

**THE POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS OF
COLORADO: WITH COMPLETE
TABULATED STATEMENTS OF
THE OFFICIAL VOTE**

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R. G. Dill

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Political Campaigns
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BY R. G. DILL.

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PREFACE.

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IT has been the intention, in compiling this little work, while keeping as closely as possible to the occurrences having an influence upon the state campaigns, in their chronological order, to omit all details and incidents which, while interesting in themselves, were not so closely connected with final results as to render them necessary to a proper understanding of the work. It will possibly be suggested to the reader that while the details of the Democratic conventions have been slighted, an undue prominence has been given to Arapahoe county. This is in strict accordance with the object of the work and the method of construction adopted. As a rule the only acts of Democratic conventions which have had an influence upon the results of a campaign have been their nominations. Being the minority party, no internal arrangement, party rule or policy, or method of party government, could ordinarily affect the general result. Political history is made by the dominant party. But when the acts of the Democratic, or of any other party have affected the campaign, they have been given due prominence, with all the necessary attention to detail. As regards the prominence given to Arapahoe county, it must be remembered that Arapahoe necessarily has a preponderating in-

fluence on account of its large population. This is the story of the entire country—the political influence of large cities is not only great, but is constantly growing in importance. The nomination of a governor of Colorado may have an intimate connection with the election or defeat of a Denver alderman, and whoever desires to trace all the political influences of the state must of necessity investigate the internal political conditions of a community containing one-third of its population.

Those who expect to find in this book a vehicle for the dissemination of political scandal will be disappointed. If facts having an important bearing on the issues of the political campaigns of Colorado are scandalous the facts are given, but there is no attempt to retail the gossip that always follows political careers, and peddle out the scandals which, if they have any foundation at all, should only be whispered behind closed doors, or, better still, buried in oblivion. This book is only what is represented in its title—a truthful story of the political campaigns of Colorado, compiled in the main from personal recollections and private memoranda, supplemented by consultations with nearly all the leading actors in the scenes described. The conclusions may be erroneous; the facts cannot be denied.

1876 WHILE the political history of Colorado properly commences with her admission to the Union, several circumstances connected with her history prior to that time are necessary to a proper understanding of the situation in 1876.

It would serve no good purpose to refer in detail to the causes which led to the revolt against Grant in 1874. Governor Elbert had been removed, and Mr. Chaffee, representing the best Republican sentiment of the state, was furious, and was indefatigable in his efforts to secure his reinstatement. In this he was unsuccessful. In many respects Grant was exceedingly tenacious of his opinion, and refused to reappoint Elbert. Hon. J. D. Ward, of Denver, then a member of Congress from Chicago, a warm friend of Mr. Chaffee, and an earnest admirer and staunch political adherent of President Grant, with a number of other well known public men, acted as mediators and effected a compromise. John L. Routt, then an assistant postmaster general, was suggested for governor. Chaffee was not specially intimate with Routt, but he was indifferent as to who should be the appointee, so that Governor McCook was removed, and therefore Routt was appointed. The main cause of the quarrel was the appointment of the territorial officers from the ranks of broken down political hacks from the eastern states. The people of Colorado,

without regard to party affiliations, felt that eastern senators having political debts to pay were using Colorado as a hospital for crippled and superannuated henchmen, and naturally resented the filling of federal offices with men to whom they applied the term "carpet-baggers," when there was superior material at home—men who had been identified with the territory from its earliest days, and were never found wanting when the interests of Colorado were at stake. The result of this feeling was the election of Hon T. M. Patterson as delegate to Congress in 1874, an election which taught the Washington authorities a much needed lesson, and resulted in the appointment of Governor Routt, but which, as a political experiment, was fraught with serious possibilities to the Republican party when the state was admitted.

It was by no means clear that the Republicans could carry Colorado in 1876. Governor Routt, as shown above, had been appointed as a compromise, but still he was a "carpet-bagger," and there were very many who still resented "carpet-bag" domination, and declined to consider the circumstances of his appointment. But the movement for statehood had taken possession of all classes, and under the stimulus of this movement it was resolved to so far as possible make an effort to heal existing differences in the Republican party, with a view to the possibilities of Republican success in the first state election.

Mr. Patterson labored earnestly for the passage of the enabling act, promising his party as-

sociates a new Democratic state, in making which promise he was fully warranted by the apparent situation. Mr. Chaffee took the higher ground with the Republican side of the House that Colorado should be admitted because she was clearly entitled to the honors of statehood. Mr. Chaffee, when a delegate, had made many warm friendships among his colleagues, and received valuable aid now, one of his principal assistants being Hon. J. D. Ward, to whom, as much as to any one man outside of Messrs. Chaffee and Patterson, is due the admission of Colorado in 1876. Of course, when success had crowned their labors, hosts of claimants to the honor of having secured the admission of Colorado sprang to the front in the hope of substantial reward. But the truth is, that to the three gentlemen named, is, in the main due the admission of the state at that time. President Grant was not readily impressed with the wisdom of the movement, and besides he was still smarting under the sting of the opposition to the administration shown by the election of Mr. Patterson in 1874, but his objections were finally overruled, and the act was passed. Mr. Patterson was for a long time subjected to the unkind criticisms of his political friends for his lack of political judgment in urging the passage of the enabling act by a Democratic House.

The passage of the enabling act made the election for members of the Eleventh Territorial Assembly one of more than ordinary importance, and both sides put forth earnest efforts to secure a majority. The result was a Republican victory,