

Changing the Political Map of the United States

[From Current Opinion for December.]

Of the many interesting aspects presented by the election last month, perhaps the most impressive is the change in the political map. Ever since the Civil war issues were settled, there have been recurring efforts to form a combination of some sort between the south and the west. The Greenbackers tried it, the Labor party tried it, the Populists tried it, Free Silver democrats tried it, the progressives tried it. Their plans were balked by the unchanging adherence of the solid south to the democratic party. The west could be enticed into a new party, but the south could not. Now what nearly two generations have tried in vain to do has been accomplished under the leadership of Woodrow Wilson. The break between the section west of the Mississippi and the section east of it and north of the old Mason and Dixon's line is a political event of enduring importance. The New York World calls it "the beginning of a new political era in the United States." The Chicago Evening Post says, "the election has revolutionized the alignments of power which have obtained for a generation. In the map (showing the results of the elections), the alliance between the south and west is apparent at a glance. But the map does not tell all the story. A swing of 200 votes would have made Minnesota black. A swing of 3,500 would have made Oregon black. A swing of 2,750 would have made South Dakota black. In other words, a swing of 6,500 votes in these three states would have left Iowa the only state west of the Mississippi in the republican ranks. And the remarkable feature of this change is that it was not affected by any issue, such as free silver, railway regulations, opposition to the money trust, etc., that had a sectional slant. The appeals in the recent campaign were indeed singularly free from sectional bias. The striking difference in the effect of strictly national appeals upon the two sections is the significant thing in the new alignment. This shift in sentiment and change in political geography, as the Washington correspondent of the New York Times notes, "was probably not expected by any of the political managers, judged by their attitude in the early hours of Wednesday morning."

West Surprises Political Managers

Before three o'clock of the morning following election, democratic papers like the New York World and New York Times conceded the election of Hughes, signaled it to the public, sent editorials and headlines to that effect to the printer, and their editions were rushed off the press and to the news-stands. Willcox, republican chairman, sent his congratulations to Mr. Hughes, and received the latter's thanks for his "victory." Mr. Roosevelt had gone to bed satisfied, expressing his delight and declaring he would not offer any advice to the incoming president. Enough returns were in from all the heretofore pivotal states at that time to make conclusions apparently safe. But with the coming of returns after that hour from North Dakota, followed by those from other trans-Mississippi states, the first intimations of what had happened came to managers, candidates and journalists alike. They had talked of landslides and tidal waves but not of a political revolution in

the map. Says the New York Times Washington correspondent:

"With the drawing of a new map have arisen new statesmen, representative of new national policies. The south, the west, the Pacific coast states, and Ohio constitute the new political chart created by Woodrow Wilson and the new elements in politics. Whether this map and the personalities also created by the shift of opinion will last, remains to be seen. It is a question to be decided, probably, by the congressional battle two years hence, or two years later on by the presidential election. In the meantime there is no overlooking the fact that the far west has thrown its lot in with the solid south, and no longer seems to be dependent on the east."

The "Passion for Popular Government" in the West

It is not a southern or western but an eastern journal, the New York World, that is most outspoken in its rejoicing over this new shifting of influence away from the eastern and middle states. It says:

"The west has indeed spoken, and nothing better has happened in a generation than this shifting of the political balance to a section which still maintains the old ideals of the republic which is not owned by its pocketbook and which has never made a god of its bank account. To elect a president without the sordid assistance of New York, and hardly less sordid assistance of Illinois, would be a double triumph. Even to lose the presidency by a small margin in such circumstances would be a moral victory that Mr. Wilson could always remember with pride. Whether he wins or loses in the final count of the states that will decide the result, his leadership has wrought a mighty political revolution in the United States. The cash register patriotism of New York has been spat upon by a virile American west that is keeping the faith of the fathers."

One explanation that comes out of the west itself is presented by E. P. Costigan, a progressive leader of Colorado, and twice a progressive candidate for governor. "While the East," he says, "has been thinking in terms of the European war, the progressives of the west have considered domestic peace and justice of greater importance, and have voted accordingly." Nothing, he goes on to say, is more curious than the persistent blindness of the people of the east toward the passion for popular government in western America. "It explains at one and the same time the enduring influence of Mr. Bryan and Senator La Follette, the rise and eclipse of Colonel Roosevelt, and the present widespread popularity of President Wilson."

[The map showing results of the 1916 elections, referred to in above article, will be found in another column on this page.—Ed.]

SAYS BRYAN H'S TURNED CITY "DRY"

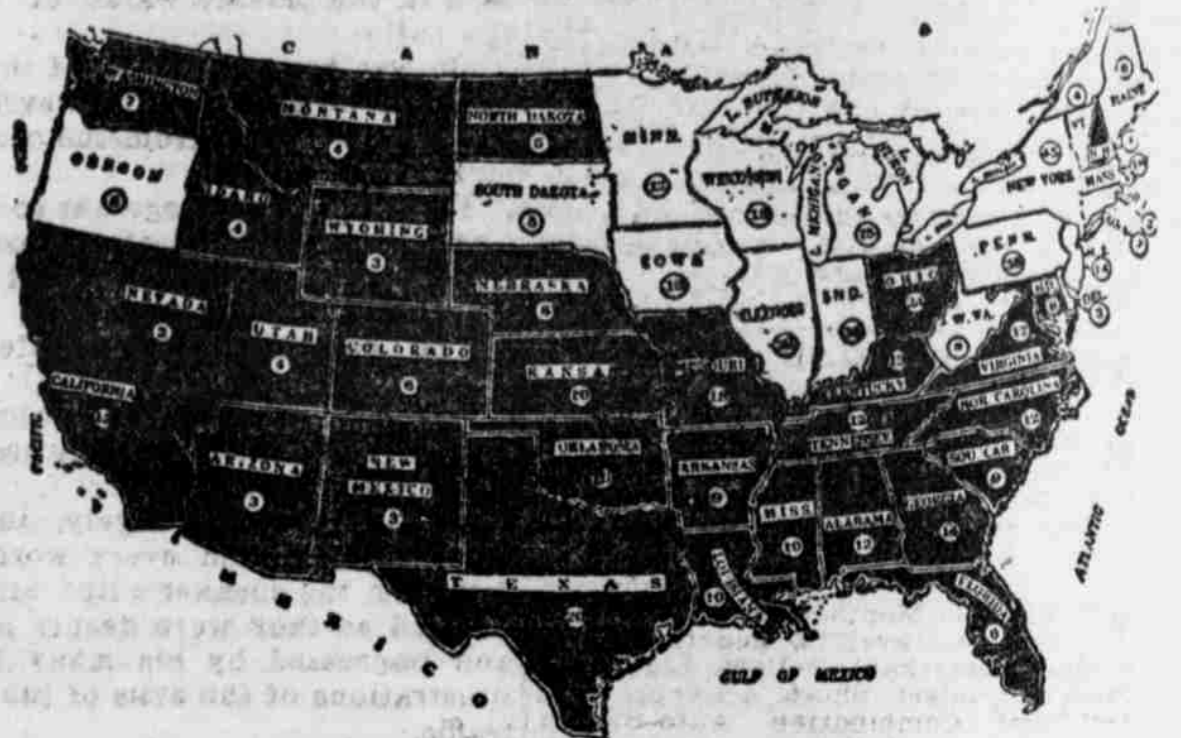
[From the St. Louis Times, Dec. 11.] If a prohibition election were to be held now, St. Louis would go "dry" by a big majority as a result of the nine speeches made here by William Jennings Bryan in the past two days, Rev. Dr. John L. Brandt, pastor of the First Christian church and a leader in the recent battle for prohibition in Missouri, told a re-

"LEST WE FORGET"

The West and South in 1896



The West and South in 1916



Black, Democratic; White, Republican

A comparison of the two maps printed above—the first giving the political map of 1896 and the second the political map of 1916—shows that the same forces which gave birth to progressive democracy in 1896 brought victory to progressive democracy in 1916. In 1896, the democrats carried all the western states carried by the democrats in 1916, with the exception of California and North Dakota. In 1896, the democrats carried South Dakota but lost it in 1916. In 1916, the democrats added the three western states that were territories in 1896.

porter for the St. Louis Times, Monday morning.

"Mr. Bryan's speeches have converted hundreds of people in St. Louis," Dr. Brandt said, "and have awakened hundreds of others to the danger that lies in allowing the liquor traffic to continue. There is no greater influence for prohibition in the country than Mr. Bryan. His logic and his marvelous eloquence move people as no other speaker can. "I believe that if Mr. Bryan lives and it is granted for him to continue in good health, his name will go down in history as the one man who did more than any other to bring about prohibition in the United States."

Dr. Brandt said that he was not basing this opinion on the effect of Mr. Bryan's talk on the church people alone, although "it awoke many of them from the lethargy into which they have allowed themselves to sink." He said that business men and men who were not Christians were just as enthusiastic over the address as the church people.

Mr. Bryan spoke before a crowded house at the central Baptist church Sunday afternoon. The meeting was scheduled for 3:30 p. m., but at 3 o'clock the doors were closed and the overflow crowd was partly cared for across the street in St. John's Southern Methodist Episcopal church. The crowd in St. John's waited from 3:30 until nearly 5:30, when Mr. Bryan addressed them. He also spoke at a

11 a. m. Sunday in the Wheeler evangelistic tent, Wellston.

MR. BRYAN IN SOUTH CAROLINA

It is just a year since Bryan spoke in Charleston under the auspices of the Southern Commercial Congress. His message then was peace. He has long urged this as the first of all human aspirations. It was peculiarly appropriate then, both because of the season whereof the poet has said "so gentle and so hallowed is the time," and because the world seemed lost in universal war. Today he comes while the word "Peace" is on the lips of kings and emperors who pray that finally the sword has done its bloody work. And he is as welcome as the sound of that word to the weary nations.

He is, indeed, a dynamic force in our republic. For a sun that has suffered so many passing eclipses, he shines with amazing splendor. He has been ever wrong for the moment, but right in the end. The pathfinder of democracy, he has hewn the forests while others plowed the fields and gathered harvests. And yet he moves on. But he is growing slower now with the weight of work rather than years upon his shoulders, while the people are crowding at his heels where once they followed only from afar. He has never sought a majority; but now the majority seems to be seeking him.—Charleston (S. C.) American.