

GENERAL SCIENCE

Election Forecast Made

A Republican President with a Democratic Congress is seen as a possibility. Wallace's third party not likely to be determining factor, veteran predictor says.

► THAT the elections this fall may very possibly give us a Republican President and a Democratic Congress is the suggestion made by a veteran predictor of elections, Louis H. Bean, economic adviser to the Secretary of Agriculture, in a new book, *"How to Predict Elections"* (Knopf).

There is, Mr. Bean has found from a study of votes for Congress and for President during the past hundred years, a regular tide of ups and downs in party popularity. If the political tide follows the same course that it has in previous years, the 1948 elections may very well mark an upward swing for the Democratic Party from the low of the 1946 Congressional elections, when the Democrats actually lost more votes than they might have been expected to on the basis of past history.

Wallace's new third party is not likely to be a determining factor in the coming election, it would seem from Mr. Bean's figures. A third party is seldom strong enough in the first year after its organization to draw as much as a fourth or a fifth of the total vote.

Theodore Roosevelt's Progressive Party was the strongest vote-getter on record, but it polled only 27.4% of the total vote. Although he is generally credited with taking enough Republican votes away from the fold to elect Wilson, Mr. Bean's figures indicate that this is giving too much credit to the Bull Moosers.

"In 1912," says Mr. Bean, "the political tide was running strongly liberal, progressive and Democratic and, in spite of the general belief, it appears that the Democrats had sufficient strength to elect Wilson had there been no third party."

The case was similar in 1924 when La Follette was taking votes away from the Democrats.

"In 1924 the political tide was running so strongly Republican that the Republicans would have won even if La Follette had not diverted nearly 5,000,000 votes from the Democrats."

No prediction is made by Mr. Bean (publicly, at least) as to how many votes will be carried off by Mr. Wallace or what the actual election result will be. But he does give a hint of where the third party strength may be expected. Some states, he has observed, have a political flexibility; others lack it. Even when the nation's vote changes as much as 10 points one way or the other, New Hampshire would change only 4 points. North Dakota, on the other hand, shifted 19 points. Wallace can look for his strength in the Northwestern states having the greatest political flexibility, and

least in the relatively stable states.

The carrying of certain states, with their important electoral votes, has a certain relation to the strength of the popular vote, Mr. Bean has found. This is the order in

ARCHAEOLOGY

Violence in Ancient Sinai

► BLOODSHED in the tension-zone between the Holy Land and Egypt is no new thing under the sun. Ages before the present fighting, even before the Children of Israel saw the pursuing chariots of Pharaoh overwhelmed, there were red stains on the sands of Sinai.

Evidences of battle and sudden death a hundred thousand years ago, at er-Rawafi in Sinai, near the boundary of Palestine, were described by Dr. Henry Field, newly returned from field work with the University of California African Expedition. Dr. Field spoke as guest of Watson Davis, director of Science Service, on Adventures in Science, heard over stations of the Columbia Broadcasting System.

On the sides of a low hill in the desert, members of the expedition found large numbers of primitive hand-axes made of a yellowish-white stone, "in almost mint condition." They were of the type known as Mousterian, which were used by early Old Stone Age men, of the Neandertal level of development.

"As we reconstructed it," Dr. Field related, "the prehistoric flint-knapper and his friends must have been killed by a sudden attack or were driven from this sheltered spot overlooking some water pools, never to return. . . Hand-to-hand conflict in this part of the world is obviously not merely of our time."

The expedition crossed the Wilderness of Zin, through which Moses led the Israelites after they had escaped from Egyptian bondage. They saw very few signs of life, either ancient or modern, and hardly any animals, until suddenly they saw a ship—they had arrived at the Suez Canal.

"How the Israelites or anyone else could survive for long in that desert remains a mystery," commented Dr. Field.

Researches on the geography of Sinai convinced members of the expedition that the hosts of Pharaoh pursuing the Children of Israel met their end not in the Red Sea but in a great swamp called the Sea of Reeds.

As Dr. Fields reconstructed the event: "Moses and the Israelites were held as

which states may be expected to join the Democratic ranks if the popular vote should climb above 50%.

At 51%, Idaho. At 52%, Washington, Ohio, Delaware and Colorado. At 53%, Wyoming, Wisconsin, North Dakota, Nebraska and California. If these latter are all won, victory for the Democrats would be sure.

"If the Democrats made sure of Ohio and California," Mr. Bean predicts, "they might barely win. But if they reach into the 54% level and take New Jersey or New York, victory would be more certain."

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slaves at Rameses, later Tanis. Moses felt the approach of a great storm. That evening he led the Israelites eastward across the Sea of Reeds, later called the Reed Sea, and then misinterpreted as the Red Sea in our Bible.

"The Egyptians followed, with their heavy chariots, which became mired. They removed the wheels as described in Exodus, but that did not help. Then the storm broke over the Sea of Reeds. Moses and the Israelites had crossed to dry land. They had escaped. The miracle was complete."

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METEOROLOGY

20-Year Period Shows Cut In Hurricane Life Loss

► LOSS OF LIFE in hurricanes in this country has been cut to one-fortieth of its former magnitude in the past 20 years, thanks to better warning services and preparedness against disaster, states Howard C. Sumner of the U. S. Weather Bureau.

Mr. Sumner's figures are not absolute, but are measured by the amount of property damage. Much of the property exposed to hurricane damage, such as docks, warehouses, bridges, field crops and orchards, cannot be moved out of harm's way; but human beings can get to high ground and other secure places if they are told far enough in advance what is coming. Thus it has come to pass that for every ten million dollars' worth of storm-ruined property in the five-year period 1941-45 only four persons lost their lives, whereas in the 1926-30 period the comparable figure was 161.

The Weather Bureau does not claim all the credit for this improvement, it is emphasized. Red Cross disaster relief, Army and Navy air reconnaissance, both professional and "ham" radio stations, the press, telephone and telegraph companies, and alert private citizens have all contributed towards the vast improvement in the life-saving record.

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