

THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND THE TARIFF.

What the Democrats Have Affirmed Touching Protective Taxes in all Their Party Platforms.

New York World. 1880.

The first democratic platform was adopted by the party, then called "Republicans" as distinguished from the Federalists party, in a congressional caucus at Philadelphia in 1800, the year in which Jefferson was first elected to the presidency. It demands:

6. Free commerce with all nations, political connection with none, and little or no diplomatic establishments.

1838.

The next democratic platform, known as the "Locofoco" platform of 1838, was adopted by the first national convention for nominating candidates for the presidency. It proclaims:

Hostility to any and all monopolies by legislation because they are violations of the equal rights of the people.

The true foundation of republican government is the equal rights of every citizen in his person and property and its maintenance.

1840.

The next democratic platform was that of 1840, adopted by the presidential convention at Baltimore which contains these resolutions:

Resolved, That justice and sound policy forbid the federal government to foster one branch of industry to the detriment of another, or to cherish the interests of one portion to the injury of another portion of our common country.

5. Resolved, That it is the duty of every branch of the government to enforce and practice the most rigid economy in conducting our public affairs, and that no more revenue ought to be raised than is required to defray the necessary expenses of the government.

1844.

The democratic convention of 1844, reaffirmed the fourth and fifth resolution of the convention of 1840.

1848.

The democratic national convention of 1848.

Resolved, That it is the duty of every branch of the government to enforce and practice the most rigid economy in conducting our public affairs, and that no more revenue ought to be raised than is required to defray the necessary expenses of the government, and for the gradual but certain extinction of the debt created by the prosecution of a just and necessary war.

And that the results of democratic legislation in this and all other financial measures, upon which issues have been made between the two political parties of the country, have demonstrated to careful and practical men of all parties their soundness, safety and utility in all business pursuits.

Resolved, That the fruits of the great political triumph of 1844 have fulfilled the hopes of the democracy of the Union, in the noble impulse given to the cause of 1842, and the creation of the more equal, honest and protective tariff of 1846; and that in our opinion it would be a fatal error to weaken the band of a political organization by which these great reforms have been achieved and risk them in the hands of their known adversaries, with whatever delusive appeals they may solicit our surrender of that vigilance, which is the only safeguard of liberty.

1852.

The democratic convention of 1852. Resolved, That it is the duty of every branch of the government to enforce and practice the most rigid economy in conducting our public affairs, and that no more revenue ought to be raised than is required to defray the necessary expenses of the government, and for the gradual but certain extinction of the public debt.

Resolved, That, in view of the condition of popular institutions in the Old World, a high and sacred duty is devolved with increased responsibility upon the democracy of this country, as the party of the people, to uphold and maintain the rights of every state, and thereby the union of states and to sustain and advance among them constitutional liberty by continuing to resist all monopolies and exclusive legislation for the benefit of the few at the expense of the many.

1856.

In 1856 the democratic national convention.

Resolved, That justice and sound policy forbid the federal government to foster one branch of industry to the detriment of another or to cherish the interest of one portion of our common country.

It also repeated verbatim the first resolution quoted above of the convention of 1852, and then it

Resolved, finally, That there are questions connected with the foreign policy of this country which are inferior. The time has come for the people of the United States to declare themselves in favor of free seas and progressive free trade throughout the world, and, by solemn manifestations, to place their moral influence at the side of their successful example.

1860.

In 1860 both the Douglas and Breckinridge platforms reaffirmed the resolutions quoted above.

1864.

In 1864 the continuation of the civil war, which made imprudently high duties necessary to raise sufficient revenue precluded the necessity of discussing the extraordinary and willingly endured burden imposed by it on the

people of the northern states; and nothing was said about the tariff.

1868.

The democratic convention of 1868 demanded—

3. Payment of all the public debt of the United States as rapidly as practicable—all money drawn from the people by taxation, except so much as is requisite for the necessities of the government, economically administered, being honestly applied to such payment.

6. * * * * A tariff for revenue upon foreign imports and such equal taxation under the internal revenue laws as will afford incidental protection to domestic manufactures, and as will, without impairing the revenue, impose the least burden upon and best promote and encourage the great industrial interests of the country.

1872.

In 1872 the democratic convention (so-called) at Baltimore—which was, in fact, a Greeley, and not a democratic convention at all—did not adopt any democratic resolutions, but endorsed the platform of the liberal republican convention held at Cincinnati, which contained the following curious declaration making the tariff a "local issue."

We remit the discussion of the subject (protection and free trade) to the people of their congressional districts and the decision of congress thereon, wholly free from executive interference or dictation.

This is the only hiatus in the chain of assertions by the democratic party of the doctrine of a tariff for revenue only. It resulted in the shameful defeat of a candidate supported by the party in defiance alike of principle and of policy.

1876.

In 1876 the democratic convention spoke with no uncertain voice:

We denounce the present tariff, levied upon nearly four thousand articles as a masterpiece of injustice, inequality and false pretense.

It yields a dwindling, not a yearly rising revenue. It has impoverished many industries to subsidize a few. It prohibits imports that might purchase the products of American labor. It has degraded American commerce from the first to an inferior rank on the high seas. It has cut down the sales of American manufactures at home and abroad and depleted the returns of American agriculture—an industry followed by half of our people. It costs the people five times more than it produces to the treasury, obstructs the processes of production and wastes the fruits of labor. It promotes fraud, fosters smuggling, enriches dishonest officials and bankrupts honest merchants. We demand that all custom house taxation shall be only for revenue.

1880.

In the democratic platform of 1880 the old doctrine was tersely rephrased:

Home rule, honest money, consisting of gold, silver, and paper convertible on demand, the strict maintenance of the public faith, state and national, and a tariff for revenue only.

A Rebel Yell.

The first "rebel yell" of the session was heard at the democratic caucus Saturday night, when General Slocum moved, and the caucus unanimously resolved that the crippled and disabled Union Soldiers on the roll of the doorkeepers be retained. The "solid south" is getting its work in promptly.

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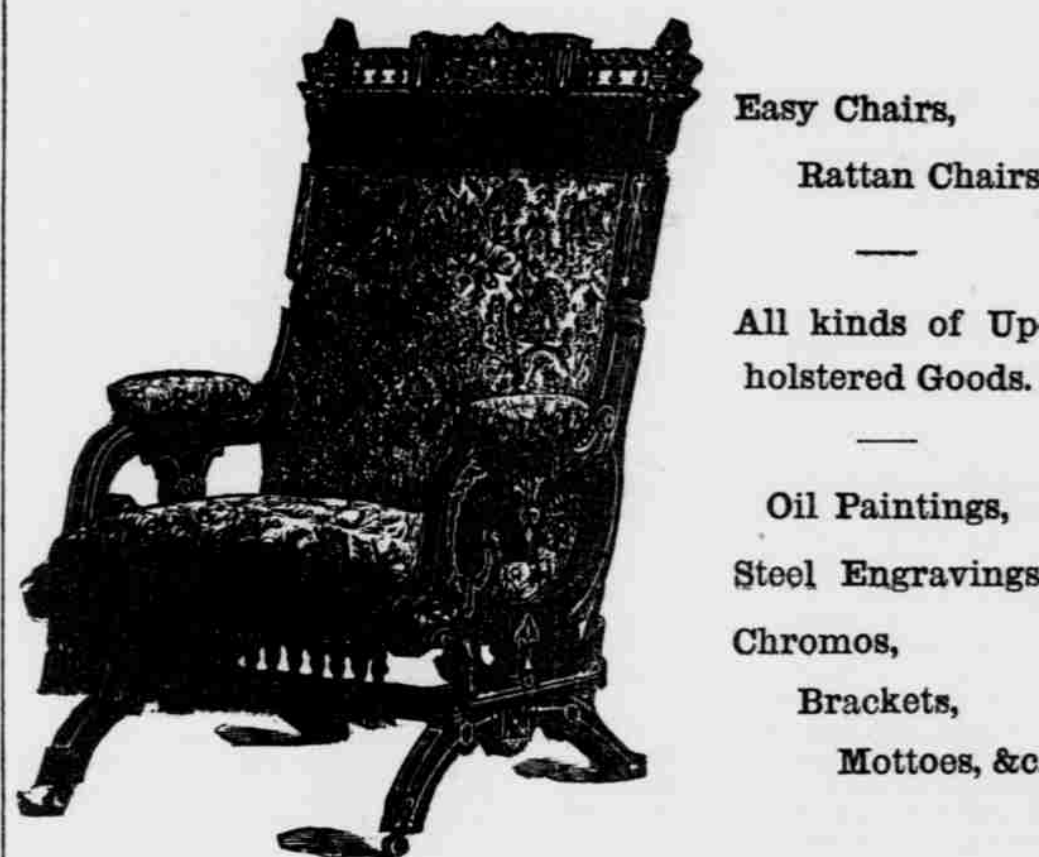
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