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Painful Indifference Prevails at St. Louis

*Puffing, Perspiring Delegates Crowd the Hotel Lobbies,
But Efforts at Arousing Enthusiasm for Candidates Meet with Little Success.*

Maryland Rooms Decorated

St. Louis, Mo., July 5.-Imagine a mob of 500 men packed so closely together in a steaming hotel lobby that it took one in the middle five minutes to fight his way out—imagine this mob stewing and fuming with badges torn from coats, hats mashed, faces crimson and throats parched as the mercury crowded up the tube to 95—imagine all of this and you will have in your mind's eye a fairly accurate picture of the scene in the Southern Hotel this afternoon.

There the booms clashed and the shouters for the candidates, disguised as the public, argued and bawled after the fashion of ballyhoo at a county fair. It looked a bit like the wheat pit scene in "The Pit," and more like the betting ring at a race track.

All the afternoon an intoxicated Indianan held forth in the center of the throng. Finding no one to oppose his stentorian eulogy of Parker, he fell to inarticulate yelling and hoarse speech-making. Every little while a new group, with news or rumors that another state was "in line," came trooping in and the Indianan began his speech all over again.

Convention Crowds Contrasted

At Chicago the hullabaloo in the auditorium lobby was made by dignified gentlemen smoking genuine ten-cent cigars, and about the walls gazing upon them sat handsome women in flashy silks and diamonds. Here the shouts come from the throats of men wearing slouch hats and enormous badges, who spit on the floor and rush toward the bar with shrill, despairing cries and in flying wedge formation.

At Chicago the principal boomers donned dress suits at 6 o'clock, and despite the shadowy and oppressive fringe of colored brethren without, tried to look like the well-fed drove that inhabits the Waldorf-Astoria. Here the "boys" are of the gunpowder and blood school, and their drinks come from the bottle, undefiled by seltzer and lemon.

Last night Mr. Arthur Peter, of Maryland, having a dinner to attend, appeared abaft the Maryland headquarters in a tuxedo coat, but he soon realized that he was alone in a wide, wide sea of Jeffersonian simplicity. So he removed his waistcoat and permitted his necktie ends to fly free, and thereafter he felt less like a Son of the Revolution at a meeting of "King Bill" Garland's Third Ward Club.

Crushing Soberness Prevailed

But with all of this there is little real shouting, and much crushing soberness. Tonight lobby prophets and news mongers believe that Parker will be nominated on the first ballot, and though it is etiquette to be glad thereat, few are unduly hilarious.

Old-timers tell of the ear-splitting rebel yells that rose in Chicago in 1884 when Cleveland and Hendricks were nominated, and the Palmer House foundations trembled. These yells came from the Southern delegates, and there is nothing in the present situation to make a Southerner shed his coat and throw his hat into the air.

Parker is altogether too smug and peaceful and colorless to arouse the enthusiasm of an Alabaman or a Texan. The solid South will undoubtedly vote for him, but it will not sit up nights to cheer for him, as it might have done for Francis Marion Cockrell, of Missouri, or for some other gallant old war horse of the days that tried men's souls.

Cleveland, one may object, was not such a man, either; but, then, Cleveland was rough and rugged and heavy, and there was something about him that set him apart from other men.

The Parker portraits about the hotel lobbies show the judge in his judicial robes, cold, prim and expressionless. They are not the sort of scion that men follow into battle. The delegates will dutifully cheer for half an hour Friday. They are not overexuberant tonight.

Tammany's Little Joke.

This afternoon the anti-Parker horde from New York, as a last foul blast, had printed and distributed about the lobbies a circular bearing on one side the words "For Judge Parker's opinion on tariff and trusts, imperialism and the currency, see the other side." The other side was blank.

But this was a joke more than a serious effort to win votes, and today, as yesterday, the grim figure of D. B. Hill overtops every other figure here.

Bryan dropped out when the effort to have the Pennsylvanians launch a Pattison boom failed so miserably, and tonight he is merely among those present.

The Marylanders, with their punctured Gorman boom, are gnashing their teeth and dodging the embarrassing questions of the Southerners.

"If Gorman had only come," say some of the latter, sadly, "there would have been a different story."

But Gorman did not come, and unless those who say the farce of 1892 is being reenacted are infinitely in error his moment has passed.

So, too, the moments of other candidates have slipped by. The Hearst boomers at the Jefferson Hotel gave up the ghost long ago and are now peacefully distributing their useless stock of California fruit and California Rhine wine to all comers.

The Wall boom has bounced into the vice-presidential class and out again. The Harmon boom lives only in a few scattered signs, the Olney boom died on the way and the Gray boom—where is it?

Maryland Headquarters Decorated.

Maryland's headquarters, at the end of the long row of state rallying places on the second floor of the Southern Hotel, suddenly grew gay this morning with streamers and state colors. A

fine portrait of Senator Gorman looks down upon the visitor as he enters and a big yellow and black banner, with "Maryland" upon it in big letters, hangs over the entrance.

These decorations arrived with the delegation early yesterday afternoon, but remained in their packages until this morning. Last night Mrs. J. Fred C. Talbott, wife of the Baltimore county congressman, entered the room and made an indignant protest thereat.

"Why don't you hand up your banners," she demanded, "and show your colors?"

"Oh, there's time enough," protested someone.

"Stop that time-enough talk and get to work," said Mrs. Talbott, who knows more about politics than most men. "Every other state has its sign out, and Maryland's headquarters look as if we did not want people to know that we were here."

Gorman Badges Appear

So the signs appeared this morning, and so did the flags and streamers; and so, too, did a scant half dozen Gorman badges. They were made of white silk, without clasps, and upon each, printed in blue ink, was a poor portrait of the senator and the words "For President, Gorman, of Maryland, the Leader of All Leaders."

George Lewis, who conveyed the packages of flags and bunting from Baltimore, said that these badges were not brought to St. Louis by the Maryland delegation.

"A fellow came in here this morning," said Mr. Lewis, "with half a dozen or so of them, and he gave a few of us one each."

Mr. Lewis said that he did not know who the fellow was, nor did he know the state whence he hailed.

"The only badges we brought," said one of the delegates, "were state badges. We brought a few buttons, too, with the state coat of arms on them."

A visitor dumped a handful of Parker buttons on a table in the Maryland room this morning.

"What are those things?" demanded a delegate.

"They are Parker buttons," said the visitor.

"Well, take them out," ordered the delegate. "We don't want 'em."

"Not so fast," cautioned the visitor. "Maybe you don't want 'em now, but you may have some use for them before the end of the week."

And smiling maliciously he walked out. All of the other states are advertising the location of their headquarters by big signs in the lobbies of the leading hotels. But no flaming posters or fingerboards guide the pilgrim who would pay his respects at the shrine of the Chesapeake state. And, incidentally, the Marylanders within are not talking, at any rate not for publication. Under the rose they are saying things, but these things are not for the public.

Non-Committal Replies

When the reporters for the St. Louis, Chicago and New York papers drop in each evening, they are much puzzled, and not unnaturally by the answers they receive to their questions.

"The delegation, of course, will declare for Gorman," suggested one of them politely last night.

"We are having a pleasant week here," replied General Baughman.

“And who will place him in nomination,” asked another reporter.

“We’ll have our headquarters decorated tomorrow morning,” said General Vandiver.

Tonight the corridors seem quiet, and most of the faithful apparently have gone out to the fair grounds.

It is as hot in St. Louis as on a mid-summer day along Light Street wharf and the bottom has dropped out of the convention. Why should anyone perspire in a hotel lobby and shout meaningless nothings while there are cooling breezes and foaming refreshments on the Pike?