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TIMING THE OVATION

A Custom Born In the Political Conventions of 1892.

THE OUTBURST FOR BLAINE.

It Lasted For Nearly Twenty-five Minutes and Almost Swept the Convention Off Its Feet—The Cleveland Demonstration Was a Trifle Longer.

Timing the ovations at political conventions for favorite candidates was born in the national convention of 1892. Notwithstanding the fact that it was pretty generally understood who would lead the tickets in that year, there were interesting and even exciting incidents in both conventions.

At Minneapolis the Blaine men fought nobly, but to no purpose. The galleries were with him, but a majority of the delegates, contemptuously referred to by Senator Edward Wolcott of Colorado as the "bread and butter brigade," were for Harrison, and they could not be swayed by oratory, emotion or cash.

For a brief half hour, however, the Harrison men were plainly troubled. Chauncey M. Depew was on the platform seconding the nomination of Harrison. He had spoken about ten minutes when he mentioned the name of Blaine. The effect was similar to that produced by touching a lighted match to a powder magazine. The convention "blew up." Then and there began what was destined in the future to become a regular convention feature—the timed ovation. The Blaine men, aided lustily by the galleries, took up the rhythmic cry of "Blaine, Blaine, James G. Blaine!" The chairman of the convention was absolutely powerless to check the wildly enthusiastic crowd. Mr. Depew's face was a study. He stood disconcerted and helpless, smiling nevertheless. The first outbreak was of perhaps ten minutes' duration. At the end of that time the crowd was nearly exhausted. The chairman rapped vigorously for order, and the convention was about to give its attention to Mr. Depew when some leather lunged delegate again started the "Blaine, Blaine, James G. Blaine!" slogan. At the same moment Mrs. Carson Lake, the wife of a well known newspaper man, who was seated on the platform, jumped to her feet and began to lead the cheering, keeping the crowd in perfect unison by using a white parasol as a baton.

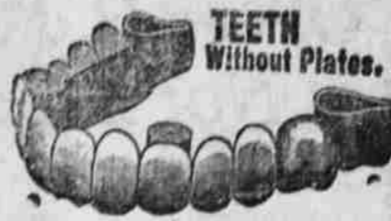
No similar scene has ever been witnessed in a national convention. The first Blaine outburst was more than inspiring. This one was simply overwhelming. Even many of the Harrison men were caught in the wave of enthusiasm, and the next fifteen minutes were anxious ones for his political managers. Mrs. Lake did her part well. Assuredly hers was the greatest parasol flirtation ever carried on in the United States. She dominated the 12,000 men who stood before her for a quarter of an hour. In the opinion of many persons she came very close to upsetting the convention programme. Had a less adroit speaker than Mr. Depew been before the assemblage she might have done so.

However, the Blaine cheering lasted between twenty-two and twenty-five minutes. Then the convention nominated Harrison and Reid. Ten days later the Democrats assembled in Chicago. The late William C. Whitney was in charge of the Cleveland forces. Notwithstanding the well understood fact that he had the situation under perfect control several adherents of David B. Hill, notably Edward Murphy, Jr., of Troy, insisted upon having Mr. Hill's name presented to the convention.

The day of the nomination was unpleasant enough outside of the convention hall. Inside it was almost unbearable. Hardly had the delegates seated themselves when a heavy thunder and lightning storm broke out. Parts of the roof were leaky, and some of the delegates raised umbrellas. While the storm was raging one of the arc lights became loosed from its position and came swinging down over the heads of the New York delegation, barely missing Roswell P. Flower. Some time was required to restore order, but the storm abated, and the convention proceeded to business in the most humid spot on the North American continent. The morning session was unimportant. When the convention reassembled in the afternoon it was generally understood that it would not adjourn until a nomination had been made.

Mr. Cleveland's name was presented and was seconded nearly all the way down the alphabetical list of states until New York was reached. During the early part of the session there were a great deal of cheering and enthusiasm, but finally the crowd tired of oratory. As the hour approached midnight the galleries became a hooting mob, and many of the delegates were thoroughly disgusted. Mr. Hill's name had been placed before the convention, and every person in the hall knew his nomination was to be seconded by W. Bourke Cockran of New York. Mr. Cockran's fame as an orator had preceded him. The crowd wanted to hear him and nobody else. So did most of the delegates. Many of the ablest speakers in the Democratic party were hooted down without an opportunity to speak two sentences.

Finally, at 1:15 o'clock in the morning of the next day, Mr. Cockran faced his audience. The convention had been in session at least ten hours. The hu-



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midity was even greater than it had been in the earlier hours of the session. Every person in the hall was tired, and most of them were hungry. A more inauspicious moment for Mr. Cockran's effort could not have been selected. He began slowly, but his voice could be heard in every part of the hall. The crowd at once became interested. There were several outbursts of applause.

The Cleveland men were waiting. At the first mention of his name by the speaker they evidently intended to make Mr. Cockran feel as uncomfortable as Mr. Depew did when interrupted in his speech at Minneapolis. Finally the moment came. "Grover Cleveland," said Mr. Cockran, but that was all he did say. Led by Don M. Dickinson of Michigan, the delegates started the cheering. "Grover, Grover! Four years more of Grover!" woke up the crowd. Delegates marched up and down the aisles waving the standards of their states, and twenty-six minutes elapsed before the tumult ceased.

Meantime Mr. Cockran stood on the platform, the least perturbed person in the hall apparently. He took a drink of water, chatted with the chairman and other men on the platform and watched the proceedings with a sort of amused smile. When the convention became exhausted he resumed: "Grover Cleveland is a popular man."

Again the cheering was taken up, and this time it continued for eight minutes. It was maintained that long by plainly forced efforts of the Cleveland leaders. Utterly fagged out, delegates and spectators sat down, and Mr. Cockran went on.

"I repeat, gentlemen, Grover Cleveland is a very popular man every day in the year except one, and that is election day."

Again the speaker was interrupted. This time laughter was mingled with the cheers, but Mr. Cleveland was nominated about 4 o'clock in the morning.—New York Post.

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