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DEMOCRATS IN DENVER

Twentieth National Convention of the Party of Jefferson and Jackson on July 7. Two-thirds Vote Needed to Secure Nomination.



Bryan and Johnson the Leading Candidates. Conventions of the Past. "Old Hickory" and "the Little Giant." Tilden vs. Hayes.

By ROBERTUS LOVE.
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ANDREW JACKSON IN SILHOUETTE.

IN the new Auditorium at Denver, capital of Colorado, on the 7th of July the twentieth national convention of the Democratic party will begin its work of nominating candidates for president and vice president of the United States. A two-thirds vote of the 1,908 delegates, or 672 votes, will be required to nominate. In Republican national conventions a mere majority is sufficient. The Democrats adopted the two-thirds rule at their first national convention, seventy-six years ago. Of the candidates for the presidential nomination at Denver may be mentioned William J. Bryan of Nebraska, John A. Johnson of Minnesota, David H. Francis of Missouri, George Gray of Delaware and Lewis S. Chanler of New York. The convention will be called to order by Thomas Taggart, chairman of the Democratic national committee.

The first Democratic national convention opened in Baltimore May 21, 1832. Its chief duty was the nomination of a vice presidential candidate. President Andrew Jackson, then near the close of his first term, was no un-

versally popular with his party that no other name was considered for the presidency. A resolution endorsing Jackson in about a hundred words was the only platform adopted. Martin Van Buren of New York, Jackson's own selection, was named for the vice presidency.

Prior to 1832 presidential candidates were nominated by mass meetings, caucuses, legislative resolutions and in other ways not national in character. In the Baltimore convention all the states except Missouri were represented by delegates. Since 1832 the Democrats have held quadrennial conventions, and eight of them, including the first, have met at Baltimore.

At President Jackson's instance the convention which named candidates for the election of 1836 met May 20, 1835, nearly eighteen months prior to election day, thus giving Martin Van Buren and Richard M. Johnson, the nominees, the longest campaign in the history of America. This convention adopted no platform. Andrew Jackson was the Democratic platform. The whole power of Jackson's administration was exerted toward the election of Van Buren in order to overthrow John C. Calhoun, with whom "Old Hickory" had quarreled.

President Van Buren was renominated in 1840, the convention meeting May 5, as the unanimous choice of the party. The convention refused to renominate Vice President Johnson, making, in fact, no nomination for that office. Nevertheless Van Buren was badly defeated in the election by William Henry Harrison, while Johnson was elected vice president by the United States senate. The convention of 1840 adopted a platform, the first ever adopted by any national convention. It declared that the federal government is one of limited powers, which should be strictly construed by all the departments.

The convention of 1844 met May 27 and nominated James K. Polk of Tennessee for president and Silas Wright of New York for vice president, but Wright refused to accept the nomination. George M. Dallas of Pennsylvania was placed on the ticket in his stead. Wright's refusal was because of jealousy at the defeat of Van Buren, who tried to break down the two-thirds rule and secure a renomination for himself. Polk was the first "dark horse" nominee in our history. He had not been mentioned for the presidential nomination prior to the convention.

Lewis Cass of Michigan was nominated for president at the 1848 convention, with William O. Butler of Kentucky as the vice presidential candidate. The convention met May 2. The convention of 1852, which opened June 1, was a little royal, and in the end another dark horse, Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire, was named for president. The fight was between Cass, nominated and defeated four years before, and James Buchanan of Pennsylvania. Finally Pierce was voted for on the thirty-fifth ballot by the Virginia delegation, which persisted in voting for the New Englander until on the forty-ninth ballot nearly all the other delegates swung over and nominated him. William R. King of Alabama was named on the second ballot for vice president.

In 1856 the Democracy finally broke away from Baltimore and met in Cincinnati on June 2. During all of President Pierce's administration James Buchanan had been absent from the

country as minister to England and thus had escaped the fierce conflict on the slavery problem and the incidental anarchy in Kansas. Buchanan, Douglas and Cass were candidates before the convention. Pierce sought a renomination and received a substantial vote, but his attitude in having favored the repeal of the Missouri compromise rendered him a weaker candidate than Buchanan, whose absence had been his political salvation. Buchanan received the nomination, with John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky as the vice presidential candidate. The platform adopted at this convention approved the course of the Pierce administration in repealing the Missouri compromise and thus giving slavery a chance to intrench itself in the new territories north of the southern line of Missouri.

The convention of 1860 met at Charleston, S. C., April 23. This was the fiercest Democratic convention ever held, slavery extension being the bone of contention. Stephen A. Douglas was by far the strongest presidential probability. The convention voted fifty-seven ballots without casting the necessary two-thirds vote for one man.

Finally the convention adjourned to meet in Baltimore June 18. Before adjournment several southern states withdrew, being opposed to the Douglas platform. The seceding delegates held a convention in Charleston, adopted a platform for which they had contended in the regular convention, then adjourned to meet in Richmond the first Monday in June. On this date the seceding delegates met and again adjourned to the 21st of June. Meanwhile on the 18th the "regulars" met in Baltimore and nominated Douglas for president and Benjamin Fitzpatrick of Alabama for vice president. Fitzpatrick declined, and the national committee named Herschel V. Johnson in his place. Some of the "regulars" bolted the Baltimore convention and nominated for president John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky and for vice president Joseph Lane of Oregon. The "seceders" sitting in Richmond accepted this ticket.

At Chicago in 1864 the Democratic convention, which met Aug. 29, was national only as it related to the northern states. The eleven southern states then in the Confederacy, of course, were not represented. General George B. McClellan was named for the presidency on the first ballot and George H. Pendleton of Ohio for the vice presidency on the second ballot. The platform pronounced the war a failure.

The only time the city of New York ever entertained the national convention was in 1868, when the body met there on the Fourth of July and nominated for president Horatio Seymour, governor of New York, and for vice president Frank P. Blair of Missouri.

In 1872 the Democracy as then constituted returned to the first love of the party, Baltimore, meeting in convention July 9, and nominated for the first and second offices in the land two Republicans, Horace Greeley of New York and B. Gratz Brown of Missouri. This anomalous situation was brought about by a prior convention of "Liberal Republicans" at Cincinnati, led by Carl Schurz, which nominated Greeley and Brown. The only hope of defeating President Grant for re-election was in a combination of the Democrats and the Liberal Republicans, who had declared violently against the Grant administration. The Baltimore convention simply swallowed the Cincinnati convention product—ticket, platform and all. Greeley and Brown were defeated overwhelmingly in November.

St. Louis was the Democratic convention city in 1876, June 18 being the opening date. Samuel J. Tilden of New York and Thomas A. Hendricks of Indiana were named for president and vice president. Tilden, who was governor of New York, was a master politician and had planned his campaign with marvelous ability. Governor Hendricks of Indiana was his chief opponent. Hendricks accepted the second place on the ticket with some reluctance. Tilden was elected in November, according to the best knowledge and belief of all Democrats and many Republicans, but a special commission created to decide electoral contests voted his opponent, Rutherford B. Hayes of Ohio, into the presidential chair. The electoral commission was made up of eight Republicans and seven Democrats. The final vote on the matters in contest was eight Republicans for Hayes and seven Democrats for Tilden.

In 1880 the Democrats met June 22 in Cincinnati. Tilden declined a renomination. General Winfield S. Hancock of Pennsylvania was named for president and William H. English of Indiana for vice president.

Grover Cleveland of New York, the first Democrat elected president since 1860 and thus far the only one, was the presidential nominee of the three conventions of 1884 in Chicago, 1888 in St. Louis and 1892 in Chicago. His running mate in 1884 was Thomas A. Hendricks, in 1888 Allen G. Thurman of Ohio and in 1892 Adlai E. Stevenson of Illinois.

When the convention of 1896 met in Chicago the leading candidate was

Richard P. Bland of Missouri, but William J. Bryan of Nebraska, then only thirty-six years old, delivered in the convention his famous "cross of gold" speech, and in the ensuing whirlwind of enthusiasm he was nominated for president. Arthur Sewall of Maine was nominated for vice president. Bryan was named for vice president at Kansas City in 1900, with former Vice President Stevenson in second place.

At the convention in St. Louis in 1904, of which Congressman Champ Clark of Missouri was permanent chairman, Judge Alton B. Parker of New York was nominated for president, with former Senator Henry G. Davis of West Virginia as running mate.

At the nineteenth Democratic national convention already held fifteen individuals have been named for the presidency. Of these six have been elected. The successful candidates were Andrew Jackson, Martin Van Buren, James K. Polk, Franklin Pierce, James Buchanan and Grover Cleveland. Van Buren was elected once and defeated once. Cleveland was elected twice and defeated once. Andrew Jackson was president two terms, but was the nominee of a national convention only once. Tilden was elected at the election and defeated by the electoral commission. Bryan has been defeated twice and is now again the leading candidate for the nomination. In 1894 he was not an aspirant for the honor.

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