in the meantime been driven

from power in 1844 by a small popular plurality and an electoral vote of 170 to 105, but had recovered power in 1848 by a small popular plurality and an electoral vote of 163 to 127, only to lose power again in 1852.

Its last loss of power was with deadly emphasis,—the popular plurality against it being five or six times more than ever before, and its electoral vote only 42 out of 296.

The defeat of the Whigs was so crushing that the fourth "era of good feeling" would doubtless have begun at that time, had not a new party of the first rank been at once generated by the aggressive spirit with which the Democratic party, thus entrenched in power, dealt with the question of extending slavery into the Territories.

This drove the anti-slavery Whigs into factional opposition and then into coalition with the Free Soil Democrats. Calling themselves anti-Nebraska men at first, that coalition had by 1856 become the Republican party.

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At the election of 1856 the new party secured 114 electoral votes to 174 for Buchanan. The Whig party had none. Four years later the Republican party elected Lincoln, and from 1860 to 1876 we were in our fourth "era of good feeling." There was but one political party with any power. The Democrats made a campaign in 1864, but got only 21 electoral votes to 212 for the Republicans. In 1868 it got 80 to 214, but in 1872 it fell to 42 to 286. It was a moribund party.

Through factional differences in the Republican party, however, the Democratic party revived in 1876, and thereby terminated our fourth "era of good feeling."

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With the end of the war the question of strict or loose construction of the Constitution really passed out of our politics. Its influence lingered, however, and this probably accounts largely for the revival of the Democratic party in the '70's instead of the organization of a new party of opposition to the party in power.

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#### Fifth "Era of Good Feeling"—1894—?

The realignment of parties at the close of the fourth "era of good feeling," though different in form was the same essentially as in the three previous eras of similar character.

The new parties did not indeed spring out of factional fights within the party in power; but

the old Democratic party was resurrected by an infusion of Democratic blood from the Republican party.

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In this revival, the Democrats got in 1876, 184 electoral votes to 185 for the Republicans; in 1880, 155 to 214; in 1884, 219 to 182; in 1888, 168 to 233; and in 1892, 277 to 145. But in 1894 the Congressional elections left the party stranded, with a defeat as crushing as those of the Federalists in 1804 to 1816, or that of the Whigs in 1852.

Since then the present Republican party has been as truly the only party of power in our national politics as were the old Republicans from 1804 to 1828, or the Democrats from 1860 to 1876. In 1896 the Democrats had only 176 electoral votes to 271 for the Republicans, in 1900 only 155 to 292, in 1904 only 140 to 336, and in 1908 only 162 to 321.

In these circumstances it would seem that we have entered upon our fifth "era of good feeling." The Republican party is entrenched in power beyond danger apparently from assault from without. It is doubtful if anything but factions within can dislodge it—factions generated by differences over principles and not over spoils.

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When this "era of good feeling" shall end, circumstances only can determine. But in the light of past political experience, we may with reason consider the probabilities.

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#### **The Democratic Party Moribund.**

The probability of a revival of the Democratic party is not encouraging.

Recent experience seems to demonstrate that it is in the plight of the Whig party of the early '50's, when slavery was the issue and the Whig party was composed partly of pro-slavery men and partly of anti-slavery men. For to-day, when industrial questions are insistent, is not the Democratic party composed partly of democratic and partly of plutocratic elements? And are not these elements irreconcilable—as much so as were pro-slavery and anti-slavery Whigs?

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If no tests had been made, it might be reasonably inferred that the dominance of either influence within the Democratic party—democratic or plutocratic—would attract to it kindred influences from other sources. That is the inference which has thus far prevailed.

But the reverse has proved to be true. In 1896 and 1900 the Democratic party, under progressive control, lost heavily. In 1904, under reactionary control, it again lost heavily. In 1908, once more under progressive control, it lost as heavily as in 1896 and 1900 and only less heavily than in 1904. The circumstances, moreover, make the loss of 1908 seem hopeless.

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Let the reason be what it may, the fact is obtrusive that the historic Democratic party, now that the question of strict or loose construction of the Constitution no longer lingers in our politics, cannot draw to itself the elements necessary for an effective opposition to the party in power.

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#### **Hopelessness of Side Parties:**

Were that conclusion established, citizens of progressive tendencies might instinctively turn toward one of the side parties for a political home.

But if our political history has any lessons to offer, none of these parties as at present organized, can grow into an effective opposition, much less into power. For side parties have been common to the politics of this country since the introduction of conventions in the early '30's, and their story is one of uniform failure—as parties.

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The Anti-Masonic party, which polled 2½ per cent of the popular vote at the election of 1832, lived no longer.

The Liberal party, which polled 3/10 of 1 per cent at the election of 1840 and 2⅓ per cent at the election of 1844, lost its identity in the Free Soil party in 1848.

The Free Soil party, which polled 10 per cent of the popular vote at the election of 1848, and dropped to 5 per cent at the election of 1852, dissolved into the Republican party in 1856.

The American ("Know-Nothing") party, which polled 21½ per cent at the election of 1856 was never heard of again.

There were four parties at the election of 1860, but three of them were merely fragments of the shattered Democrats, Whigs, and Americans.

In 1872 a break from the Republican party, the Liberal Republicans, fused with the Democrats and died in the common defeat—as a party.

In that year, also, a Temperance party and a Labor party appeared, but polled insignificant votes or none. The Temperance party had become

the Prohibition party in 1876, polling 1/10 of 1 per cent, and the Labor party had become the Greenback party, polling quite 1 per cent.

The Greenback party rose in its popular vote to 3 1/3 per cent in 1880, but fell in 1884 to 1 1/2 per cent, and lost its identity in 1888 in the Union Labor party which polled 1 1/3 per cent.

The Union Labor party lost its identity in turn, in 1892, in the People's party, a spontaneous local movement which had done wonders in Kansas, but soon sank into political insignificance, although its popular vote was 9 per cent in 1892 and it had also an electoral vote of 22.

The Prohibition party still figures in the count. Reported as "scattering" in 1880, its vote rose to 1 1/2 per cent in 1884, and to 2 per cent in 1888. Remaining at 2 per cent in 1892 it fell to 1 per cent in 1896, rose to 1 1/2 in 1900, almost to 2 in 1904, and seems to have receded still further in 1908.

The Gold Democrats broke away for a single campaign in 1896, but polled less than 1 per cent of the popular vote.

The Socialist party (or parties) the youngest of the only two (or three) side parties that survive, made its first appearance in Presidential election returns in 1896, when it polled 3/10 of 1 per cent. In 1900 it had split into two parties, which polled in the aggregate 9/10 of 1 per cent, and in 1904 the aggregate was 3 1/5 per cent. The percentage for 1908 is not yet known, but if the popular vote in Illinois is indicative it will be much below the percentage of 1904.

Another side party, the Independence (or Hearst) party, appeared at the election of 1908. The popular vote is not yet known, but is evidently only a small fraction of 1 per cent.

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This review of our side-party history can lead only to the conclusion that side-parties do not grow from little to big in the United States.

Unless a new party spring at once into first or second place, as the Republican party did in 1856, it either dies at once or lingers as a derelict upon the political seas.

For this there is a good explanation.

Under our electoral system—resting as it does upon pluralities instead of majorities,—progressive voters who have a second choice, as all progressives have unless they are hermitic doctrinaires, will not risk voting for a hopeless first choice when there is hope of electing their second choice. If it took a majority to elect, as in the parliamentary elections of continental Eu-

rope, third parties might grow steadily; for, in that case the progressive who favored a third party as his first choice, could vote with it without thereby casting half a vote against his second choice.

As it is, however, side-parties in the United States cannot draw their own full strength. The Prohibitionists do not get the full prohibition vote; the Socialists do not get the full socialist vote. And inasmuch as it is not in human nature—outside of doctrinaire human nature—for voters to "plug" along, election after election, with a party polling only an absurdly small percentage of the popular vote, side parties naturally die after two or three elections. If they live at all, it is only in a dead-and-alive way, as paper organizations, maintained by a few devoted souls who neglect to distinguish between political education, which depends upon apostleship, and political action, which depends upon numbers.

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That alone is cause enough to discourage hope from existing side parties for political purposes. But there are other good reasons why thoughtful progressives should hesitate to join them.

Only a prohibitionist can join the Prohibition party in good faith; for prohibition is an indispensable article of its doctrine.

Only a Socialist in the doctrinaire sense, can join the Socialist party in good faith; for class crystalization—the "class-conscious" doctrine—is an indispensable part of its creed.

Such is the moral aspect of the matter.

On the practical side, it is to be considered that if the mass of the people were in the future spontaneously to divide into two great movements on the question of prohibition, the new prohibition movement would not join the present Prohibition party. Or, if this great division were over the question of socialism, the new socialist movement would not join either of the present Socialist parties.

It might be very snobbish of them, but they would know not the Josephs of prohibition, or of socialism, as the case might be, and would form their own new party for their own new movement. They would think it of doubtful expediency to pour new political wine into old political bottles.

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Under those circumstances the present side-parties, whether Socialist or Prohibitionist, would perform simply in the role of obstructionists.

Claiming to be the "original Jacobs," they

would afford aid and comfort, not to the new party that had accepted their principles, but to the party that was opposing their principles. For there is that about human nature which tends strongly to develop in organized men a love for their organization which supplants their love for its cause.

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#### The Outlook for the Future.

What then remains for fundamental democrats to do?

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If the Republican party, entrenched in power, is now given over to plutocracy as 60 years ago the Democratic party, entrenched in power, was given over to slaveocracy; if the Democratic party can draw to itself neither the powerful plutocratic elements that would make it strongly plutocratic, nor the democratic masses who would make it truly democratic; and if the existing side parties afford no encouragement,—if all this is true, what is the outlook for the future?

No one can answer that question with certainty. But judging the future by the past, assuming that history will repeat itself in the sense that like conditions produce like results, a reasonable answer is possible.

From the historical viewpoint, the outlook for the future is disruption of the Republican party and the formation of a new party. Not a manufactured new party, but a new party spontaneously generated by some burning question of immediate national concern, involving the essential principle of aristocracy versus democracy.

Whatever that concrete question might be, it would tend to shatter the party in power and precipitate an opposition party commanding the support of one of the factions or another into which the Republican party is as certain to divide as history can foretell events.

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The revolting party might spring from the dominant faction of the party in power, as did the National Republicans in 1828; or from its dominated faction, as did the Democratic-Republicans in 1796; or from its dominated faction in coalition with fragments of the old opposition, as did the Republican party in 1856. But whatever the mere form of readjustment, political history points with remarkable definiteness to an outcome of that general character.

It points, too, to an outcome in particular respects not unlike the one indicated above. The coming and the going of four "eras of good feel-

ing" in our history, each closely resembling the others in detail as well as character, is suggestive at least of the manner in which the fifth may go.

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Meanwhile none of us can do better than wait with patience, promoting our own educational work in our several ways as best we can, and making no very definite changes of political association, until the dawn of coming events shall have thrown further light upon the political pathway.

Only one thing is as yet perfectly clear.

It is the importance of an unobstructed field for the spontaneous revolt from plutocracy when it shall occur. The less and the weaker the mere party loyalty which that revolt encounters—whether loyalty to old parties or to new ones,—the better for the cause of progress toward fundamental democracy.

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## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

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### DANIEL KIEFER AND "THE PUBLIC."

Cincinnati, O., November 9—The Public owes its continuance through this year to those of its subscribers who responded (see vol. x, pages 937, 944, 1037, 1081, 1088; and vol. xi, pages 21, 165, 260, 356, 404, 764) to the call I made last Winter for a "sustention fund." In addition to these favorable responses there were letters from a very large number regretting their inability to help for the current year, but hoping that they would be able to contribute when the second year's call should be made. To those and the others who made no acknowledgment of the circular letter of last Winter for a three years' fund, I beg to quote from a circular letter now in the mails to those who are already contributors:

For myself, I have had rich compensation for my part in the work, in the association it brought me with rare minds the world over, to whom the cause so nobly served by The Public is sacred, and who have assumed their share of the cost not as a burden but as a blessing.

Notwithstanding this has been a panic year, the outlook for The Public has materially improved. Whether or not my hopes be realized, that a three year sustention period might put the paper beyond need of further subsidy, there are those who argue that The Public must nevertheless be continued. If it does not get upon a paying basis these friends urge that it be sustained continuously by the kind of support you have shared in this year, and thus be kept going in its needed and deserved position of independence.

Not only have you helped to make headway in an effort to permanently solve the problem of sustaining The Public, but you have enabled me to distribute the load which was carried for several years by its editors and a few friends. You have also proved that you too are capable of that highest test of devotion which finds happiness in sacrifice for a cause.