Why Was the Democratic Party in Indiana 
A Radical Party, 1865-1890?

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The money question was a live issue in Indiana from 1866 to 1880, in 1868 it became a leading issue, and in 1874, 1876, and 1878 it was the paramount issue. Its importance began to decline in 1880 and by 1882 it was negligible. The Greenback party managed to taper out an existence in the state to 1886, but by 1884 it scarcely counted and by 1888 it had passed into history. By the 1890's Indiana had definitely become an ally of the conservative East.

Immediately following the close of the war, both Democratic and Republican parties were radical on the money question. The state platforms of both parties stood against contraction and for the payment of the debt in greenbacks. The Republican enthusiasm for soft money began to wane by 1870, and by 1872 the party was inclined definitely toward conservatism. But in 1874 the Indiana Republicans in Congress not only voted for but led the fight for the adoption of the Inflation Bill. The Republican platform of that year was a straddle on the money question. The Republican members in Congress voted for specie resumption in 1875, although the state platform of 1876 and the Republican party press during the campaign of that year demanded repeal of the clause which fixed a definite date for the beginning of resumption. The Indiana Republican members of Congress in 1878 stood for the radical Bland Bill and for the Bland-Allison Bill, and even voted to override Hayes' veto. This was the last manifestation of monetary radicalism on the part of the Republicans of Indiana. Their platform of 1878 was ultraconservative, and in that year they accepted the Specie Resumption Act without reservation.
It will be seen, then, that the Republican party was headed for conservatism as early as 1870, but that a temporary intensifying of agrarian hard times forced the party into more or less radical positions at various times from 1870 to 1878. On the whole, the votes of the Indiana Republican members in Congress were more radical than the party’s state platform declarations. This is a situation almost unique in political history—a party more radical in action than in promises. The Republican party contained a considerable radical money element at least down to 1880.

The Democrats were radical on the money question in 1868 and continued to do so down to 1880, and, in that year and after, the party was conservative only because the inflation agitation was over and there was no radical money movement in the country to which the party could attach itself. The Democrats stressed the money question in 1868 and continued to do so down to and including the campaign of 1878, with the single exception of 1872, when the party unwisely abandoned economic issues for the political reforms advocated by the Liberal Republicans. The platforms of 1874 and 1878 were extremely radical, and differed little from Greenback declarations. The platform of 1876 was predominantly radical, and the party that year was ardently inflationist. Indiana Democrats in Congress stood against the Specie Resumption Act, supported the original Bland Bill, and voted to pass the Bland-Allison Act over the Hayes veto. In both pronouncement and performance the Democratic party of this era was radical on the money question.

Both parties contained minorities which opposed the prevailing tendencies of their respective organizations. The Republicans contained a minority who opposed the conservative trend of their party. Oliver P. Morton, whose personal influence over his party was well-nigh overwhelming, managed to keep his party fairly liberal until his death in 1877, and there were those who attempted to continue his policy after that time. In the Democratic party a powerful minority led by such able leaders as McDonald, Kerr, and English attempted to keep the party in the conservative path, but without much success.

When the prevailing economic distress became temporarily more intense the Republicans would become less conservative and the Democrats more radical. When the
prevailing economic distress was less intense, the Republicans would become more conservative and the Democrats less radical. The position of the parties on the money question was a trustworthy barometer of economic conditions.

The positions taken by public men on the money question were not always consistent. Morton voted for the Specie Resumption Act in 1875, although his record up to that time had been constantly and vigorously radical. Pratt likewise violated his past record when he voted for the Specie Resumption Act. So did Orth. McDonald, honest as he was in his conservatism, voted for the amended Bland-Allison Act, and back in the National Democratic Convention of 1868 he was the Indiana member of the resolutions committee, the committee that wrote the radical national platform of that year. Apparently, he did not dissent. The unstable position of Hendricks on the money question has often been pointed out. Harrison was consistently conservative, but had he been in a public position in the seventies it would not have been so easy for him to have maintained such a record. Kerr and English never faltered in their conservatism. Voorhees and Turpie never swerved from inflationist convictions, and the former was ardently radical. But these men are the exceptions. Among the lesser leaders the records are even less unifying than among the more important. The insistent tug of party loyalty, a temporary change in economic conditions, and a fleeting shift in public sentiment are among the factors which explain the changes in the public attitude of politicians. Many had no convictions on the subject of money. Still others did not understand it.

A man’s attitude on the financial issues was not the only criterion by which he was judged in the seventies. When one isolates a topic from the completed story and develops it, he is likely to overemphasize it at the expense of other topics and other factors. A radical legislature sent the conservative McDonald to the Senate in 1875, a comparatively conservative legislature returned Voorhees to the Senate in 1885, and a radical Democratic district sent Kerr to Congress in 1874. Men never entirely subordinate the personal element to economic interests, even when economic issues are uppermost in the political discussions of the day. And there is always present an interplay of issues, no one candidate epitomizing and harmonizing all the views of the men who vote for him.
What were the reasons for the agrarian radicalism of Indiana in the 1870's? These are to be found largely in the economic and social conditions prevailing in the state at that time. Indiana was predominantly agrarian in 1870. The total population, excluding children under the age of ten, was 1,197,936. There were 459,369 persons engaged in gainful occupations, and of these 266,777 were engaged in agriculture. Only 76,057 were then occupied in the manufacturing and mining industries, some 80,000 were to be found offering professional and personal services, while a meager 36,517 were employed in trade and transportation. There were no really large cities in the state. Indianapolis boasted a mere 48,244. Evansville contained 21,830 inhabitants, Fort Wayne 17,718, and Terre Haute 16,103.1

The census of 1880 again emphasizes the dominance of agriculture. Out of a population ten years or older of 1,468,095 inhabitants, there were 635,080 engaged in earning a living, and of this latter total agriculture claimed 331,240. There were 187,281 offering personal and professional services, 110,127 working in the manufacturing and mining industries, and 56,432 employed in trade and transportation. Even in 1880, Indianapolis possessed a population of only 75,056, Evansville of 29,280, and Terre Haute of 26,042.2

In the entire state there were in 1870 but 11,847 factories and only 58,852 factory hands. The capital invested in manufacturing totaled $52,052,425, the value of the manufactured products $108,617,278, and the wages paid $18,366,780. On the other hand, the total capital invested in agriculture amounted to $652,480,780, and the total value of agricultural products reached $122,914,802.3 It is highly significant, however, that the $52,052,425 invested in manufacturing yielded products valued at $108,617,278, while the $652,480,780 invested in agriculture, more than twelve times that invested in manufacturing, rendered only $122,914,302. The difference between the total valuation of the products of each was only $14,297,024, while the difference in capital

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1 Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Statistics of Population, I, Table XXVI, 670-671; ibid., Table III, 122-131.
2 Compendium of the Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, II, Table CI, 1356-1357; ibid., I, Table XIX, 115-125.
3 Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Statistics of Wealth and Industry, III, Table IX (B.), 613, Table III, 81.
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invested was $600,428,355. Of course, a great allowance should be made for the food livelihoods made by the farmers, and these livelihoods do not appear in the census figure. Even so, money invested in agriculture seems to have earned considerably less than the same amount invested in manufacturing.

Statistics for 1880 reveal practically the same conditions. There were only 11,198 manufacturing establishments in the state in that year, a slight decrease below the number of 1870, due to the then prevalent tendency to consolidation. The capital invested in manufacturing represented $65,742,962; more than 62,000 wage earners were employed; the total wage paid was $21,960,888; and the entire manufactured production was valued at $148,006,411. The capital invested in agriculture amounted to $655,713,099, and the total value of farm production was $114,707,082.4 The disparity between agriculture and industry in the amount invested and the financial return thereon is even more striking in 1880 than it was in 1870. The comparatively meager amount invested in industry was actually bringing in more financial returns than the comparatively large amount invested in agriculture. The peculiarly privileged position of manufacturing is still more enhanced when it is revealed that the figures for the total amount invested in agriculture do not include capital invested in livestock, while the figures representing capital invested in manufacturing include every conceivable factor of investment. As pointed out before, however, allowance must be made for the food livelihoods of farmers, which allowances do not appear in the census figures.

During the Civil War, the farmers in Indiana, like those elsewhere, had enjoyed a phenomenal prosperity. The average price received in Indiana for corn in 1864 was ninety-five and one-half cents a bushel, while wheat had soared to $1.75. Corn had dropped to sixty-five cents in 1867, but wheat had rocketed to $2.21. The boom was over by 1868. Corn had taken a further slump and the average price per bushel received that year was only fifty-two cents, while wheat had gone down to $1.50. Corn rallied to seventy cents in 1869, but wheat went down to ninety-three cents. Corn fell to

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4 Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Manufacturers, II, Table IV, A, 111; Compendium of the Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, I, Table XLIV, 684-685.
thirty-eight cents in 1870, but wheat recovered and went up to $1.00. Corn continued to fall in 1871 and averaged only thirty-seven cents, but wheat climbed to an average of $1.26. Corn declined to twenty-nine cents in 1872 and wheat increased to $1.32. In the panic year of 1873 corn rose to forty cents, but wheat fell to $1.22, while the price of hogs, which had hovered around six and seven dollars since 1870, fell to $3.61.5

It will be noted that by 1868 corn and wheat had both registered a decline. Corn declined to unprecedented prices during the years from 1870 to 1873, so that these years constitute the lean time of the Indiana corn grower. Wheat rallied after the depression of 1868, but declined in 1873, and did not again reach the 1872 level of $1.32 during the period under consideration. Corn went up to fifty-one cents in 1874, the year of particularly hard times for the wheat grower, but went down to thirty-nine cents in 1875, never again to reach the 1874 level during the decades of the seventies and eighties except in the single year 1881 when the average price received for corn in Indiana was sixty cents.6

It is significant, then, to note that the depression of 1868-1869 was followed by a partial recovery of agricultural prosperity, that both corn and wheat rallied, but not simultaneously, so that the corn grower suffered a lean year while the wheat grower enjoyed a temporary and comparative prosperity, and vice-versa. But after the depression of 1873-1874 the distress was continuous, and all agricultural producers suffered a loss. To be sure, there were years of relative prosperity, and years when the general depression was comparatively even more severe. Wheat fell as low as eighty-one cents in 1878, and hit bottom at sixty-seven cents in 1884.

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It went up to $1.27 in 1881, but the rise was abortive. Corn hit bottom at twenty-seven cents in 1878 and staged a temporary rally in 1881, going up to sixty cents. The years 1879-1881 were tantalizing in that they seemed to prophesy a return to general prosperity, but the revival was ephemeral. There was a slight variation in the condition of producers of different agricultural products, and there was some fluctuation from year to year in the prices of one product, but as a general condition the hard times were continuous. Indiana was above all else a corn producing state and there is a marked connection between the price of corn and the existence or non-existence of agrarian radicalism in Indiana politics in the 1870's and 1880's.

The corn producers of Indiana received $70,941,567 in 1864, for 74,284,363 bushels of corn, which represented the yield of 2,561,529 acres. Six years later, 113,150,000 bushels of corn, representing the yield of 2,864,556 acres, rendered the corn producers only $42,997,000. The crop yield and the acreage increased, but the financial returns were actually less than they had been in 1864. Similarly, 138,252,000 bushels of corn were produced on 4,215,000 acres of land in 1878, and the total yield of the crop in money value was only $37,328,040. The acreage was almost double that of 1864, and the total yield was more than double, but the value of the crop was approximately one-half what it had been in that year. Even in 1881, the one year approaching the old-time agrarian prosperity, the 79,618,000 aggregate yield of corn on 3,657,800 acres brought financial returns amounting to only $47,777,800. Even if one takes as a basis for comparison the figures of 1884, which was an average year for corn in these decades of depression, he will find that 104,757,000 bushels, representing the yield of 3,612,312 acres, brought a financial return of only $35,617,380.

Figures involving wheat valuation are equally significant.


The financial returns in 1864 totaled $39,062,308, for 22,321,376 bushels of wheat which were raised on 1,594,384 acres. Ten years later, 23,331,000 bushels of wheat raised on 1,912,376 acres of land yielded only $21,931,140. The value of the crop had fallen off by almost one-half, although its size was slightly larger. In 1878, a particularly bad year for the wheat grower, 23,136,000 bushels of wheat, representing 2,071,000 acres of land, brought only $26,840,160 in money. The crop and the acreage had been increased by one-half and one-third over the 1864 totals, but the aggregate pecuniary return was cut down by about one-third. In 1884, another very bad year, 33,745,000 bushels of wheat, representing the entire yield of 2,708,016 acres of land, resulted in a total crop valuation of only $22,609,150. The crop and the acreage had been increased over the 1878 figures, but the total money yield was even less than it had been in 1878. In 1883, an average year in these decades of depression, 28,447,800 bushels of wheat, representing the output of 2,735,370 acres, yielded in money only $27,025,410. The farmer might thus increase his acreage and his output, but the consequent rise in supply only resulted in further declines in price and a decrease in his annual money income.

Land values declined enormously. In 1870 there were 10,104,279 acres of improved farm land in Indiana, while there were about eight million acres of unimproved farm land. The total valuation of all farm land was $634,804,189. In 1880 the unimproved farm land had dwindled to 6,487,245 acres, while the improved farm land had increased to 13,933,738 acres. Thus between 1870 and 1880 more than two million acres had been added to the farm land of the state, while more than three million of the farm acres had been improved and put under cultivation. Yet the total valuation of farm land in 1880 was only $635,236,111. The value had remained constant, while the acreage and improvement had greatly increased. If the land values of 1865 and 1866 were

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10Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Statistics of Wealth and Industry, III, Table III, 81; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Agriculture, III, Table I, 8-4.
available, the disparity would appear more striking, for the
great deflation in value had occurred before the census of
1870. The values of 1880, moreover, are slightly higher than
the values for the years preceding and succeeding that year
due to the temporary revival of agriculture from 1879 to 1881.

Interest rates in Indiana were high in the decade of the
seventies. In 1880 the average rate of interest in the whole
state on all types of mortgages was 7.13 per cent. In Marion
County, where money was relatively plentiful, interest rates
on mortgages averaged 6.91 per cent. If interest rates in
Marion County were 6.91 per cent, it is safe to assume that
they were much higher in the rural communities, and that
in the more remote and less wealthy counties they were con-
siderably over the average for the state. Even as late as
1889, when the average rate of interest for the whole state
was down to 6.33 per cent, the average rate of mortgage
interest in Crawford, a poor agricultural county, was 7.32
per cent. Even in Hendricks, a wealthy county and contig-
uous to Marion, but an agricultural community, the average
interest rate in 1890 was 7.07 per cent.11 During the decades
of the seventies and eighties the agrarian communities must
have suffered, as a rule, from high interest rates, and the
rate of interest must have varied inversely with the wealth
and capital of the county.

Although there had been since 1865 a steady improve-
ment in the financial condition of the state government, as
late as 1880 it was heavily in debt. The total debt of the
state aggregated $4,998,178.34, the greater part of which was
in ten per cent and eight per cent bonds. The entire out-
standing bonded debt of all civil divisions in Indiana, includ-
ing the state debt just mentioned, was $16,794,078.12 County
and municipal governments of Indiana very largely fell within
the debtor class.

It is a surprising fact that at the close of the Civil War
there were in Indiana few who held United States govern-
ment bonds. At the end of the decade of the seventies there
were only 698 holders of government securities in the entire

11 Eleventh Census of the United States, 1890, Real Estate Mort-
gages, XVII, Table 69, p. 248; ibid., Table 72, p. 251; ibid., Table 79,
p. 259.
12 Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Valuation, Taxation,
and Public Indebtedness, VII, 618-623; ibid., Table XX, 829.
state, and nearly one-third of these were concentrated in the six cities of Evansville, Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, Lafayette, New Albany, and Terre Haute. Little wonder it is that the movement to pay the bondholders in greenbacks made great headway in the state.

The National Banking Act of 1863 and the federal tax of ten per cent on the circulation of state banks, which had gone into effect on July 1, 1866, were felt keenly by the many state banks in Indiana. The state banking system of Indiana had been sound, and the currency of the banks usually had been received at par. The state banks rode the panic of 1857 with ease, paying gold where most banks in other states suspended. Hugh McCulloch, the conservative Secretary of the Treasury under Johnson, was president of the Indiana State Banking System at the time. The destruction after 1865 of a sound and valued local currency was regretted by some of the most conservative citizens of the state.

Running east and west in the central part of Indiana is located the rich agricultural region called by geographers the Tipton Till Plains. The average price of an acre of land of all counties included in this region was $159 in 1922. North of the Tipton Till region is the district known in geography as the Northern Moraine and Lake Region. For the most part the counties in the western portion of this geologic division fall into the subdivision known as the Kankakee Lacustrian section. The soil is rich, but not as productive as that of the Tipton Till region. The average price of an acre of land for all counties herein included was $102 in 1922. The eastern portion of the Northern Moraine and Lake Region is

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13 Ibid., Exhibit I, 494; Ibid., Exhibit II, 496-497.
16 Logan, *Handbook of Indiana Geology*, 23, gives land values for each section in 1922.
17 Southern portion of Lake, LaPorte, and Porter counties, together with most of Cass, Elkhart, Jasper, Newton, Pulaski, St. Joseph, and White, all of St. Joe, and small portions of Fulton and Marshall, are found in this subdivision.
Democratic Party in Indiana called the Steuben Morainal and Lake Section. The average price of an acre of land in all the counties included in this region was ninety-six dollars in 1922. It will be noted that this region is less rich than the Tipton Till or the Kankakee Lacustrian Section.

The region south of the Tipton Till is the poorest section of the state. In the southwest is the Wabash Lowland. The average price of an acre of land of all counties in this region was seventy-seven dollars in 1922. Just east of the Wabash Lowland is the Crawford Upland. This is one of the poorest sections of the state, and the average price of an acre of land in this region was twenty-six dollars in 1922. The three sections east of the Crawford Upland are known successively as the Mitchell Plain, the Norman Upland, and the Scottsburg Lowland. The soil here is slightly better than in the Crawford Upland, and the average value of an acre of land in the Mitchell Plain and the Norman Upland in 1922 was thirty-four dollars. East of the Scottsburg Lowland is the Muskatatuck Regional Slope. This is a very poor section, outside of Rush and Shelby counties, and the average value of an acre of land in this section in 1922 was twenty-six dollars. The Dearborn Upland in the southeastern part of the state is a richer section, but poor when compared with the regions of northern and central Indiana. The average value of an acre of land in this section in 1922 was seventy-four dollars.

Indiana, then, may be divided into three distinct sections: the rich central plain; the moderately wealthy counties in the Northern Moraine and Lake Region; and the poor counties of the south, the sections southeast and southwest comprising the wealthier of the relatively poor southern counties, and the counties in the central portion of this southern re-

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18 Herein are included the counties of DeKalb, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Whitley, and portions of Allen, Cass, Elkhart, Fulton, Huntington, Marshall, Miami, St. Joseph, and Wabash.
19 It includes the counties of Clay, Daviess, Gibson, Knox, Pike, Posey, Spencer, Sullivan, Vanderburgh, Vigo, Warrick, and parts of Dubois, Greene, and Parke.
20 It roughly includes Crawford, Perry, and parts of Dubois, Greene, Harrison, Lawrence, Martin, Monroe, Orange, Owen, Parke, and Putnam.
21 Included in these three sections are Bartholomew, Brown, Clark, Floyd, Harrison, Jackson, Jennings, Johnson, Lawrence, Monroe, Morgan, Scott, and Washington.
22 Included in this region are the counties of Decatur, Jefferson, Jennings, Ripley, and parts of Bartholomew, Clark, Rush, and Shelby.
23 This region comprises the counties of Dearborn, Fayette, Franklin, Ohio, Switzerland, Union, and parts of Jefferson, Ripley, and Wayne.
region comprising the poorest in the state. In area the southern counties comprise well over one-third of the state.

In the decades of the seventies and eighties the population was densest in the counties of the great Tipton Till, the heaviest population being concentrated in Marion County and in the counties that cluster about it. The old portion of the state, the poorer area of the south, was growing in population less rapidly than the central and northern portions of the state. In some counties in the southeast the population was practically stationary and the census of 1870 reveals that Dearborn, Switzerland, and Union had actually declined in population since 1860.24 The counties of the northwest were undergoing the process of settlement and development, and at the opening of the seventies they were in many ways in a state of growth scarcely removed from frontier and pioneer conditions.

The development of Jasper, Newton, Porter, Starke, and southern Lake was long arrested by the refusal of the state to undertake the drainage of the Kankakee Valley, and it was not until 1882 that this very important project was begun with state aid.25 These counties were further hampered in their development by the long legal controversy between riparian owners and the state involving rich Kankakee bottom lands in LaPorte and Starke counties.26 The counties with less than fifty inhabitants to the square mile were to be found for the most part in the newer counties of the northwest in 1880, and in the poorer counties of the south, particularly in the counties of the central portion of the southern region, comprising the poorest in the state. But it was the pioneer counties of the northwest which contained the sparsest population. Benton County possessed only twenty-seven people to the square mile; Jasper only seventeen; Newton only twenty; Starke only sixteen; and White only twenty-seven.27

The wealth of the state was also concentrated in the rich counties of the Tipton Till. If one takes as a basis the figure $750 as the average per capita wealth in 1870 of the state, he will discover that the great majority of the counties

showing a per capita wealth of only $750 or less to be generally localized in the north or in the counties of the old and poorer south. Figures which indicate the average value per acre in each county show unmistakably that the highest values are in the rich central plain, and the lower values in the northwestern and southern counties. Counties with an average value per acre of twenty dollars or less are found concentrated in the northwest and in the south. Counties with an average yield per acre of only five dollars or less are found bunched in the north and in the south. There is a tendency for the entire northern counties to be included in this particular classification, northeastern as well as northwestern. The soil of the northwest was wealthy but undeveloped. The soil of the northeast was less wealthy but more highly developed.\textsuperscript{25}

If the average amount of a mortgage of twelve dollars is taken as a basis for comparison, it will be found that in 1880 the counties with an average of twelve dollars or under were grouped in the northwest and south. The average amount of a mortgage debt always correlates closely with the value of the land—if the average is low the land is likely to be of scant value; if it is high the land is usually valuable. If for comparative purposes one takes thirteen dollars as a figure representing the average mortgage debt for the decade of 1880-1890, he will discover again that the counties registering this figure or below are to be found for the most part segregated in the northwest and the south. Even as late as 1890 the same sectional division holds true; the census of that year shows that the counties in which the average value of an acre of land was less than forty dollars were concentrated in the northwest and in the south.\textsuperscript{29} The northwest registered low land values not because the land was poor, but because it was undeveloped.

\textsuperscript{25} Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Statistics of Wealth and Industry, III, Table II, 27-28; ibid., Table IV, 138, 140, 142. If one takes the total estimated cash valuation of farms of every county in 1870 and divides these figures by the total acreage of each county, he will arrive at figures which represent the average value per acre in each county. If one divides the total value of the agricultural production of each county by the acreage of each county, he will find the average yield per acre. There is a fundamental weakness in the method of computation used in the last two illustrations, an exact compilation would involve only the acres under cultivation, and not the entire acreage of the county. But for relative and comparative purposes these figures are valid.

\textsuperscript{29} Eleventh Census of the United States, 1890, Real Estate Mortgages, XVII, Table 56, p. 138.
The poor counties were the counties of small farms. This is a generalization to which there are many exceptions, but it is essentially true. The counties having one-half or more of their farms in sizes of fifty acres or under were found in 1870 clustered in the northern and southern regions. Even in the central plain, it is the comparatively poor counties like Adams, Blackford, Jay, Madison, Randolph, Tipton, and Wells which fall in this category; Boone, Clinton, Hamilton, and Howard are the exceptions, for they are among the wealthy counties, but the tendency is rather in the direction of small farms in poorer counties. In the northwest the farms tended to be larger than those in the north central and northeast portions.

The greatest tendency toward rented farms is to be found in the wealthy central counties and in the newer counties of the northwest. There was a tendency for wealthy capitalists to buy the land in the northwest, to hold it for investment purposes, and to people it with tenant farmers. In the wealthy central counties men of means often held farms as investments and rented them to tenants. The districts with the fewest rented farms were the northeast, which is the poorer but older developed portion of the Northern Moraine and Lake Region, and the counties in the central portion of the southern region, the district with the poorest soil in the state. The farmer in this poor district struggled with unfavorable conditions and lived on a small farm, but he owned the land he tilled.

In the northeast, then, the farms were comparatively poor, they had a tendency to be small, and the men who owned them tilled them. In the northwest the soil was rich, but less so than in the central Tipton Till; the land was undeveloped, and, therefore, less valuable in this period than the land of the northeast, and much of it was held by tenants. In this region development was the need. In the south the soil was poor, the farms were small, and the farmers generally independent, especially in the central portion. The population here was comparatively sparse and in some places

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31 Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Agriculture, III, Table V, 47-49.
32 The counties with the largest percentage of tenant farmers were Benton with 44 per cent of the farms tilled by tenants; Warren with 40 per cent; Montgomery with 38 per cent; Vermillion and Marion with 34 per cent; Newton and Tippecanoe with 33 per cent; and Jasper with 32 per cent.
practically static. In the central plain the land was rich, developed, and valuable; here the population was densest, the farms were large and in many cases farmed by tenants. An undue emphasizing of tenant farming is, however, a mistake because rarely did it rise above thirty per cent.

The greatest percentage of foreign-born were concentrated in the northern and southern counties; the smallest percentage in the rich central plain.33 The poor soil of the southern region was less of a handicap to the foreign husbandman, accustomed as he was to the intensive cultivation practiced in Europe. The comparatively low price of the land was an ever present inducement to the penurious but thrifty European. The land in the north was also less expensive than that of the central plain, and its cheapness, together with the fact that geographically it stood on the main route of the immigrant to the West, and underwent development during the high tide of immigration which followed the Civil War, are factors which explain the large percentage of foreign-born found in this region as early as 1870. The census of 1880 shows the foreign-born consolidated in the border counties of the south beginning with Posey and ending with Wayne, but excluding Crawford, Ohio, Scott, Switzerland, and Union; and solidly in the counties of the northwest from Benton to St. Joseph. In the northeast, Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Elkhart, Huntington, and Noble contained the largest foreign-born population. Marion, Tippecanoe, and Wayne were among the few counties in the central plain possessing large foreign populations.

The Germans were the most numerous of the foreign settlers, and the areas in which they located were almost identical with the sections having the greatest number of foreign-born generally.34 The German voter played an important part in the politics of Indiana, and he was an especial object of political coddling. Campaign documents were printed in German. Campaign speakers spoke to the German voter in his native tongue. So zealous were the politicians in their solicitation of the German vote that it was a common practice for the state legislature to order one-third of the copies of official documents published by the state to be printed


German newspapers received a large share of legal advertising.

The Catholic church was strong where the foreign elements were most numerous. If one maps the counties possessing in 1870 over one thousand Catholics to the whole population, he will find that with few exceptions these counties fall into the northern and southern regions. Marion, Tippecanoe, and Wayne are exceptions, but it will be remembered that these were the exceptional counties of the central plain possessing large foreign populations.

Methodism was the most important of the Protestant sects. It was strongest in the rich counties of the central plain. If one maps the counties in 1870 possessing a Methodist population of five thousand or above, he will discover that of the twenty-nine counties involved seventeen are to be found in the Tipton Till region.

Manufacturing was not segregated in any one section of the state. Twenty-seven widely scattered counties contained manufacturing establishments which represented capital of a half million dollars or more in 1880. Indiana ranked eleventh in 1880 in the number of malt liquor establishments, and thirteenth among the states in the value of liquor products. In the city of Fort Wayne the liquor industry ranked fourth in the amount of capital invested. In Indianapolis it ranked fifth. Terre Haute and Evansville also contained wealthy brewing interests. These liquor interests played a part in Indiana politics out of all proportion to their statistical strength, and usually were in alliance with the Democratic party, which was thus wet as well as inflationist. Indirectly, the liquor interests aided the cause of soft money.

Why was the Democratic party the radical party? Because it drew its strength from the poor counties of the state and from the poorer elements of the wealthier counties. The

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35 Journal of the House of Representatives of Indiana, 1877, pp. 48-49.
37 Ibid.
38 Compendium of the Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, II, Table LII, A, 963-965. The counties were Allen, Bartholomew, Cass, Clark, Dearborn, Delaware, Elkhart, Floyd, Grant, Henry, Jefferson, Johnson, Knox, Lake, LaPorte, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Miami, Montgomery, Noble, St. Joseph, Tippecanoe, Vanderburgh, Vigo, Wabash, and Wayne.
39 Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Manufacturers, II, Table III, 110, p. 53; ibid., Table VI, 408; ibid., Table VI, 406.
bulwark of Democratic strength was in the poor counties of the south.\textsuperscript{40} Vigo was normally Democratic in the 1870's but leaned to the Republican column in the 1880's. Decatur, Gibson, Jefferson, Switzerland, and Vanderburgh were close, but somewhat predisposed to Republicanism. In this entire section the only definitely Republican counties were Greene, Jennings, Lawrence, Monroe, and Ohio.

The counties lying in the central plain which were normally Democratic were the poor counties of the section. Miami contained an average per capita wealth of only $570; Huntington contained an average per capita wealth of only $520, and the yield per acre was low; Blackford's land values were low, the yield per acre was small, the population sparse, and the average per capita wealth meager; Wells possessed a population of less than fifty to the square mile, land values were low, and the per capita wealth was only $441; while in Adams the population fell below fifty persons to the square mile, the yield was small, land values were low, and the per capita wealth was only $380. In Tipton the per capita wealth stood at $334 in 1870 and the yield and value of land were low. In Madison land values were low as land values went in the counties of the central plain, but they were not as low as in most of the other Democratic counties of the central plain. The average incumbrance of land per acre was below $15 in 1880. In Putnam the population was under fifty people to the square mile and the yield per acre was on the average smaller than in the majority of counties of the central plain. In Fountain the average per capita wealth stood at $340. In Carroll the population was sparse and land values low. In Cass the yield per acre was small and the value of the land low. Clinton, Hancock, Johnson, and Shelby were the only wealthy counties of the central plain which were Democratic.

There were nine Democratic counties in the north.\textsuperscript{41} La Porte, St. Joseph, and Allen contained poorer farm lands than the counties of the central plain, but the large Catholic and foreign, especially German, populations in each were factors predisposing them to Democracy. The other counties, save Whitley, were the decidedly poor counties. The farms were

\textsuperscript{40}Of the large number of counties included in this region Bartholomew, Brown, Clark, Clay, Crawford, Daviess, Dearborn, Dubois, Floyd, Franklin, Harrison, Jackson, Knox, Martin, Owen, Orange, Perry, Pike, Posey, Ripley, Scott, Spencer, Warrick, and Washington were definitely Democratic in this period.

\textsuperscript{41}The counties were Allen, DeKalb, Fulton, LaPorte, Marshall, Pulaski, Starke, St. Joseph, and Whitley.
small; the land values low. The per capita wealth in Starke in 1870 was $308; in Marshall $494; in Pulaski $320; in Fulton $306; in DeKalb $641. The size of the farms in Whitley was small. Elkhart, Kosciusko, and Noble tended to go Republican, but they were close. The Democratic strength, then, was in the poor south and in the poor counties of the north and of the central plain. Where the per capita wealth was small, the yield meager, the land value low, the size of the farms restricted, and the farms tilled by their impecunious owners the Democrats were usually in the majority.

Why did the Republicans become conservative? Because their strength came from the wealthy counties. Their citadel of strength consisted in the populous and rich counties of the central plain. These counties of the northwest were comparatively new. They were in the process of development. The population was rather sparse and the land was not developed to a point where land values correlated with the true fertility of this region's soil. But the farms were large, the capital wealth was very high, and about one-fourth of the soil was tilled by prosperous tenants. In 1870 the per capita wealth in Porter was $1,063; in Jasper $787; in Newton $1,286; in Lake $724; in Benton $1,424; in Warren $980; in Parke $866; and in Vermillion $922. The per capita wealth in Marion County was only $1,042. This northwest region was Republican from the first, and as its soil came more and more under cultivation and after the industrial development of the Calumet region took place in Lake and Porter, its Republicanism was intensified.

Let us look at the counties of Fulton, Jasper, Lake, Marshall, Newton, Porter, Pulaski, and Starke a moment. Nothing will better illustrate the difference in economic background of the two major parties in Indiana. These counties fall for the most part in the Kankakee Lacustrian Section. Yet the four to the west were Republican while the four to the east were Democratic. Why? The four to the east were older; the four to the west were later developed and under-

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42 The Republican counties of the central plain were Boone, Delaware, Fayette, Grant, Hamilton, Henry, Howard, Marion, Montgomery, Morgan, Parke, Randolph, Rush, Tippecanoe, Union, Vermillion, Wabash, and Wayne. The six counties just south of Lake Michigan and north of the Wabash: Benton, Jasper, Lake, Newton, Porter, and Warren were in alliance with the wealthy counties of the central plain. In point of development Parke and Vermillion really ought to be classified with Benton, Jasper, Lake, Newton, Porter, and Warren.

43 That is why this section is shown on the maps with low land values.
went the process of development during the Republican supremacy following the Civil War. The soil of the four counties to the west was richer; it was owned in large tracts by wealthy landowners; the per capita wealth was high. In Fulton, Marshall, Pulaski, and Starke on the other hand, the soil was poorer; it was owned in smaller plots and by struggling farmers. The average per capita wealth was lower by from two hundred to three hundred and ever four hundred per cent. In Starke the average per capita wealth was $308; in Benton it was $1,424. These figures represent the two extremes. In this connection it is interesting to note that White County, which belonged to the eastern group economically, threw in its political lot with the western group, just as Jay County in the central plain was a poor county which usually went Republican.

The Republican strength, then, came from the wealthy counties, the counties of large farms, and from those where there was a tendency to a higher percentage of tenantry. Politically, this likeness in economic condition expressed itself in a sectional alliance of the central plain with the northwest.

The conservative position of the national Republican administrations was a force always tending to make the Republican party in Indiana conservative, but the fact that the party in Indiana drew its strength from the wealthier elements in the state made its assumption of the conservative position much easier. The Democratic party of Indiana in the seventies was more radical than the national organization. The roots of its radicalism extended down to the small struggling farmers in the poor sections of the state, the farmers who had a hard enough time in the prosperous years, and who found the lean years intolerable.

The Greenback party never came close to carrying Indiana. Except in coalition with the Democrats, that party never carried a single county of the state in the whole decade of its existence. It polled in 1874 a vote of ten per cent or more in twenty counties, some wealthy and some poor, some Republican and some Democratic.44 The party ran second in Blackford, Delaware, Jasper, and Newton. Two years later

44 The Republican counties in which a vote of ten per cent or more was registered were Benton, Boone, Delaware, Grant, Henry, Jasper, Jay, Montgomery, Newton, Steuben, Tippecanoe, and Warren. The Democratic counties were Blackford, Clinton, Greene, Hancock, Johnson, Pike, Sullivan, and Whitley.
it polled a vote of ten per cent in only Boone, Brown, Fountain, Steuben, Vigo, and Warren. Three were Republican counties and three were Democratic. The Greenback party reached its high water mark in 1878 when it polled a vote of ten per cent in thirteen Republican counties and in nineteen Democratic counties. The party was second in Jackson, Newton, Vigo, and Wells. In 1880 the Greenback vote was ten per cent or more in Boone, Fountain, Marshall, Pulaski, Starke, and Wells. Only in fusion was the Greenback party able to function as an effective political organization.

The truth is that there was no need of a third party in Indiana. Unlike overwhelmingly Republican states as Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, and the Dakotas, Indiana was a state with two strong major parties, and a third party was not the necessary and inevitable creation of a suffering people groping for an instrument with which to express opposition. The Democratic party was the natural party of opposition and was radical enough to give the discontented a means of expressing their unrest. The Greenback party did serve a purpose, however. It was a creator of original programs; a maker of new ideas. The Indiana Plan was adopted by the Indiana Democracy as well as by the national Greenback party, and it is perhaps one of the cleverest and safest soft-money schemes ever devised.

What accounts for the success of the Democratic party in 1870, 1872, 1874, 1876, 1878, 1882, and 1884? Undoubtedly, economic discontent was the chief factor. But the Democratic party made a bid for the wet vote, and it was the combination of liquor and inflation which explains the victories of the seventies. Democracy made a bid to the cities with its wet planks. Republicanism made a bid to the cities with its appeal to the manufacturing and industrial interests. And Democracy won. The Republicans usually won some thirteen counties which had over a half million dollars invested in manufacturing in 1880, while the Democrats usually carried some fourteen counties with similar investments.

45 The Republican counties were Benton, Boone, Hamilton, Henry, Jasper, LaGrange, Newton, Parke, Porter, Steuben, Switzerland, Vermillion, and Warren. The Democratic counties were Adams, Blackford, Cass, Clark, Clay, Crawford, Floyd, Fountain, Jackson, Johnson, Marshall, Owen, Pike, Pulaski, Starke, Sullivan, Vigo, Wells, and Whitley.

46 The Republicans usually carried Delaware, Elkhart, Grant, Henry, Jefferson, Lake, Marion, Montgomery, Noble, Tippecanoe, Vanderburgh, Wabash, and Wayne counties. The Democrats offset this by usually carrying Allen, Bartholomew, Cass, Clark, Dearborn, Floyd, Johnson, Knox, LaPorte, Madison, Marshall, Miami, St. Joseph, and Vigo. Vigo County usually went Democratic in the 1870's, but went Republican more often in the 1880's.
It was the liquor issue which carried for the Democrats the industrial and urban centers. The chief cities of Indiana in 1870 were in their order of population Indianapolis in Marion, Evansville in Vanderburgh, Fort Wayne in Allen, Terre Haute in Vigo, New Albany in Floyd, Lafayette in Tippecanoe, Richmond in Wayne, South Bend in St. Joseph, and Vincennes in Knox. South Bend had superseded Richmond in 1880 as the seventh city. The Democrats in 1874 carried Allen, Floyd, Knox, Marion, St. Joseph, and Vigo. Two years later the Democrats carried Allen, Floyd, Knox, St. Joseph, and Vigo, as they did again in 1878. They won in the same urban communities in 1882 and in addition carried Vanderburgh. The Democrats usually came out of Fort Wayne, Terre Haute, New Albany, South Bend, and Vincennes with large majorities, while they managed to keep the Republican pluralities in Indianapolis and Evansville down to a very low level, and occasionally carried either or both of the latter two cities. The only cities of the first rank which were definitely Republican were Lafayette and Richmond.

Besides appealing to the urban population, the liquor issue appealed to the Catholic and foreign, especially German, voter. But many of these lived in the cities and have thus already been accounted for. The Democrats carried the rural counties where these elements constituted numerous parts of the population. But as these counties were for the most part poor counties, with Democratic leanings, they probably would have been carried anyway.

Of the forty-three counties containing the heaviest foreign-born population only eleven were definitely Republican while twenty-seven were definitely Democratic. Of the thirty-five counties possessing the heaviest German population only seven were definitely Republican while twenty-four were definitely Democratic. Of the thirty-three counties having the heaviest Catholic population only four can be set down as Republican while twenty-two can be set down as normally Democratic. In the central plain there were fewer foreign-born and here the Protestant sects were strong, particularly Methodism. The Republicans, with their tendencies to temperance, drew heavily from the Methodists and the Baptists.

The Democrats made no demagogic nor unnatural appeal to the poor, the discontented, and the wets. In 1868 their party already was composed of the poor counties, and contained large foreign, German, and Catholic elements. Thus composed, it naturally espoused the causes which appealed to
its own people. A party becomes what it is because of the constituent elements which combine to make it up. In the seventies the Democrats welded liquor and inflation into a winning issue, carrying the poor counties and a majority of the urban communities. This victorious alliance was neither unnatural nor unholy: the Democratic party merely adjusted its policies and its creed to the interests and predilections of the people who composed it.

After 1880 the industrial development of Indiana was more rapid. Of the 724,058 people in the state engaged in occupations in 1890, 330,569 were engaged in agriculture; 161,637 were offering personal and professional services; 139,508 were engaged in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits; and 92,344 were employed in trade and transportation. Far less than half of the population of the state was engaged in agriculture. Cities were growing rapidly. Indianapolis contained 105,436 people. Evansville had grown to 50,756; Fort Wayne to 35,393; and Terre Haute had increased to 30,217. In 1880, capital invested in manufacturing had climbed to $131,605,366, the number of manufacturing establishments had increased to 12,354, the net value of the manufactured products was $96,705,976, the number employed in factories was 124,349, and the total yearly wages paid amounted to $51,749,976.47

From 1886 to 1900 the “Natural Gas Craze” existed in ten counties, and factories were drawn by the prospects of cheap fuel.48 The amount of coal mined in the state jumped from 1,996,490 tons in 1880 to 4,068,124 tons in 1896.49 The capital invested in manufacturing rose to $234,481,528 in 1900. The number of wage earners in that year increased to 155,956. It is significant that the greatest industrial development in the state was taking place in the central plain land in the northwest, Republican sections, increasing their population and their wealth. On the other hand, industry in the southern section was not growing so rapidly, and the industrial center at New Albany had actually declined. These facts help explain why Indiana did not respond effectively to the agrarian crusade of the 1890’s.

47 Compendium of the Eleventh Census of the United States, 1890, III, Table 75, pp. 408-410; ibid., I, Table 3, pp. 130-140; ibid., III, Table 5, pp. 734-735.
48 Logan Esarey, History of Indiana. (2 vols., Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1924), II, 911-912. The ten counties were Blackford, Delaware, Grant, Hamilton, Hancock, Henry, Howard, Madison, Rush, and Tipton.
49 Indiana. Department of Geology and Natural Resources. Twenty-first Annual Report. 1896 (Indianapolis, Indiana, 1897), 461.