The Chatham Record

THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 1884.

H. A. LONDON, Editor.

TILDEN DECLINES.

Hon. Samuel J. Tilden has published a letter in which he positively declines to become the democratic candidate for President, because of his age and physical condition, stating explicitly that he "cannot now assume the labors of the administration or of the canvass". This letter was written and published because it was generally conceded that he would be tendered the nomination. Seldom has it been the good fortune of any American to be so great a favorite and wield such an influence with his party as Mr. Tilden, and there is an universal expression of regret that he will not accept the nomination and lead the democratic hosts on to a glorious victory. How great a contrast is now presented between him and Hayes who fraudulently obtained the Presidency to which Tilden had been elected! For Hayes has sunk so low that there is none so poor as to do him reverence, and he is contemned by his own party.

But while we regret that Mr Tilden declines, because we wished the great fraud of 1876 to be avenged by him, yet there are many other democrats who can beat Blaine and worthily fill the high office of President. Conspicuous among them is Bayard, who is America's model statesman and one of the purest men ever in public life. He has the confidence and esteem of all good men regardless of politics, and would, as our candidate, receive the hearty support of the moderate republicans and independent voters of the Northern States. We believe that Bayard and McDonald would sweep the country like a tidal wave, and we sincerely hope they may be the nominees of the democratic national convention. But the outlook now indicates the nomination of Gov. Cleveland, of New York, and it is probable that he would be a more available candidate than Bayard. We made this prediction in 1882 when he was elected Governor of New York by so large a majority, and all the signs now point to him as the democratic nominee.

THE POLITICAL OUTLOOK.

The prospects for democratic success both in the State and nation were never brighter than now. An overwhelming victory seems almost assured. The passions and prejudices aroused by the late war have in a great measure subsided, and the "bloody shirt"—the banner that has led the republicans to so many victories—has now lost its magic power. Men are now beginning to listen to appeals to their judgment and are no longer blinded by passion. The nomination of Blaine, "the tattooed candidate", has disgusted the better element of the Northern people, without regard to party, and a large number of republican papers have openly declared their dissatisfaction. The New York Times, which is the leading republican paper in the United States, has positively declared that it will not support him. While the candidates of the Chicago convention have thus divided the republicans of the North, its platform has solidly united the democrats of the South. Its pledge to promote legislation in favor of civil rights makes the South solid indeed. This issue of civil rights will be unfortunate to the republican party and calamitous to the country. The people of the South, of both races, deprecate the agitation of this question, which can only tend to the injury of both the whites and blacks. The latter do not really want it and the former certainly will not allow it. The whites and blacks in the South are now living together amicably and peaceably, each race dependent on the other, and it is deeply to be regretted that race prejudices will be excited by this issue of civil rights.

In this State we have never known the political outlook more encouraging to the democrats than it is now. The party has seldom ever been so thoroughly united. All our family feuds seem to have been settled and the party is no longer divided by dissensions between our leaders. The breach between the friends of Vance and Merrimon has been happily closed by the election of one to the position of United States Senator and of the other to the Supreme Court. The contest between the admirers of Stedman and Waddell has been terminated, and New Hanover county honors itself in complimenting both of these talented gentlemen. Her delegates are instructed for Stedman for Lieutenant-Governor and for Waddell for Congress. Harmony prevails and the democracy of North Carolina will give a hearty and united support to the nominees of their convention to be held next week, and with solid column and unbroken ranks will march on to a brilliant victory in November next!

Tilden's Letter.

Tilden's letter is such an able one that we publish it entire. It is addressed to the Chairman of the democratic State executive committee of New York, and is as follows:

NEW YORK, June 10, 1884.

In my letter of June 18, 1880, addressed to the delegates from the State of New York to the Democratic National Convention, I said:

Having now borne faithfully my full share of labor and care in the public service, and wearing the marks of its burdens, I desire nothing so much as an honorable discharge. I wish to lay down the honors and toils of even quasi party leadership and to seek the repose of private life.

In renouncing renomination for the Presidency, I do so with no doubt in my mind as to the vote of the State of New York, or of the United States, but because I believe that it is a renunciation of reelection to the Presidency.

To those who think my renomination and reelection indispensible to an effectual vindication of the right of the people to elect their rulers—violated in my person—I have accorded as long a reserve of my decision as possible, but I cannot overcome my repugnance to enter into a new engagement which involves four years of ceaseless toil.

The dignity of the Presidential office is above a merely personal ambition, but it creates in me no illusion. Its value is as a great power for good to the country. I said four years ago in accepting the nomination:

"Knowing as I do, therefore, from fresh experience, how great the difference is between guiding through an official routine and working out of a reform of systems and policies, it is impossible for me to contemplate what needs to be done in the Federal Administration without an anxious sense of the difficulties of the undertaking. If summoned by the suffrages of my countrymen to attempt this work, I shall endeavor, with God's help, to be the efficient instrument of their will."

Such a work of renovation, after many years of misrule, such a reform of systems and purposes, to which I would cheerfully have sacrificed all that remained to me of health and life, is now I fear beyond my strength.

My purpose to withdraw from further political service dates from grounds of it were at that time well known to you and to others, and when at Cincinnati, though respecting my wishes yourself, you communicated to me an appeal from many valued friends to reconsider that purpose, I reiterated my determination unconditionally.

In the four years which have since elapsed nothing has occurred to weaken, but everything to strengthen, the considerations which induced my withdrawal from public life. To all who have addressed me on the subject my intentions have been frankly communicated. Several of my most confidential friends, under the sanction of their own names, have publicly stated my determination to be irrevocable. That I have given no room to question the sincerity of my purpose, I have reason to believe. The appeal made to me by the democratic national convention, mentioning no name, is entirely free from the most distant suspicion that it is anything else than what it purports to be, a strong desire of a united party to follow the path of duty, as I conceive it, and I have endeavored to follow it in accordance with my judgment of duty.

I believe that there is no instrumentality in human society so potential in its influence upon mankind for good or evil as the governmental machinery for administering justice and for making and executing laws. Not all the eleemosynary institutions of private benevolence to which philanthropists may devote their lives are so fruitful in benefits as the rescue and preservation of this machinery from the perversions that make it the instrument of conspiracy, fraud and crime against the most sacred rights and interests of the people.

For fifty years, as a private citizen, never contemplating an official career, I have devoted at least as much thought and effort to the duty of influencing aright the action of the governmental institutions of my country as to all other objects. I have never accepted official service except for a brief period for a special purpose, and only when the occasion seemed to require from me that sacrifice of private preferences to the public welfare.

I undertook the State administration of New York because it was supposed in that way only could the Executive power be arrayed on the side of the reforms to which, as a private citizen, I had given three years of my life.

I accepted the nomination for the Presidency in 1876 because of the general conviction that my candidacy would best present the issue of reform which the Democratic majority of the people desired to have worked out in the Federal Government as it had been in that of the State of New York. I believed that I had strength enough then to renovate the administration of the Government of the United States, and at the close of my term to hand over the great trust to a successor faithful to the same policy.

Though anxious to seek the repose of private life, I nevertheless acted upon the idea that every power is a trust, and involves a duty. In reply to the address of the committee communicating my admission, I depicted the difficulties of the undertaking, and likened my feelings in engaging in it to those of a soldier entering battle, but I did not withhold the entire consecration of my powers to the public service.

Twenty years of continuous maladministration, under the demoralizing influence of intestine war and of bad finance, have infected the whole governmental system of the United States with the cancerous growths of false construction and corrupt practices. Powerful classes have acquired pecuniary interests in official abuses, and the moral standards of the people have been impaired. To redress these evils is a work of great difficulty and labor, and cannot be accomplished without the most energetic and efficient personal action on the part of the Chief Executive of the Republic.

The canvass and administration which it is desired that I should undertake would embrace a period of nearly five years. Nor can I admit any illusion as to their burdens. Three years of experience in the endeavor to reform the municipal government of the city of New York and two years of experience in renovating the administration of the State of New York have made me familiar with the requirements of such a work.

At the present time, the considerations which induced my action in 1880 have become imperative. I ought not to assume a task which I have not the physical strength to carry through. To reform the administration of the Federal Government; to realize my own ideal and to fulfill the just expectations of the people would, indeed, warrant, as they could alone compensate, the sacrifices which the undertaking would involve. But, in my condition of advancing years and decaying strength, I feel no assurance of my ability to accomplish those objects. I am therefore constrained to say, definitively, that I cannot now assume the labors of an administration or of a canvass.

Understanding in no wise that lost gift of Heaven—the conscience and the power sometimes bestowed upon a more manadmic to communicate an impulse for good; grateful beyond all words to my fellow countrymen who would assign such a benevolent function to me, I am consoled by the reflection that neither the Democratic party, nor the Republic for whose future that party is the best guarantee, is now, or ever can be, dependent upon any one man for their successful progress in the path of a noble destiny.

Having given to their service what ever of health and strength I possessed, or could borrow from the future, and having reached the end of my capacity for such labors as these will have now to decide, I must commit the work to God and the hearts and hands of my fellow-citizens.

SAMUEL J. TILDEN.

Our Washington Letter.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 11, 1884.

The present campaign promises to be hot in temperature and also in other respects. The Republicans are busily engaged in the work of harmonizing, by compromising, the differences upon their own candidates. While Blaine is the most vulnerable of the whole list of those who sought the Chicago nomination, it goes without saying that there was not one of them who could not, as a political opponent, would have made a formidable opponent, or more than a formidable opponent to the party whose doings would have to be criticised. Of course, the Republicans will make capital out of the fact that the Democratic party has not been able to agree upon a candidate, and that it has been compelled to go outside of its ranks for a leader. But this will be more than counterbalanced by the fact that the Democratic party will be able to point to a record of its candidate, which will be free from the charge of corruption, and which will be a guarantee that the affairs of the Government will be administered in the interests of the people, and not in those of a party or a clique. The Republicans will be able to point to a record which will be anything but that, and they will be compelled to defend the acts of their candidate, instead of being able to devote their entire time to the exposure of the shortcomings of their opponents. The Democratic party will be able to devote its entire time to the work of exposing the shortcomings of its opponents, and to the work of preparing the way for the election of its candidate. The Republicans will be able to devote but a portion of their time to this work, because they will be compelled to devote a portion of their time to the defense of their candidate and his record. The Democratic party will be able to devote its entire time to the work of attacking its opponents, because its candidate will have no record to defend