



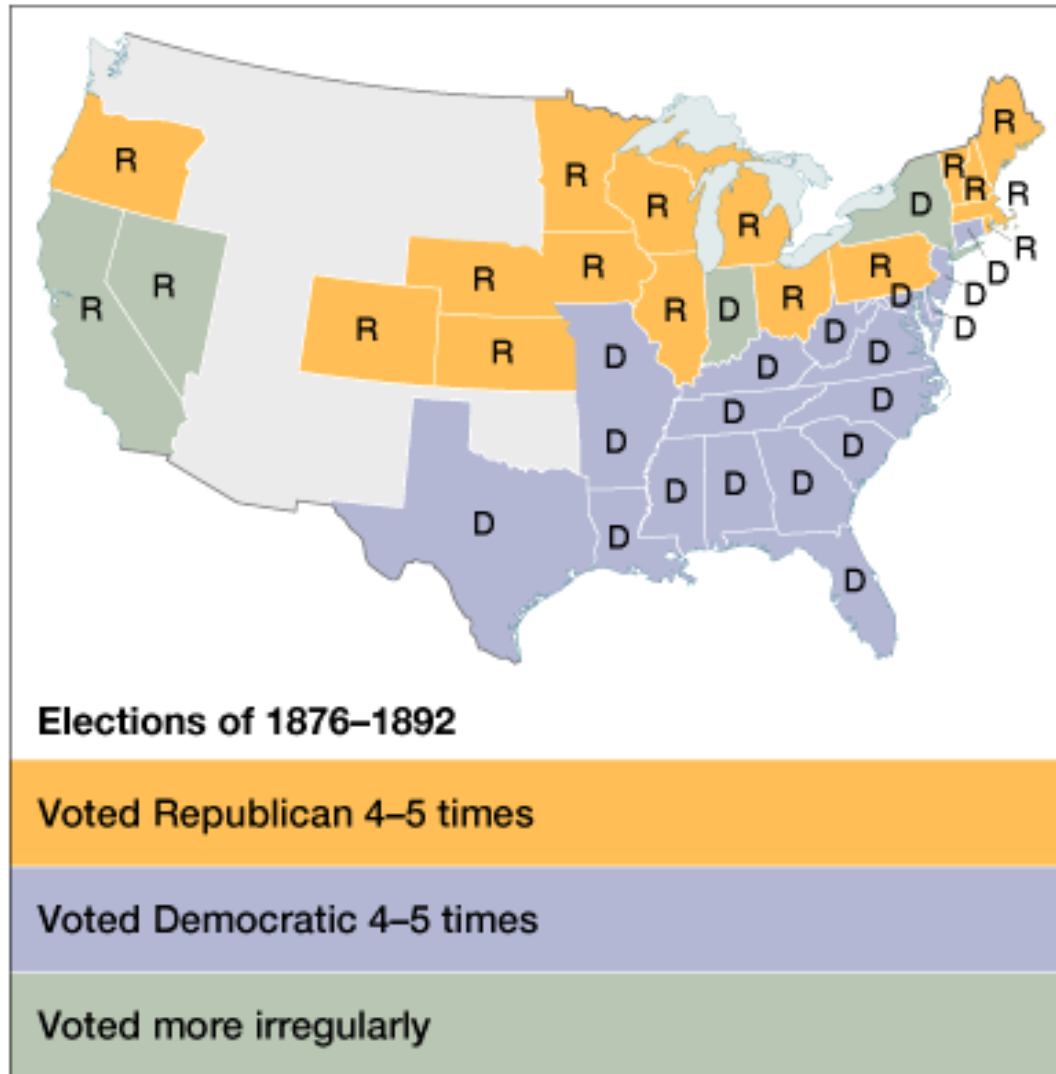
# Gilded Age Politics

**By: Ms. Susan M. Pojer  
Horace Greeley HS Chappaqua, NY**



The  
"Politics of  
Equilibrium"

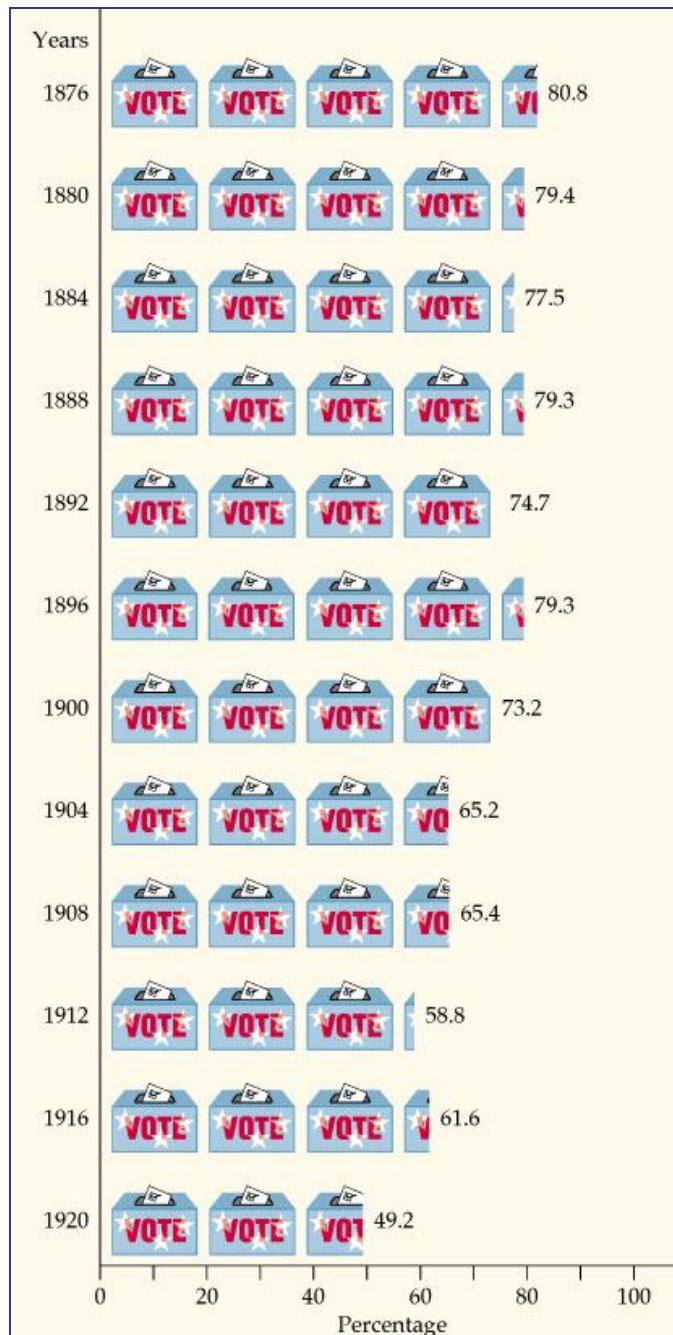
# 1. A Two-Party Stalemate



# Two-Party "Balance"







## 2. Intense Voter Loyalty to the Two Major Political Parties

# 3. Well-Defined Voting Blocs

## Democratic Bloc

- ★ White southerners (preservation of white supremacy)
- ★ Catholics
- ★ Recent immigrants (esp. Jews)
- ★ Urban working poor (pro-labor)
- ★ Most farmers

## Republican Bloc

- ★ Northern whites (pro-business)
- ★ African Americans
- ★ Northern Protestants
- ★ Old WASPs (support for anti-immigrant laws)
- ★ Most of the middle class



## 4. **Very Laissez Faire Federal Govt.**

- ★ From 1870-1900 → Govt. did very little domestically.
- ★ Main duties of the federal govt. :
  - Deliver the mail.
  - Maintain a national military.
  - Collect taxes & tariffs.
  - Conduct a foreign policy.
- ★ Exception → administer the annual Civil War veterans' pension.

## 5. The Presidency as a Symbolic Office

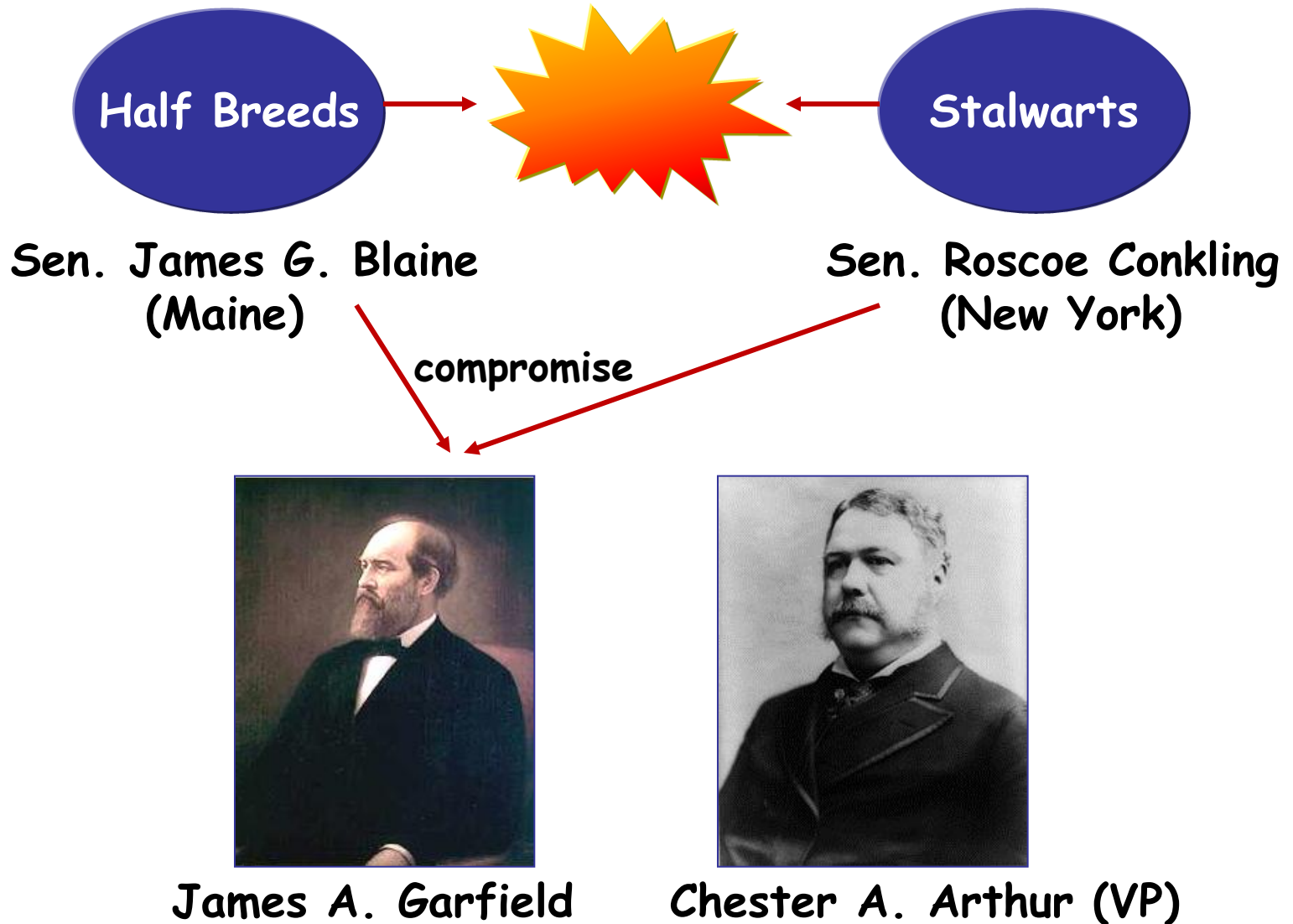
- ★ Party bosses ruled.
- ★ Presidents should avoid offending any factions within their own party.
- ★ The President just doled out federal jobs.
  - 1865 → 53,000 people worked for the federal govt.
  - 1890 → 166,000 " " " " " "



Senator Roscoe Conkling



# 1880 Presidential Election: Republicans



# 1880 Presidential Election: Democrats

**TO OUR NEXT PRESIDENT.**  
"The Soldier Statesman with a Record as stainless as his Sword."

# HANCOCK *and* ENGLISH

GENERAL ORDER No. 40. AUGUST 21st, 1867.  
\*\*\* The right of trial by jury, the habeas corpus, the liberty of the press, the freedom of speech, the natural rights of persons and the rights of property, must be preserved. Free institutions, while they are essential to the prosperity and happiness of the people, always furnish the strongest inducements to peace and order. \*\*\*  
By command of MAJ-GEN. W. S. HANCOCK.

NO NORTH  
NO SOUTH  
NO EAST  
NO WEST

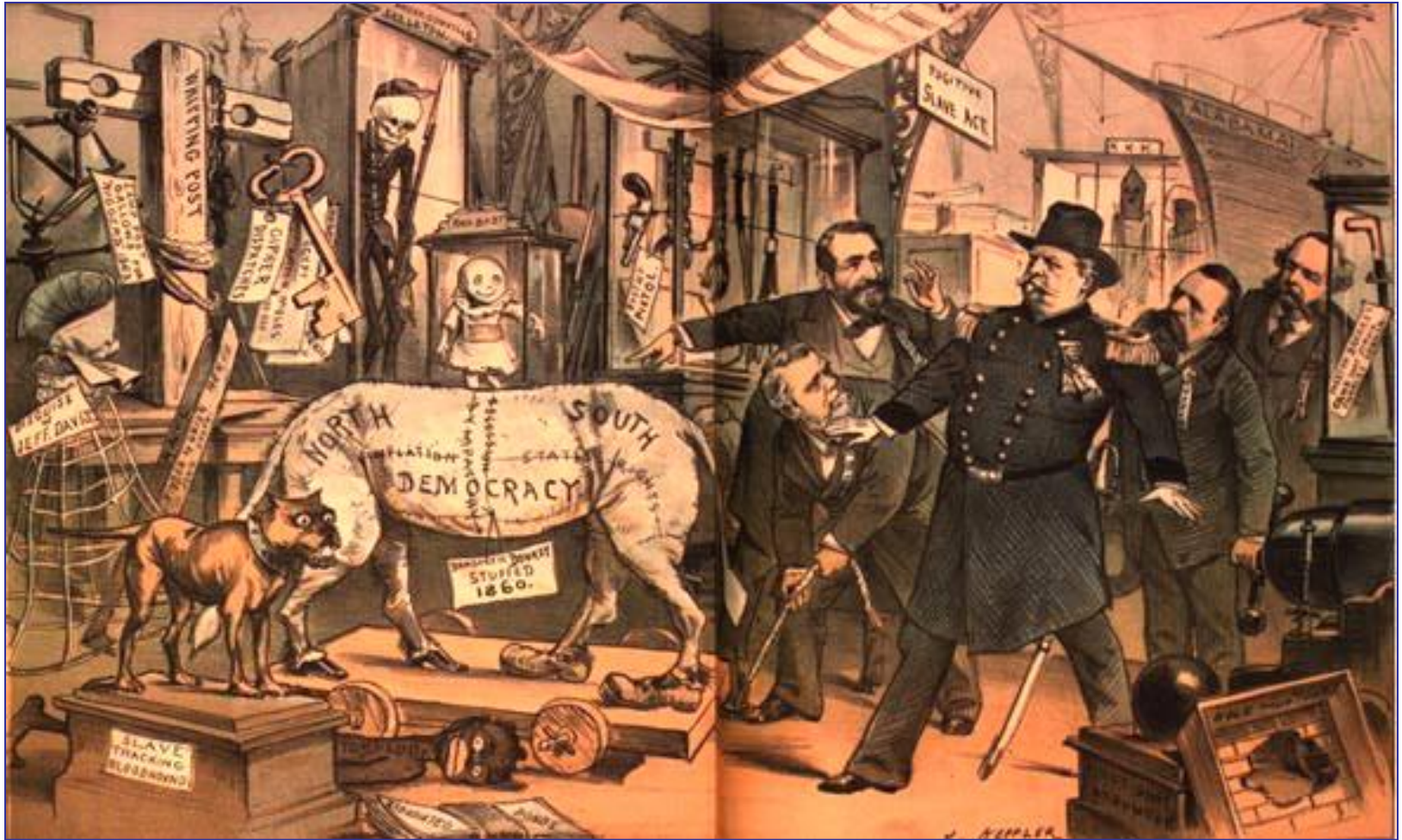
THE UNION of STATES  
THE UNION of HANDS  
THE UNION of HEARTS forever.

WINFIELD S. HANCOCK. WILLIAM H. ENGLISH.

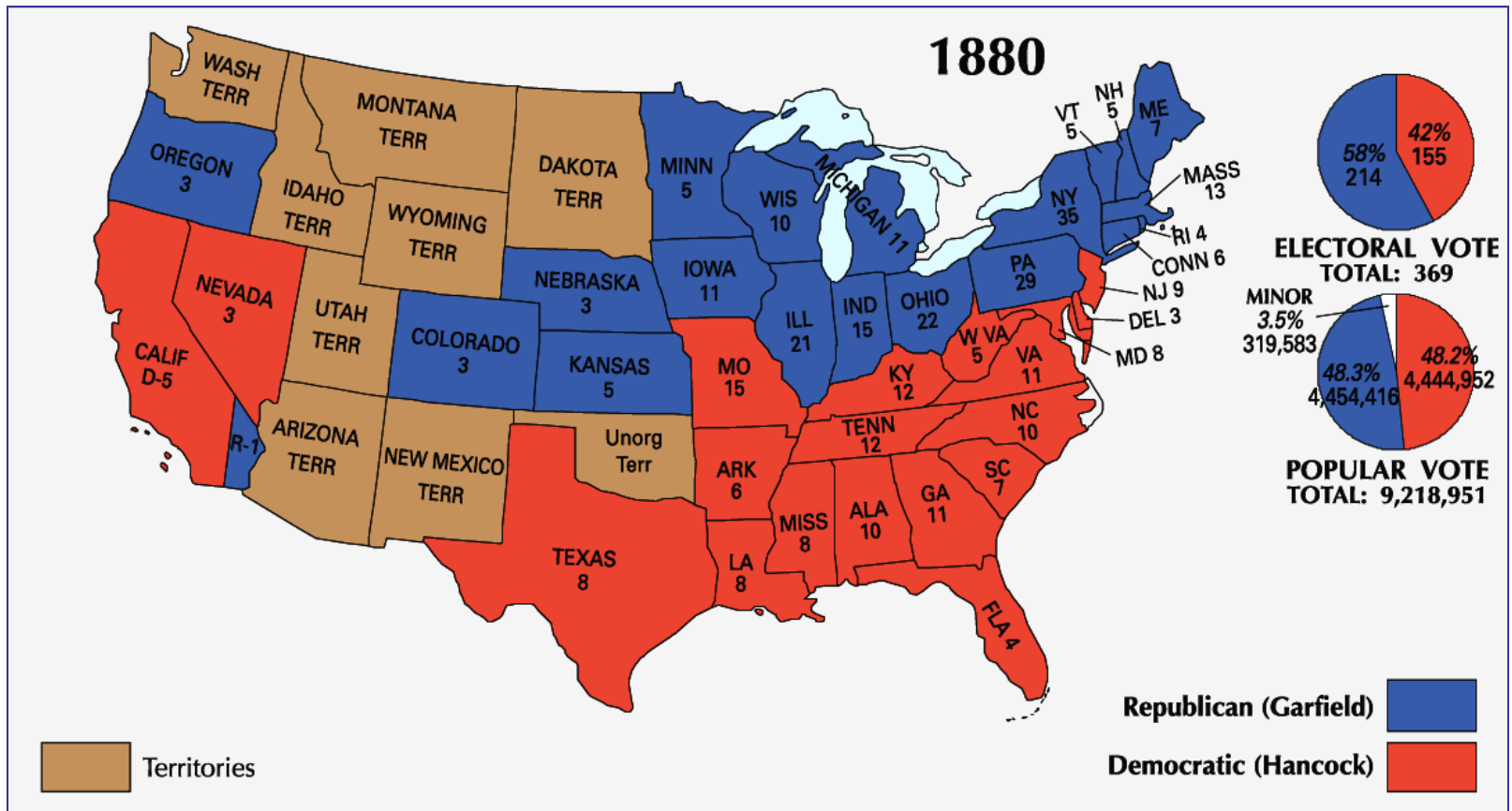
## UNION MARCH.



# *Inspecting the Democratic Curiosity Shop*



# 1880 Presidential Election



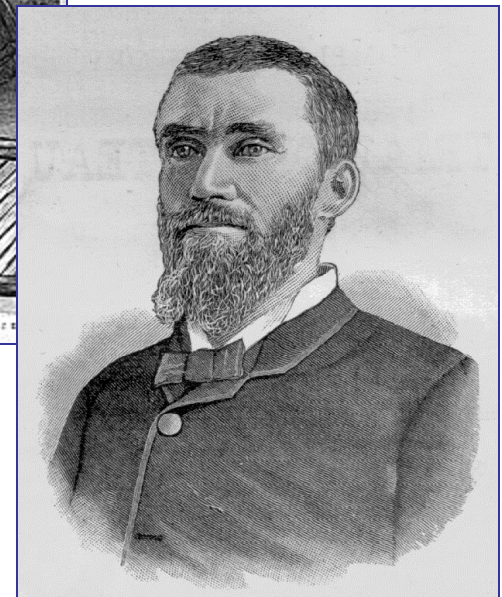


# 1881: Garfield Assassinated!



**Charles Guiteau:**

*I Am a Stalwart, and Arthur is  
President now!*





# Chester A. Arthur: The Fox in the Chicken Coop?





# Pendleton Act (1883)

- ★ Civil Service Act.
- ★ The "Magna Carta" of civil service reform.
- ★ 1883 → 14,000 out of 117,000 federal govt. jobs became civil service exam positions.
- ★ 1900 → 100,000 out of 200,000 civil service federal govt. jobs.





# Republican “Mugwumps”

- ★ Reformers who wouldn't re-nominate Chester A. Arthur.
- ★ Reform to them → create a disinterested, impartial govt. run by an educated elite like themselves.
- ★ Social Darwinists.
- ★ Laissez faire government to them:
  - Favoritism & the spoils system seen as govt. intervention in society.
  - Their target was political corruption, not social or economic reform!



# The Mugwumps

*Men may come  
and men may go,  
but the work of  
reform shall go  
on forever.*

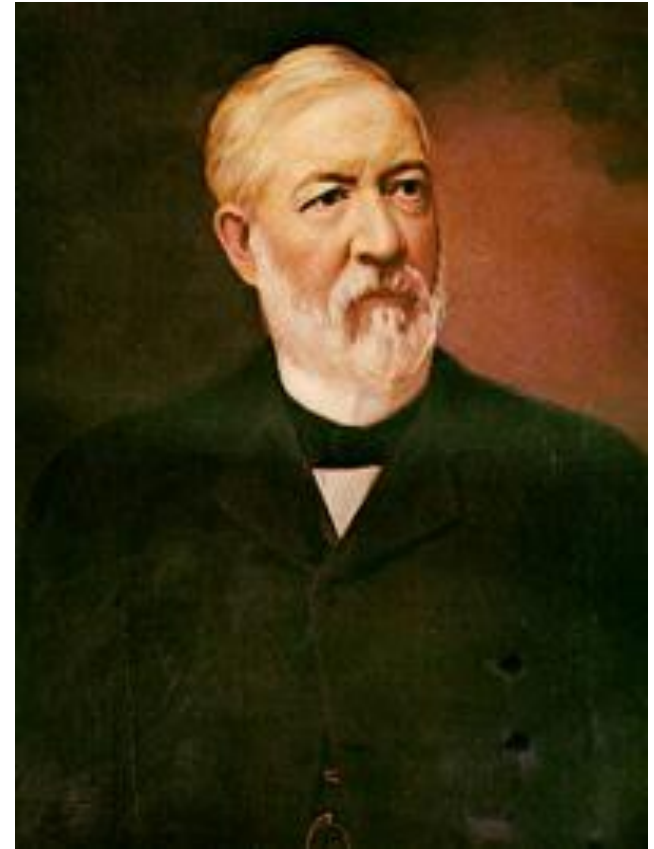
- ★ Will support Cleveland in the 1884 election.



# 1884 Presidential Election



**Grover Cleveland**  
\* (DEM)



**James Blaine**  
(REP)



# A Dirty Campaign



*Ma, Ma...where's my pa?  
He's going to the White House, ha... ha... ha...!*

# *Little Lost Mugwump*



**Blaine in 1884**



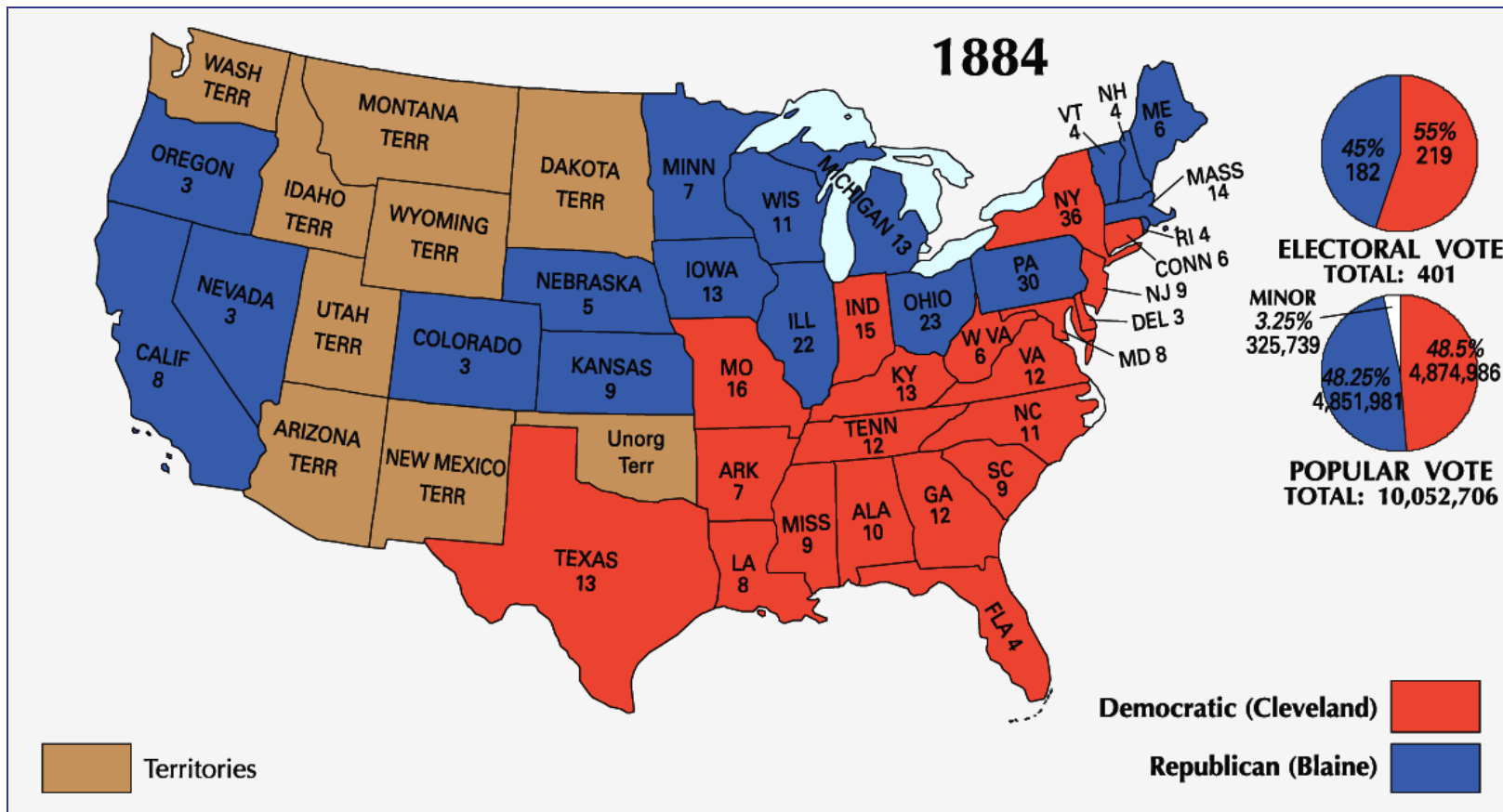
# *Rum, Romanism & Rebellion!*



Dr. Samuel Burchard

- ★ Led a delegation of ministers to Blaine in NYC.
- ★ Reference to the Democratic Party.
- ★ Blaine was slow to repudiate the remark.
- ★ Narrow victory for Cleveland [he wins NY by only 1149 votes!].

# 1884 Presidential Election





# Cleveland's First Term

- ★ The "Veto Governor" from New York.
- ★ First Democratic elected since 1856.
- ★ *A public office is a public trust!*
- ★ His laissez-faire presidency:
  - Opposed bills to assist the poor as well as the rich.
  - Vetoed over 200 special pension bills for Civil War veterans!



# ***Bravo, Señor Clevelando!***







# The Tariff Issue

- ★ After the Civil War, Congress raised tariffs to protect new US industries.
- ★ Big business wanted to continue this; consumers did not.
- ★ 1885 → tariffs earned the US \$100 mil. in surplus!
- ★ Mugwumps opposed it → **WHY???**
- ★ President Cleveland's view on tariffs**????**
- ★ Tariffs became a major issue in the 1888 presidential election.

# *Filing the Rough Edges*

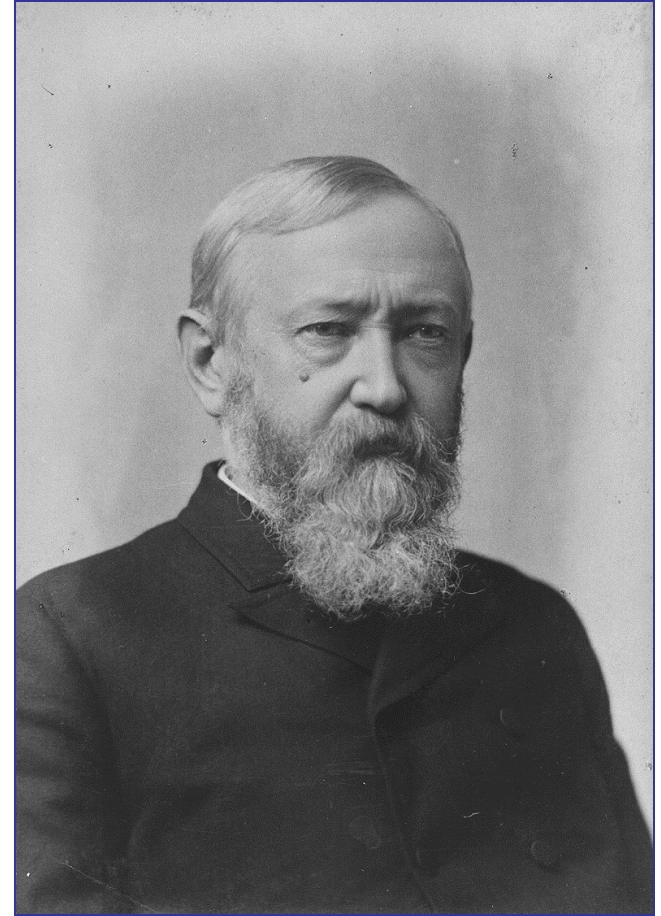


**Tariff of 1888**

# 1888 Presidential Election



**Grover Cleveland**  
(DEM)



**Benjamin Harrison**  
\* (REP)



# Coming Out for Harrison

PUCK.

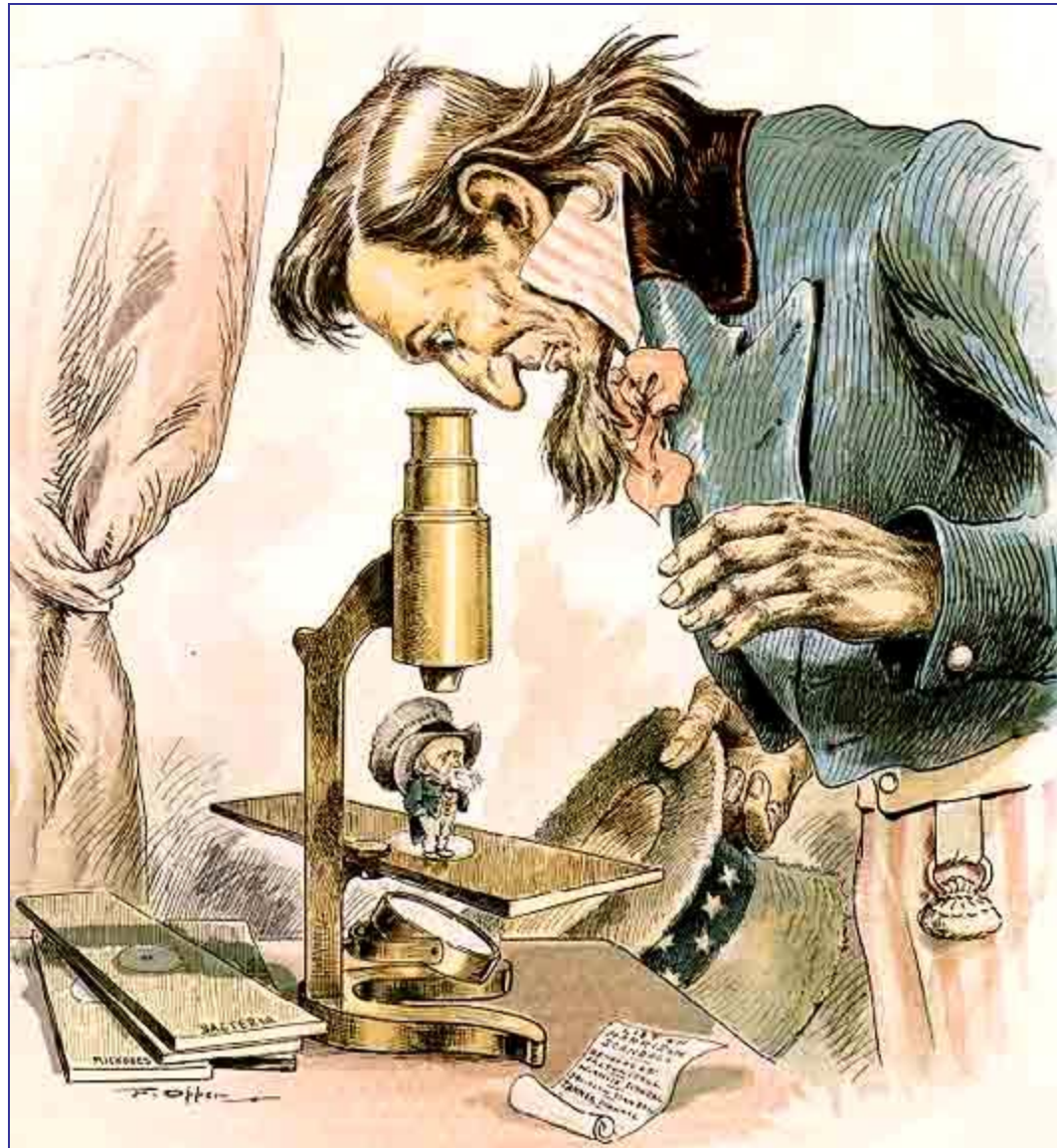


"COMING OUT" FOR HARRISON.

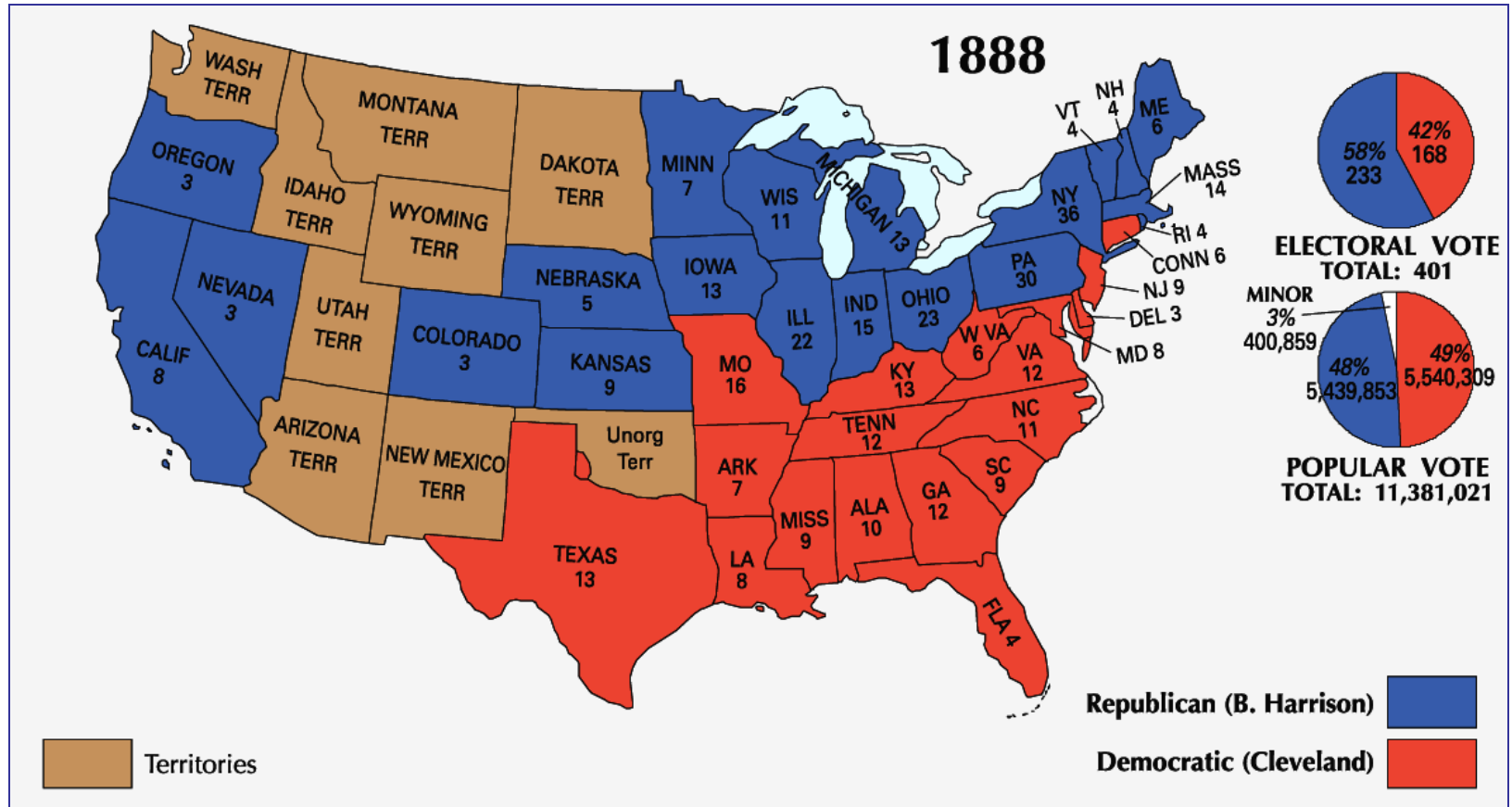
PROTECTED MONOPOLIST.—Chuck in your votes there, and don't forget that you're "working for—Kane!"



# The Smallest Specimen Yet



# 1888 Presidential Election





# *Disposing the Surplus*





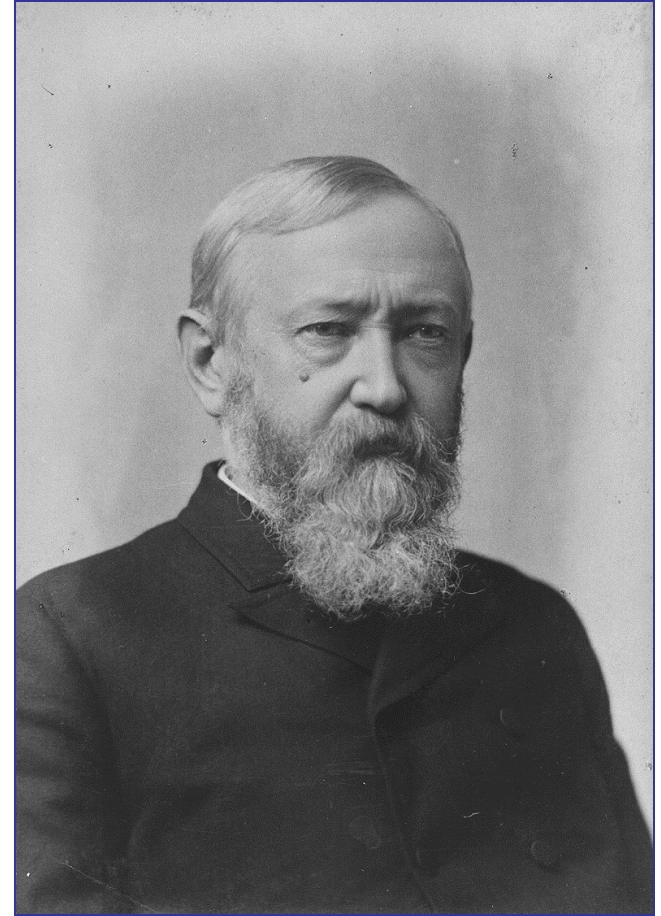
# Changing Public Opinion

- ★ Americans wanted the federal govt. to deal with growing soc. & eco. problems & to curb the power of the trusts:
  - Interstate Commerce Act - 1887
  - Sherman Antitrust Act - 1890
  - McKinley Tariff - 1890
    - Based on the theory that prosperity flowed directly from protectionism.
    - Increased already high rates another 4%!
  - Rep. Party suffered big losses in 1890 (even McKinley lost his House seat!).

# 1892 Presidential Election



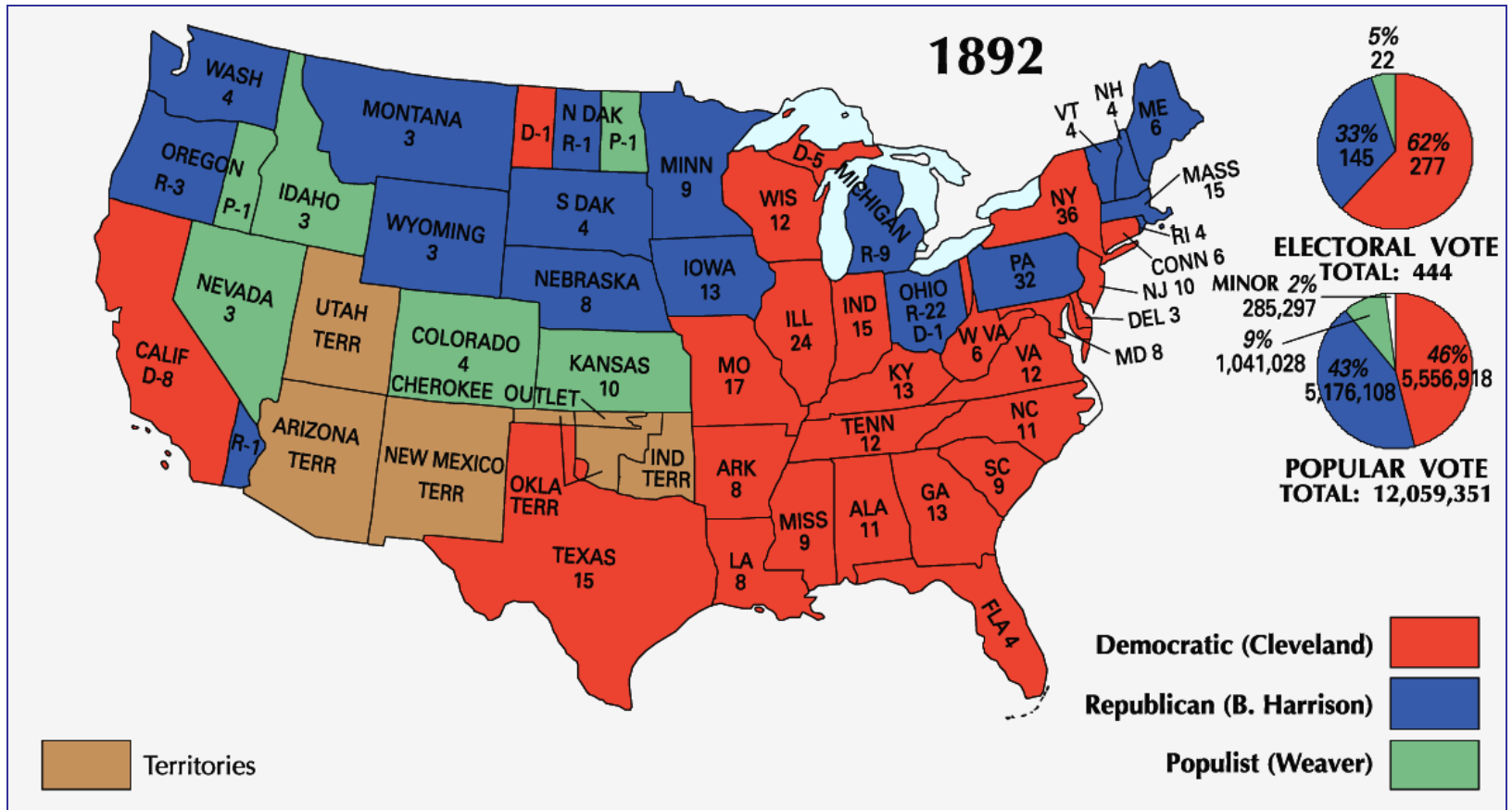
**Grover Cleveland**  
again! \* (DEM)



**Benjamin Harrison**  
(REP)



# 1892 Presidential Election





# Cleveland Loses Support Fast!

- ★ The only President to serve two non-consecutive terms.
- ★ Blamed for the 1893 Panic.
- ★ Defended the gold standard.
- ★ Used federal troops in the 1894 Pullman strike.
- ★ Refused to sign the Wilson-Gorman Tariff of 1894.
- ★ Repealed the Sherman Silver Purchase Act.