

HISTORY OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

This admirable review of the function and history of the democratic party is reprinted from the Kansas City Star:

In view of the possible reorganization of the democratic party, which the defeat of Mr. Bryan may bring about, the history of that ancient political organization is of especial interest. It has passed through many epochs and crises without losing its remarkable vitality, and there is no reason to suppose that it will not recover from its latest disaster. Its reason for existence lies in the very constitution of democracy. As John Adams wrote in 1812: "You say our divisions began with federalism and anti-federalism? Alas! they began with human nature; they have existed in America from its first plantation."

Professor A. D. Morse of Amherst college in an article in the International Monthly, points out what he believes are the three functions of a great party—teaching the people, giving shape to public policy and administering the affairs of government. The democratic party has exercised these functions with degrees of success depending on the organization's make-up and attitude for the last century and more. In colonial politics, while as yet the people were organized only in what John Adams called the court and country parties, the significance of the latter organization was in teaching the principles of democracy and in giving practical training in politics. It was this democratic movement that carried out the revolution. Its influence was manifest in the loosely knit confederation and the attempt of the colonies to get on without a central government in the years following the war.

The extremity to which its principles were carried caused a reaction, and the federalists—advocates of a strong government—dominated the convention that formed the constitution. As a consequence the document was regarded with popular distrust and ratification was difficult. The bill of rights was added to the constitution as a concession to this feeling. During this period the conservative classes—the "well born," as they were derisively called—headed by Hamilton, seized the opportunity afforded by the disorganization and lack of leadership among the more numerous opponents, to establish a strong government. With the return of Jefferson to America the opposition found the leader it needed. The struggle between these two men resolved itself into a conflict between the principles of local home rule with large individual liberty and a highly centralized authority.

The era of the control of the Jeffersonian democracy from 1800 to 1825 was one of the most creditable in this history of that party. At the time of the overthrow of the federalists it had done much to restore to popular favor the democratic principles which had been discredited by the failure of the confederation. Under Jefferson it brought the masses under active participation in the government and developed a national spirit where before provincialism had been strong. By his conciliatory policy and his retention of federal ideas, which had proved their worth, Jefferson attracted to his party large numbers of the opposition from the conservative classes. This alliance added a strength and effectiveness to the democratic administration which it could not otherwise have had.

The party under the influence of Jackson, from 1825 to 1840, departed from the conciliatory policy of Jefferson. The earlier leaders united the conservative with the radicals; the later one was the avowed champion of the masses and stood for a radical democratic movement. Jackson's administration and the years of his influence were charac-

terized by many blunders, but during this time the masses of the people were educated in the spirit of nationality and respect for law. The sectional spirit developed from 1840 to 1860 and the democratic party was without a leader of the first class until the time of reconstruction and Tilden. Its record during this period was not to its credit.

The party under the later leaders, Tilden, Cleveland W. C. Whitney, Governor Russell of Massachusetts and Governor Pattison of Pennsylvania, resembles in its make-up the organization which Jefferson headed. It combined the radical and conservative elements to a remarkable degree. Mr. Bryan has taken the role of Jackson in alienating the conservative classes. In all its history the democratic party has succeeded admirably in fulfilling the first function suggested by Professor Morse—that of educating the people. In the function of shaping public policy it has had uneven success. The purchase of Louisiana and the enunciation of the Monroe doctrine during the era of Jefferson are to its credit, but it looted the civil service under Jackson, allowed the flag to be fired on under Buchanan and advocated giving up the Philippines under Bryan. Its administrative successes have been under the regimes in which the conservative element has been large.

The successful Jeffersonian era may roughly be compared with the creditable administration of Mr. Cleveland. The leadership of Mr. Bryan has some of the characteristics of the Jacksonian period. The question now is one of reconstruction. It remains to be seen which era of the party will repeat itself.

Cleverton—That man Van Piper is a good fellow to cultivate. He has three lovely sisters.

Daahaway—All right. You cultivate him, and I'll cultivate the sisters.—Town Topics.

He is wise who saves up for a rainy day, for even if there be a protracted drouth it is well to have capital with which to buy water.—The Judge.

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