

years had kept the greatest issue in American politics in the background, and fought sham battles. No matter where the victory lay. Wall street and Lombard street won. Meanwhile the Populist party, he said, organized to bring real relief to the people, had grown steadily. Victories against greed had been won. He described the various campaigns through which the party passed in various states, the hardships endured, the flings and ridicule to which they had been subjected, but they had at last torn the mask from the old parties. The Republican party had been forced to align itself with the monied kings of Wall street and Europe. The Democratic party was driven to the alternative of siding with gold or the people. They were so frightened that in their desperation they finally committed grand and petit larceny—stole our platform and tried to steal our party.

This statement set the convention wild.

"Why did not they steal our transportation plank?" shouted a California delegate.

"Ab," replied Butler, "the old Democratic habit got the better of them there. They straddled that question."

"Whoopie," cried a thousand voices.

"If the People's party should abandon its organization," said Butler, "the Democratic party, at the next national convention, would repudiate the platform adopted at Chicago and Bryan would not have any more chance of being nominated than Thomas Jefferson would if he were alive today. The financial question had been as much of an issue since 1872 as it was today, but it remained for the People's party to force this issue to the front.

"Right here," he said, "comes our responsibility, the greatest responsibility that ever fell to any party. Shall we save the party or allow it to go down in defeat? Shall it be said that this great band of patriots who have broken all party ties, had allowed themselves to be controlled more by prejudice than by patriotism?"

Cries of "no" and applause greeted the question.

He appealed for the cessation of petty prejudices. He had heard intimated by one extreme, that Mark Hanna was ruining the party, and by another that the Democratic party was doing it. As for himself he had enough faith in the integrity of the party to feel convinced the party was not making itself an annex to the Democratic party.

This statement gave the "middle of the roaders" a chance to cheer. The Bryan followers were afforded an opportunity to shout when he added that there was grave danger that it might be made a Republican annex.

"Let us find the truth in the middle way," he said.

This was the key note to the senator's speech, but there was no especial applause at this evident suggestion of a compromise.

"If this convention," he shouted passionately, "does not follow its own teachings, it is unworthy to represent the people."

"Hurrah for Bryan," cried an Alabama delegate.

"Put him out," yelled several Texas delegates.

"What shall we do?" asked Butler.

"Nominate Bryan," replied the same Alabama delegate.

"Shut up; put him out," shouted several hundred voices.

"Is he a Democrat?" called out some one.

"Yes," "no," were intermingled.

Butler waving his arms appealingly to secure quiet, said: "What the gods wish to destroy they first make mad.

"Every time you interrupt me you endanger yourselves. This convention has not been cursed by either parties and cannot be stamped out. Our duty is to prove what is right and condemn what is wrong. I am telling you what you will find when you get home. I have been down among the farmers in my state; I know what I say is true. I tell you they expect to rise to the level of patriotism and travel in the path of conscience."

It was the duty of all Populists to stand by what they have taught in the past. He believed the convention was going to do what was wisest, and added, "We shall stand together and go away united and strip our coats for the fray and be prepared for any emergency, however great. Remember, you are the People's party men; remember, you have accomplished more in four years than the old parties. Do your duty now, you will very soon be the party of the majority."

Butler closed amid vigorous applause. The states were called for members of the committee on credentials, and after the call the convention, at 2:10, took a recess until 8 o'clock tonight.

The Populist committee on credentials organized immediately after the convention took a recess. E. M. Wardell was made chairman.

St. Louis, July 22.—When 8 o'clock, the hour for the convention to convene, arrived, the hall was still in darkness. The delegates were huddled in the seats in front of the platform, while groups of faces swayed in the light of the few candles that flickered on the press tables. About this time some sbrowd middle-of-the-roader thought he discovered that the refusal to turn on the lights was part of a scheme of the Bryan people to prevent the straight-out element from controlling. This suspicion that the lights were out in the interest of a faction, as they were turned out in the Cincinnati convention in 1876 by the opponents of Mr. Blaine, aroused a storm of protests, and the middle-of-the-roaders went charging about in the dark to discover the cause of the unprecedented situation.

At 8:45 Chairman Butler appeared on the stage. The band played "Put Me Off at Buffalo," and then Senator Butler called the convention to order. He announced that the committee on credentials would not be able to report tonight, and that as, owing to an accident, there was no light he would declare the convention in recess until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The delegates, many of them with evident reluctance, then quitted the hall.

St. Louis, July 23.—The delegates to the Populist and silver conventions were abroad early today. They

gathered in groups arguing with one another and often becoming greatly excited. The day began clear and hot. In the Grand Music hall where the silver convention was held the heat was even more uncomfortable than on the street. A large number came in before 9:30 a. m. The galleries were practically vacant at 10 o'clock, the hour to which the convention adjourned, and it was long after that time when the convention was called to order.

The Populists began assembling in the convention hall shortly after 9 o'clock. It was extremely oppressive. Delegates with coats slung over their arms stood about discussing the situation. The "middle of the road" fellows could be heard above the music of the band. The Texas delegation contains some of the most uncompromising men in the convention.

At 10 Senator Butler, temporary chairman, appeared on the platform. Simultaneously the hands struck up Dixie and the delegates uncorked some of their pent up enthusiasm. The attendance in the galleries, as yesterday, was very thin.

At 10:10 Chairman Butler called the convention to order and Rev. Smith called forth a blessing upon the country.

The report of the committee on credentials was called for. No one responded, and the states were called for members of the committee on permanent organization and resolutions.

After the announcement of the committee on permanent organization the members retired.

A squad of "middle roaders," headed by Delegate Branch of Georgia, suddenly plunged into the hall through the main entrance whooping down the center aisle. Branch bore aloft a big white banner with the inscription: "Middle of the road—a straight ticket." At the sight of it the Texas, Georgia, Maine, Missouri and Mississippi delegations mounted their chairs and yelled at the top of their voices, at the same time the middle road delegates stationed in the gallery over the platform hurled through the air about a peck of small green tickets which broke and fell like a cloud of stage snow over the pit. Four delegations gave cheer after cheer, but the others sat smilingly in their seats. About one-sixth of the delegates joined the demonstration. The green tickets contained the following: "Middle of the road—our financial plank:

We demand a national treasury note issued by the general government to be received for all public dues and full legal tender in payment of all debts, public and private, and a loan direct to the people through the postal and other government banks at a cost, for the benefit of the people, and the purchase and coinage of such an amount of gold and silver bullion, at a ratio of 16 to 1, as may be necessary to pay the debts of the government, which are payable in coin. We demand that the volume of money shall speedily increase to the amount necessary to transact the business of the country on a cash basis. Respectfully submitted for the consideration of the Populist convention.

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