NEW PUBLICATIONS

THE CASE OF THE DEMOCRACY.

THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY: Its Political History and Influence. By J. HARRIS PATTON, M. A. 16mo. pp. 349. Fords, Howard & Hulbert.

It is a curious coincidence that simultaneously with the appearance of Mr. Boutwell's able review of the history, character and tendencies of the Republican party, another writer should publish a somewhat similar essay on the rival political organization, completing the survey of parties, and enabling the studious voter to weigh pretty accurately the services of both. Probably it is only a coincidence; but if Messrs. Boutwell and Patton had acted in concert they could not have complemented each other more exactly. Mr. Boutwell exhibits the achievements of the one party; Mr. Patton is principally concerned with the errors and futile undertakings of the other. Each has called attention to a remarkable fact not generally known or remembered, which is this: that although the Democrats had almost uninterrupted control of the Government from the time of Jefferson to the outbreak of the Rebellion, they instituted in all that long course of years *only one* measure or policy which proved lasting and successful. That was the establishment of the sub-treasury system—an admirable arrangement which, however, was only adopted as the sequel and remedy of a series of Democratic financial blunders. What more crushing proof of the innate incapacity of the party could be given than this barren record? It has generally been assumed that among the Southern leaders at all events, who were the governing element of the Democracy, the arts of statesmanship were most carefully studied; and yet in sixty momentous years, crowded with change and development, they devised not one public measure which stood the test of experience, except a plan for taking care of the Government deposits. Such an extraordinary failure, running through generations, is not to be explained by the mistakes of individuals; it could only result from some fundamental fault in either the constitution or the objects of the party.

Mr. Patton does not charge himself with the task of explaining this phenomenon. He is content with describing it, and supplementing the account with a catalogue of the public questions on which the Democracy has taken the side which has ultimately been proved and *admitted* to be wrong. For the party has not only failed to do useful work of its own; it has opposed all the useful work undertaken by others. The history of its errors reaches as far back as the time of Washington, when it fought bitterly against the policy of neutrality in European affairs which has been universally accepted as the traditional and obvious duty of this country; and against the financial policy of Hamilton, which was soon found to be the very basis of the National prosperity. Under Jefferson it completely destroyed our commerce by the delusive embargo. Under Jackson it broke up the banking system, fostered wild-cat speculation, established the spoils doctrine, and created the profession of office-hunting. By the Tariff Act passed in the same Administration it prostrated all the industries of the country except the raising of cotton, and reduced wages while the Government accumulated an enormous surplus because we had to import what we had ceased to manufacture. The result was the great financial crash of 1837, a deficiency in the National revenue only one year after the Treasury had declared a surplus of $40,000,000, a political reaction, and the choice of a Whig President. The protective tariff of 1842 revived the country; but no sooner did the Democrats return to power than they made mischief again by a "tariff for revenue only" in 1846; and nothing in the consequences of this mistake were deferred for a while by the discovery of gold in California, the prostration of manufactures came in time, and the inevitable crash followed in 1857. The Democracy, however, has learned nothing, though the rest of the people have, and ever since the recovery of business under a renewal of protective duties it has been striving to repeat the old blunder.

The key to nearly all the errors of the party for forty years—including the tariff errors—was slavery. Mr. Patton says less upon this subject than might have been expected, perhaps because it is so generally understood. It is so fully treated in Mr. Boutwell's book that we have no reason to regret the brevity with which it is handled here; but in a catalogue of Democratic misdeeds we must not overlook the worst and most prolific of all the sins of the party. Its principal object, from about 1826 until after the close of the Rebellion, was to aid the slaveholders in maintaining slavery where it already existed, and in forcibly extending its area when the superior vitality and energy of freedom threatened to outstrip it. Thus it is that the party is shamefully identified with the needless Mexican war, the schemes for seizing Cuba, the filibustering expeditions in Central America, the fugitive slave law, the repeal of the Missouri compromise, the invasion of Kansas, the Dred Scott decision, the violation of the mails in the South, the doctrines of State sovereignty and secession, the non-interference theory of Mr. Buchanan, rampant hostility to emancipation and all its consequences, a determination, even when the war was near its close, that the Union should be restored with slavery or not restored at all, and a stubborn opposition, when the war was over, to the constitutional amendments blotting out the great disgrace of American history. Here indeed is a terrible list of blunders—the whole work of a party for nearly forty years discredited, brought to naught, confessed, even by the party itself, to be discreditable in principle and mischievous in practice. But this does not exhaust the astonishing record. The Democracy opposed cheap postage, opposed fast mails, opposed the homestead law, opposed other plans for giving land to the landless poor, has opposed public improvements, has opposed the support of the army and navy and the protection of commerce, opposed resumption, opposed the honest payment of the public debt, opposed refunding, opposed and still opposes a sound banking system, and with perfect unanimity has fought every law to prevent fraudulent voting. What good deed has this amazing party ever done, what good deed has it failed to oppose? It calls itself the friend of the poor; but it has always been the enemy of the workingman, the ally of the landowning aristocracy and foreign importers, the advocate of low wages. Mr. Patton makes the striking statement that from 1829 to 1861, when the Southern wing of the Democracy practically governed the country, "there was not a comprehensive measure to benefit the people at large introduced in Congress by a Southern member, except the Homestead bill by Andrew Johnson," and that was resisted by most of the rest of the party and vetoed by a Democratic President.

ARMINIUS VAMBERY. His Life and Adventures Written by Himself. 12mo. pp. xiii., 370. Cassell & Co.

The journeys narrated in this entertaining volume are the same which formed the basis of Vambery's "Travels in Central Asia." That book made the author one of the most famous and best discussed travellers of our time; he traversed little known countries, he mingled intimately with interesting and inhospitable people, he ran great risks, and he returned at last to civilization with a full budget of the very information which the western world was most anxious to obtain. This new publication goes over much of the same ground as the old, but, being intended for "popular use," it dwells more than the other upon personal matters and lighter incidents of travel. A very frank autobiography is seldom dull, and if the writer happen to have a spice of vanity in his character it can hardly help amusing. Perhaps we are wrong in thinking Vambery a little vain. It would be better to say that he has a cordial appreciation of some of the natural qualities and the acquirements which made his great feat possible, especially of his adventurous and sturdy spirit, his wonderful memory, and his mastery of many tongues. Born in Hungary, of very humble parents, and lame from his birth, he grew up in extreme poverty. His desire to see the East was an early dream. By the help of a patron he found his way to Constantinople. Landing there absolutely penniless, he was befriended by a countryman until he got a few pupils in languages. The means by which he pushed himself into Turkish society, and got on until we find him starting for Central Asia, with the high-sounding title of "Reshid Effendi," with complimentary letters, and with credentials and a little money from the Hungarian Academy, reminds us of the adventures of those heroes of Oriental fiction, like Hope's "Anastasius" and Morier's "Hadji Baba," who used to amuse and instruct our grandfathers. And if the beginning of the story is like a fiction, the rest of it is like a romance. Vambery visited Persia, Khiva, Bokhara, Samarkand, Herat, Meshed, disguising himself as a dervish and sometimes narrowly escaping detection and death, begging his way not only to carry out his assumed character but from a still sterner necessity; when he returned to Europe his friends did not know him, and after he had disclosed himself and told his story, although he was overwhelmed with invitations to dinner, it was some time before he could raise fifteen pounds to carry him to London, where he meant to publish his book. The ingenuous account of his reception in the British capital, and the review of the philological studies with which he has employed his leisure since the Emperor appointed him Professor of Oriental Languages at the University of Pesth, make an appropriate finish to the tale.

RACINET'S HISTORY OF COSTUME.

LE COSTUME HISTORIQUE. Par A. RACINET. Paris: Firmin-Didot & Cie. New York: J. W. Bouton. Lv. ramon 15.

The admirable and exhaustive work of M. Racinet on historical costume has reached its fifteenth part. Two-thirds of the work have therefore been placed in the hands of the subscribers, and there can be no doubt as to the faithful fulfilment of all the promises made by the author and publishers in the prospectus. The undertaking was a considerable one, for it involved no less than a collection and correction as well as a reproduction of the bulk of a very numerous series of similar though less comprehensive works, together with an artistic treatment far in advance of any preceding history of costumes, and an amount of research which fully accounts for the slow progress of the publication. As it is, the subscribers will have much more than a history of costume. They will have a history of furniture, of jewelry, of weapons, of pottery and faience, and to some extent of domestic architecture also. And while the extent of the ground covered is remarkable, the artistic details are worked out with the most scrupulous delicacy and care. The illustrations are of two kinds, viz., colored (and adorned with silver and gold and merely neutral tinted. In all cases however, the work is excellently well done. The double-colored cartoons, one of which accompanies each part, are in several instances reproductions of famous pictures. The figures chosen to illustrate costumes of different eras are, wherever possible, portraits of celebrated personages, so that an unusual historical value attaches to them. The literature of the various subjects treated has been selected in the choice of illustrations and explications. The authorities are in every case given, moreover, and when possible their statements have been verified by careful comparison and original research. Throughout the work a most commendable determination is exhibited to give the best examples and the most exact and trustworthy descriptions. Many of the explanations of particular pictures, especially those accompanying views of interiors, are really compact and complete little essays on interesting antiquarian topics. Nothing is left undescribed. Nothing in the work is either meagre, or excessive, or confused. The freshest views of the soundest authorities upon all the subjects treated are sought, and it is scarcely necessary to say that the special knowledge of M. Racinet adds greatly to the value of the work.

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