

## MISCELLANEOUS.

Written for this Paper.  
CHICAGO UP TO DATE.

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CHICAGO, April 27th, 1896.



**FIND** LESS EXCITEMENT here over the convention than at St. Louis. Chicago was satisfied by the World's Fair crowd, and a little affair like a national convention does not stir her blood. The hotels are amply large enough to take care of the crowd.

No increase of rates will be made, and there will in all probability be plenty of room. The Great Northern Hotel, which was considered a folly in the way of magnitude at the time of the World's Fair, and of which it was prophesied that it would go to pieces as soon as the fair closed, is now building an immense addition, adding 500 rooms to its capacity. This will be ready by the time the convention meets. Chicago has also scores of other hotels, and quarters can be gotten either in the heart of the city or close to the convention hall. The center of the convention work will be the Palmer House. Here the leading men of the Democratic party from every state will have quarters. Chairman Harrity has engaged sixty rooms for distinguished Democrats, and he is apportioning these among the states. The New York delegation, the Illinois delegation, and, in fact, nearly every state delegation, has quarters at the Palmer, and in its lobby will be the loudest shouting and the chief electioneering which goes on between the sessions of the convention. Tammany has also secured 117 rooms at the Auditorium, and the indication is that New York will be here in force. There is a prospect that the convention will be well attended. There is sure to be a fight on the money question, and the silver men will be very much in evidence. Governor Altgeld is today practically the boss of the Illinois democracy. He is a pronounced silver man, and he will have a number of his shouters at the convention.

The building in which the national Democratic convention is to be held will be the highest permanent convention hall ever erected. It will be one-third larger than the Capitol at Washington. Its ground floor will cover more than five and one-half acres, and with its gallery, it will have more than seven acres of floor space. Think of building a wall about a five-acre field and then roofing it with an immense iron framework, so made that there are perhaps four acres in the center unobstructed by posts. Let this four acres be entirely free from pillars or walls, and you get some idea of the immense building which is now being put up for the great conventions of the future at Chicago. I went out to see it last Sunday. The walls are already in place. The iron network has been fastened and riveted together, and the roof is now being put on. The roof is supported by immense

trusses of iron, which extend from the sides of the building in the shape of great arms, meeting in the center 100 feet above the floor. The span is more than 200 feet, and these pieces of steel are all that support the roof. They look frail, but they are really very strong. They have been tested by the engineers, and it is said there is no danger whatever of the roof falling. The building is to be made of steel, iron and glass, with the exception of the floor, and it is as nearly fire-proof as modern science can make it. Its outer walls are of a Milwaukee brick. They are about sixteen inches thick, and the light comes in through immense windows, each of which is about as large as the floor of an average parlor. The building is, you know, to be used for circuses, horse shows and such immense public gatherings as cannot be crowded into a small hall. It will be opened by Buffalo Bill and his Wild West Show on the 1st of June. On the 15th of June there will be a bicycle exhibition in it, and after this it will be put in thorough shape for the national Democratic convention. After the convention is over there will be another bicycle show, and later on in the summer there will be an exposition showing the industries of the southern states. There will be a foot ball match in the building on Thanksgiving day, when it is expected that there will be 25,000 people present.

I have gone over the plans of the hall, and it will be, it seems to me, admirably adapted for the Democratic convention. It will in some respects, give the best facilities ever furnished to a convention. At one end of the building there will be a space covering about three acres, which will constitute the convention hall proper. This will contain 15,000 seats, arranged somewhat in the form of an amphitheater, the seats of the public running about those of the delegates and alternates, who sit in a pit in the center, in front of the stage, upon which are the reporters, the speakers of the convention and the national committee. The reporters are a little below the desk of the speakers, but high enough to look over the heads of the people below. There are 1,000 seats set apart for the delegates. These seats run very much like the orchestra chairs, of a theater in front of the stage. Back of them are 1,000 seats for the alternates, and back of these, as I have said, are the seats for the public. At the opposite end of the building from the convention hall proper is a public reception hall covering nearly two acres. This will be filled at the time of the convention with the crowd which cannot get inside, and it will probably be free to all. Running clear around the building there is a tier of offices and rooms for committees, the officers of the convention and others. About one-quarter of these rooms are given up to the offices for the daily paper. In these there will be tables and all facilities for writing dispatches. This part of the building is called News paper Row, and from it will go out the news of the convention to more than 70,000,000 of people. The telegraph offices will be under the speaker's platform. A large number of wires will be run into the building, and dispatches will be sent during the day direct from

the building in order that the wires may not be over crowded down town.

There are a large number of exits from the building, and there is no danger of a panic, as it could be emptied within a few moments. This is a most important matter. So far we have never had a panic at a national convention. We have a number of times been on the edge of one, and had the people appreciated their danger they would probably not have been so anxious to get in. At the Minneapolis Republican convention, which nominated Harrison, about 12,000 people were packed in the third story of a house which might have easily been burnt to the ground. At the Chicago convention of 1892 there were 20,000 people crowded together in a hall of wood. During the convention an immense rain storm occurred, and at one time there was a fall of an electric light with the wires attached to it. Had a fire occurred there might have been one of the greatest panics of history.

The last Democratic convention (1892) was held in the wigwag, here, and as far as seating capacity was concerned, it perhaps the largest convention ever held. It contained 19,200 chairs, and in the seats were 500 ladies. There were 1,000 persons connected with the press and telegraph service, with the police and messenger service, and there were 2,000 delegates and alternates.

By this new building Chicago hopes to be the great convention city of the future. It has had some of the greatest conventions of history, and, beginning with 1860, it has grown in favor as a central place for political meetings. Chicago's greatest convention, perhaps, was that which nominated Lincoln. At this time the first big national convention building was constructed. It was known as the Wigwag, and it was an immense wooden structure, built in much the same shape as one of the immense panoramas, which are now in existence in the different cities of the United States. It was a great round wooden hall, with an almost flat roof, and with seats arranged like those of a theater. This hall seated about 15,000 people. The national Democratic conventions of that year were held at Charleston and Baltimore. The Charleston convention was held three weeks before the convention that nominated Lincoln. It was held in a hall not bigger than the average theater. It did not seat more than 1,500 people. Stephen A. Douglas was the candidate of the northern democrats and ex-Senator Henry B. Payne was the leader of this faction in the convention. Judah P. Benjamin, afterward secretary of war of the confederacy, led the southern Democratic delegates. He was against Douglas and wanted a man who would in every way favor proslavery legislation. Ben Butler got his first national notoriety at this convention. He was a delegate from Massachusetts, and he voted steadily for Jefferson Davis. The convention lasted over a week, and then seven of the southern states withdrew, making the split in the Democratic party, which brought about the election of Abraham Lincoln. The convention finally adjourned, without nominating a candidate, to meet again in Baltimore, June 18th, 1860. It was held in a theater, and nominated Douglas. Seceding delegates also held their convention in Baltimore. They nominated John C. Breckenridge as the presidential candidate, and Lane of Oregon was