

DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA.

de Torqueville, in his work on the States, has given to the world what long been a desideratum, a clear, intelligent and candid exposition of our American institutions. He has viewed their practical operation with the eye of a statesman and philosopher, and portrayed the result of his observation with great ability and lucidness. But the object of this article is not so much to eulogize or review the valuable production, as to treat of its subject matter,—the Democracy in America.

It has often been mooted, whether party spirit is conducive to freedom or the stability of free institutions, but, in reality, the subject is viewed with attention, it is a question whatever for doubt or for consideration. It is one of those necessary concomitants of freedom and of free governments, without which they cannot exist; it is as essential to prevent the stagnation of the community, the corruption and heaving of the ocean is to serve its purity; and it operates upon the political, as the lightning does on the natural atmosphere; yet, like all other blessings, it has its evils. Ambitious men and demagogues seize on it to promote their own selfish purposes, and it sometimes happens, by its aid, such men are elevated to power, whilst the more worthy and the more honest are left in the ranks of private life; although it is one of the means used in order the chains of despotism, and establishing free governments, yet it is too often used by the unprincipled to overthrow the monuments of its own creation, and its influence there have been too many instances where the people forgetting their true interests, have enlisted under the banner of some party chieftain, and marching against the citadel of liberty itself, such unfortunates, to redress their indignity wrongs, or promote the ambitious views of a Coriolanus or a Cæsar, is of more importance than to preserve their country in anarchy and bloodshed.

In every nation, ancient and modern, the mind has been free and unshackled; history informs us of parties and parties; and even in the primitive ages of humanity, we are told in sacred history, that one was for Paul and another for Apollonius; it was, therefore, hardly to be expected or perhaps desired, that our own country should be exempt from what seems to have been the common lot of all free governments; in fact, our country was peopled by the party spirit and political conflicts of the old world. Whilst our colonial dependence continued, and even since, to a very considerable extent, parties here have developed their names, as well as principles, from another country. When the lion-hearted of '76 struck for freedom and independence, they found sympathy and aid among Whigs of Great Britain, the liberal minded, high spirited men of that day, who, under such champions as Chatham and Burke, battled for the rights of man. The American patriots possessed of the principles, assumed the name of the Whigs, whilst those who still adhered to the mother country, or rather to the tory administration, which then governed it, were designated tories, being merely the name by which their opponents were known in Great Britain.

At the commencement of the Revolution, the term tories had no more odious significance here, than it had or now has there, being merely in contradistinction to the Whigs, the latter inclining to democracy, the former to aristocracy. But as the Revolution terminated successfully for the Whigs, it was natural that the tories, being opposed to independence, should be looked upon as enemies of this country, and so treated in public estimation. This, then, was the first division of parties in this country. Whigs and Tories, the former were in favor of Democracy, and were for the rights of the people, the latter were the aristocrats, and were well content to bask in the sunshine of power and patronage, as then administered by the administration in the mother country.

Our national independence achieved and acknowledged, the sages and statesmen of that day began to look around them for the best form of government, to secure and perpetuate that freedom which their valor had obtained; and when we consider how little was known at that period of free governments, and how lamentably had failed all former efforts of the kind to establish them, it is not a matter of surprise that a great diversity of opinion should exist among the purest and best of men, and that some of them, out of excess of fear lest the country should be speedily overrun with anarchy, and all its bright prospects blasted in the bud by the influence of demagogues, should favor a limited monarchy or a strong national government. In fact, the constitution of Great Britain, in theory at least, was considered as the very spirit of perfection, where the rights of King, Lords, and Commons, were all protected, precisely balanced, and checked each other.

During, and after the formation of the federal constitution, the country became divided into two parties,—federal and anti-federal—the former, in the convention, favored one general government for all national purposes, organized under a distinct constitution, the latter were opposed to this, in favor of amending the articles of confederation, and of the nation remaining a mere league or confederation of independent and sovereign States. The constitution was a compromise, a medium between the extremes of both parties, and satisfactory to neither; but those favoring a federal national government in preference to a confederation predominated, and the constitution was adopted by the States; yet, in the construction of its powers, the same feelings and sentiments prevailed that had been exhibited in the convention. The friends of the national government were striving full scope to its powers, whilst their opponents were for limiting them by strict construction, and for leaving all possible

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power with the States. Both parties ran in to extremes, and experience has proved that both were wrong, in medio tutissimus est. The federal party appear in many respects to have taken the British constitution as their model, and of course, would naturally favor the operation of that government, whilst the anti-federalists looked more to State-rights, and for a form of government that was more democratic, and of course they looked with no favorable eye on the constitution of Great Britain, or the operations of that government.

Thus matters stood when the French Revolution broke out. At its origin, all parties in this country looked upon it as a noble enterprise, but as the great and good men of that nation were one after another thrust aside, & their places usurped by wretches who spread violence and anarchy through the land, many began to doubt of the stability of their institutions, and of the benefit of her democracy. Still in the contests of that nation with Great Britain, a very large proportion of the people of this country cherishing the old hostility against England, and warming with the spirit of liberty, and with gratitude towards France, sided with the latter, and were in favor of assisting her in her conflicts against their old enemy.

As the controversy between these two nations waxed warm, party-feeling here became more excited, and when the anarchists, or democrats, as they styled themselves, in France, broke out into the most frightful excesses, those who, in this country, had favored the revolution, were styled, by way of reproach, democrats, the others retaining the name of federalists. By these names the two parties were known for many years; the democrats eventually assuming with pride the name which had been forced on them.

During and for some years after the administration of the elder Adams, political contests were very high, and even very much embittered with personal feeling, and doubtless both parties were more or less in the wrong; eventually, however, the federal party was overthrown and completely prostrated—the democrats were triumphant and retained the government for many years.

The administration of Mr. Monroe seems to have been the balcyon days of the Republic, when the old party distinctions were in a great measure forgotten, and democrats and federalists, excepting perhaps their prominent leaders, mingled together in harmony. These leaders of the old federal party were marked by their opponents, and had thrust upon them all the sins ascribed to their party; of course, they were in a great measure proscribed and kept out of power, but they were ambitious, daring and restless, possessed of much talent and keenness of discrimination, and ever on the watch for some favorable opportunity by which they might again come into power. The Presidential election of 1824, afforded them the long looked for opportunity to make a manifestation of their strength, and to evince their power of combination. The Congressional caucus had been exploded, and four democratic candidates for the Presidency were in the field, Crawford, Adams, Clay and Jackson. The old Federal leaders saw at once that by acting in concert, and heartily supporting one of the candidates, they might be the means of his success, and thus be effected their long looked for restoration to power. After much secret canvassing and canvassing, they at length settled on General Jackson as the man for their support, not because they had confidence in his fitness, or had been therefore partial to him; no, they had but little confidence in him, but much in themselves, by whom they hoped he would in some measure be governed, especially if to them he owed his election. Many of them had openly declared that for his conduct in Florida, and at New Orleans after the battle, he ought to have been hung, and all of them had opposed that war in which he gained all his laurels and political capital,—yet there was a popularity and a glory about the old chief that took with the people, especially that portion of them who might be more easily led by designing demagogues, and the publication of the celebrated Monroe correspondence, settled every doubt, and determined them to prefer him to either of his democratic competitors. Thus the leading federalists throughout the Union were ranged under the Jackson banner, striking out the word federal, they styled themselves Jackson Republicans, not yet having the courage to assume the name of democrats. Eventually, their efforts were crowned with success, and the old hero marched into the capital with a greater share of popularity than had been enjoyed by any man since the days of Washington. His friends, the leaders of the old Federal party, and now the prominent actors in his own, were not forgotten in his distribution of the "spoils," as is abundantly evinced in the selection of his cabinet and the appointment to many of the most important offices in the nation.

From the inauguration of President Jackson to this day, his party has embraced a very large proportion of the leading members of the federal party, who had joined his ranks from sinister views. Overreaching the democrats, they took the lead and carried off the spoils; of this, any man of ordinary political intelligence must be convinced, if he will look through the ranks of the present dominant party. They have for the last ten years been the leading, ef-

ficient men of the party at the capital, and in almost every State in the Union. We say not this in reproach of that by gone, and in some respects, once highly respectable party, but for the purpose of exposing the cant and hypocrisy of those who now assume to be the exclusive democracy, and style their opponents by way of reproach, federalists; who hope by taking to themselves the name of a once triumphant party, and attaching to their opponents the name, and in some respects, the odium of a defeated party, to blind the eyes of the people, and remain themselves, the lords of the ascendant. But they are mistaken, the people have more intelligence and discrimination than is generally awarded to them—they may be deceived for a time by names and professions, but they will eventually look to principles and acts, as well as enquire into the fairness and honesty of names and professions—they can discern that a rose by any other name will smell as sweet, and that a thorn will be a thorn still, call it by what name you will.

Having shown the origin and character of the present self-styled democracy, let us look for a moment into its principles and transactions. The federal party were accused, whether rightly or not, is immaterial in the present question, of endeavoring to strengthen the arm of the National Executive at the expense of the rights of the States, and of the people—this in fact, was the great test question between the federal and democratic parties, as represented and understood by the latter. On which side has the present dominant party arranged itself? Has it not been on the side of federal power, and against the States and the people? The federal power arises from the public purse—from patronage, or from powers in the constitution, and their extension, and which of them has not the party exercised to the utmost limit? Is it the money power? When before was it assumed that this belonged to the National Executive, and not to the Legislative authority? Did any party ever before claim to place the purse and the sword in the hands of the Executive? Is it the power of patronage? What administration before the late and the present, ever dared to govern the nation upon the broad base principle, that "the spoils of victory belonged to the victors," and might be used to perpetuate executive power? And what express or implied power is there in the constitution that has not been stretched to its utmost limit to cover executive usurpation, or to promote executive power? And yet, with all these things before the world, the dominant party profess to be the democracy, the exclusive friends of the people, and of their rights! Like the French Jacobins, they cry at every cross-road and corner *Le pauvre peuple! Le pauvre peuple!* whilst they are attempting to lead them on to their own destruction. For the purpose of strengthening their tottering power, the people are flattered into every kind of excess—they are told that they are absolute, uncontrolled sovereigns, that their will is paramount to order, law and constitution, that they have the power and the right to take the responsibility, and ride over all opposition. These are dangerous doctrines, promulgated in a critical age, yet they have long been promulgated in theory, and recent events show they are being forced into practice. True, the people are and ought to be the sovereigns, but that sovereignty is to be regulated and restrained by laws and institutions; or it becomes the force of a mob. Isolated man must be restrained by laws human and divine, and when he associates into the body politic, the necessity of that restraint becomes more apparent.

We have perhaps extended our remarks further than the subject required, but the great efforts made and making, to place the Whigs in a false position, would seem to require that the subject be fairly placed before the country.

THE LIGHTNING ROD. It is curious to find that the conductor, or lightning rod, which so many men of genius, learning and ingenuity, have been at the pains to compile, which in fact has always been regarded as one of the proudest trophies of science—was known and employed by people of no more refined cultivation than the wild peasantry of Lombardy. The Abbe Bethollet, in his work on electricity, describes a practice used on one of the bastions of the Castle of Duno, on the shores of the Adriatic, which is literally neither more nor less than the process which enabled Franklin to bring lightning down from the clouds. An iron staff, it seems, was erected on the bastion of the castle during the summer, and it was a part of the duty of the sentinel, whenever a storm threatened, to raise an iron pointed halbert, towards this staff. If on the approach of the halbert, sparks were emitted, (which to the scientific mind would show that the staff was charged with electricity from a thunder cloud,) the sentinel was made sure that a storm impended, and he tolled a bell which sent forth the tidings of danger to the surrounding country. Nothing can be more delightfully amiable than the paternal care of its subjects, which this provision of the government exemplified. The admonishing sound of the bell was obeyed like a preternatural signal from the depth of the firmament; shepherds were seen hurrying over the valleys urging flocks from exposed fields to places of shelter. The fishing boats, with which the coast of the Adriatic was generally studded, forthwith began to crowd sail & to make for the nearest port, whilst many a supplication was put from many a gentle and devout heart on shore before some hallowed shrine, for the safety of the little fleet.—Monthly Review.

THE BIRD'S SILVER NEST. BY MISS H. P. GOULD. Founded on the singular incident of finding the nest of a hanging bird, in a Sycamore tree, formed entirely of silver wires, plucked from a Soldier's Epaullette.

A stranded soldier's epaullette; Thy waters east aboute; A little winged rover met, And eyed it o'er and o'er. The silver bright so pleased her sight, On that lone idle vest, She knew not why she should say Herself a silver nest.

The shining wire she pecked and twirled, Then bore it to her bough, Where on a flowery twig 'twas curled, The bird can show you how. But when enough of that bright stuff, The cunning builder bore Her house to make, she would not take, Nor did she cost more.

And when the little artizan With neither pride nor guilt, Had rested in her pretty plan, Her nesting place had built; With here and there a plum to spare, About her own light form, Of these, inlaid with skill, she made A lining soft and warm.

But do you think the tender brood She fondled there and fed, Were prouder when they understood The cheen about their bed? Do you suppose they ever rose Of higher powers possessed, Because they knew they peeped and grew Within a silver nest?

GOSSIPING. The most prevailing fault of conversation in our country, and, I believe, in all social communities, is gossiping. As weeds most infest the richest soils, so gossiping most abounds amidst the social virtues in small towns, where there is the most extended mutual acquaintance, where persons live in the closest relations, resembling a large family circle.—To disturb the sweet uses of these little communities by gossiping, is surely to forfeit the benefit of one of the kindest arrangements of Providence. The habit of gossiping begins in youth. I once attended a society of young persons, from thirteen to seventeen years of age, who met for benevolent purposes. "Is this reading or talking afternoon?" asked one of the girls. "Reading," replied the president; "and I have brought Perry's Reliques of English Poetry to read to you." "Is not that light reading?" asked Julia Ivers. "These are old ballads and songs?" "Yes, I suppose it would be called light reading."

"Then I vote against it; mother don't approve of light reading." Julia, who had the lightest of all minds, and the most voluble of tongues, preferred talking to any reading, and without loss of time she began to a knot of girls, who too much resembled her. "Did you notice Matilda Smith last Sunday?" "Yes, indeed; she had on a new silk dress."

"That is the very thing I wanted to find out, whether you were taken in with it. It was nothing but her old sky-blue dyed." "Can that be? why she has worn it ever since she was thirteen. I wonder I did not see the prints of the tacks." "I did," interposed another of the young committee of investigation. "I took a good look at it as she stood in the door. She couldn't deceive me with aunt Sally's wedding sky-blue dyed black." "I don't think Matilda would care whether you were deceived or not," said little Mary Morris the youngest member of the society, colouring up to her eyes. "Oh! I forgot, Mary, said Julia Ivers, "that Matilda is your cousin?" "It is not because she is my cousin," replied Mary. "Well, what is it then?" Mary's tears dropped on her work, but she made no other reply. She had too much delicacy to proclaim her cousin's private good deeds; and she did not tell how Matilda, having had a small sum of money, which was to have been invested in a new silk gown, gave it instead to her kind aunt Sally, who was sinking under a long indisposition, which her physician said "might be removed by a journey." It was—and we believed Matilda cared how much these girls gossiped about her dyed frock.

the name of the society should be changed; for," as she said, "the little charities they did with their needles were a poor offset against the uncharitableness of their tongues."

There is a specimen of gossiping aggravated by treachery; but, bad as this is, it is sometimes committed more from thoughtlessness than malice. A girl is invited to pass a day, a week, or a month, it may be, in a family. Admitted at such an intimacy, she may see and hear much that the family would not wish to have reported. Circumstances often occur, and remarks are made, from which no harm would come if they were published to the world, provided what went before and came after could likewise be known; but, taken out of their connection, they make a false impression. It is by relating disjointed circumstances, and repeating fragments of conversations, that so much mischief is done by those admitted into the bosom of a family.

You know that, with the Arabs, partaking salt is a pledge of fidelity, because the salt is a symbol of hospitality. Show a sacred gratitude for hospitality, by never making any disparaging remarks or idle communications about those into whose families you are received. I know persons who will say, unblushingly, "I am sure that Mr. So and So is not kind to his wife. I saw enough to convince me of it when I stayed there." Mrs. S. is very mean in her family." "How do you know that?" "I am sure I ought to know, for I stayed a month in her house. If you wish to be convinced that Mrs. L. has no government over her children, go and stay there a week, as I did." "The B's and their stepmother try to live happily together; but if you were in their family as much as I am, you would see there is no love lost between them."

Now you perceive, my young friends, that the very reason which should have sealed this gossip's lips, she advances as the ground of your faith in her evil report.

I have dwelt long on this topic of gossiping, my young friends, because, as I said before, I believe it to be a prevailing fault in our young and social country.—The only sure mode of extirpating it is by the cultivation of your minds and the purification of your hearts. All kinds and degrees of gossiping are as distasteful to an elevated character as gross and unwholesome food is to a well trained appetite.

FATALITY OF FASHIONS. It is a startling fact that human life is shorter in New England now than it was fifty years ago. There are diseases now which were hardly known then, and which bring thousands to a premature grave.—What is the cause of all this? Has our climate essentially changed? No—unless it be for the better. The cause is to be found doubtless in the corrupting fashions of the times, which regulate the food and the dress of people, and which make idleness more respectable than honest sturdy industry. We deprecate those fashions; they are rapidly leading us as a people into those excesses which have proved the ruin of other and earlier nations. It is time that subject were looked into with as much solicitude and care as politicians look for the causes of civil liberty and public good.

In olden times—in the days of the revolution, when sons worked willingly in the forests and the fields, and pot-hook of the simple but substantial fare of their own farms, when daughters wore thick shoes, loose gowns and labored at the spinning wheel and loom, such diseases as consumption and dyspepsia were seldom or never known. Doctors were rare acquaintances then. But now, if a young man would appear respectable, he must carry a green bag to court rather than a meal bag to mill; he must wield a yard stick, rather than a hoe or shovel; and as for young ladies—alas! it would soil their lily hands and be an irreparable disgrace to be seen cleaning houses or be caught at a wash tub. Their shoes must be of kid than as waters; their chests must be pent up in corsets as closely as a Chinese foot, and their time must be spent in spinning street yarn, thumping the piano forte or discoursing sentimental songs.—All these fashions are prejudicial to human life and health. Oh, that fashion would ever take the right direction, and go upon the maxim of sanction nothing which interferes with the laws of health. Then would the hopes of our country brighten, and individuals would enjoy an amount of comfort which is now too willingly but blindly sacrificed to false taste.

Maine Cultivator. THE NEWSPAPER. How endless is the variety of newspaper readers, and how hard it is to satisfy their wants. Mr. A. believes he shall discern the his paper, because it contains no political news—and B. is decidedly of opinion that the same sheet dabbles too freely in the political movements of the day. C. does not take it because it is all on one side and D. whose opinion it generally expresses, does not like it because it is not severe enough upon the opposition. E. thinks it does not pay due attention to fashionable literature—and F. cannot bear the flowery notions of idle writers. G. will not suffer a paper to lie on his table which ventures an opinion against slavery—and H. never patronizes one that lacks moral courage to expose the evils of the day. I declare he does not want a paper filled with the hedgepodge proceed-

ings of Congress and the Legislature—and considers that paper the best which gives the greatest quantity of such reading. K. patronizes papers for the light and lively reading which they contain—and L. wonders that the press do not publish Denney's sermons, and such other "solid matter." M. will not even read a paper that does not expose the evils of sectarianism—and N. is decidedly of opinion that the press should not meddle with religious dogmas. O. likes to read police reports—and P. whose appetite is less morbid, would not leave a paper in which these silly reports are printed. Q. reads his house. R. reads a paper that publishes them—R. says that robbers and other dreadful accidents ought not to be put in the papers—and S. complains that his honorable paper gives no account of that highway robbery last week.—T. says the type is too small and U. thinks it too large. V. stops his paper because it contains nothing but advertisements—all that W. wants of it is to be advertised in. X. will not take the paper unless it is left at his door before sunrise—and Y. declares he will pay for it if left so early, that it is stolen from his domicile before he is up. And, last of all, comes the compliments of a me of the Ladies (the dear creatures), who declare the paper uninteresting, because it does not every week contain a list of marriages, just as if it were possible for poor printers to marry people, whether the parties will or not.—New Bedford Gazette.

EDUCATION OF FARMERS—No. 9. Legislators. MR. TUCKER: The dictates of experience and of common sense, must convince any candid mind that seven eighths of nine-tenths of the members of legislatures ought to be practical farmers and mechanics. For this opinion two reasons are sufficient, if no others could be adduced. First, the principal object of laws is to promote the interests and protect the rights of these two classes of citizens, as they constitute seven eighths and ought to constitute nine-tenths of the community. Second, they are educated in schools better fitted to make sound & enlightened statesmen, than ever are or can be produced in any other schools but those of experience. The soundness of the first reason will probably not be called in question by many; that of the second, I am aware, will be doubted by many, and possibly by some farmers and mechanics themselves. But I have for several years been entirely convinced, that farmers and mechanics were better qualified for composing legislatures, than any theoretical statesmen from the fact, that they have greater influence and advocate sounder and more republican doctrines, in all legislatures of which they are members. The only misfortune is, that they are not elected to fill our legislatures, or to constitute a majority of them.

If I am not greatly mistaken, one of the principal sources of the civil and political evils we suffer, is in making the profession of law, the channel to offices of emolument and honor. The practice presents an inconsistent and highly improper, that one class of men should institute laws, expound laws, and execute laws, which it may be supposed they will do to promote their interests, while that class constitutes a very small minority of the community, though there are ten times, and probably fifty times as many, as the most healthy state of the community requires. The greatly increased, the rapidly increasing, and the largely disproportionate number of our citizens, who resort to the law for a profession, is probably not the least evil resulting from appointing so many of this profession to places of honor and trust.

Without any prejudice against the members of this profession as individuals, for by an extensive acquaintance with them, I knew many of them to be honorable and respectable men, I am convinced, as they themselves will undoubtedly acknowledge, that a large number of lawyers promote litigation. And no one will pretend that extensive litigation is favorable, either to the pecuniary, the moral or social health and prosperity of the community, but highly destructive to all. Consequently any arrangements or measures adopted for conducting the operations of society, which have tendency to increase the number of lawyers, which is already entirely out of proportion with that of other classes of the community, must do an injury to that community. And appointing them to fill the seats in our legislatures, especially the chairs of state and the highest seat in the nation, must do a double and an irreparable injury; it produces bad laws, and instigates quarrels and contentions in the observance and executing of those laws.

To avoid these evils, and as far as possible, to repair the injury already done, by the increasing and anti-republican practice referred to, our legislators, our legislatures and filling our offices, a great measure with farmers and mechanics appear to be the rational, perhaps the only salutary measure to be adopted. The education of farmers in its present degraded state, is better fitted to make sound legislators, than are produced by our colleges, or by the profession of law. If farmers' education, what it ought to be, and what it might be, they duly appreciated the knowledge they already possess, and their facilities for greatly extending that knowledge, they could hardly fail of being the proprietors, or of availing themselves of the privilege, of appointing from their own ranks, guardians of their own rights and interests. I do not pretend that the interests of farmers, or of mechanics, or of both, are the only interests to be promoted and promoted; nor do I pretend that our legislatures, or other offices, should be filled entirely from those classes. I only contend that they ought to be represented in proportion to their numbers, and represented by themselves. I hold to this doctrine because they must be supposed to understand, their own interests better than those in other pursuits; and because, being educated in the school of experience they may be supposed to be, as they are actually found to be, sounder and safer men to be relied upon, and because, by neglecting to fill our offices from the profession of law, the number engaged in that profession might be diminished and litigation diminished with it; and that means the wealth, the intelligence and the virtue of our Republic greatly promoted.

If the education of farmers was what a rational and an enlightened system would make it, at a less expense of time and money than is now incurred for the purpose, they would be entirely qualified to perform many kinds of business, for which they now resort to the legal profession, such as drawing contracts, giving power of attorney, making out bills of sale, conveying property, by deed or otherwise, and various other acts of a similar character, which would save themselves great expense and trouble, and permit lawyers to engage in pursuits better calculated to promote the health of society. To avoid the evils ad, secure the benefits here referred to, no one need to act under the influence of prejudice or desire of prescription.—Farmers and mechanics have simply to select and appoint individuals from their own professions, to promote their interests and to secure and protect their rights, and they can hardly fail to accomplish their object. I remain yours, Truly and always, J. HOLBROOK. [General Farmer.]