

the minds of impartial citizens. When, as has several times happened, the Democrats have obtained a majority in the House of Representatives, their legislation has not been higher in aim or more judicious in the choice of means than that which Republican congresses have produced. Hence the tendency to desert from the Republican ranks has enured to the benefit of the Democrats less than might have been expected. However, the Democratic party includes not only nearly all the talent education and wealth of the South, together with the bulk of the Southern farmers and poor whites, but also a respectable minority of good men in the Middle States, and a somewhat smaller minority in New England and the North-west.

In these last-mentioned districts its strength lies chiefly in the cities, a curious contrast to those earlier days when Jefferson was supported by the farmers and Hamilton by the townfolk.¹ But the large cities have now a population unlike anything that existed eighty years ago, a vast ignorant fluctuating mass of people, many of them only recently admitted to citizenship, who have little reason for belonging to one party rather than another, but are attracted some by the name of the Democratic party, some by the fact that it is not the party of the well-to-do, some by the leaders belonging to their own races who have risen to influence in its ranks. The adhesion of this mob gives the party a slight flavour of rowdyism, as its old associations give it, to a Puritan palate, a slight flavour of irreligion. Twenty years ago, a New England deacon—the deacon is in America the type of solid respectability—would have found it as hard to vote for a Democratic candidate as an English archdeacon to vote for a Birmingham Radical. But these old feelings have begun to wear away. A new generation of voters has arisen which never saw slavery, and which cares little about Jefferson for good or for evil. This generation takes parties as it finds them. Even among the older voters there has been a sensible change within the last three years. Many of the best Republicans, who remembered the Democrats as the party of which a strong section sympathized with the slaveholders before the war, and disapproved of the war while it was being waged, looked with horror

¹ Jefferson regarded agriculture as so much the best occupation for citizens that he was alarmed by the rumour that the codfish of the North-eastern coasts were coming down to the shores of Virginia and Carolina, lest the people of those States should "be tempted to catch them, and commerce, of which we have already too much, receive an accession."