



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW

NO. DCLXXXI

AUGUST, 1912

THE POLITICAL PREDESTINATION OF WOODROW WILSON

REPRINTED FROM "THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW" OF MARCH,
1911

Whether predestination is absolute or conditional is a cardinal point of controversy between the Calvinists and the Arminians whose determination is not essential to the purpose of the following argument. Equally foreign to need in welding the chain of reasoning is decision of the question of dominance over the world—whether of a personal God or of the powers of Nature. But two assumptions on the part of the reader are requisite to understanding: (1) That the laws of logic, growing out of conditions and circumstances, are irrefragable as applied to human affairs, and (2) that, even so, irrespective election of an individual, without reference to the use he may make of his moral agency, cannot be maintained.

Upon this hypothesis we confidently base the prediction that, barring accidents of a physical nature, the two chief opposing candidates for the Presidency of the United States in 1912 will be William Howard Taft, Republican, and Woodrow Wilson, Democrat. We do not presume to impute to dialectics the nomination of the former. That, frankly, must be taken for granted. The reasons for its assumption, however, are sufficiently obvious. (1) He is a candidate. (2) He controls the Federal patronage. (3) He has won the confidence and respect of the people in

Copyright, 1912, by THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW PUBLISHING COMPANY. All Rights Reserved.

large measure and is gaining favor daily. (4) He is gradually acquiring the active friendship of the inevitably conservative business men, without whose support no candidate has been elected President since 1832. His rejection by the National Convention would be unprecedented and would presage certain defeat of the party at the polls.

But one obstacle lies in his path—Insurgency. By a remote possibility the new and eager League of Radical Republicans may secure control of the Convention and nominate, not Cummins, the wheel horse, but La Follette, the resolute, imaginative, inspiring leader. In that event, the Democrats will nominate Judson Harmon in consequence of causes precisely analogous to those set forth below which render the choice of Woodrow Wilson as the opponent of President Taft a virtual certainty.

Logic predestines antithesis. Circumstances, Conditions, uncontrolled and uncontrollable, demand it. History decrees it. Invariably the opposing candidate has been named, not by the opposition itself, but by the party taking the lead—in all but three instances by the party in power.

Sift the records! Sharp alignment of political organizations was first made in 1840. Prior to that time the elements constituting general opposition had been segregated and their strength dissipated. Four candidates had entered the race against Van Buren in 1836 and each had received votes in the electoral college, but Jackson's representative had a majority over all.

1840.—Van Buren reaped where Jackson had sown and his administration was a failure. Nevertheless, his renomination was universally accepted as a certainty when representatives of the new Whig party assembled for the first time in National convention to designate a candidate for President. Much difficulty was experienced in reconciling the various discordant elements and great deliberation characterized the proceedings. Three days were consumed in conferences of committees representing the various delegations. Clay was recognized as the ablest man in the party, was the most popular, was the natural choice and, at the beginning, was a prime favorite. Even as late as the second day the aggregate informal vote of the committees was: For Clay, 103; for William Henry Harrison, 97; for Winfield Scott, 57. And yet on the succeeding day Harrison was nominated by acclamation. Clay, the intellectual leader,

the idol of the masses, the experienced statesman, had been found to be "unavailable." Why? He was too like Van Buren. Both were skilled in statecraft and politics; both were civilians; both were dependent for public favor upon recognition of their mental gifts and shrewd practices. An opposite was the requirement of the opposition. Harrison, the rough-and-ready soldier, the military hero, met the unconscious demand.

1844.—Clay's star was in the ascendant and he received every vote in the Whig national convention. Van Buren, who had been beaten by Harrison, was the leading candidate for the Democratic nomination. On the first ballot he received 146 votes to 83 for Lewis Cass and 24 for R. M. Johnson and he held the lead till the fifth. The delegates sympathized with Van Buren's desire for vindication. He was still considered the most sagacious political manager within the party. But on the ninth ballot the unknown Polk was nominated. Why? For the same reasons that Clay was defeated for the Whig candidacy against Van Buren in 1840. The similarity had continued too marked. Both had just declared themselves opposed to the annexation of Texas. Both had long records in political service to uphold and defend. Both were affirmative. Polk was wholly negative. His views were unknown; his convictions adaptable. Polk was chosen.

1848.—The Democratic convention named Lewis Cass to succeed Polk. Although he bore a military title, the nominee was noted chiefly as a lawyer and an orator. The leading candidates before the Whig convention were Clay, Daniel Webster, Scott, and Zachary Taylor. Clay was still the idol of his party and Webster its greatest statesman. Both were lawyers and famous orators. Both were rejected. Of the two remaining candidates, Scott and Taylor, both were heroes of the Mexican War. But Scott was the more cultivated, the more diplomatic, the more courtly, and the prize went to "Old Zach," the uncouth, the very antithesis of Cass.

1852.—Millard Fillmore had succeeded to the Presidency, upon the death of Taylor, in 1850. Clay had revived his famous compromise measures and secured their enactment, thereby so weakening the Whigs in the North without strengthening them in the South that the reunited Democrats aggressively demonstrated their confidence by holding

their convention in advance of their opponents. On the forty-ninth ballot they nominated Franklin Pierce, an inconspicuous and inoffensive Governor of New Hampshire, who nevertheless embodied the spirit of the "young democracy." Two weeks later the Whigs assembled. Fillmore was the natural or "logical" candidate and led on the first ballot, but on the fifty-third General Winfield Scott, the opposite in all respects of the young civilian, Pierce, was nominated.

1856.—Pierce's administration was a failure and early in June the Democrats nominated James Buchanan, the experienced statesman and diplomat. The Whig party had perished and its successor, the Republican party, held its first convention in Philadelphia on June 17th, 1856. There was no expectation that a distinctive Republican could win. The only apparent possibility of success lay in finding a candidate who would draw the votes of both the Whigs and Americans. Such an one was the jurist, McLean, who received very strong support. But, as ever, when the time came for action McLean's similarity to the Democratic nominee proved fatal to his aspiration and the prize went to John C. Fremont, the dashing young general, "the millionaire without a dollar, the soldier who never fought a battle, the statesman who never made a speech," the man unlike Buchanan in more particulars than any other who could have been selected.

1860.—The Democratic party broke in twain at its National Convention in Charleston in April before a vote was taken for candidates. Upon the adoption of the Douglas platform the delegations from eight Southern States withdrew. Nobody could obtain two-thirds of the votes remaining, but Douglas held a plurality of nearly one hundred on fifty-seven ballots. The convention then adjourned to reassemble in Baltimore on June 18th. Meanwhile the seceders had arranged to meet in Richmond on June 11th.

This was the situation when the second Republican convention was called to order on May 16th. The nomination of Seward seemed assured. Who could hope to compete with the foremost Republican statesman, the great Governor of the greatest State, the one commanding figure standing forth luminously against the background of the new organization? Thurlow Weed, the master of political managers, fully anticipated his nomination on the first bal-

lot, and when the votes were cast a large plurality, 173½ to 102, did indeed go to Seward. But a clear majority was lacking and on the third ballot Abraham Lincoln was nominated.

Why? The result at Charleston, though not conclusive, had made clear the fact that the Republican candidate must oppose Douglas. Was Seward, the statesman of like class, the man for the undertaking? No; instead, Lincoln the rail-splitter, Lincoln the gaunt and awkward country lawyer, "Old Abe" the story-teller, yet one and the only one whose mettle had been proven in debate with the Little Giant himself—his nomination was decreed and inevitable.

1864.—Lincoln was renominated as a matter of course—the man of peace, the lover of concord, the rustic civilian. Instinctively and instantly the Democrats named in opposition General George B. McClellan, the man trained to war, the practised soldier, the accomplished gentleman.

1868.—Again a military hero—Grant, named with complete unanimity by the Republicans in May. The Democrats met in July. McClellan was not mentioned, but Hancock stood third on the first ballot. His time, however, was not yet, not against another military chieftain. Tradition forbade. On eighteen of the first twenty-one ballots not a solitary vote was cast for Seymour. Pathetically, when the tide seemed to be turning his way, he beseeched his fellow delegates: "Your candidate I cannot be." But remonstrance was unavailing. The Logic of Circumstance compelled the nomination of the "Peace Governor," the very opposite of Grant; and on the twenty-second ballot not a vote was cast against him.

1872.—Grant again! Grant the sturdy, silent, soldier President; Grant the Democrat turned Republican. Against him, Greeley the vociferator, Greeley the genius erratic, Greeley the Republican turned Democrat.

1876.—Hayes, the commonplace, the "safe-and-sane" Governor of Ohio, had been designated by the Republicans when the Democrats met in June. Hendricks of Indiana awaited the Democratic nomination. A far stronger, more popular, more appealing statesman than Hayes, his supporters, led by the capable McDonald and aided by powerful Tammany, were more than confident of securing for their favorite the prize. But he, too, was a mid-western Governor; he, too, was prudent, conservative. Tilden, the re-

former, the radical, was named on the first ballot, and the men from Indiana sat in their seats as if stunned and refused to make the vote unanimous. They felt betrayed when, in fact, only the inevitable had happened.

1880.—Garfield was not named as a soldier, but as a statesman. He had become the chief figure in the House of Representatives, had just been elected to the Senate and was reckoned one of the most eloquent and persuasive orators in the land. Bayard was the most fit Democratic candidate, as he was the foremost Democratic statesman and orator, but therein he resembled Garfield. Tradition pointed unerringly to Hancock, graduated of the Military Academy, the “superb soldier” who neither possessed nor assumed to possess any knowledge of public affairs or any capacity for civil government.

1884.—Blaine at last—the dashing leader, the experienced statesman, the brilliant orator, the Plumed Knight. Again Bayard was a candidate. But he, too, was a Richard; he, too, had served long in Congress; he, too, was an eloquent speaker. Enter the stolid Cleveland, who then was famed only for common sense and sturdy courage, who uttered platitudes monotonously, who had never served in a legislative assembly, and who had never even visited the National Capitol.

1888.—Cleveland renominated! But a different Cleveland. No longer conservative. Now an ardent tariff reformer, almost a free-trader, held to be a radical. Against him Harrison the ultra-conservative, “uncompromisingly in favor of the American system of protection.”

1892.—Again Harrison *vs.* Cleveland.

1896.—For the second time the opposition took the lead. McKinley the good, kindly, patient, painstaking, serious McKinley, was named on the first ballot. Three weeks later the Democrats met in Chicago. The radicals were in full control. Free Silver was the only cry and Bland, the apostle of Free Silver, was regarded as an almost certain winner. But Bland differed little from McKinley. In their upbringing, in temperament, in method, in Congressional service, in previous attitude toward silver, even in manner, they were not unlike. It is commonly said that Bryan won the nomination with a striking speech. But who can tell what would have happened if that oration had not been delivered? It was a convention of radicals seeking a radical

candidate. Bland could never have satisfied; nor Boies; nor Pattison; nor Campbell; nor any one bearing the slightest resemblance in thought, word, or deed to the prudent McKinley. The nomination of a Bryan was inevitable—predestined by the Logic of Circumstance.

1900.—Again Bryan *vs.* McKinley.

1904.—Roosevelt had succeeded to the Presidency and had been unable wholly to resist the impulses of his ardent temperament to break away from the traditional policies of his party. Already he was recognized as embodying the spirit of the times which has since been termed progressiveness. He had, in fact, appropriated so many of Bryan's notions that the political inclinations of the two could hardly be contrasted with marked effect. So patent was his tendency that, but for the death of Hanna, the controlling elements of the Republican party would probably have tried to defeat him in the Convention. However, he was nominated without dissent.

Bryan had then been absolute master of the Democratic organization for eight years. He held undisputed control of the National Committee and his great personal popularity had not waned perceptibly. Had a Republican nominee of the McKinley type been designated his power would have been unbroken and he would have named the Democratic candidate. But the nomination of the promising radical, Roosevelt, fixed the outcome of the Democratic convention irresistibly. With all his authority and personal following Bryan could not hold even the one-third essential to the defeat of Parker, whom he had attacked viciously; and the staid and sober judge was named in opposition to the fiery Roosevelt.

1908.—Back swung the pendulum. Roosevelt's tempestuous administration was reaching its close. Taft was nominated—Taft the moderate, the pacificator, the judge considerate, patient, kind, the natural and proud successor, as he has since declared, of his prototype, McKinley. The old Republican leaders breathed more freely. After all, the Roosevelt disturbance might prove to have been only an episode.

Such was the condition when the Democratic convention assembled in Denver. Only four years before the conservatives had dominated completely. They still controlled the National Committee. But they were as helpless in the face

of the Taft nomination as Bryan had been in the face of Roosevelt's candidacy. Again the fetching orator became the standard-bearer of the Democracy and achieved the customary party disaster.

Such the record! In each and every instance the type of opposing candidate, if not the man himself, has been marked by the party making the first declaration. Invariably seemingly coherent certainty has yielded to the greater power of the Logic of Conditions—the irresistible demand of Circumstance for Antithesis.

Therefore, in

1912 the renomination of Taft will compel the nomination of Wilson in place of Harmon, just as the nomination of La Follette would compel the nomination of Harmon in place of Wilson.

Why?

Obviously but one theme of inquiry demands consideration: Who is the real Antithesis of Taft? Bryan? Yes, as in 1908. But Bryan's races have been run. Gaynor? Yes; but Gaynor is disqualified by Fate. Folk? Yes; but Folk clearly is outclassed. Champ Clark? Theoretically, perhaps, but practically only as a pretty compliment. Dix? The carrier of water upon both shoulders? The upholder of party fealty, on the one hand, and the source of pretexts to bolters on the other? Neither opposite nor apposite is Dix. Remain Harmon and Wilson. Which, we repeat, is the Antithesis of Taft? Unroll the moving portraits. Note the points of similarity and of divergence:

CHARACTERISTICS	TAFT	HARMON	WILSON
Age in 1913.....	Fifty-five	Sixty-seven	Fifty-six
Physique	Robust, portly	Solid, heavy	Lithe, sinewy
Environment	Mid-west	Mid-west	South, East
Habitation	Ohio	Ohio	New Jersey
Ancestry	English	English	Scotch-Irish
Religion	Unitarian	Baptist	Presbyterian
Recreation	Golf to excess	Golf in moderation	Golf at minimum
Temperament	Prudent	Cautious	Daring
Manner	Genial	Serious	Graceful
Address	Winning	Friendly	Charming
Nature	Grateful	Appreciative	Just
Grain	Compassionate	Stoical	Tenacious
Temper	Sweet, mellow	Cool, controlled	Quick, zealous
Intellect	Capacious	Plodding	Keen, imaginative
Knowledge	Wide	Restricted	Profound
Mental attitude	Tolerant	Considerate	Self-reliant
Disposition	Conciliatory	Steadfast	Uncompromising
Expression	Earnest, pleasing	Commonplace	Eloquent, persuasive
Diction	Fair	Ordinary	Fine
As lawyers	Judicial	Essentially sound	Analytical
Politics	McKinley Republican	Cleveland Democrat	Tilden Democrat
Political purpose	Steady progression	Stability	Reform
Political tendency	Mildly progressive	Conservative	Intelligently radical
Political character	Pure	Strong	Luminous
Political convictions	Constant	Firm	Immovable

In but one essential particular—that of age—is marked a greater dissimilarity between Taft and Harmon than between Taft and Wilson; and that seriously to Harmon's disadvantage, in view of the facts that the average age of Presidents at inauguration has been only fifty-three and that of the three elected when more than sixty-four two died within the year.

The contrast is complete, conclusive; the evidence overwhelming. The finger of Predestination, guided by Logic, Circumstance, Conditions, and History, points unerringly to Woodrow Wilson, Democrat, as the opponent of William H. Taft, Republican, in 1912. Blessed Columbia!

THE EDITOR.