

## POLITICAL CHAOS

The Great and Enthusiastic Army Organized by Bryan Thrown Into a Disordered Mass by Reorganizers

If any one can make anything out of the result of the elections it is more than the editor of The Independent can do. Did the country indorse trusts, imperialism, colonies beyond the seas, exorbitant tariffs? Did it indorse the reorganizers and the overthrow of the Kansas City platform? The only democratic governor elected east of the Mississippi was a Bryanite. The republican majority in congress was cut down. Bryan states west of the Mississippi went republican. Socialism was advocated by the New York democracy and it came near winning. A revision of the tariff was advocated by some republican leaders and denounced by others. Taken altogether, it is simply political chaos.

This has been brought about by the Cleveland-Hill reorganizers. Bryan organized the greatest army of reform that the world ever saw and polled more votes than were ever cast for a democratic candidate for the presidency. This grand army of populists and genuine democrats has been scattered to the winds by the Cleveland traitors. The democracy has one policy in one state and the very opposite policy in another. In one state a radical, progressive reformer is nominated for governor, and in another right beside it a plutocrat and the vilest of corporation extortionists is chosen as the candidate, and both of them call themselves democrats. There were candidates for congress on the republican ticket who denounced tariffs with more bitterness than the ordinary populist or democrat and there was Henderson who refused a nomination by that party because the platform declared that the tariff should not be a shelter for trusts. Amidst all this confusion there is one division of the army of reform whose ranks are unbroken, who fight for the same principles and have the same platform everywhere, whose flag still floats from the ramparts, where every man still stands by the guns, determined to fight until victory is won or he dies in the trenches. There is no disorder or confusion in the ranks of the people's party.

One writer of great ability, an independent in politics, sums up the condition of affairs as follows:

"Eliminating the solid south, the country divides easily into a number of groups. There is the New England group—Massachusetts, New Hamp-

shire, Rhode Island and Connecticut. Here we meet the singular fact that in Rhode Island there was chosen the only democratic governor east of the Mississippi river, and he a man known in the past as a "single taxer," a supporter of Bryan, and a resident of a congressional district whose democratic convention a month ago explicitly indorsed the Kansas City platform. Dr. Garvin is a sincere, high-minded man, who has fought corrupt corporate influences in Rhode Island for almost a generation, and politically he is an exact antithesis to Mr. Gaston, who was nominated for governor by the democrats of Massachusetts. Had Gaston done as well as Garvin, he would have carried Massachusetts. Now, adjoining Rhode Island is Connecticut, which used to be close when Rhode Island was safe in republican hands. In Connecticut we face the oddity of democratic failure to equal the effort for governor in 1900, and in that year the state democratic candidates were bound to the Kansas City platform. This year the Connecticut democrats ignored that platform, and cut away from anti-imperialism, yet did worse than before—with Rhode Island democratic on one side and New York almost democratic on the other.

In the group of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the outcome is no less curious, when viewed in the dry light of political principle. The New York contest had formidable personal factors with a strong touch of the socialistic issue, and the conservative rural counties appear to have barely overcome the tremendous push toward Albany of the restless metropolis. Yet if New York was almost democratic, the adjoining state of Pennsylvania, which is ridden by some of the most brazen and lawless syndicates in the world, was overwhelmingly republican; and in New Jersey, an old-time democratic state, the republicans were remarkably successful in spite of Mr. Cleveland's personal appearance on the stump with tariff reform as the paramount issue. Who can analyze the results in those three adjoining states, from the democratic viewpoint, and see anything but that political disorderliness which comes in the absence of a widespread party homogeneity and a dominating central leadership?

It is the same in the middle west, the trans-Missouri region and the Pacific coast. Tom Johnson is beaten severely in Ohio, with his platform of local reform and reaffirmation of the Kansas City platform—due not a little to the McLean bolters in Cincinnati—yet the democrats were defeated with

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no less severity in the adjoining state of Indiana, which is one of the old doubtful four, notwithstanding that the reorganizers had obtained control of the party. In Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois and Iowa, democratic failures were conspicuous, although in all those states the party had "turned its back on Bryanism." In Kansas and Nebraska, neighboring states, having practically the same interests, the singular spectacle is offered of Kansas turning more heavily than before in 10 years to the republican side, and Nebraska displaying a slight reaction toward Bryanism. In the Rocky mountain states the republican gains are balanced by the fact that Senator Teller has carried the Colorado legislature by a substantial majority. On the Pacific coast the republican sweep of Washington is somewhat neutralized by the strong democratic drift in the governorship contest in California. And not least interesting is the much increased strength of socialistic tickets east and west, in Massachusetts aggregating a phenomenal gain of 300 per cent.

The spectacle thus reviewed may fairly be said to be that of a democratic party with no fixed or universally-accepted principles, depending largely upon local conditions for its chance successes. It was a chaos of defeat, with here and there an upward surge toward victory, governed, however, by no discernible political tendency in the least general in its scope. It was the fight of a leaderless party, with terrible internal dissensions, with no common principle and no common aim.

Cleveland and Hill knew when they started the scheme to repudiate the constitutionally announced principles of the democratic party, and which of necessity must be the principles of the party until another national convention formulated a new platform, that the result would be chaos. That is what they wanted and intended to bring about. The history of political parties can furnish no parallel to these two infernal scoundrels, who deliberately worked in the interest of plutocracy and the republican party. The republicans are in power today because of their treason. With a united democratic party and the two million of populists leading them as they did in '96, the republicans would have been overwhelmed long ago. But both Hill and Cleveland are now the two deader ducks that ever sank to the bottom of a stagnant pond.

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If the editor of The Independent had been a resident of Wisconsin he is inclined to think that he would have cast his vote for La Follette, as against the old Senator Vilas crowd of political traitors. Besides La Follette seems to be a second Bryan who by some mischance got into the republican party.

### Piano For Sale

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George D. Bell, 205 Central avenue, Nebraska City, Neb., sold a number of subscription cards and in remitting took occasion to say that "the g. o. p. has given us so much prosperity that we are not able to pay our debts any more."

### General Apathy

J. A. Baird in the Cedar Rapids Outlook says that nearly 150 farmers in Cedar precinct (Boone county) stayed in the fields on election day, and commenting on the fact remarks:

"The fusion apathy during the campaign caused a small country vote and this accounts for the fusion defeat. It may be said, too, that the same apathy which existed before election continues as the news of the election comes in. A very large part of the people of Nebraska did not care how the election went. They have lost faith in the ballot as manipulated by political parties. The results of the election in 1900 completely discouraged them and it is probable they will never regain their interest in party politics. They have come to look upon politics as practically only a fight for the spoils of office and have concluded that conscientious convictions have no show in the race against money. They would not be willing to surrender their right to vote, but at present are unable to see any good coming from the use of the ballot. If asked what would the country do without political parties they answer by asking the question, "In what way has the country ever been benefited by them?" Except, perhaps, in the way of education, they have cost the country enormously more than they have been worth. For every ounce of good they have done tons of labor and money have been expended, to say nothing of the corruption, hatred and divisions they have generated. They ask us to point to a single great reform or legislative accomplishment which has been secured by a political party since the government was founded. As instances they point us to slavery destroyed by military necessity and to the settlement of the recent coal strike from industrial necessity. They claim that political parties invariably become corrupt after their first taste of power and are thereafter only a nursery for prejudice and a machine for the manipulation of the ballot in the interest of the manipulators. Before blaming people for their political apathy and for not voting last Tuesday it might be well to inquire into the reasons for their indifference."

Although Pitney, Peisiger and Householder were defeated for re-election to the legislature, Gishwiller of Franklin managed to pull through by 6 votes.

Just as The Independent said, the big meat trust will now be organized. It only waited until the election was over to make the formal announcement. The underwriting syndicate has been formed, and will be headed by James Stillman, president of Rockefeller's City bank of New York. There is a blanket injunction out against any such combination on the part of the large packers, but this is where "injunctions don't go." They "go" only against labor.

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