

DEMOCRACY'S BAD LEADERSHIP.

A Great Contrast to the Position of the Party Eight Years Ago--The Worst Foot Put Forward Now In Important States.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 25.—A comparison of the condition of the democratic party as it enters the campaign this fall, one year preceding the presidential contest, with its condition in a similar election just eight years ago, affords one of the most pathetic contrasts of American politics. Today there is just one state north of the old Mason and Dixon line and east of the Missouri River which has a democratic governor. That is Minnesota; nor does this signify anything as to the relative strength of the two political parties, for on the same day that John Lind was elected governor the seven congressional districts of the state each chose a republican to represent them in congress. The clannishness of the Scandinavian vote accounts for this solitary exception to the rule that the democrats are now out of power in every state of the North as far west as the Missouri.

Eight years ago Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Iowa and Massachusetts had democratic governors. The congress of the United States which had been last elected contained in the lower house only 87 republicans, against 237 democrats, and eight farmers' alliance men. It was then evident to the most casual observer that the democrats were gaining in strength so rapidly as almost to insure their carrying the presidential election the following year. This they did by an overwhelming majority. Today their prospects as they approach this preliminary skirmish of 1899 are as slim as they were then flattering. This is something that those now in control of the organization will do well to ponder. It shows more forcibly than anything else that the way of the transgressor among parties, as well as men, is still hard.

Nothing has occurred in the conventions thus far this year to indicate that the democratic tide, which seems to be at low-water mark, has begun to come in. In nearly all the states that have any politics this year the democratic organization has boldly and bravely put its worst foot forward. In Massachusetts and Ohio this is particularly true, and Washington observers are wont to contrast the condition of the party in those two states with that which prevailed when Governor Russell was in control in Massachusetts, and the Cleveland wing of the party in Ohio. James E. Campbell was then governor of Ohio, and while he subjected himself to criticism for yielding to the free silver movement soon afterwards, it must be acknowledged that he is a long way ahead of John R. McLean. The demo-

cratic party appears to slightly better advantage in Iowa and Maryland, but in Kentucky it is in a worse muddle than ever before. Although the Iowa democrats selected of the two candidates prominently before their convention the one most extremely devoted to free silver, Mr. White has, since his nomination, apparently lost his enthusiasm for that issue, and is making some very strong anti-imperialist speeches. In Maryland, the democratic party ordinarily represents a substantial element of the communities, and this year is not an exception. Southern in their sympathies the Maryland democrats usually are, and yet with enough of the Baltimore business interests in the equation to keep them from those populist vagaries into which the democrats of the extreme South, where the rural vote predominates, fall so readily.

The few elections which always take place in the year preceding a presidential contest throw so much light as commonly to make it absolutely clear how that contest will turn out. This year there will be less certainty than usual in interpreting the meaning of the results, on account of the existence of a foreign war, which is liable at any time to have very sensational developments, so striking as to obliterate in a night all other issues, and completely to change the face of politics. Barring the possibilities of such developments in Philippine affairs between the coming November and that month a year later, it ought to be easy to tell from the vote soon to be cast how the presidential contest will result. After another deluge like that of 1896, it is reasonable to expect some reform from within the democratic party. Its followers like office altogether too well to remain permanently outside the corn crib. When it is again shown very distinctly that such drivers as now hold the reins will never guide them towards the corn, there will be a chance for wiser counsels to prevail.—From The New York Evening Post, Sept. 25, 1899.

THE BRAZOS RIVER (TEXAS) FLOOD OF JUNE-JULY, 1899.

The report of E. S. Holmes, jr., of the Division of Statistics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, on the recent flood in Brazos River, Texas, is now in the hands of the Public Printer and will soon be issued by the Department as Circular No. 10, Division of Statistics, entitled "The Brazos River (Texas) Flood of June-July, 1899, and Its Effects upon the Agriculture of the Submerged Region."

Mr. Holmes visited all the principal points in the district, and in his report says there were two floods, the first reaching its maximum height June 29, and the other following after an interval of less than one day and attaining

its highest point July 1, the two coming so nearly together as to be commonly known as one flood. There was a distinct interval, however, of almost a day between the two periods of high water, and during that time the river in the northern portion of the district sank nearly to its low-water mark.

The report describes the sections where the greatest damage occurred, and gives an account of the character of the damages, showing that the cotton planters were the chief losers, as 67.4 per cent of the entire area under cultivation was planted in that staple. There were also large losses of corn, including a considerable amount of last year's crop which had been stored for food, sugar cane, live stock, houses, fences, etc. There was a great deal of suffering from hunger and exposure in the outlying districts, and the problem of making the flooded section self-sustaining until another crop can be produced is a difficult one. Steps are being taken, however, to plant portions of the territory in food and forage crops which yield a quick return. This will serve to keep the land in good condition for next year's crop and may ultimately result in a greater diversification of crops, which can not fail to benefit a district where an abundant yield is assured by a mere scratching of the earth and dropping of seed.

The report gives estimate of the area covered by the flood, the population, and losses in land, crops, improvements, live stock, etc.

No attempt has been made to fix the loss on any particular class of people, but a certain portion of the value of the crops in the flooded region would have gone to the land owners. The system of tenant farming is such that the landlord is practically compelled to furnish household supplies to his tenants in advance of the gathering of the crop. It is estimated that the landlord has already advanced on this year's crop \$756,000 to tenants in the devastated region in addition to which the rent of his land would have yielded him \$1,759,000 had the crops matured, making a direct loss to the landlord of \$2,519,000, to which he has entirely given up his claim.

Not more than 50 per cent of the land will be replanted, and probably not more than 20 per cent of that in cotton; the remainder will be planted in quick-yielding food and forage crops, which may result in a greater diversification of products and more scientific farming.

The report concludes with estimates of the value of the property and losses in the flooded territory, showing a total loss of \$7,412,583.

He who loves Nature loves himself—
"from the dust of the earth didst thou come; to the dust of the earth shalt thou return; from mother earth dost thou live."