

THE SILVER BALL

ILLINOIS DEMOCRATS START IT ROLLING.

Proceedings of the Great Free Silver Convention in Springfield—A Row Narrowly Averted—Will Democracy Unfold the Banner.

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., June 5.—Had it not been for the timely action of Secretary of State W. H. Hinrichsen, who issued the call for the Illinois Democratic silver convention, the event would have ended in a row. It all came about because of a plank in the resolution endorsing Governor Altgeld. It had been expressly agreed before the convention was called to order that there was to be no action taken outside of that for which the call provided.

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There was a full representation and abundant enthusiasm. Ex-Congressman Bryan's speech was the feature of the day and he with difficulty continued on account of the applause.

"Whereas, silver and gold have been the principal money metals of the world for thousands of years, and silver money recognized and used as honest money, between nations notwithstanding the varying ratios between silver and gold, and whereas the Democratic party have secured the people of the free use and benefits of an invaluable and original money metal and has increased debts and added to the burdens of the people by lowering the value of labor, products, and, whereas, the constitution of the United States prohibits the use of anything but gold and silver coin as legal tender for the payments of debts, thereby recognizing that coin composed of silver and gold is honest money and for it to be used as legal tender, therefore, by the Democracy of Illinois, in convention assembled, be it.

Resolved, That we are in favor of the use of both gold and silver as the standard money of the United States, and in favor of an unlimited coinage of both metals at the ratio of 16 to 1, without waiting for the action of any other nation and that such coins shall be a legal tender for all debts both public and private, and that all contracts hereafter calling for payment of money whether in gold, silver or coin, may be discharged by any money which may be a legal tender.

"It is to be regretted that the first Democratic President since the war should become the trusted instrument in the hands of concentrated wealth, the official head of the commission of self. When he was found he was as modest as a hum and as conspicuous among his fellows for his good conduct, but since he has sought counsel of the familiar spirits of Wall Street he has tried to take the political life of every David whom the people trusted. Grover Cleveland is not the Democratic party—Democracy is greater than any man. It will exalt him who rightly interprets his trust but it will cast down him who seeks to wear its livery and set its plume.

"The reason why bimetalism has been difficult in the past was because of different ratios existing in different countries. If we should attempt free coinage at 16 to 1, we would write the silver of other countries to come here in exchange for gold but we offer free coinage at 19 to 1, gold will not leave because it cannot find a more favorable ratio where there is any quantity of silver to exchange. If a change in the ratio is desirable we cannot intelligently choose a new ratio unless we have put gold and silver upon an equal footing. It is absurd to measure silver by gold when we open the mine to gold and close them to silver. This country must act alone because it cannot afford to submit the interest of American citizens to the government control of foreign nations and because other nations are not similarly situated and therefore cannot be relied upon to cooperate with us. We did not ask the consent of other nations when we declared for silver and we should not ask their consent when we restore it.

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Mr. Cushing had a brother 18 years old on the Colima. Nothing has been heard of him. The surviving brother was terribly cut on the head by floating lumber, besides being bruised about the body. George Rowan, another passenger bound for New York, agrees in the main with the statements of the storm victims. "There was absolutely no discipline, no organization of any kind. Everything was a panic. The captain stood on the bridge. Women screamed and the children cried clinging in desperation to their parents and even to strangers. As soon as I became convinced that the ship was doomed I hastily pulled down some life preservers. When seen by the steward he ordered me to return to my cabin. I continued what I was doing. Without paying attention to him I kept on pulling down life belts and passing them out. As I am unable to swim I tied one of these belts around me and jumped into the sea. Three times I sank and had just reached for a piece of wreckage when I was again knocked under by something, presumably a plank. I am cut and bruised all over. After floating about for twenty-four hours on a large piece of wood I was picked up."

Sailor A. L. Capenter was one of the party on the raft. He says that attempts were made to lower the boats, but failed. All the women were in their staterooms, for none of them expected that the disaster was upon them. "I think that something might be done," added Carpenter. "The vessel ran into a gale from 9 o'clock Monday night until 11 o'clock the following evening. She steered badly, and when about 30 miles below Manzanillo she lost stowage way, swung her head around a few points and in less than ten minutes she was capsized. Scarcely ten minutes elapsed before she went down. Captain Taylor died at his post. I was thrown into the water, and when I came up I seized a stick of lumber and floated about until picked up by the people on the raft. Such a hurricane I never before experienced. It will my mind. Lumber broken drifting and dead bodies drifted by us, and the horrors of the situation was alone enough to render us helpless."

The following is the list of the survivors landed today: Third Mate Hansson, R. Aviles, a carpenter; A. Richardson and Thomas Fish, members of the crew; H. A. Sutherland, C. H. Cushing, George Rowan, C. J. Boyd, George Bond, G. D. Riss, J. Sandness, J. O'Brien and Juan A. Ramos. The following survivors were landed at Mazatlan: Thos. Seralia, D. Olivas, A. Gutierrez and Carlos Luitz.

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The small decrease in Florida is due to larger planting of sea island cotton. The crop is unquestionably late. The weather up to May 2 was not favorable. It is not certain whether permanent injury has resulted or not. Probably serious harm has resulted in only limited sections. California is a year ago. There has been very heavy decrease in the taking of commercial fertilizers, but of home made fertilizer a slightly greater use is reported. The condition of the plant was less satisfactory at the close of the month than at the same date last year. The States of less promise are the Carolinas and Georgia, but the plant is late almost everywhere and so is farm work. The condition is not necessarily unpromising, but more depends upon future development than has been the case in other productive years.

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Seventy-six delegates to the national convention were selected at the Chicago, because of his leaning to silver. His audience gave him an ovation and then loudly cried for Congressman W. J. Bryan. Mr. Bryan was ready. In the course of his speech he said: In 1896, the people of the United States will be called upon to decide whether the influence of this nation shall be cast on the side of bimetalism or in favor of a universal gold standard. The greatest economic question which has been before the people of the United States during the present generation, if not the present century. This question cannot be settled by the fiat of bank presidents or money loaners of Federal officials. It will not be finally settled upon the silver issue. The Democratic party must take its position upon this question and by the correctness of that position will rise or fall. No coward, whether an individual or a party, can long retain the confidence of the people. Not only is it necessary that the Democratic party take a position, but the sooner it defines its position, the greater will be its opportunities in 1896.

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"This convention has a most peculiar and most important significance. Heretofore, managers of political parties have so arranged that party policies should be declared only in a row, which would be fatal to the future of silver. At this juncture, Hinrichsen arose and waved his hand and instantly the uproar was hushed. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'I have a personal request, to make of you. I do not believe there is anybody in this hall who has any more right to make such a request than I have. It is this: That the part of the resolutions endorsing Governor Altgeld be stricken out and for the use of an unanimous consent. The State administration did not expect to be endorsed by this convention, either as individuals or as a whole. If such endorsements were made, the object of this convention would be nullified.'

Judge Samuel H. McConnell, the permanent chairman of the convention, joined his request to that of Mr. Hinrichsen, and Chairman Fithian without delay the request, read the resolutions over again, this time leaving out the objectionable paragraph. Then the delegates adopted them with a yell.

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There was a full representation and abundant enthusiasm. Ex-Congressman Bryan's speech was the feature of the day and he with difficulty continued on account of the applause.

"Whereas, silver and gold have been the principal money metals of the world for thousands of years, and silver money recognized and used as honest money, between nations notwithstanding the varying ratios between silver and gold, and whereas the Democratic party have secured the people of the free use and benefits of an invaluable and original money metal and has increased debts and added to the burdens of the people by lowering the value of labor, products, and, whereas, the constitution of the United States prohibits the use of anything but gold and silver coin as legal tender for the payments of debts, thereby recognizing that coin composed of silver and gold is honest money and for it to be used as legal tender, therefore, by the Democracy of Illinois, in convention assembled, be it.

Resolved, That we are in favor of the use of both gold and silver as the standard money of the United States, and in favor of an unlimited coinage of both metals at the ratio of 16 to 1, without waiting for the action of any other nation and that such coins shall be a legal tender for all debts both public and private, and that all contracts hereafter calling for payment of money whether in gold, silver or coin, may be discharged by any money which may be a legal tender.

"It is to be regretted that the first Democratic President since the war should become the trusted instrument in the hands of concentrated wealth, the official head of the commission of self. When he was found he was as modest as a hum and as conspicuous among his fellows for his good conduct, but since he has sought counsel of the familiar spirits of Wall Street he has tried to take the political life of every David whom the people trusted. Grover Cleveland is not the Democratic party—Democracy is greater than any man. It will exalt him who rightly interprets his trust but it will cast down him who seeks to wear its livery and set its plume.

"The reason why bimetalism has been difficult in the past was because of different ratios existing in different countries. If we should attempt free coinage at 16 to 1, we would write the silver of other countries to come here in exchange for gold but we offer free coinage at 19 to 1, gold will not leave because it cannot find a more favorable ratio where there is any quantity of silver to exchange. If a change in the ratio is desirable we cannot intelligently choose a new ratio unless we have put gold and silver upon an equal footing. It is absurd to measure silver by gold when we open the mine to gold and close them to silver. This country must act alone because it cannot afford to submit the interest of American citizens to the government control of foreign nations and because other nations are not similarly situated and therefore cannot be relied upon to cooperate with us. We did not ask the consent of other nations when we declared for silver and we should not ask their consent when we restore it.

"Illinois is the imperial State of the West, and the Democracy of this State, by meeting in this convention, earned the right to lead the fight of 1896. The platform adopted by this convention will be in substance, the Democratic platform of 1896. We are right, as we believe we are, they that are with us are all right. Truth is right and will prevail.

"It is now apparent the convention determined to hear Gov. Altgeld, despite his protest that he would, under no circumstances, speak. The Governor was on the floor below in his office and a committee was sent on to conduct him in. His appearance was the noisiest demonstration of the day. Men stood on chairs and yelled like cow boys on a reservation and spun their silk hats on the end of their sticks. Women clapped their hands, having no canes, swung their bonnets by the strings and howled as if it were a university football game. It was fully five minutes before a semblance of order could be patched up. The Governor said:

President Cleveland seemed apprehensive of coming trouble. The delegates from the various Congressional districts met at 10 o'clock to select delegates to the proposed national convention on the currency question. In some of these caucuses the subject of denouncing Cleveland and Palmer were talked over in an informal way, but the sentiment appeared to be against that which was not conservative. In the case of the 17th Congressional district, General Palmer's home, a resolution was offered instructing the chairman of the delegation and the district member of committee on resolutions to vote against any proposition to either condemn or endorse the State administration. Several speeches were made on the subject, and the general impression, while strongly against Mr. Cleveland, was that it would be bad policy for the convention to take any action which would widen the breach between the two factions of the Democracy. Timothy Phelps, general principal of the anti-Palmer speech in which he spoke bitterly of Cleveland, as a traitor to the Democracy, but he said he did not think it the business of a monetary convention to denounce him. The convention reassembled at 2 o'clock. The committee on permanent organizations then made its report. Samuel P. McConnell was conducted to the chair, and spoke as follows:

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