

TWO LETTERS.

BY CHAR. F. MERRILL.
If you were dead and in some silent valley,
I would add your name to my grave,
In some lone fern where wild breezes blow,
And softly sigh as willow branches wave.

NOMINATING THE PRESIDENT.

Review of the Previous National Conventions of the Political Parties—The Candidates and the Ballotings.

(From Harper's Monthly for July.)

National conventions for the nomination of party candidates for President and Vice-president, and the building of party platforms of political principles, are peculiarly an American device and custom. No other country exhibits these luminous and excited assemblies, sprung from the town caucus and State conference of the land.

In view of the conventions which are to meet the present year, it will perhaps be interesting to give a sketch of those which have already been held in the course of our political history; for such a sketch will deal with familiar names, the fate of famous ambitions, and what may be called the romance of the American Presidency.

At the formation of the Government the law provided that the person having the highest number of electoral votes should be President, and the person having the next highest, Vice-president of the United States. This rule was found to operate sometimes to defeat the will of the people. It once made Aaron Burr, who was the Republican candidate for Vice-president, the rival of Jefferson, the candidate for President.

Our Presidents and Vice-presidents were a first nominated by caucuses composed of the Senators and Members of the House of Representatives belonging to each party. This caucus system, which was really derived from our early political life in England, however, there were no nominating caucuses of Congressmen until the year 1824, when the candidates were very clearly designated by the caucus of the Revolutionary and Constitution-making period.

As a Federalist had become a strong political adherent of Jefferson, and was now Secretary of State. The other was Colonel Monroe, who had been minister to France. The members of the caucus were the Federalists, the Republicans, and Madison was nominated by eighty-three votes. George Clinton, the then Vice-president, receiving a re-nomination for that office.

Great dissatisfaction with the caucus system had now grown up. The monopoly of the Presidency by Virginia bitterly complained of, especially by New York, which had a favorite candidate in De Witt Clinton. It was seen that the Congressional caucus was controlled by Virginia influences, and that the State still desired to supply Presidents to the country.

Monroe's second term approached its end, it became evident that a sharp contest for the Chief Magistracy's chair was about to ensue. Several eminent men looked up as aspirants, and a strong force of followers. The Whigs was the polliated and genial Crawford, of Georgia, who had already been put forward to oppose Monroe. There was the eloquent and chivalrous Harry Clay, the ablest of Speakers and the most famous of party leaders.

Such was the State of the campaign when the Democratic convention, 600 at org. assembled at Baltimore in May. It was not an interesting convention, for it included only the delegates of the Virginia delegation in Congress. The Whigs were already laid out for at the White-house. On the first ballot Mr. Van Buren was unanimously nominated for President.

The course of events during Van Buren's Presidency was such as to cause a look forward with interest not only to the election, but to the nominating conventions of 1840. The bright prospects before the Whigs brought several rivals to the front as candidates for their party. John C. Fremont, the great explorer of that party, Webster and Clay, were the most prominent. It was seen that it would be at last necessary for this party, which had hitherto looked upon national conventions as a Democratic device, to adopt the Whig mode of nominating a candidate.

Gen. Jackson became the candidate of that section of the Republicans who took up a position of opposition to the Adams administration, and who now assumed the name of "Democrats." and when election year came around again, in 1828, there was no need of caucus or convention to nominate him. He triumphed in the electoral colleges by a vote of 173 to 83.

It was in the year 1831 that the first national convention to nominate candidates for President met. The example was set, curiously enough, not by either of the regular political parties, but by the faction which came into existence solely to oppose the secret order of Missouri. It is worth while to notice that it was this movement which gave an opening to the caucus system, which was to become the rule of the Presidency, the other to the Senate and the Secretaryship of State. These were William H. Seward and Millard Fillmore. The Antislavery party grew out of the excitement of the Missouri question, and the appearance of William Morgan, a member of the order, who was supposed to have divulged its secrets.

The caucus system was now evidently extinct; no party would have dared to attempt its revival. The system of national conventions, established by the Antislavery movement, was to be the only possible substitute. As the supporter of Jackson now called themselves "Democrats," so his opponents adopted the designation of "National Republicans." The Whigs were first in the field to call a national convention, and this convention met at Baltimore in December, 1831. Its session was brief, for public opinion had already marked out Henry Clay as its candidate. Clay was accepted by the first ballot, and John Sergeant was given the second place on the ticket. Thus the opposition to Jackson, which was strenuous and hot, was yet divided at the start of the race between Clay and Wirt.

President of the convention, which contained 135 delegates, entitled to 226 votes. The first motion made was intended by the opponents of Clay to elect him from the North. It was to adopt the rule requiring that a third of the votes cast to make a choice. There was a long and bitter contest over this motion, but it was finally carried. Then the convention proceeded to the nomination of a President. On the first ballot Mr. Van Buren polled 146, a majority of all the votes cast, but not two-thirds. On the second he fell to a plurality; on the third he dropped below the fifth case, passed over, and received a plurality, on the seventh case had a majority, but not two-thirds. The convention now adjourned to the next day.

The Whigs met in convention at Baltimore, and now once more the friends of Clay had it all their own way. The great Kentucky was nominated by acclamation. A short struggle followed for the nomination for Vice-president. The candidates were Millard Fillmore, John Davis, of Massachusetts, and Theodore Fringhlaynen, the latter finally succeeding. But Clay, to his intense disappointment and the despair of his devoted supporters, lost the nomination to Webster, who was elected Vice-President after an exciting contest.

The war with Mexico ensued, and provided a number of military as well as civil candidates for the party in 1848. Most prominent among these were Gen. Winfield Scott and Gen. Zachary Taylor, the one an old Whig, the other "innocent of politics." The Whig convention, called the "Slaughter-house convention," from the deadly havoc it made with great Whig names, met at Philadelphia on the 15th of June, and adjourned to the last time, the friends of Henry Clay made a desperate struggle in his behalf. Webster, too, was avowedly in the field, and in 1840, the rivalry of these giants was destined to prove the political ruin of both.

The subsequent conventions are in the recollection of most of our readers; and we have occupied so much space in our rapid sketch of these interesting events, that we cannot detail those which have followed. Lincoln was nominated with Andrew Johnson for Vice-president, in 1860, his opponent being Gen. Fremont. Both nominations were the result of compromise, and hence comparative little interest attached to the bodies which made them. The same was the case with the fore-ordained nomination and re-nomination of Gen. Grant in 1868 and 1872, the interest in the Republican nominations of those years centering upon the contests for Vice-president. The Democratic convention which nominated Horatio Seymour at New York in 1868 was an exciting, though not a very eventful one, as it already seemed certain that Grant would be elected. The "Liberal Republican" convention which met at Cincinnati in 1872 was watched with deep interest. The contest there was between Charles Francis Adams, Lyman Trumbull, and John Grevel, and when the latter was finally nominated, the Democrats had only to meet and adopt their old foe of the Tribune as their candidate.

A Wheelbarrow Trip to the Centennial. One afternoon recently, about 5 o'clock, a man and a boy, apparently worn with travel, and certainly bronzed by the sun and begrimed with the dust of the road, were seen trudging in West King; the man being between the handles of an oddly constructed and handsomely painted wheelbarrow, and the boy walking by his side. The man proved to be Mr. J. C. Temple, of the town of Joplin, Jasper county, Mo., the boy being his son Otto, aged thirteen years. He said that he left Joplin on the 28th of February, accompanied by his son Otto and an Englishman named Wilson. Some time last winter he made a proposition that if the Oronogo and Joplin Mining Company of Jasper county would give him fifty pounds of mineralogical specimens, he would, in return, give them a wheelbarrow, and all the way to the Centennial. Some beautiful specimens of ore were brought to him, and he constructed a wheelbarrow that would be particularly suitable for so long a journey. The entire weight of the barrow, baggage, and specimens of minerals is 150 pounds, and the cost of the outfit was \$125. The minerals are specimens of zinc, lead, bismuth, spar, and garnet, all from Oronogo and Joplin, Mo., mines.

Names of the United States. Massachusetts is the Indian name for "the country around the great hills; Connecticut is derived from the Mohegan, signifying "long river;" Tennessee is the Indian for "the river of the bend;" i. e., the Mississippi, which forms its western boundary; Ohio means "beautiful river;" Mississippi is an Algonquin name meaning "long river;" Illinois is derived from the Indian word "Illinewek," "we are men;" Missouri from the Illinois, and means "a canoe;" Michigan is from the Algonquin "michigami," "great lake;" Ponce de Leon landed on the coast of Florida on Easter Sunday, and named the country in commemoration of the day, which he called "Pasqua Florida of the Spaniards," or "Feast of Flowers;" Minnesota, "cloudy water."

An Old Flag. Sarah Smith Safford, daughter of the lieutenant who sprang into the sea and rescued the flag shot from Paul Jones' ship, Bon Homme Richard, in the battle with the English ship Serapis, in 1779, is still living in Trenton. She has in her possession the flag shot from the masthead of the Bon Homme Richard and rescued by her father. It is of bunting, with thirteen red and white stripes and twelve white stars on a blue field.

Three men who killed the California bandit Chavez, in November last, in Yuma county, Arizona, have successfully applied for the reward offered for the capture or head of the notorious robber, the limit of time set by the proclamation having expired just prior to the date of their achievement. To make the matter all the more aggravating, the Mexicans of Yuma county, Arizona, are seeking the lives of the entire party.

THE RESULT OF THE CONVENTION. The result of the convention, which contained 135 delegates, entitled to 226 votes. The first motion made was intended by the opponents of Clay to elect him from the North. It was to adopt the rule requiring that a third of the votes cast to make a choice. There was a long and bitter contest over this motion, but it was finally carried. Then the convention proceeded to the nomination of a President. On the first ballot Mr. Van Buren polled 146, a majority of all the votes cast, but not two-thirds. On the second he fell to a plurality; on the third he dropped below the fifth case, passed over, and received a plurality, on the seventh case had a majority, but not two-thirds. The convention now adjourned to the next day.

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ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

BY THOMAS S. COLLIER.
Hurray! Hurray! ring loud the bells,
Sing triumph with such noise and din,
That our land and sea and inland shall,
A hundred years ago.

All darkly lowered the winter sky,
And 'mid the wind and snow,
Brave patriots aimed to do and die,
A hundred years ago.
On Bunker Hill, by Quebec's wall,
Where Hudson's waters flow,
Were sabel clash and fife and drum,
A hundred years ago.

No iron-horse, with frantic speed,
Its white steam plume could show
By mountain dark and grassy moor,
A hundred years ago.
Along the sounding wires, that ring
Where wisdom's light doth glow,
No word of hope and love could ring,
A hundred years ago.

But loving hearts, and toiling hands,
And much of joy and weal,
Were heritage of all the lands,
A hundred years ago.
Ah, men were brave, and women fair,
In those old days we know,
Were prompt to do and strong to bear,
A hundred years ago.

The liberty that is our pride,
Did from brave hearts outpour,
Acts of great souls that lived and died,
A hundred years ago.
And we are worthy of the fame
They did us as bestow;
It is as bright as when it came,
A hundred years ago.

Let noble deeds that will endure
Be ours to proudly show,
And build like they who built so sure,
A hundred years ago.
That when we sleep, and the bells toll
A century's ebb and flow,
They'll say, "They did right brave and well,
A hundred years ago."

Wit and Humor.
GETTING at the root of the matter—
Digging stumps.
HARVESTING is usually a season of rejoicing, but the onion crop is gathered in tears.
The difference between a baby and an overcoat is: one you was, and the other you wear.

CRUSTY says that the list of marriages in the newspapers ought to be put under the head of "King Frauds."
YOUNG SWELL—"I should like to have my moustache dyed." Polite barber—"Certainly. Did you bring it with you?"
ALWAYS pick out a bald-headed barber to shave you, because he can't consistently ask you to buy any hair restorer.

WHEN two gentlemen at a party inadvertently change hats, the man who gets the worst tile is always the first to discover the mistake.
JUDGE—"Have you anything to offer to the court before sentence is passed on you?" Prisoner—"No, judge. I had \$10, but my lawyers took that."

WOMAN has many advantages over man; one of them is that his will has no operation till he is dead, whereas hers generally takes effect in her lifetime.
A MOMENT of triumph: House-hunter, who has just been shown the best furnished room in the house—"Ahem! I suppose you use this as a storage-room."

WHEN a woman throws a brick-bat, the great problem seems to be, not how to hit the mark, but how to avoid knocking her brains out with her elbow.
TWO BOYS (twins) came to school for the first time. The master called up the tallest of the two and asked him what was his name. Answer, "John." "How old are you?" Answer, "Very innocently," "Ten minutes after Clay."

LAYS of rich men all remind us
We may make our lives ridiculous,
And, departing, leave behind us
Wives and rods wretched to pickle us.
Who, if not left eminent "means,"
Will howl and make a righteous pother,
And knock that will to smithereens.
—Grosvenor.

"I DON'T see why the papers make such a do about it," said Mrs. Partington as Ike read, "Great Picture of the Prodigal Sunburnt." "He went without his hat," she murmured; "the sun is getting hot now, and he should have known better."

ART received an awkward criticism from a free-and-easy young man who recently met a sculptor in a social circle, and addressed him thus: "Er—er—so you are the man—er—that makes—er—mud heads?" And this was the artist's reply: "Er—er—not all of 'em; I didn't make yours."

TELLING of a man who had lost his life in a riot, a Belfast paper said: "They fired two shots at him; the first killed him, but the second was not fatal." He was not blessed with two lives as was the deaf man, Taff, who "was run down by a passenger train and killed; he was injured in a similar way a year ago."

A DUTCHMAN lately attended the law court in Boston, to get excused from the jury-box. "I can't understand goot Englese," he said. "What did he say?" asked the judge. "I can't understand goot Englese," repeated the Dutchman. "Take your seat," cried the judge; "that's no excuse; you need not be alarmed, as you are not likely to hear any."

THEY sat in the parlor and he squeezed her hand. "Oh, would this hand were mine," he sighed. "Why?" she simpered. "Because if it was mine I could knock a bullock down with it better than with a sledge hammer." The last seen of the young man, he was trying to climb on top of the house by means of the water-spout.

"EATING peanuts by the peck."—Cassabianca modified.—Oh, how detestable is this comestible! Doctors denounce them as quite indigestible. Still the boys munching them, cracking and crunching them, hopelessly seek a lunch in them. Crammed to satiety (farewell propriety!) still they go cracking on, pests of society. Symptoms of cholera, making them holler "Ah!" soon supervene while the peanuts they swallow—ah! Would you our gratitude gain, from our latitude drive this abuse—it would comfort us, that it would! Banish it utterly, nuts in the gutter lay; then I'll subscribe myself yours, sir, penitently.

THE State University of Indiana has 435 students.