

Congressman Hitchcock Produces the Record

The following report of a speech delivered by Congressman Gilbert M. Hitchcock of Nebraska in the house January 24 is taken from the Congressional Record:

Mr. Hitchcock: Mr. Chairman, I shall not consume all the time that has been allotted to me, and I desire only to use so much of it as may be necessary to make some comment upon a recent unofficial prophecy of the late official prophet of the republican party, General Grosvenor of Ohio. While in the city a few days ago he made an elaborate and carefully prepared statement in the nature of a prophecy to the effect that the prospective nominee of the democratic party could not by any possible computation be figured out as able to secure more than 166 of the electoral votes of the United States, and in making this prophecy this prophet, recently out of a job, used this language:

"Bryanism has been the bane of the democratic party in the east and great middle west for all these years."

Now, Mr. Chairman, some one has said that "the best of prophets of the future is the past," and the world's greatest poet has said that "one thorn of experience is worth a whole wilderness of warning." Therefore it happens, Mr. Chairman, that even if the democratic party were disposed to take its warnings and its prophecies from high republican sources and from assistant republican newspapers, that party is much more likely to look to its experience of recent years and scan the statistics of recent elections than it is to heed the grave warnings of eminent republicans who are very anxious to save the democratic party from a terrible mistake. What are those experiences?

In the table prepared by the eminent gentleman from Ohio, we find 166 electoral votes accorded to Bryan in the approaching election, as follows:

Alabama	11
Arkansas	9
Florida	5
Georgia	13
Kentucky	13
Louisiana	9
Maryland	9
Mississippi	10
Missouri	18
North Carolina	12
Oklahoma	7
South Carolina	9
Tennessee	12
Texas	18
Virginia	12
Total	166

After this concession to "Bryanism" the same prophet proceeds to foretell which states will surely be republican. These so-called "safe republican states" embrace, among others, the states of Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New York and Ohio. Now for a few moments, I desire to draw attention to these states, which cast in all 126 electoral votes, and in which democracy is alleged by the prophet to have been so terribly damaged by the "bane of Bryanism." What do the figures of the elections show? Taking the first state, Colorado, we find that Mr. Bryan in the year 1900, in the last campaign in which he was a candidate, polled 122,000 votes, and that the democrat nominated by the democratic party in the last campaign as safe and sane, representing, as our republican friends tell us, the real, wise, and hopeful candidacy of the democratic party, polled only 101,000 votes four years later.

Mr. Bonyng: May I ask the gentleman a question? Has he the figures of 1896, when Mr. Bryan carried the state by about 136,000 plurality, and in 1900 by 29,000 plurality? At the same rate of figures the republicans ought to carry the state next time by 100,000. (Applause on the republican side.)

Mr. Hitchcock: I reply to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. Bonyng) to this effect, that Mr. Bryan in both campaigns carried this republican state by large majorities, and that with the exception of Colorado every one of these states gave Mr. Bryan substantially the same vote in 1900 that it gave him in 1896. (Applause on the democratic side.)

Mr. Bonyng: The gentleman was talking about Colorado. I wanted to give the facts.

Mr. Hitchcock: I did so, Mr. Chairman. Moreover, in spite of the fact in 1900 that the republican candidate for president was running

for re-election; in spite of the fact that he had at that time, as the republicans have not now, the argument of the full dinner pail; in spite of the fact that the republicans at that time had, as they have not now, the argument of a successful war, Bryan carried this republican state and can do so again. Colorado, moreover, is the only one of the debatable states in which Mr. Bryan's vote declined from 1896 to 1900, and even then, after that decline, he had enough to carry the state against McKinley by nearly 30,000 majority. He had more than any other democrat ever received in Colorado before or since. (Applause on the democratic side.)

Come, now, to the state of Idaho. He carried that state in 1896, and again in 1900. No other democratic candidate for president ever carried that state. When Judge Parker ran—and in speaking of him I speak in no disparagement, because his candidacy was not one in which his personal strength was the test. His weakness was the weakness of the reactionary. It was the weakness of a general who was leading toward the rear and not toward the front. (Applause.) When Mr. Parker ran in Idaho he polled only two-thirds as many votes as Mr. Bryan had polled four years before.

Coming now to the state of Illinois, which General Grosvenor denominates as surely republican, because democracy there suffers from the bane of Bryanism, what do we find? We find that Mr. Bryan polled in that state 503,000 votes in spite of the flood of money which was poured forth at the last moment to purchase the electorate. We find that Judge Parker four years later polled about 200,000 votes less. (Renewed applause.) Mr. Bryan polled in Illinois more votes than any democratic candidate for president before or since. Running four years after Cleveland, he had 40,000 more votes, and running four years before Parker, he polled 175,000 more votes than Parker. (Applause.) Does that look as though the democracy of Illinois was suffering from the "bane of Bryanism?" Mr. Bryan did not carry the state then, although I believe he will carry it this year. (Loud applause on the democratic side.) But he lost Illinois by a vote which was 200,000 to the good, as compared with the reactionary candidate.

Let us now look at the state of Indiana, which republican prophets warn us will surely be republican, if Bryan runs. Here we can more emphatically repeat the statement made by me about the state of Illinois. No democrat who ever ran for president in Indiana, or for any other office in Indiana, ever polled as many votes as Bryan did in 1900 against Mr. McKinley, the popular and militant president of a successful war and the prophet of a full dinner pail. In 1896 Mr. Bryan polled 43,000 votes more than Cleveland had done four years before, and he polled in 1900 35,000 votes more in Indiana than Judge Parker did four years later. Does that show weakness or strength in Bryanism?

Now we come to the state of Montana, denominated as safely republican. Mr. Bryan carried that republican state both times; and in 1900 polled more votes than Parker did four years later.

In Nebraska, my own state and Mr. Bryan's state, he carried it in 1896, and in 1900 even though he lost it by a narrow margin he polled more than twice as many votes as were given to Judge Parker four years later. (Renewed applause on the democratic side.) And it may be said, Mr. Chairman, that as a result of Bryanism, the republican majority in Nebraska, which had originally been nearly 28,000, has been reduced as to be less than half that size; and we feel confident in this year of grace, with Bryan as our leader and candidate, we will carry that state for him. (Loud applause on the democratic side.)

Mr. Keifer: I would like to ask the gentleman—he may have stated it, although I failed to hear it—what the vote for Bryan was in 1900 as compared with his vote in 1896 in Nebraska?

Mr. Hitchcock: In Nebraska?

Mr. Keifer: Yes.

Mr. Hitchcock: I think I can furnish the information. (Cries of "Go on.")

I will reply to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio by a more comprehensive statement perhaps than he anticipates. The total popular vote of the United States for the democratic candidate in the year 1900, when Mr. Bryan ran, was 6,358,000. Four years later, when Judge Parker—a man of unimpeachable charac-

ter, a man with a great reputation as a lawyer, a man who stood high in the Empire state and wherever lawyers are known—in that campaign Judge Parker polled 5,077,000 votes.

Mr. Keifer: A further question: The gentleman did not answer the other. Do you know whether Mr. Parker is right in his statement of a day or two ago that Bryan did not act in good faith, and according to promise, or he would have got more votes?

Mr. Hitchcock: I think, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Bryan is entirely able to answer personal questions himself. My opinion is that he acted in very good faith and that he carried himself in a model way under the circumstances. (Applause on the democratic side.)

It will be remembered in further answer to the gentleman's question, that when the great convention was held in St. Louis a desperate fight occurred in the committee on resolutions. Single handed and with a vigor and energy and ability unparalleled in struggles of that sort, Mr. Bryan for several days and several nights succeeded, by his work on the committee on resolutions, in preventing that committee from reporting a platform which he could not honestly support and defend before the people. After the resolutions had been adopted, after the platform had been made, and after the candidate had been nominated, or about the time he was nominated, after the books were closed, that candidate by wire made, without authority, what he called and his friends called "an addition to the democratic platform." And yet Mr. Bryan went forth in that campaign and made the best fight that he was capable of in support of that ticket.

Mr. Gaines of Tennessee: And Judge Parker thanked him.

Mr. Hitchcock: He fulfilled his pledge and received the thanks of Judge Parker during or near the close of that campaign. (Applause on democratic side.)

Mr. Keifer: I did not understand the gentleman to answer my question about the relative vote for Bryan in Nebraska in 1896 and 1900.

Mr. Hitchcock: I assure the gentleman from Ohio that I am not afraid to answer the question.

Mr. Keifer: You can answer it in a word.

Mr. Weisse: If the gentleman wants those figures I will go into the house library and get them in a minute and take that load off the gentleman's hands.

Mr. Hitchcock: Unfortunately I have not before me the figures for both years. I find that Bryan polled 114,000 votes in the year 1900, which was the year of his second campaign, and four years later Judge Parker polled 51,800 votes.

Mr. Macon: Mr. Chairman, I desire to interrupt the gentleman just a moment, in reference to Bryan's work for the ticket that was nominated in St. Louis.

Mr. Hitchcock: Yes.

Mr. Macon: I desire to state that he did noble work after that convention adjourned, notwithstanding the fact that every little two-by-four would-be statesman in that convention had tried to drive him out of the party.

Mr. Hitchcock: Yes, I think the gentleman from Arkansas is eminently correct in that. And now, as I have been interrupted by the distinguished ex-speaker and representative from Ohio (Mr. Keifer) I want to give him some more figures from Ohio.

Mr. Ollie M. James: Will the gentleman from Nebraska permit me just a moment? The question asked by the gentleman from Ohio as to whether or not Judge Parker impugned the good faith of Bryan would seem to lead to the inference that Bryan did not support him loyally in the campaign. Judge Parker did not intimate such a thing.

Mr. Keifer: Oh, yes.

Mr. Hitchcock: No; he did not. He simply said that Mr. Bryan before Parker's nomination had made speeches or statements which were used afterwards by Parker's enemies to hurt him, but he in no way implied that Bryan did not support him after he was nominated.

Mr. Gaines of Tennessee: Is it not also a fact that while he was making his great campaign for Parker in Indiana that Judge Parker wired him and thanked him for his brilliant and magnificent defense of him?

Mr. Hitchcock: Yes.

Mr. Gaines of Tennessee: I remember that distinctly.

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