

on another page. It is a document which every truly patriotic man should read, at least once a year, with intelligent affection. For the declaration of independence is the real chart of the American ship of state.

That place has been assigned to the constitution; but the constitution is subject to amendment for the good of the republic, whereas the declaration of independence cannot be amended without destroying the republic in all but form. It gave birth to a nation which, conceived in liberty, was dedicated to those immutable truths that all men are endowed with equal rights and that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. Since that sacred dedication the nation has steadily advanced toward the goal of its high purpose. One by one it has been casting off the evils that in spite of its dedication have clung to it from the past. And never until now has it been forced to face the issue of repudiating its dedication.

But that issue the nation does now face. The truths of the declaration of independence are denied by powerful interests and from high places; no longer timidly in extenuation of old inequalities not yet swept away, but boldly, as obstacles to the establishment of new inequalities necessary to a splendid career of imperialism. In this emergency, universal reading and reflection upon the declaration of independence should be encouraged. It should be read next Wednesday in every household, and at every public gathering. Especially should it be read at the democratic convention at Kansas City. If the clergyman who is to pronounce the invocation at the opening of that convention should, in place of improvising a prayer of his own, simply, but with true religious fervor, repeat the Lord's prayer, and be immediately followed by an impressive reading of the declaration of independence—both democratic to their heart's core—a new inspiration would thrill the public mind and

elevate political thought. There could be no more appropriate and hopeful beginning for the elemental fight against imperialism. When democracy is assailed at the source, let democrats go to the source for inspiration and courage.

One plank in the democratic platform to be adopted at Kansas City next week will doubtless express the sympathy of the party for the struggling Boers. The republican platform sympathizes with both the Boers and Great Britain, merely expressing a—

hope that a way may soon be found, honorable alike to both contending parties, to terminate the strife between them—

and unless the democrats say more they had better say nothing. They should at least express their—

hope that a way may soon be found, honorable alike to both contending parties, to secure a permanent peace with independence to the two republics.

The difference between hoping for the end of the strife, as the republicans do, and hoping for peace with Boer independence, as the democrats should, would be worth something to the democrats in the campaign, and if the contest were close it would be worth a great deal to the Boers. For only recently Joseph Chamberlain said, at the meeting of the Woman's Liberal Unionist association, that "even a note of disapproval" from the United States "would be a matter of serious concern." But the democrats can and ought to say more than that. They ought not only to express sympathy, but also to register a promise.

But there is a notion prevalent that this country can do nothing to preserve independence for the Boers without involving itself in war with Great Britain, and therefore that no promise can be made. That is a mistake. Great Britain would not destroy the independence of the Boer republics if her ministry were authoritatively advised that such an act would be regarded with concern by the people

of the United States. The ministry now labors under the delusion, confirmed by the behavior of the republican administration and the expressions of the Philadelphia platform, that the great majority of the people of this country sympathize with the purpose the British have declared of divesting the South African republics of their independence. Mr. Chamberlain has publicly said as much. An opportunity to dispel that delusion is now open to the democrats, and all they need do to accomplish it is to insert a plank in the Kansas City platform something like this:

We cannot contemplate without serious concern the declared purpose of the present ministry of Great Britain to divest the South African republic and the Orange Free State of their independence, the more especially as that purpose has thus far been encouraged by the friendly acquiescence of our own government. If without protest from the greatest republic in the world this act of subjugation were accomplished, it would thereafter be cited as a precedent justifying the destruction by military conquerors of the independence of the nations they defeat in battle. Even the United States, with all their reserve of military strength, might, through the ill fortune of some unavoidable war, fall a victim to this most dangerous usage. It is a usage, therefore, which should be promptly discountenanced by all self-governing peoples. And that it may be discountenanced in behalf of the people of the United States, we hereby instruct our candidate for president that in the event of his election the democratic party will expect him to advise the British ministry, with friendliness and firmness, that the people of the United States would regard the destruction of the independence of the South African republic and the Orange Free State as a precedent fraught with grave danger to all republican government.

Another part of the Kansas City platform calls for boldness of purpose and directness of expression. This is true, of course, of the anti-imperial planks, but there is little danger of timidity there; the plank we have in mind is that on trusts. Upon this issue more than upon any other there is danger of timid and frivolous declarations. The principal danger, probably, will be due to a failure to