

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 5, NO. 207.

NEW YORK, MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 1905.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

TRIUMPHANT DEMOCRACY.

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THE phenomena produced by the last presidential election still continue to furnish matter for discussion among capitalist writers. The extraordinary vote polled by President Roosevelt appeals to them as being unusually significant and worthy of analysis. One of them, William Garrott Brown, the well-known historical author, writing in the current *Independent*, on "The Changing Character of National Elections," observes that "Perhaps, say twenty years hence, the very quiet general election of last November will come to be accounted far more epochal than the stormier contests of 1896 and 1876." This is a very safe observation to make. Though the number of years specified by Mr. Brown have not yet been traversed, there is even now a growing recognition of the epoch-making character of "the very quiet general election of last November."

But this is as far as a Socialist is willing to go with Mr. Brown. When he overlooks the deep meaning of another of his own statements, to wit, "The vote, though fairly heavy in the States that were strongly agitated, fell decidedly below the vote of 1900," and concludes that the "one man power and the bureaucracy" gained at the expense of the Democracy in the last election, and that in this lies the epoch-making character of the latter, disagreement becomes the order of the day. Mr. Brown overlooks the fact that the Democracy does not always express itself through the ballot. Democracy is most emphatic, when, at times, it refrains from registering its will at the polls, and silently, nay, ominously THINKS. Last election the Democracy THOUGHT. Seven hundred thousand fewer voters went to the polls in 1904 than in 1900. THIS NUMBER DOES NOT INCLUDE THE VOTERS WHO SHOULD BE ADDED BECAUSE OF THE INCREASE IN THE VOTING POPULATION DURING THE FOUR YEARS BETWEEN THOSE TWO PERIODS. Who will say that these portentous figures denote a victory for "one-man power and

the bureaucracy” at the expense of the Democracy? The “one-man power and the bureaucracy” itself indulges in no such dreams, as all who recall Secretary Taft’s warning against the abuse of power will know.

The last general election is an epoch-maker in that it confirms the verdicts of 1876 and 1896 making the capitalist domination over the ex-slave holder and the middle class agrarian and manufacturer the paramount feature of modern American society. It is also an epoch-maker, because by that very performance the last Presidential election leaves clear the field between Plutocracy and Democracy—between Capitalism and Socialism. The million or more voters who failed to cast their ballots in “the very quiet general election of last November” were conscious of the fact that a Democratic or a Republican victory meant the ascendancy of ultra-capitalist interests, to the detriment of all others. They accordingly refrained from voting. This very act, penetrating as it does the sham of conflicting principles kept alive by two apparently different political parties—thereby laying bare the political oneness of the capitalist class, makes a distinct gain for Socialism. When one stops to reflect on the interests that actuated this act—interests antagonistic to ultra-capitalism and mainly those of the working class—the gain for Socialism is decidedly more manifest.

Plutocracy, i.e., “one-man power and the bureaucracy,” which is its political expression, lost, and Democracy, i.e., Socialism, won, in “the very quiet general election of last November.” It is this that will cause it to be accounted more epochal than its stormy predecessors of 1876 and 1896, two decades hence.

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Uploaded October 2007

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