

Newspaper Comments on the 1916 Election

Discussing Mr. Bryan's Connection With the Late Presidential Campaign and Its Influence on Future Politics

MAN WHO CAUSED ALL THIS NERVE-RACKING NOT UNKNOWN

[From the Montgomery (Ala.) Journal.]

There has been a political revolution in the far west and middle west.

It has disturbed the equanimity of the whole country.

It has been a revelation.

It has shocked the republicans, and surprised many democrats.

It has caused a nerve-racking condition among both democrats and republicans.

And what has caused all this?

Who has been the greatest factor in the education of the western farmer to the ideals of the democracy?

Who has since 1896 been constantly at work among the western farmers trying to convince them that the republican party was the party of predatory wealth, by and for predatory wealth, and the democratic party was the party of the people, by the people, and for the people?

Who has sought to show them it was a party of the masses and not of special interests?

Who is the man who has been the chief factor in this great work of education? the people are asking.

They know something has happened out there to change the political views and complexion of the farmers and business men, that has made a wonderful conversion, a conversion that means a new era has dawned in American politics, and that the one man who has been the enemy of Wall street and who Wall street has sought to destroy and who they have declared "politically dead and buried," time after time, may yet achieve an ambition, if he yet has it, to be elected to the highest office within the gift of the American people without their vote and despite their opposition and their money.

That man said at the St. Louis convention, to the confusion of Wall street and his enemies:

"I have no planks to offer but one, and that is the President's. Determine what he wants and his plank his mine. I expect to go before the people in his behalf."

And he went.

He did not go to the east.

He went to the west.

For seven weeks prior to the election he made from two to a half or a dozen speeches a day to the farmers and business men of the west.

In an interview during the campaign he declared that heretofore he could "speak of promises only" but now he could speak of "the good actually accomplished by a democratic administration—of promises fulfilled."

"All of these elements," he said, referring to the farmers and business men of the west, "unite in warm approval of the foreign policies of the administration, whereby peace has been preserved with our stricken neighbor, Mexico, and America has been spared the horrors of participation in the European war. It is no idle thing to say that the west is literally aflame with sentiment for Wilson because of the successful and honorable manner in which he has preserved the peace. Nor is it idle to say that the west regards peace as the paramount issue of this campaign, and intends to vote accordingly."

That man did not ask the national democratic committee to pay his expenses during the campaign.

He paid his own expenses and spoke from the rear platform of cars on special trains to thousands who had gathered at the various stations along the route, arousing the greatest enthusiasm everywhere.

Wilson had carried out his ideals of government. Had stood for what he had been contending for and fighting for nearly twenty years, and he had his ideal candidate—a candidate for whom he could pour out his whole soul everywhere, and he spoke strongly, feelingly, sincerely; and the people knew he was honest; they had known and heard him and loved him for nearly a quarter of a century and he had never deceived them

The hour and the man had met. Those farmers and business men had loved him, but had not followed him—simply because of party regularity and the party name.

But at last the education he had been carrying on consistently among those people had the effect.

It was an education not without good results as shown by the returns so far received from that section of this country which has usually followed the east in presidential contests.

He seems to have known it in advance.

"We are going to elect Wilson without New York and the east," he said, in an interview giving a forecast of the election, a week before the election.

It is hardly necessary for the Journal to name the man.

The people of the country know him.

He is a great moralist.

There are those who think he should have been a preacher; but many of those who have so strenuously asserted this often had a wish that he had a more limited field of action, that he should no longer have the whole world for his congregation.

He is an able, conscientious and courageous defender of freedom; a man of conviction, with the courage to express it in courteous language; who appeals to the reason of the upper and nether as well as the great middle class of Americans as a hard reasoner and clear thinker, who had rather drift into obscurity and sink into oblivion on an unpopular tide than to desert the people's cause, and who will live in stature, history and hearts of the people as the greatest defender of human rights in his day.

"God bless William Jennings Bryan" is now on the lips of Democrats, all sorts of Wilson democrats everywhere.

THE WITNESS IN THE WEST

The retirement of Mr. Bryan from the chief post in the cabinet of President Wilson last year was hailed with scarcely concealed glee by the republican leaders and newspapers. The Wilson administration was doomed, they said. The passage of uncommonly cordial expression of regard between the President and Mr. Bryan at the time of their official separation excited only their jeers. Even from those who should have known better came intimations that the great Nebraskan would turn upon Mr. Wilson.

It long ago became a republican maxim—almost an eastern maxim—that Mr. Bryan is an unscrupulous person. So the east resolved 20 years ago and so, in their opinion, he must be. They have taught themselves that sincerity, so far as W. J. Bryan is concerned, is non-existent



PAULINE REVERE

—From the New York World.

—and that is one of the reasons that they were unprepared for what came to pass a week ago.

Now the truth is that sincerity and direct, forward going honesty of purpose and action are the characteristics that distinguish this western gentleman. Perhaps he lacks the aptitude for finesse, perhaps he is poor in the quickness, the cunning, the trained and swift adroitness of intellect, that define political talent in the east. Perhaps, for that reason, in the east he is not understood. He violates the ancient rules of play. He is not vengeful and angry when, to the eastern mind, he ought to be. Hence he is inscrutable.

Hence, for the same reason, the west is inscrutable.

The west knows Mr. Bryan. The west looks upon a very human sort of man, of robust mind and not without imperfections yet withal sincere, big of purpose, who goes right on with steps true to those larger principles of righteousness and justice that men learn as children. So the west understands Bryan and to the west it is not strange that, though out of the cabinet, he is Wilson's friend.

That Nebraska has voted for Wilson is no singular phenomenon in the west. Nor does it call for explanation that everywhere that Bryan journeyed, defending the policies of the Wilson administration, explaining them and impressing them, the people voted for Mr. Wilson on election day. To be sure they were not voting for Mr. Bryan. Indeed, their inclination was to vote for Mr. Wilson. But Bryan was the witness for Wilson that they wanted; he was the supporter of the Wilson cause that they trusted, whom they gladly heard because they knew him.

It is no new thing that with a whole and single heart William J. Bryan serves his country. The zeal of the west that the man shall rule in this republic Bryan lighted 20 years ago. In the convention at Baltimore it was Bryan that set his great party in the path that since that day it has trod. It is Bryan that in 1916 is the sponsor for Wilson whom the people heed. New York and Boston sneer at Bryan—but the country moves on.—Columbia (S. C.) State.

HAS MR. BRYAN "COME BACK?"

Has Mr. Bryan "come back?" Well, judging from the ovations he is receiving even in New England, we should say so, if indeed he needed to come back. Mr. Bryan arrived some years ago and has remained since. The Baltimore convention of 1912 exhibited his influence on his party; the recent campaign has shown his marvelous hold on the people. The states in which Mr. Bryan spoke gave the votes that elected the President. Wilson and Bryan are the leaders of the democracy, and it is the personality of the men and the confidence felt in both of them that make the hold of the party secure. For Mr. Bryan there is indeed a love which probably passes that felt for any other tribune of the people in all our history. Only our own "Old Hickory" had such a following. There are millions of men in this country, democrats and republicans, who would undergo almost any personal sacrifice to see him president of the United States.

How silly for any enemy of Mr. Bryan to continue to criticize his lecturing for pay. A part of each year he devotes to this purpose. His only source of income is from his writings and his lectures. With it all, he is not a rich man. But of his income he gives a larger portion to useful public purposes than any other man in the public eye. There are many who would be pleased if they could isolate Mr. Bryan and hermetically seal his truth-speaking lips. The press has never been fair to the Commoner. There is always against him a conspiracy either of silence or abuse in its influenced columns. No lie has been too cheap that it has not been freely used to foster prejudice. But on his devoted head abuse, misrepresentation and ridicule alike have fallen without injury. He is greater today than ever before. Modern times have produced but one man whose life compares with his, and that