

has been found by experience in voting on constitutional amendments to draw the attention of voters, thereby securing a full expression of opinion. In other respects the bill is excellent. There is probably little hope of its passage this year; yet if it should pass, it would be extraordinarily effective in distinguishing and promoting popular legislation. If the people could officially express their wishes regarding legislation by voting upon important questions free from entangling preferences for candidates, we should at least have opportunities for learning what now it is impossible to learn, the actual will of the people regarding the questions that concern them.

In the Commoner of last week Mr. Bryan called Grover Cleveland to account on the score of his democracy, apropos of Cleveland's characteristic letter to the Crescent Democratic club of Baltimore. Mr. Bryan's offer of a reward of five dollars "for a written statement, not to exceed 500 words, signed by Mr. Cleveland, applying democratic principles, as he understands them, to at least five of the questions now before the country," has been criticized as "infra dig." The contemptuous offer may be; but that is a matter of mere taste—something which is never open to discussion. The essential thing is Mr. Bryan's demand. Forever prating about democratic principles, Cleveland never applies them. If he would respond to Mr. Bryan's demand and make a statement applying democratic principles as he understands them to five of the questions now before the country, he might furnish some test of his democracy. What, for instance, in Mr. Cleveland's opinion, is democratic doctrine on the Spooner amendment? What is it on the Cuban resolutions? What is it on trusts?

Mr. Cleveland's nearest approach to practical democracy was in 1887-88, when he blazed the way for a campaign of free trade. But that ap-

pears now to have been an accident, for in no other important respect does his record tally with it. The free trade issue itself he shunted off the track, as soon as it had put him back into the whitehouse with a strong majority behind him in congress. Instead of calling an extra session of congress at once to give effect to the popular mandate on the only issue of the campaign, he let the spring and the summer and the fall go by, let the opposition catch their breath. Meantime he called an extra session to make an entirely new issue, the money issue, on which he took the republican side. Cleveland could not be better described than in these words of Mr. Bryan: "To desertion of the party organization and betrayal of the principles of the party, he adds ostentatious pretence of interest in the plain people, while he conceals his ideas in ponderous and platitudinous phrases." He yearns in his Baltimore letter for the old days of democracy when "democratic principles, advocated in democratic fashion, gave guarantee of democratic supremacy—or at least strength and influence in our national councils." Which old days does he mean? Those proslavery days that ended with Buchanan's term? or the days that followed the close of the civil war? If the former, what is there in them for a democrat in principle to be proud of? If the latter, what record of democratic accomplishment is there to show for "democratic supremacy" or democratic "strength and influence"?

A London paper, the Daily News, reported on the 28th that Denmark has communicated to the United States the following conditions for the sale of the Danish West Indies:

1. Four million dollars to be paid to Denmark.
2. The population to decide by vote whether to remain Danish or to be transferred to the United States.
3. If the vote is favorable to the United States then the inhabitants to become immediately not only American subjects, but American citizens.
4. Products of the island to be ad-

mitted to the United States free of duty.

It is supposed in London, says the News, that the United States will not readily accept the third and fourth conditions. A shrewd supposition. The United States is less intent, under the present administration, upon establishing citizenship than upon acquiring subjects.

Senator Hoar, who, by the way, is reported by those who have talked with him within the last week or so, to be waiting the proper occasion to declare himself in favor of the repudiation of our national pledge to the Cuban republic, built that masterly speech of his of April 17, 1900, which has been the text-book of anti-imperialists, on the assumption that we would keep our word to Cuba and make her really free. All the way through it occur expressions like this:

Every people is by right entitled to its independence that has got as far as Cuba had in the spring of 1898. You all admit that. Admit! You all avow, affirm, strenuously insist on that. You will always pledge your lives and fortunes and sacred honor for that. You will go to war and send your sons to war to maintain that. If Spain shall deny it, or any other country but Great Britain, woe be to her. It is not necessary, according to you, to have a constitution; it isn't necessary to have courts; it isn't necessary to have a capital; it isn't necessary to have a school. The seat of government may be in the saddle. It isn't necessary to occupy a city, or to have a seaport; it isn't necessary to hold permanently an acre of land; it isn't necessary to have got the invader out of the country; it isn't necessary to have a tenth part of the claim the Filipinos have, or to have done a tenth part of the things the Filipinos have done.

The motto of that speech on its title-page stands in three lines of bold-face type:

No right under the constitution to hold subject states. To every people belongs the right to establish its own government in its own way. The United States cannot with honor buy the title of a dispossessed tyrant, or crush a republic.

The amazing and painful depravation, intellectual and spiritual, which permits the author of this once great speech (it cannot be esteemed any-