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MONDAY - - - AUGUST 7, 1899

A FALLACY IN FIGURING.

Two reasons are offered by a Democratic paper in Virginia for the belief that Mr. Bryan will be a formidable candidate next year. One is that he received more votes than were ever given any successful presidential candidate before 1896, and the other relates to the political bearings of trusts. The first only need be examined, for the Democratic party has not, and never had, any monopoly of opposition to oppressive business combinations. The Democratic fancy continues to be dazzled with the 6,502,925 votes for Bryan. Four years before, the argument runs, Cleveland received only 5,556,918 and was elected. Here the figuring stops. If Bryan, who was defeated, received nearly a million more votes than Cleveland, who was elected, then, it is held, Bryan ought to win next time. Besides, it is pointed out, Bryan polled the largest Democratic vote on record in all except the New England and Middle States. Even Ohio, McKinley's state, gave to Bryan in 1896 73,379 more votes than Cleveland obtained four years before, and Cleveland secured one of the Ohio electors. And so the Virginia paper, like many of its Democratic contemporaries, proves to its own satisfaction that Bryan presents peculiar advantages for the "second battle" he has confidently counted upon.

After recalling the 6,502,925 votes for Bryan, why not go on and mention the 7,104,779 votes for McKinley, and the immense McKinley plurality of over 600,000? The phenomenally active campaign of 1896 brought out an enormous total vote and the Democratic increase was more than matched by the Republican increase. Another essential point to remember is that Bryan was supported by the Populist party, which in 1892 cast 1,041,028 votes for candidates of its own. He will not have united Populist help next year. One Populist faction has already made separate nominations. It is vain to suppose that sound money voters of 1896 will change from the winning to the losing side in 1900. Naturally the drift will be in the other direction. If the promised prosperity had not come the Bryan note of discontent would have some influence, but good times are here in ample measure than was foreseen. The sudden change of Democratic front in 1896 and the extraordinary concessions for the sake of fusion, were exciting and sensational, and brought out an unexampled army of voters. But Democrats are foolish to call to mind only the marks of their own high tide.

Democratic papers can be found

that do not deceive themselves in regard to the lessons of 1896. They remember that, in spite of his 6,500,000 votes, Bryan was ninety-five votes behind in the electoral college. The Baltimore Sun remarks that Bryan will probably lose some states he carried before, and adds: "If the South wants to have the pleasure of voting for Mr. Bryan in 1900 it should at least not indulge the hope that he can be elected on a silver platform. There is not a practical politician in touch with national sentiment who does not know that under such conditions he will be defeated more decisively than in 1896." A chase after the Bryan aggregate of votes three years ago is not a bright conception when it is recalled that it fell hundreds of thousands short. The pursuit of minorities is not an intelligent form of politics. Mr. Bryan is a popular man with his party, but the platform on which he has tied himself is dead. It is a bad dilemma and means a repeated and heavier Democratic defeat in 1900.—Globe-Democrat.

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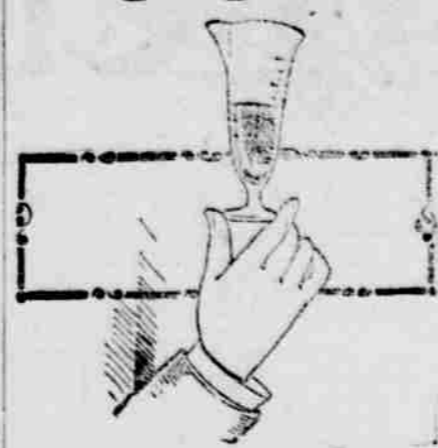
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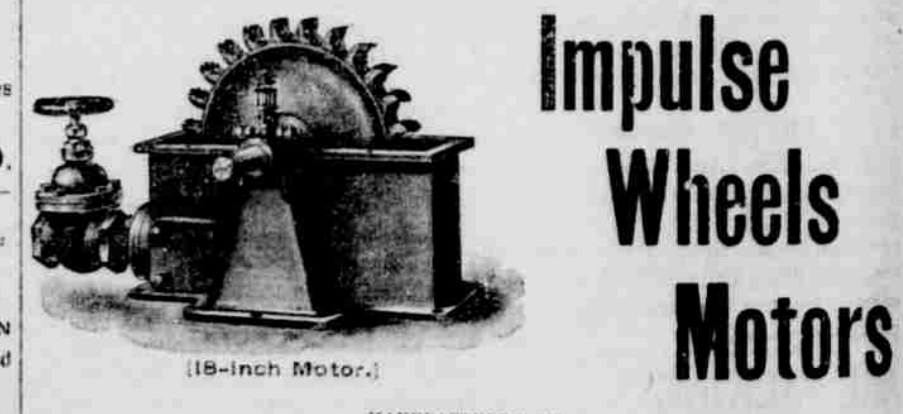
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