

created a prejudice against the very name of a United States Bank. But it is the judgment of impartial history that the first Bank of the United States (Hamilton's) was a wholly beneficent institution, and that the second one was such until Jackson made his attack upon it. The attack was unprovoked, unjust, unstatesmanlike, and unbusinesslike. It is altogether one of the most shameful chapters in our history. Yet the popular conception is that Jackson was right, and that the bank was a "monster." So completely has this idea laid hold upon the public mind that probably no step could be taken at present towards the establishment of such a bank on any terms. Yet the underlying idea that there should be some means by which public moneys may be kept at the service of commerce when not needed by the Government, and yet without involving the Government itself in the business of banking, is sound, and must, we think, force itself more and more upon public attention as years roll on.

A LINE OF DIVISION APPEARING.

THE most striking feature of political developments during the year 1887 is the appearance of a line of division between the two great parties on fundamental issues. Such a line once existed and was clearly defined, but during the last years of Republican Administration it gradually faded out. There was no great question upon which men took sides as Republicans and Democrats so that one needed only to know which party a man favored to know what policy he supported. As regarded pensions, for example, Republicans and Democrats vied with each other in championing the most extravagant measures. So as to the tariff, both parties in their national platforms of 1884 inveighed against the surplus as an insupportable evil, and Republicans as well as Democrats pledged themselves to reduce it by abolishing the unnecessary taxation which produced it. On the question which underlies all others, of the proper scope of the Federal Government, many Democrats had so far abandoned the traditional attitude of the party that membership of the organization did not prevent them from voting for a measure so glaringly unconstitutional as the proposition to take money from the National Treasury to support State schools, or to grant allowances from the same fund for the purchase of seeds for farmers in any State which had had a run of bad luck.

The first clear indication of a change came with the President's vetoes of the Pauper Pension Bill and the Texas Seed Bill last February. Both bills had been very generally supported by Democrats as well as Republicans, and a veto of neither was anticipated at the time of its passage. The exigencies of party discipline forced enough Democratic Congressmen to sustain the Democratic President in these cases to make his vetoes effective, while the Republican managers, despite the general support of Mr. Cleveland's action by Republican newspapers, decided to cast a solid party vote against him. The Republicans thus committed themselves to extravagant pension legislation, while the Democrats, aside from a small contingent of demagogues, ranged

themselves alongside of their President in opposition. These respective attitudes of the two parties in Congress have been so fully endorsed by the organizations of the two parties throughout the country, that it is now evident that the only hope of escaping the wildest schemes of the pension grabbers is in a Democratic Congress, or, failing that, a Democratic President ready to exercise the veto power; the Republicans being now committed to compliance with any demand which may be made upon them.

The pension question is only one phase of the wider question of extravagance or economy in the administration of the Government. So recently as 1884 the Republicans still clung to the position formulated in their platform of 1868, that "the Government of the United States should be administered with the strictest economy"; but in 1887 they have entirely abandoned it. Not a word in favor of economy is now ever heard in Republican platforms. Extravagance, thinly veiled under the euphuism of "liberal appropriations," is now the demand—the Ohio platform phrasing it, "liberal pensions to the soldiers and sailors of the Union, adequate appropriations for the improvement of our national waterways, and national aid to education," while the Massachusetts platform puts it thus: "We favor liberal appropriations for the reconstruction of our navy, for coast defences, for internal improvements, and for proper national aid to education; also, adequate pensions for our disabled soldiers and sailors."

The support of extravagance as a national policy in the future is accompanied by the failure of the Republican party longer to advocate a reduction of the tariff. In 1884 its national platform protested against "the burden of unnecessary taxation," which is as heavy now as it was then, and declared that "the Republican party pledges itself to correct the irregularities of the tariff and to reduce the surplus." Now the *Tribune* declares that "no body of citizens anywhere asks for a reduction of the tariff unless in conventions packed by office-holders," and the statement is true as regards Republican conventions. The Ohio platform only recognizes the existence of any surplus, after its "liberal appropriations" are made, as a remote possibility, in which case it favors the abolition of the internal tax upon American-grown tobacco. The Massachusetts platform also regards the existence of any surplus, after its "liberal appropriations" are made, as problematical, and contents itself with the mild suggestion that, "to meet further the question of a Treasury surplus," a reduction of internal-revenue taxation is recommended, and that the time has come for Congress to "carefully consider" the tariff on sugar. The New York and Pennsylvania platforms do not admit the necessity of any reduction of the tariff. Indeed, the plain intention, as it would be the necessary result, of the policy of extravagance is to do away with the surplus produced by "unnecessary taxation" through unnecessary spending, so that there may be no surplus to bother over.

As a part of this policy of extravagance, a dangerous extension of Federal authority is now

taken up as a party policy by the Republican managers. Despite the earnest protests of a few Republicans like Senator Hawley against the grossly unconstitutional nature of the proposition, the Republican platforms this year are endorsing the scheme of national aid to education, by which Senator Blair proposes to dispose of \$77,000,000 of the surplus. Nor is this all. Here in New York the Republican party proceeds a step further, and asks the general Government to interfere in the matter of State canals in these words: "National support of the Erie Canal, the great highway for the products of the West to the seaboard, is favored and invited."

On all these issues the drift is as strong the other way among the Democrats. While some of the Southerners have been seduced by the \$77,000,000 bribe into supporting the Blair bill, the better portion of the party in Congress is against it, and nobody doubts that the Democratic President would veto it as quickly as he did the Texas Seed Bill if it should ever reach him. While a small wing of the Democrats in Congress have hitherto blocked tariff reform by voting with a nearly solid Republican party against it, the bulk of the party is sound on this issue. On the proposition further to extend national authority, as in the Erie Canal aid scheme, the Democrats are as positive as could be wished, their platform declaring that "the State of New York needs and will accept no Federal aid for the improvement or maintenance of its canal system."

It is thus obvious that there is at present a strong drift towards a well defined line of division between the parties on fundamental issues in the campaign of 1888. If the drift continues for twelve months to come, the next Presidential election will be a contest involving great questions of national policy.

THE ASSESSMENT EVIL.

THE annual sale of offices to the highest bidder is now in progress in this city, and we wish very much that public attention could be so concentrated upon the transaction as to create a popular demand for the radical reform of our entire election machinery. There is much talk in the newspapers about various candidates and their strength before the people, but every intelligent student of our system of nomination knows that a controlling test of every candidate is, "Can he pay the assessment?" If he cannot pay it, has he a "hall" that will pay it for him? If the assessment is not forthcoming from some source, the man cannot be nominated, no matter how great his strength may be. If the office to be filled is a Supreme Court judgeship, the price of a nomination ranges from \$10,000 to \$20,000; if it be a Comptroller-ship, the price is \$10,000; for a united nomination for District Attorney it is \$5,000 to each of two "halls"; and for nominations for the minor judgeships, State Senators, and Assemblymen, it ranges from \$500 to \$10,000.

Unless a candidate for a nomination can pay the price asked, or can get somebody else to pay it for him, he cannot be nominated. This is a scandalous state of affairs, but who is

responsible for it? Not the halls and the politicians, but the people of the city and State. It is the people who, through their law-makers, have failed to make any provision for defraying the expense of printing and distributing the ballots on election day, that are responsible for this annual sale of offices. The State provides for the registration of the vote and for its reception and counting, but makes no provision whatever for the printing and distributing of ballots. What the State has failed to do, the political machines have been built up to do, and as a matter of course they do it in the way best calculated to further their own interests. They meet the expense by a tax levy upon the candidates, and the candidates recoup themselves from the public treasury after election, either by means of exorbitant salaries, or by resorting to some of the methods of indirect pilferings which are so familiar to politicians. If a candidate's assessment is paid by a "hall," he pays back the obligation by quartering a sufficient number of "workers" upon the city pay-rolls, or in other ways enabling them to get living at the city's expense. Every general election in this city, involving the choice of a Mayor and other high officers, requires an assessment fund of at least \$400,000. This year it will not be so large, but it will be at least half that sum. Why should the candidates be called upon to pay this tax, which belongs to the city as clearly as the tax for poll clerks and inspectors?

Any man can see that the necessity for such a tax must inevitably affect the character of the candidates. It bars out all but the rich or those who have the support of the "halls." The poor man who stands outside the "halls," and whose personal friends are unable to put up the money for him, has no chance. Even if he were to receive a popular nomination, he could not hope for an election, because there is no existing machinery by which he can get his ballots distributed at the polls. We have a case in point here now. Mr. Nicoll has made a most creditable record as Assistant District Attorney. There is a distinct and gratifying public sentiment in favor of his nomination for the head of the office. But it is a moral impossibility for him to get a regular nomination, and equally a moral impossibility for him to get an election on an irregular nomination. He stands outside the "halls," he is not connected with either of them as "their man," and their leaders will not hear of his candidacy. Suppose, now, that there should be a citizens' movement to take him up, or suppose the Republican Machine were to consent to make him their candidate. If he were the citizens' candidate, an entirely new machine would have to be organized to distribute his ballots on election day. It would cost as much to do this as it has in previous years to run an independent candidate for Mayor—that is, between \$60,000 and \$100,000. Even with that outlay, the chances would be ten to one that he would be sold out at the polls by the very men who were hired to distribute his ballots; for every one of the 37,000 workers of the various machines, whose business would be at stake in the contest, would be his bitter and most wily enemy from the start. If he were to be the candidate of the Republi-

can Machine, his case would be even more hopeless, for he would be nominated solely to be "sold out."

With an election law providing for the printing and distribution of ballots at the public expense, and allowing the candidacy of any man who could be named for a position by a specified number of citizens, this could all be changed: Mr. Nicoll, or any other capable official, could snap his finger at the "halls," and could take the field as a candidate without submitting to an assessment and without fear of "knifing" at the polls. It is the grossest neglect of our own interests for us as a community to go on year after year under the present system. It is putting a premium upon misgovernment. It bars from office the men most fit, and opens wide the door for dishonesty and extravagance. We cannot get more than two or three honest men out of the thirty-one which represent us at Albany each year. The others buy their nominations for from two to ten times as much as their salaries amount to, and get their money back by selling their votes or by favoring the most vicious kinds of "hall" legislation.

The project for a new election law, which attracted so wide attention through the debates of the Commonwealth Club last winter, is to be revived this year, and we are assured that a carefully prepared measure, applying to the large cities of the entire State, will be presented in the next Legislature soon after it comes together. A more laudable work could not be undertaken, and every citizen, whatever his politics, who has the welfare of popular government at heart, ought to give it his most earnest support.

THE DREAM OF THE COMTE DE PARIS.

THE great vision of the Comte de Paris, the narrative of which he published two or three weeks ago in the form of a manifesto "to the representatives of the Monarchist party in France," may thus be epitomized in his own moods and tenses: France will pass through one of her periodic violent crises. This crisis will be the work of Republicans, when demagoguery shall have led to civil strife, or faction attempted the seizing of the supreme power by force. The monarchy will be hailed as the restorer of order and concord. That monarchy will not mark a retrograde step. It will but steady French democracy. It will renew the old pact between the nation and the Capet family. This pact will be recalled into force by a constituent assembly, or by the more solemn agency of a popular vote. As an act for ever, it will be carried out on the basis of universal suffrage. The country will desire a strong government. To fit this the method of election will have to be modified. The King will govern with the concurrence of the Chambers. The Senate will be in part elective, and have equal authority with the Chamber of Deputies. By both royalty will be enlightened and guided, but not enslaved, leaning for support on either the one or the other. The budget, instead of being voted annually, will be an ordinary law. The annual financial project will contain only modifications of it. New taxes will require the consent of the representatives of the nation, who will also

have the right of discussing all subjects of national interest and of listening to complaints of abuses. The monarchy—thus the story of the vision goes on—will have to re-establish financial economy, administrative order, and judicial independence. It will have to raise by peaceful means the position of France in Europe, to make her respected and her alliance sought after. The Ministers will in this work be free from the fear of an omnipotent Chamber, as they will be responsible to three branches of legislative power. The monarchy will be strong abroad, and yet able to relieve ruinous military burdens. It will protect all religions, guarantee respect to the clergy, restore the freedom of Christian education, and insure liberty to religious as well as secular institutions. It will raise the discipline of the army. It will study industrial problems, work for the amelioration of the lot of the laboring classes, endeavor to bring about social pacification, leave the new strata of society in the enjoyment of the advantages recently obtained, maintain universal suffrage, and leave unpretending and honest Republican office-holders in their positions. That the King will be the first servant of France is the last word of the dream.

M. Ferry, in a speech on Thursday, declared that the Republic regarded this dream with "contemptuous indifference." If he had said "ignorant indifference," it would doubtless be true of the country at large, because we presume nine-tenths of the provincial voters do not even know who the Comte de Paris is. But he admits that it is not true of the Chambers, for he says it will probably be made a pretext for attacking the Cabinet, and an excuse by some Republicans for deserting their party, and expresses a fear that a ministerial "crisis" may arise out of it. The meaning of this is, that the Cabinet has owed its capacity to hold its own during the past six months to the support of Royalists who had come to the conclusion that the weakness of successive ministries, the facility with which they were overthrown, and the instability thus introduced into the management of public business, constituted a great danger for the country. It is feared that the Comte de Paris's manifesto may have sufficient influence on these men to make them feel that they ought not to do anything further to save the Republic from discredit or danger, and that as soon as they fall away from the Ministry the Radicals will attack it fiercely for ever having had their support.

On the other hand, the manifesto, in adopting the Bonapartist plan of substituting the popular vote for divine right, or "the grace of God," as the source of sovereignty, has profoundly afflicted a large body of the Monarchists, while it has filled Paul de Cassagnac and the other surviving Bonapartists with glee as a grand vindication of the main plank in their own platform. The adoption of it is certainly the most serious step, and at the same time the most absurd, that the head of the house of Bourbon has ever taken, for it is clear that no two things can be more opposed than the hereditary principle and the bestowal of the crown by popular vote. If the Comte de Paris were restored to-morrow by a plébiscite, he might be the choice of the majority as the best man available for the chief magistracy. If his son were to succeed him by inheritance, however,