

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A HISTORY.¹

LINCOLN RENOMINATED—THE WADE-DAVIS MANIFESTO— HORACE GREELEY'S PEACE MISSION.

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LINCOLN RENOMINATED.



IN other chapters we have mentioned the unavailing efforts made by a few politicians to defeat the will of the people which everywhere demanded the renomination of Mr. Lincoln. These efforts were worth studying as manifestations of eccentric human nature, but they never had the least effect upon the great currents of public opinion. Death alone could have prevented the choice of Mr. Lincoln by the Union convention. So absolute and universal was this tendency that most of the politicians made no effort to direct or guide it; they simply exerted themselves to keep in the van and not be overwhelmed. The convention was to meet on the 7th of June, but the irregular nominations of the President began at the feast of the Epiphany. The first convention of the year was held in New Hampshire on the 6th of January—for the nomination of State officers. It had properly no concern with the National nominations. The convention consisted in great part of the friends of Mr. Chase, and those employees of the Treasury Department whose homes were in New Hampshire had come together determined to smother any mistimed demonstration for the President; but the first mention of his name set the assembly on fire, and before the chairman knew what he was doing the convention had declared in favor of the renomination of Lincoln. The same day a far more important demonstration came to the surface in Pennsylvania. The State legislature met on the 5th of January, and the following day a paper, prepared in advance, addressed to the President, requesting him to accept a second term of the Presidency, began to be circulated among the Union members. Not one to whom it was presented declined to sign it. Within a day or two it received the signature of every Union member of the Senate and the House of Pennsylvania, and Mr. Simon Cameron, transmitting it to the President on the 14th of January, could say:

You are now fairly launched on your second voyage, and of its success I am as confident as ever

I was of anything in my life. Providence has decreed your reelection, and no combination of the wicked can prevent it.²

This remarkable address began by congratulating the President upon the successes of the recent election, which were generously ascribed to the policy of his Administration. Referring to the Republican victory in their own State, the members of the legislature said:

If the voice of Pennsylvania became thus potential in indorsing the policy of your Administration, we consider that, as the representatives of those who have so completely indorsed your official course, we are only responding to their demands when we thus publicly announce our unshaken preference for your reelection to the Presidency in 1864.

This preference is justified by them purely on public grounds.

To make a change in the Administration until its authority has been fully reestablished in the revolted States would be to give the enemies of the Government abroad a pretext for asserting that the Government had failed at home. To change the policy in operation to crush rebellion and restore the land to peace would be to afford the traitors in arms time to gather new strength—if not for immediate victory, at least for ultimate success in their efforts permanently to dissolve the Union. . . . We do not make this communication at this time to elicit from you any expression of opinion on this subject. Having confidence in your patriotism, we believe that you will abide the decision of the friends of the Union, and yield consent to any honorable use which they may deem proper to make of your name in order to secure the greatest good to the country and the speediest success to our arms. . . . Expressing what we feel to be the language not only of our own constituents, but also of the people of all the loyal States, we claim to indulge the expectation that you will yield to the preference which has already made you the people's candidate for the Presidency in 1864.

In every gathering of the supporters of the Union the same irrepressible sentiment broke forth. The "New York Times" on the 15th of January clearly expressed the general feeling:

The same wise policy which would forbid a man of business in troublous times to change his agent of proved efficiency, impels the loyal people of our

² Cameron to Lincoln, Jan. 14, 1864. MS.

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country to continue President Lincoln in his responsible position; and against the confirmed will of the people politicians are powerless.

The sentiment was so potent in its pressure upon the politicians that they everywhere gave way and broke into premature indorsement of the nomination. The Union Central Committee of New York held a special meeting and unanimously recommended the renomination of the President. Senator Morgan, sending this news to Mr. Lincoln, added:

It is going to be difficult to restrain the boys, and there is not much use in trying to do so.¹

At a local election some of the ward tickets were headed, with an irrelevancy which showed the spirit of the hour, "For President of the United States in 1864, Abraham Lincoln." From one end to the other of the country these spontaneous nominations joyously echoed one another. Towards the close of January the radical legislature of Kansas, with but one dissenting voice, passed through both its Houses a resolution renominating Lincoln. All through the next month these demonstrations continued. The Union members of the New Jersey legislature united in an address to the President, saying:

Without any disparagement of the true men who surround you, and whose counsels you have shared, believing that you are the choice of the people, whose servants we are, and firmly satisfied that they desire and intend to give you four years for a policy of peace, we present your name as the candidate for President of the American people in 1864.²

Connecticut instructed her delegates by resolutions on the 17th of February; Maryland, Minnesota, and Colorado expressed in the same way the sentiment of their people. Wisconsin and Indiana made haste to range themselves with the other Northern States; and Ohio seized the opportunity to put a stop to the restless ambition of her favorite son by a resolution of the Republican members of the legislature declaring that "the people of Ohio, and her soldiers in the army, demand the renomination of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency" — the members rising to their feet and cheering with uncontrollable clamor when the resolution passed. The State of Maine, on the extreme eastern border, spoke next: early in March, the President received this dispatch, signed by a name afterwards illustrious in our political annals:

Both branches of the Maine legislature have this day adopted resolutions cordially recommending your renomination. Every Union member voted in favor of them. Maine is a unit for you.

JAMES G. BLAINE.

¹ Jan. 4, 1864. MS.

² Feb. 18, 1864.

Nowhere except in the State of Missouri was the name of Mr. Lincoln mentioned without overwhelming adhesion, and even in the Missouri Assembly the resolution in favor of his renomination was laid upon the table by a majority of only eight. There had been some anxiety on the part of Mr. Lincoln's friends lest the powerful secret organization called the Union League, which represented the most ardent and vehement Republican sentiment of the country, should fall into the hands of his opponents; but it was speedily seen that out of Missouri these apprehensions were groundless. The Union Leagues of New York, Illinois, and even Vicksburg, where the victory of Grant had allowed the development of a robust Union sentiment, were among the first to declare for the President. The organization in Philadelphia, powerful in wealth, intelligence, and personal influence, so early as the 11th of January had resolved that to the "prudence, sagacity, comprehension, and perseverance of Mr. Lincoln, under the guidance of a benign Providence, the nation is more indebted for the grand results of the war, which Southern rebels have wickedly waged against liberty and the Union, than to any other single instrumentality, and that he is justly entitled to whatever reward it is in the power of the nation to bestow." They declared also:

That as Mr. Lincoln has had to endure the largest share of the labor required to suppress the rebellion, now rapidly verging to its close, he should also enjoy the largest share of the honors which await those who have contended for the right. They therefore recognize with pleasure the unmistakable indications of the popular will in all the loyal States, and heartily join with their fellow-citizens, without any distinction of party, here and elsewhere, in presenting him as the people's candidate for the Presidency.

The current swept on irresistibly throughout the months of spring. A few opponents of Mr. Lincoln, seeing that he was already nominated the moment the convention should meet, made one last effort to postpone the meeting of the convention until September, knowing that their only reliance was in some possible accident of the summer. So earnest and important a Republican as William Cullen Bryant united with a self-constituted committee of others equally earnest, but not so important, to induce the National Committee to postpone the convention. In their opinion "the country was not now in a position to enter into a Presidential contest; it was clear to them that no nomination could be made with any unanimity so early as June. They thought it best to see what the result of the summer campaign would be, as the wish of the people to continue their present leaders in power would depend very much upon this." The committee, of

course, took no notice of this appeal, though it was favored by so strong a Republican authority as the "New York Tribune."¹ The National Committee wisely thought that they might with as much reason take into consideration the request of a committee of prominent citizens to check an impending thunderstorm. All the movements in opposition to Mr. Lincoln were marked with the same naïveté and futility. The secret circular of Senator Pomeroy, the farcical Cleveland convention, the attempt of Mr. Bryant's committee to postpone the convention, were all equally feeble and nugatory in their effect.

Mr. Lincoln took no measures whatever to promote his candidacy. It is true he did not, like other candidates, assume airs of reluctance or bashfulness. While he discouraged on the part of strangers any suggestions as to his reelection, among his friends he made no secret of his readiness to continue the work he was engaged in, if such should seem to be the general wish. In a private letter to Mr. E. B. Washburne he said: "A second term would be a great honor and a great labor, which together perhaps I would not decline if tendered."² To another congressman he is reported to have said: "I do not desire a renomination except for the reason that such action on the part of the Republican party would be the most emphatic indorsement which could be given to the policy of my Administration." We have already mentioned the equanimity with which he treated the efforts of a leading member of his Cabinet to supplant him, and he received in the same manner the frequent suggestions of apprehensive friends that he would do well to beware of Grant. His usual reply was, "If he takes Richmond, let him have it." In reality General Grant was never at any time a competitor for the nomination. Of course, after the battle of Missionary Ridge there was no lack of such suggestions on the part of those who surrounded the victorious general; but he positively refused to put himself in the lists or to give any sanction to the use of his name. The President constantly discouraged on the part of office-holders of the Government, civil or military, any especial eagerness in his behalf. General Schurz wrote, late in February, asking permission to take an active part in the Presidential canvass, to which Mr. Lincoln replied:

¹ April 26, 1864.

² Oct. 26, 1863. MS.

³ Lincoln to Schurz, March 13, 1864. MS.

⁴ Lincoln to Schurz, March 23, 1864. Autograph MS.

⁵ General John A. Logan, in a letter addressed to General W. T. Sherman and published after General Logan's death, said that when he left the army to make speeches in Illinois he did this at the request of the President. We have been unable to find any communication in this sense among Mr. Lincoln's papers.

Allow me to suggest that if you wish to remain in the military service, it is very dangerous for you to get temporarily out of it; because, with a major-general once out, it is next to impossible for even the President to get him in again. With my appreciation of your ability and correct principle, of course I would be very glad to have your service for the country in the approaching political canvass; but I fear we cannot properly have it without separating you from the military.³

And in a subsequent letter addressed to the same general he said: ⁴

I perceive no objection to your making a political speech when you are where one is to be made; but quite surely speaking in the North and fighting in the South at the same time are not possible; nor could I be justified to detail any officer to the political campaign during its continuance and then return him to the army.⁵

The experience of a hundred years of our politics has shown what perils environ a Presidential candidate who makes speeches. The temptation to flatter the immediate audience, without regard to the ultimate effect of the words spoken, has often proved too strong for the wariest politician to resist. Especially is a candidate in danger when confronting an audience belonging to a special race or class. Mr. Lincoln made no mistake either in 1860 or in 1864. Even when exposed to the strongest possible temptation, the reception of an address from a deputation of a workingmen's association, he preserved his mental balance undisturbed. To such a committee, who approached him on the 21st of March, 1864, he replied by repeating to them the passage from his message of December, 1861, in which the relations of labor and capital are set down with mathematical and logical precision, illuminated by the light of a broad humanity; and he only added to the views thus expressed the following words, than which nothing wiser or more humane has ever been said by social economists:

None are so deeply interested to resist the present rebellion as the working people. Let them beware of prejudices working division and hostility among themselves. The most notable feature of a disturbance in your city last summer was the hanging of some working people by other working people. It should never be so. The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relation, should be one uniting all working people, of all nations and

We applied to General Logan's family for the evidence on which the assertion was founded, but received no answer. There is no question that General Logan's statement was made in good faith, and that he believed that in taking a leave and assisting in the political canvass he was acting in accordance with the President's wishes. But Mr. Lincoln's action in other cases was so consistently opposed to this hypothesis, that we can only conclude that General Logan got his impression of what the President desired from some other person than the President himself.

tongues and kindreds. Nor should this lead to a war upon property or the owners of property. Property is the fruit of labor, property is desirable, is a positive good in the world. That some should be rich shows that others may become rich, and, hence, is just encouragement to industry and enterprise. Let not him who is houseless pull down the house of another, but let him labor diligently and build one for himself, thus by example asserting that his own shall be safe from violence when built.

The politicians who opposed Mr. Lincoln, whether from pure motives or from motives not so pure, met with one common fate: they were almost universally beaten in their own districts by men who, whatever their other incentives, were sufficiently adroit to perceive the sign in which they should conquer. It gave a man all this year a quite unfair advantage in his district to be known as a friend of the President, when his opponent was not equally outspoken; and many of the most radical politicians, seeing in which direction their advantage lay, suddenly turned upon their opponents and vanquished them in the President's name. General Lane, for example, who had been engaged in a bitter controversy with Pomeroy in regard to local interests in Kansas, saw his opportunity in the anti-Lincoln circular of his colleague; and although before this it would have been hard to say which of the two had been most free in his criticisms of the President, General Lane instantly trimmed his sails to catch the favoring breeze and elected himself and a full list of delegates to the Baltimore convention, whom he called, in his characteristic language, "all vindictive friends of the President." Other members of Congress, equally radical and more sincere and honest, made haste to range themselves on the side of the President against those with whom they had been more intimately associated. William D. Kelley of Philadelphia publicly proclaimed him "the wisest radical of us all"; Mr. Ashley of Ohio, to whom one of his abolitionist constituents had objected that he wanted no more of a President who had not crushed a rebellion in four years, replied that this was unreasonable, as the Lord had not crushed the devil in a much longer time.

As the day for the meeting at Baltimore drew near, and its unanimous verdict became more and more evident, the President was besieged from every quarter of the Union with solicitations to make known his wishes in regard to the work of the convention. To all such inquiries he returned an energetic refusal to give any word of counsel or to express any personal desire. During a few days preceding the convention a great many delegates took the road to Washington, either to get some intimation of the President's wishes or

to impress their own faces and names on his expectant mind. They were all welcomed with genial and cordial courtesy, but received not the slightest intimation of what would be agreeable to him. The most powerful politicians from New York and Pennsylvania were listened to with no more confidential consideration than the shy and awkward representatives of the rebellious States, who had elected themselves in sutlers' tents and in the shadow of department headquarters. "What is that crowd of people in the hall?" he said one day to his secretary. "It is a delegation from South Carolina. They are a swindle." "Let them in," said Lincoln; "they will not swindle me."

When at last the convention came together, on the 7th of June, 1864, it had less to do than any other convention in our political history. The delegates were bound by a peremptory mandate. Mr. Forney, in an article printed the day before the meeting,¹ put forth with unusual candor the attitude of the convention towards its constituents. The permanent policy of the Republican party of the nation was already absolutely established by the acts of the President and accepted and ratified by Congress and the people.

For this reason [said Mr. Forney] it is less important as a political body, as it cannot originate but will simply republish a policy. Yet for this reason it is transcendently the more imposing in its expression of the national will. Nor has the convention a candidate to choose. Choice is forbidden it by the previous action of the people. It is a body which almost beyond parallel is directly responsible to the people, and little more than the instrument of their will. Mr. Lincoln is already renominate, and the convention will but formally announce the decision of the people. If this absence of independence lessens the mere political interest of the convention in one respect, the fact that it will thoroughly and unquestionably obey national instructions gives it higher importance.

These words represented the well-nigh universal sentiment among Republicans. There were, of course, those to whom such a sentiment was not agreeable. Horace Greeley found it hard to accept an opinion which ran counter to his personal views. In an article of the same date as that last quoted, although he admitted the predestined action of the convention, he still protested vehemently against the impolicy of such action. He quoted the message sent by Mr. Lincoln to Governor Seymour in the dark winter of 1862-63, "that if he wants to be President of the United States, he must take care that there shall be a United States."

We could wish [said Greeley] the Presidency utterly forgotten or ignored for the next two months,

¹ Philadelphia "Press," June 6.

while every impulse, every effort of the loyal millions should be directed towards the overthrow of the armed hosts of the rebellion. That effected, or its speedy accomplishment proved impossible, we should be ready to enter clear-sightedly on the Presidential canvass. Now we are not. We feel that the expected nomination, if made at this time, exposes the Union party to a dangerous "flank movement" — possibly a successful one.

Among the Democratic newspapers a still more blind and obstinate disinclination to accept the existing facts is seen up to the hour of the meeting of the convention. They still insisted that the nomination of Lincoln was in the highest degree doubtful; some pretended that the delegates were equally divided between Lincoln and Grant; others insisted that the nomination of Frémont at Cleveland had electrified the country and would probably carry the convention by storm.

The convention was opened by a brief speech from Senator Morgan of New York, who was chairman of the executive committee. It contained one significant sentence. He said the party of which they were the delegates and honored representatives would fall short of accomplishing its great mission unless among its other resolves it should declare for such amendment of the Constitution as would positively prohibit African slavery in the United States. The sentence was greeted with prolonged applause, which burst at last into three cheers, in the midst of which Governor Morgan announced the choice by the National Committee of Robert J. Breckinridge of Kentucky as temporary chairman of the convention. The venerable Kentuckian on taking the chair made a speech which, though entirely extemporaneous, was delivered with great ease and dignity, and profoundly impressed his auditors.

Disregarding the etiquette which assumes that a convention is a deliberative assembly and that its choice cannot be foretold until it is made, he calmly took it for granted at the very beginning of his remarks that the Union candidate for the Presidency was already nominated, and as soon as the tumultuous cheers which greeted his mention of the name of Abraham Lincoln had died away he turned at once to the discussion of what he considered the real business of the day — the declaration of principles. Coming from a section of the country where the Constitution had been especially revered in words and vehemently assailed in action, he declared that with all the outcry about our violations of the Constitution this present living generation and this present Union party are more thoroughly devoted to that Constitution than any generation that ever lived under it; but he contended also that

sacred as was the Constitution the nation was not its slave.

We ought to have it distinctly understood by friends and enemies that while we love that instrument, while we will maintain it, and will with undoubted certainty put to death friend or foe who undertakes to trample it under foot; yet, beyond a doubt, we will reserve the right to alter it to suit ourselves from time to time and from generation to generation.

This speech was full of brief and powerful apothegms, some of which were startling as coming from an aged theologian of an aspect equally strong and benignant.

The only enduring, the only imperishable cement of all free institutions [he said], has been the blood of traitors. . . . It is a fearful truth, but we had as well avow it at once; and every blow you strike, and every rebel you kill, every battle you win, dreadful as it is to do it, you are adding, it may be a year, it may be ten years, it may be a century, it may be ten centuries, to the life of the Government and the freedom of your children.¹

Though presiding over a political convention, he declared himself absolutely detached from politics. "As an Abolition party, as a Republican party, as a Whig party, as a Democratic party, as an American party, I will not follow you one foot. As a Union party I will follow you to the ends of the earth, and to the gates of death." He echoed the brief speech in which Governor Morgan had struck the keynote. He said:

I unite myself with those who believe that slavery is contrary to the brightest interests of all men and of all governments, contrary to the spirit of the Christian religion, and incompatible with the natural rights of man. I join myself with those who say, Away with it forever; and I fervently pray God that the day may come when throughout the whole land every man may be as free as you are, and as capable of enjoying regulated liberty. . . . I know very well that the sentiments which I am uttering will cause me great odium in the State in which I was born, which I love, where the bones of two generations of my ancestors and some of my children are, and where very soon I shall lay my own. . . . But we have put our faces towards the way in which we intend to go, and we will go in it to the end.

In the evening the permanent organization of the convention was effected, William Dennison of Ohio being made chairman. He, also, in a brief and eloquent speech took for granted the unanimous nomination for the Presidency of the United States "of the wise and good man whose unselfish devotion to the country, in the administration of the Government, has secured to him not only the admiration but the warmest affection of every friend of constitutional liberty"; and

¹ McPherson, "History of the Rebellion," p. 404.

also, in the tone of both the speakers who had preceded him, said that the loyal people of the country expected the convention

to declare the cause and the support of the rebellion to be slavery, which, as well for its treasonable offenses against the Government as for its incompatibility with the rights of humanity and the permanent peace of the country, must, with the termination of the war, and as much speedier as possible, be made to cease forever in every State and Territory of the Union.

There were in fact but three tasks before the convention. The first was to settle the status of contesting delegations from the States and Territories; the second, to agree upon the usual platform; and the third, to nominate a candidate for the Vice-Presidency. All of these questions were handled skillfully, and with a spirit of moderation which led to the most successful result in the canvass.

There were no questions of consequence in regard to the delegations of any of the Northern States, nor did any questions arise in regard to those from Kentucky and West Virginia, Delaware and Maryland. There were two delegations from Missouri, both making special claims of loyalty and of regularity of election. The committee on credentials decided that those styling themselves the "Radical Union" delegates should be awarded the seats. As this was the only delegation which had presented itself opposed to the nomination of Lincoln, and as a large majority, not only of the convention, but of the committee on credentials, were of the contrary opinion, their action in admitting the recalcitrant Missourians was sagacious. It quieted at once the beginnings of what might have been a dangerous schism. The question as to admitting the delegates from Tennessee also raised some discussion, but was decided in their favor by more than a two-thirds vote. The delegates from Louisiana and Arkansas were also admitted by a vote nearly as large. The delegates from Nevada, Colorado, and Nebraska were admitted with the right to vote; those from the States of Virginia and Florida, and the remaining Territories, were admitted to the privileges of the floor without the right to vote; and those from South Carolina were rejected altogether.

The same wise spirit of compromise was shown in the platform, reported by Henry J. Raymond of New York. The first resolution declared it the highest duty of every citizen to maintain the integrity of the Union and to quell the rebellion by force of arms; the second approved the determination of the Government to enter into no compromise with the rebels; the third, while approving all the acts hitherto done against slavery, declared in favor of an

amendment to the Constitution terminating and forever prohibiting the existence of slavery in the United States. This resolution was received with an outburst of spontaneous and thunderous applause. The fourth resolution gave thanks to the soldiers and sailors; the fifth applauded the practical wisdom, unselfish patriotism, and unswerving fidelity with which Abraham Lincoln had discharged, under circumstances of unparalleled difficulty, the great duties and responsibilities of the Presidential office, and it enumerated and approved the acts of his Administration. The sixth resolution was of sufficient significance to be given entire:

Resolved, That we deem it essential to the general welfare that harmony should prevail in the national councils, and we regard as worthy of public confidence and official trust those only who cordially indorse the principles proclaimed in these resolutions and which should characterize the administration of the Government.

This resolution, like the admission of the Missouri radicals, was intended in general to win the support and heal the dissatisfaction of the so-called radicals throughout the Union. Its specific meaning, however, was not entirely clear. There were not many of the delegates who voted for it who would have agreed upon all the details of a scheme for reorganizing the Cabinet. If measures for ostracizing all the objectionable members of the Government had been set on foot in the hall of the convention, it is probable that the name of every member of the Cabinet would have been found on some of the shells. It is altogether likely, however, that the name of the Postmaster-General would have occurred more frequently than that of any other minister. The controversy between his brother and the radicals of Missouri, in which he had, in accordance with his habit and temperament, taken an energetic part, had embittered against him the feelings of the radical Republicans, not only in the West but throughout the North, and his habit of candid and trenchant criticism had raised for him enemies in all political circles.

The seventh resolution claimed for the colored troops the full protection of the laws of war. The eighth declared that foreign emigration should be fostered and encouraged. The ninth spoke in favor of the speedy construction of a railroad to the Pacific coast. The tenth declared that the national faith pledged for the redemption of the public debt must be kept inviolate; and the eleventh declared against the efforts of any European power to establish monarchical governments sustained by foreign military forces in near proximity to the United States.

This last resolution showed the result of an adroit and sagacious compromise. The radicals in the convention desired to make it a censure upon the action of the President and the Secretary of State; but the friends of the Administration, while accepting to its utmost results the declaration in favor of the Monroe doctrine, assumed that the President and his Cabinet were of the same mind, and therefore headed the resolution with the declaration:

That we approve the decision taken by the Government that the people of the United States can never regard with indifference the attempt of any European power to overthrow by force or to supplant by fraud the institutions of any republican government on the Western continent.

There was nothing more before the convention but the nominations, and one of those was in fact already made. The only delay in registering the will of the convention occurred as a consequence of the impatience of members to do it by irregular and summary methods. Mr. Delano of Ohio made the customary motion to proceed to the nomination; Simon Cameron moved as a substitute the renomination of Lincoln and Hamlin by acclamation. A long wrangle ensued on the motion to lay this substitute on the table, which was brought to a close by a brief speech from Henry J. Raymond, representing the cooler heads, who were determined that whatever opposition there might be should have the fullest opportunity of expression; and by a motion, which was adopted, to nominate in the usual way, by the call of States. The interminable nominating speeches of recent years had not come into fashion; Mr. Cook, the chairman of the Illinois delegation, merely said, "The State of Illinois again presents to the loyal people of this nation, for President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln—God bless him!" and those who seconded the nomination were equally brief. Every State gave its undivided voice for Lincoln, with the exception of Missouri, which cast its vote, as the chairman stated, under positive instructions, for Grant. But before the result was announced Mr. Hume of Missouri moved that the nomination of Lincoln be declared unanimous. This could not be done until the result of the balloting was made known—484 for Lincoln, 22 for Grant. Missouri then changed its vote, and the secretary read the grand total of 506 for Lincoln. This announcement was greeted with a storm of cheering, which during many minutes as often as it died away burst out anew.

The principal names mentioned for the Vice-Presidency were, besides Mr. Hamlin, the actual incumbent, Andrew Johnson of Tennessee, and Daniel S. Dickinson of New York; besides these General Rousseau had the vote

of his own State, Kentucky. The radicals of Missouri favored General B. F. Butler, who had a few scattered votes also from New England. But among the three principal candidates the voters were equally enough divided to make the contest exceedingly spirited and interesting. For several days before the convention the President had been besieged by inquiries as to his personal wishes in regard to his associate on the ticket. He had persistently refused to give the slightest intimation of such wish. His private secretary, Mr. Nicolay, was at Baltimore in attendance at the convention; and although he was acquainted with this attitude of the President, at last, overborne by the solicitations of the chairman of the Illinois delegation, who had been perplexed at the advocacy of Joseph Holt by Mr. Swett, one of the President's most intimate friends, Mr. Nicolay wrote a letter to Mr. Hay, who had been left in charge of the Executive office in his absence, containing among other matters this passage:

Cook wants to know confidentially whether Swett is all right; whether in urging Holt for Vice-President he reflects the President's wishes; whether the President has any preference, either personal or on the score of policy; or whether he wishes not even to interfere by a confidential intimation. . . . Please get this information for me if possible.

The letter was shown to the President, who indorsed upon it this memorandum:

Swett is unquestionably all right. Mr. Holt is a good man, but I had not heard or thought of him for V. P. Wish not to interfere about V. P. Cannot interfere about platform. Convention must judge for itself.

This positive and final instruction was sent at once to Mr. Nicolay, and by him communicated to the President's most intimate friends in the convention. It was therefore with minds absolutely untrammelled by even any knowledge of the President's wishes that the convention went about its work of selecting his associate on the ticket.

It is altogether probable that the ticket of 1864 would have been nominated without a contest had it not been for the general impression, in and out of the convention, that it would be advisable to select as a candidate for the Vice-Presidency a war Democrat. Mr. Dickinson, while not putting himself forward as a candidate, had sanctioned the use of his name by his friends on the especial ground that his candidacy might attract to the support of the Union party many Democrats who would have been unwilling to support a ticket avowedly Republican; but these considerations weighed with still greater force in favor of Mr. Johnson, who was not only a Democrat, but

also a citizen of a border slaveholding State, and had rendered distinguished services to the Union cause. At the first show of hands it was at once evident that the Tennessean was stronger than the New Yorker, receiving four more votes than Mr. Dickinson even in the New York delegation. When the votes on the first ballot were counted it was found that Mr. Johnson had received 200, Mr. Hamlin 150, Mr. Dickinson 108; but before the result was announced almost the whole convention turned their votes to Johnson, and on motion of Mr. Tremain of New York his nomination was declared unanimous. The work was quickly done. Mr. Lincoln, walking over to the War Department in the afternoon as usual for military news, received the dispatch announcing the nomination of Andrew Johnson before he was informed of his own. The telegram containing the news of his own nomination had gone to the White House a few minutes before.

In the evening the National Grand Council of the Union League came together. A large proportion of the members had participated in the National Convention, and their action was therefore a foregone conclusion. They adopted a platform similar to that of the convention, with the exception that they declared, as the Cleveland people had done, in favor of the confiscation of the property of rebels. They heartily approved and indorsed the nominations already made, and passed a resolution to the effect that as Lincoln and Johnson were the only candidates who could hope to be elected as loyal men, they regarded it as the imperative duty of the Union League to do all that lay in its power to secure their election. They also earnestly approved and indorsed the platform and principles adopted by the convention, and pledged themselves, as individuals and as members of the League, to do all in their power to elect the candidates. The seal of secrecy was removed from this action and a copy of the resolution transmitted to the President by W. R. Erwin, the Grand Recording Secretary.¹

A committee, headed by Governor Dennison, came on the next day² to notify the President of his nomination.

I need not say to you, sir [said Mr. Dennison], that the convention, in thus unanimously nominating you for reelection, but gives utterance to the almost universal voice of the loyal people of the country. To doubt of your triumphant election would be little short of abandoning the hope of the final suppression of the rebellion and the restoration of the authority of the Government over the insurgent States.

The President answered:

I will neither conceal my gratification nor restrain the expression of my gratitude that the Union people,

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through their convention, in the continued effort to save and advance the nation, have deemed me not unworthy to remain in my present position. I know no reason to doubt that I shall accept the nomination tendered; and yet perhaps I should not declare definitely before reading and considering what is called the platform. I will say now, however, I approve the declaration in favor of so amending the Constitution as to prohibit slavery throughout the nation. When the people in revolt, with a hundred days of explicit notice that they could within those days resume their allegiance without the overthrow of their institutions and that they could not so resume it afterwards, elected to stand out, such amendment to the Constitution as is now proposed became a fitting and necessary conclusion to the final success of the Union cause. Such alone can meet and cover all cavils. Now the unconditional Union men, North and South, perceive its importance and embrace it. In the joint names of Liberty and Union, let us labor to give it legal form and practical effect.

On the same day a committee of the Union League presented themselves to inform him of the action taken the night before. The President answered them more informally, saying that he did not allow himself to suppose that either the convention or the League had concluded that he was either the greatest or the best man in America, but rather that they had decided that it was not best "to swap horses while swimming the stream." All day the throngs of shouting and congratulating delegates filled all the approaches to the Executive Mansion. In a brief speech at night, in answer to a serenade from citizens of Ohio, the President said:

What we want, more than Baltimore conventions or Presidential elections, is success under General Grant. I propose that you constantly bear in mind that the support you owe to the brave officers and soldiers in the field is of the very first importance, and we should therefore bend all our energies to that point.

He then proposed three cheers for General Grant and the officers and soldiers with him, and, swinging his own hat, led off in the cheering.

The more formal notification of the convention was made in a letter written by George William Curtis of New York, in which he paraphrased the platform and expressed the sentiment of the convention and of the people of the country with his usual elegance and force.

They have watched your official course, therefore, with unflinching attention; and amid the bitter taunts of eager friends and the fierce denunciation of enemies, now moving too fast for some, now too slowly for others, they have seen you throughout this tremendous contest patient, sagacious, faithful, just; leaning upon the heart of the great mass of the people, and satisfied to be moved by

1 MS. 2 Thursday, June 9.

its mighty pulsations. It is for this reason that, long before the convention met, the popular instinct had plainly indicated you as its candidate, and the convention therefore merely recorded the popular will. Your character and career prove your unswerving fidelity to the cardinal principles of American liberty and of the American Constitution. In the name of that liberty and Constitution, sir, we earnestly request your acceptance of this nomination, reverently commending our beloved country and you, its Chief Magistrate, with all its brave sons who, on sea and land, are faithfully defending the good old American cause of equal rights, to the blessing of Almighty God.

In accepting the nomination the President observed the same wise rule of brevity which he had followed four years before. He made but one specific reference to any subject of discussion. While he accepted the resolution in regard to the supplanting of republican government upon the Western continent, he gave the convention and the country distinctly to understand that he stood by the action already adopted by himself and the Secretary of State.

There might be misunderstanding [he said] were I not to say that the position of the Government in relation to the action of France in Mexico, as assumed through the State Department and indorsed by the convention among the measures and acts of the Executive, will be faithfully maintained so long as the state of facts shall leave that position pertinent and applicable.

THE WADE-DAVIS MANIFESTO.

In his message to Congress of the 8th of December, 1863, Mr. Lincoln gave expression to his ideas on the subject of reconstruction more fully and clearly than ever before. He appended to that message a proclamation of the same date guaranteeing a full pardon to all who had been implicated in the rebellion, with certain specified exceptions, on the condition of taking and maintaining an oath to support, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Union of the States thereunder; to abide by and support all acts of Congress and proclamations of the President made during the rebellion with reference to slaves, so long and so far as not repealed, modified, or held void by Congress or by decision of the Supreme Court. The exceptions to this general amnesty were of those who, having held places of honor and trust under the Government of the United States, had betrayed this trust and entered the service of the Confederacy, and of those who had been guilty of treatment of colored troops not justified by the laws of war. The proclamation further promised that when in any of the States in rebellion a number of citizens equal to one-tenth of the voters in the year 1860 should



HENRY WINTER DAVIS.
(AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY POLLOCK.)

reestablish a State government republican in form, and not contravening the oath above mentioned, that such should be recognized as the true government of the State, and should receive the benefits of the constitutional provision that "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and, on application of the legislature, or of the executive (when the legislature cannot be convened), against domestic violence." The President also engaged by this proclamation not to object to any provision which might be adopted by such State governments in relation to the freed people of the States which should recognize and declare their permanent freedom and provide for their education, "and which may yet be consistent, as a temporary arrangement, with their present condition as a laboring, landless, and homeless class." He suggested that in reconstructing the loyal State governments, the names, the boundaries, the subdivisions, the constitutions, and the general codes of laws of the States should be preserved. He stated distinctly that his proclamation had no reference to States where the loyal State governments had all the while been maintained; he took care to make it clear that the respective Houses, and not the Executive, had the constitutional power to decide whether members sent to Congress from any State should be admitted to seats; and he concluded by saying:

This proclamation is intended to present the people of the States wherein the national authority has been suspended, and loyal State governments have been subverted, a mode in and by which the national authority and loyal State governments may be reestablished within said States, or in any of them. And while the mode presented is the