

The possibility of Abraham Lincoln becoming an available presidential candidate for the Republican party in 1860 was probably first discussed by a few of his friends in 1856. The dramatic speech which in May of that year gave him leadership of the party in Illinois,[#] the unexpected and flattering attention he received a few weeks later at the National Republican Convention in June^{*} suggested the idea, but there is no evidence that anything more was excited than a little idle speculation.

The impression he made two years later in the Lincoln and Douglas debates, kindled quite a different feeling. It convinced a number of astute Illinois politicians that judicious effort would make Lincoln strong enough in the party to justify the presentation of his name in 1860 on the ground of availability.

[#] See McClure's Magazine for September, 1896.

^{*} Lincoln received 110 votes on the first ballot on the nomination to the vice-presidency at Pittsburg.

One of the first men to conceive this idea was Jesse W. Fell of Bloomington. During the Lincoln and Douglas debates Fell had been travelling in the Middle and Eastern States. He was amazed to find that Lincoln's speeches attracted general attention, that many papers copied copiously from them, and that on all sides men plied him with questions about the career and personality of the new man. Before Fell left the East he had made up his mind that Lincoln must be pushed by his own state as their presidential candidate.

One evening soon after returning home he met Lincoln in Bloomington where the latter was attending court and drew him into a deserted law-office for a confidential talk.

"I have been East Lincoln," said he, "as far as Boston, and up into New Hampshire, traveling in all the New England States, save Maine: in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and Indiana; and everywhere I hear you talked about. Very frequently I have been asked: 'Who is this man Lincoln, of your State, now canvassing in opposition to Senator Douglas?' Being, as you know, an ardent Republican and your friend, I usually told them we had in Illinois two giants instead of one; that Douglas was the little one, as they all knew, but that you were the big one, which they didn't all know.

"But, seriously, Lincoln, Judge Douglas being so widely known, you are getting a national reputation through him, as the result of the late discussion; your speeches, in whole or in part, on both sides, have been pretty extensively published in the East; you are there regarded by discriminating minds as quite a match for him in debate, and the truth is, I have a decided impression that if your popular history and efforts on the slavery question

can be sufficiently brought before the people, you can be made a formidable, if not a successful, candidate for the presidency."

"Fell," said Lincoln, "what's the use of talking of me for the presidency, whilst we have such men as Seward, Chase and others, who are so much better known to the people, and whose names are so intimately associated with the principles of the Republican party. Everybody knows them; nobody, scarcely, outside of Illinois, knows me. Besides, is it not, as a matter of justice, due to such men, who have carried this movement forward to its present status, in spite of fearful opposition, personal abuse, and hard names? I really think so."

Fell continued his argument and finally requested Lincoln to furnish a sketch of his life which could be put out in the East. The suggestion grated on Lincoln's sensibilities. He had no chance why force himself. "Fell," he said, rising and wrapping his old gray shawl around his tall figure, "I admit that I am ambitious, and would like to be President. I am not insensible to the compliment you pay me, and the interest you manifest in the matter; but there is no such good luck in store for me as the presidency of these United States; besides, there is nothing in my early history that would interest you or anybody else; and, as Judge Davis says, 'It won't pay.' Good night," and he disappeared in the darkness.

The defeat in November in the contest for the senatorship in no way discouraged his friends. A few days after the November election, when it was known that Douglas had defeated Lincoln for Senator, the Chicago "Democrat," then edited by "Long John" Wentworth, printed an editorial nearly a column in length headed "Abraham Lincoln." His work in the campaign just closed was raw

reviewed and commended in the highest terms. His speeches, the paper declares, "will be recognized for a long time to come as the standard authorities upon those topics which overshadow all others in the political world of our day; and our children will read them and appreciate the great truths which they so forcibly inculcate, with even a higher appreciation of their worth than their fathers possessed while listening to them."

"We may also state," the editorial proceeds, "that Mr. Lincoln's name has been used by newspapers and public meetings outside of the state in connection with the Presidency and Vice Presidency, so that it is not in his own state that Honest Old Abe is respected and his talents and many good qualities appreciated; and through the north, and in most of the border states, he is looked upon as an able statesman, a most worthy man, fully competent to fill any post ~~was~~ within the gift of the people of this Union.

"We, for our part, consider that it would be but a partial appreciation of his services to our noble cause that our next state Republican convention should nominate him for Governor as unanimously and enthusiastically as it did for Senator. With such a leader and with our just cause, we would sweep the state from end to end, with a triumph so complete and perfect that there would be scarce enough of the scattered and demoralized forces of the enemy left to tell the story of its defeat. And this state should also present his name to the national Republican convention, first for President and next for Vice President. We should say to the United States at large that in our opinion the Great Man of Illinois is Abraham Lincoln, and none other than Abraham Lincoln."

Throughout the year 1859 a few men in Illinois worked quietly but persistently to awaken throughout the state a desire for Lincoln's nomination. The greater number of these supporters was the lawyers on his circuit, his life-long friends, men like Judge Davis, Leonard Swett, Judge Logan, who not only believed in Lincoln but loved him and whose efforts were doubly effective because of their affection. The rest of his supporters were made up of a few shrewd politicians who saw in Lincoln the "available" man the situation demanded, a group represented by John M. Palmer, who, remembering Lincoln's magnanimity in 1854 when he threw his influence to Trumbull in order to send a sound anti-Nebraska candidate to the Senate wanted, as Senator Palmer puts it, to "pay Lincoln back," and a few young men were in the Lincoln and Douglas debates and who threw youthful enthusiasm and conviction into their support.

The work which these men did in this year cannot be traced with any definiteness. It was mainly "talking up" their candidate, creating sentiment for him by individual efforts. In this work the newspaper of course had a large share. In reality the plan followed was laid out by the state committee in the office of the Chicago Tribune. To give an appearance of spontaneity to the newspaper canvass it was arranged that the country papers first suggest Lincoln's name. Joseph Medill then (as now) editor of the Tribune and secretary of the committee, says that a Rock Island paper opened the campaign. In May, 1859, the Central Illinois Gazette came out for him and one by one at diplomatic intervals other papers followed.

Lincoln soon felt the force of this effort in his behalf. Letters came to him from unexpected quarters offering aid, everywhere he went on the circuit men came to him to discuss his situation. In face of his undoubted movement he quailed. The interest was local, could it ever be more. Above all had he the qualifications to be a President of the United States. He asked him-

self these questions as he pondered the reply to an editor who suggested announcing his name. "I must in all candor say I do not think myself fit for the presidency." This was in April, 1859. In the July following he still declared himself unfit. Even in the following November he had little hope of nomination: "Gor my single self," he wrote a correspondent who had suggested putting his name on the ticket, I have enlisted for the permanent success of the Republican cause, and for this object I shall labor faithfully in the ranks, unless, as I think not probable, the judgment of the party shall assign me a different position."

The last weeks of 1859 and the first of 1860 convinced Lincoln that fit or not, he was in the field.

Fell, who, as corresponding secretary of the Republican State Central Committee, had been traveling constantly in the interests of the organization, brought Lincoln such proof that his candidacy was generally approved of, that in December, 1859, he consented to write the "little sketch" of his life now so generally known as Lincoln's autobiography. He did it with a little inward shrinking, a half shame that it was so meager. "There is not much of it," he wrote in sending the document, "for the reason I suppose, that there is not much of me," etc. "There If anything be made out of it, I wish it to be modest, and not to go beyond the material."

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By the opening of 1860 Lincoln had concluded that though he might not be a very promising candidate -- at all events it was in so deep that he must have the approval of his own state and he began to work in earnest for that. "I am not in a position where it would hurt much for me to not be nominated on the national ticket," he wrote Judd, "but I am where it would hurt some for me to not get the Illinois delegates. . . . Can you help me a little in your end of the vineyard?"

Judd needed no urging, nor indeed did any of the men who had raised the Lincoln banner. Their plan was well matured and they were carrying it out to the letter. The first of December Medill had gone to Washington ostensibly as a Tribune correspondent but really to launch Lincoln's name. "Before writing any Lincoln letter for the Tribune," says Medill in his Reminiscences, "I began preaching Lincoln among the Congressmen, and urged him chiefly upon the ground of availability in the close and doubtful states with what seemed like reasonable success." On Feb. 16th, 1860, the Tribune came out editorially for Lincoln and Medill followed a few days later with a ringing letter from Washington naming Lincoln as a candidate on whom both conservative and radical sentiment could unite and declaring that he now heard his name mentioned for president in Washington "ten times as often as it was one month ago."

About the time that Medill was carrying on this canvass Judd, a member of the National Committee, was executing a manoeuvre whose importance was unrealized by any but the Illinois politicians. This was securing the convention for Chicago. As the Spring passed and the counties of Illinois held their convention Lincoln found, that save in the north, where Seward was shining, he was

unanimously recommended as a candidate at Chicago. When the State Convention met at Decatur on May 9 and 10, he received an ovation of so picturesque and unique a character that it colored all the rest of the campaign. The delegates were in session when Lincoln came in as a spectator and was invited to a seat on the platform. Soon after Richard Oglesby, one of Lincoln's ardent supporters, asked that an old Democrat of Macon County be allowed to offer a contribution to the convention. The offer was accepted and a curious banner was borne up the hall. The standard was made of two weather-worn fence rails, decorated with flags and streamers, and bearing the inscription

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
The Rail Candidate
For President in 1860.

Two rails from a lot of 3,000 made in 1830 by Thos. Hanks and Abe Lincoln---whose father was the first pioneer of Macon County.

A storm of applause greeted the banner followed by cries of Lincoln, Lincoln. Rising Lincoln said, pointing to the banner, "I suppose I am expected to reply to that. I cannot say whether I made those rails or not but I am quite sure I have made a great many just as good." The speech was warmly applauded and one of the influential German delegates, an ardent Seward man, watching the episode, turned to his neighbor and said, "Seward has lost the Illinois delegation." He was right for when later John M. Palmer, now Senator and candidate for president in 1896, brought forth the resolution - "That Abraham Lincoln is the

choice of the Republican party of Illinois for the Presidency, and the delegates from this State are instructed to use all honorable means to secure his nomination by the Chicago Convention, and to vote as a unit for him." It was enthusiastically adopted. While the politicians of Illinois were preparing their campaign the Republicans of the East hardly realized that Lincoln was ~~a~~ or could be made a possibility. His name was almost unmentioned as a presidential candidate in the first four months of 1860 in the public prints of the East. In a list of 21 "Prominent candidates for the Presidency" in 1860, ~~published in New York towards the~~ prepared by D. W. Bartlett and published in New York towards the end of 1859 Lincoln's name is not mentioned nor does it appear in a list of 34 of "Our Living Representative Men" prepared ~~by~~ for presidential purposes by John Savage and published in Plebe in 1860. The most important notice in this period of which we know is a casual mention in an editorial of the Evening Post on Feb. 15th. The Post considered it time for the Republicans to speak out about the nominee at the coming convention and remarked, "with such men as Seward and Chase, Banks and Lincoln and others in plenty, let us have two Republican representative men, to vote for." This notice was 10 days before the Cooper Union speech, and the New England tour, which undoubtedly did much to recommend Lincoln as a logical and statesmanlike thinker and debater though there is little evidence, comparatively little, to create him a presidential constituency in the East. It could not be expected that wise and conservative men who knew little of Lincoln save the ability he had shown in the Lincoln and Douglas debates and in the Cooper Union Speech would conclude that because he could make a good speech therefore he would make a good president. They knew him

to be untrained in public life and to know little of large affairs. They rightly preferred a man who had a record for statesmanship behind. Up to the opening ~~in~~ of the Convention in May there was in fact no specially prominent mention of Lincoln. Greeley intent on undermining Seward without anybody perceiving it, printed the Weekly Tribune - the paper which went to the country at large, letters from persons advocating Bates and Read, McLean and Bell, Cameron, Fremont, Dayton, Chase, Wade - but not Lincoln.

The New York Herald of May ~~in~~ discussing editorially the nominee of the "Black Republicans" recognised "4 living, 22 dead aspirants." The living were Seward, Banks, Chase and Cameron. The dead Bates and McLean.

On May 10, The Independent in an editorial on The Nomination at Chicago said: "Give us a man known to be true upon the only question that enters into the canvass: a Seward, a Chase, a Wade, a Sumner, a Fessenden, a Banks" - but does not mention Lincoln.

His most conspicuous eastern recognition before the convention was in Harper's Weekly of May 12th, his face being included in a double page of portraits of "11 Prominent candidates for the Republican presidential nomination at Chicago." Brief biographical sketches appear in the same number - the last and the shortest of which is that of Lincoln.

It was on May 16th, that the Republican Convention of 1860 was formally opened at Chicago, but for days before the city was in a tumult of expectation and preparation. The audacity of inviting a national political convention to the town in the condition it was in at the moment was purely Chicagoan. No other

city would have risked it. In ten years the town had nearly quadrupled its population and it was believed that the feat would be repeated in the coming decade. In this first flash of boundless energy and ambition Chicago had undertaken the colossal task of raising herself bodily out of the prairie mud where she was placed to a level 12 feet above the lake and of putting underneath herself a solid foundation[©] when she invited the Chicago Convention half her buildings were on stilts, some of her streets had been graded to the new requirements, others still lay in the mud. Half her sidewalks were raised on piles and half were level with the lake. A city with a sense of decorum would not have cared to be seen in this demoralized condition but Chicago realized that she could give no better proof ~~that~~ of her courage and confidence than to show the country what she was doing, and so she had the Convention come.

But it was not the Convention alone which came. ~~The~~ Beside the delegates the professional politicians, the newspaper men, the friends of the candidates there came ^(a) motley crowd of men lined to march and to cheer for particular candidates, a kind of out-of-doors claque which did not wait for a point to be made in favor of their man but went off in rounds of applause at the mere mention of his name. New York brought the greatest number of these professional applauders - the leader of them being a notorious street politician, one Tom Hyler. With the New York delegation which numbered all told fully 2000 Seward men came Dodworth's band - one of the great bands of that day. While New York ~~and~~ sent the largest number of persons to Chicago, Pennsylvania was not far behind, there being about 1500 persons from the state. From New England, long ~~as~~ as was the distance there were many

trains of excursionists. The M. E. delegation took Gilmore's Band with them and from Boston to Chicago stirred up every community at which it stopped by music and speeches. Several days before the convention opened fully one half of the members of the United States House of representatives were in the city.[#] To this throng must be added the hundreds of merely curious spectators whom the flattering inducements of the 15 railroads centering in Chicago at that date had tempted to take a trip. All told there were fully 40,000 strangers in the city during the week of the Convention.

The streets for a week were the forum of this multitude. Processions for Seward, for Cameron, for Chase, for Lincoln marched and countered marched, brave with banners and transparencies and noisy with country bands and hissing rockets. Every street corner, too, became a ~~rostrum~~ rostrum where impromptu harangues for any of a dozen candidates might be happened on. In this hurly-burly two figures were particularly prominent. Tom Hyler who managed the open-air Seward demonstration and Horace Greeley who was conducting independently his campaign against Seward. Greeley in his fervor talked incessantly and around him was always a crowd of the curious, which sometimes grew so large that what had started as a conversation ended as a speech.

In this half spontaneous, half organized demonstration of the streets, Lincoln's followers were conspicuous. State pride made Chicago feel that she must stand by her own. Lincoln ~~many~~ ~~many~~ banners floated across every street and even the omnibus houses were decorated with ^{Lincoln} emblems. As the Illinois delegation saw that New York and Pennsylvania had brought in so many outsiders to create enthusiasm for their candidates, they began to

**Boston Herald - May 15, 1860, Chicago correspondence.*

call in supporters. Swett says that they succeeded in getting together fully 10,000 men from Illinois and Indiana ready to march, to shout or to fight, as the case required.

Not only was the city full before the convention^{began} but the delegations were organized several days in advance and actual work in progress. One of the first of the delegations to go to work was that of Illinois. The Tremont House had been chosen as their headquarters and here were gathered almost every influential friend Lincoln had in the state. They came determined to win if human effort could compass it and men never put more intense and persistent energy into a cause. Judge Davis was naturally the head of the body, but Judge Logan, Leonard Swett, Palmer, Oglesby, Judd, Fell and scores more with him. "We worked like nailers," says Gov. Oglesby to-day in talking over the struggle. The work for Lincoln had to begin in the Illinois delegation itself. In spite of the rail episode at Decatur the state convention was by no means unanimous for Lincoln. "Our delegation was instructed for him," wrote Leonard Swett in his admirable letter to Drummond, but of the 22 votes in it, by incautiously selecting the men, there were eight who would gladly have gone for Seward. The reason of this is in this fact: the northern counties of this State are more overwhelmingly Republican than any other portion of the continent. I could pick 25 contiguous counties giving larger Republican majorities than any other adjacent counties in any State. The result is, many people there are for Seward, and such men had crept upon the delegation. They intended in good faith to go for Lincoln, but talked dispondingly, and really wanted and expected finally to vote as I have indicated. We had also in the north and about Chicago a class of men who always want to turn up on the winning

side, and who would do no work, although their feelings were really for us, for fear it would be the losing element, and would place them out of favor with the incoming power. These men were dead weights. The Centre and South, with many individual exceptions to the classes I have named, were warmly for Lincoln, whether he won or lost.

"The lawyers of our circuit went there determined to leave no stone unturned, and really they, aided by some of our State officers and a half dozen men from various portions of the State, were the only tireless, sleepless, unwavering and even vigilant friends he had."

The situation which the Illinois delegation faced, briefly put, was this. The Republican party had in 1860 but one prominent candidate that was ~~wxxxx~~ William H. Seward. By virtue of his great talents his superior culture, his splendid services in anti-slavery agitation he was the choice of the majority of Republicans. It was certain that at the opening of the Convention he would have nearly enough votes to nominate him. But Seward's following was not unanimous. There were several minor complaints against him but the potential fact was that Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania and New Jersey all declared that they could not elect him if he was nominated. Andrew G. Curtin of Pennsylvania and Henry S. Lane of Indiana, candidates for governor in their respective states were both his active opponents - not from dislike of Seward but because convinced that ~~thxxx~~ they would themselves be defeated if he headed the Republican ticket. It is clear to the entire party that Pennsylvania and Indiana were essential to Republican success, and many states with which Seward was a first choice held success in November as more important and were willing

to give their support to an "available" man. But the difficulty was to unite on this opposition. Nearly every state which considered Seward an unsafe candidate had a favorite son whom it was pushing. Pennsylvania wanted Cameron, New Jersey Dayton, Ohio Chase, McLean or Wade, Massachusetts Banks, Vermont Collamore. Greeley who in himself was as influential as a state delegation urged Bates of Missouri.

Illinois' task was to unite this opposition on Lincoln. She began her work with a next door neighbor. The first State approached was Indiana. She was about equally divided between Bates and McLean; Saturday, Sunday and Monday was spent upon her, when finally she came to us unitedly with 26 votes and from that time acted efficiently with us.

With Indiana to aid her Illinois now succeeded in drawing a few scattering votes in making an impression on New Hampshire and Virginia and in persuading Vermont to think of her as a second device. Matters began to look decidedly cheerful. On May 14 (Monday) the New York Herald's last dispatch declared that the contest had narrowed down to Seward, Lincoln and Wade. The Boston Herald's dispatch of same day says: "Abe Lincoln is looming up to-night as a compromise candidate and his friends are in high spirits." And this was the situation when the Convention finally opened on Wednesday May 16.

THE WIGWAM.

The Assembly Room in which the Convention met was situated conveniently - the corner of Market and Lake Streets. It had been built especially for the purpose by the Chicago Republican Club and in the fashion of the west in that day was called by the

indigenous name of Wigwam. It was a low, characterless structure fully 180 feet long by 100 wide whose roof rose in the segment of a circle so that one side was higher than the other; across this side and the two ends were deep galleries.~~and~~ Facing them ran the platform reserved for the delegates. A great floor 140 feet long and 35 deep raised some 4 feet from the ground level and having committee rooms at each end. The vast expanse of pine-board had been rescued from ugliness by the energetic efforts of the committee and Republican women of the city who scarcely less interested than their husbands and brothers strove in every way to contribute to the success of the convention. They wreathed the pillars and the galleries with masses of green, hung up banners and flags, brought in busts of American notables, ordered great allegorical paintings of Justice, Liberty, etc. to suspend on the walls, borrowed the whole series of Healy portraits of American Statesmen - in fact made the Wigwam a gay even cheerful room. Foreign interest added something to the furnishings of the Wigwam for the seat placed on the platform for the chairman of the Convention was the first chair made in the State of Michigan. It was an old arm chair of the most primitive description, the seat being dug out of an immense log, and the whole resting on large rockers. Another chair which was made for the occasion attracted a great deal of attention. It ~~xxxxxx~~ was composed of 34 different kinds of wood, each piece from a different state, and Kansas in appropriately represented by the "weeping willow" as a symbol of her grief that she ~~was~~ still excluded from the sisterhood of states.

The gavel used by the chairman was more interesting than his seat, it being made from a fragment of Commodore Perry's

brave "Lawrence."

Into this room ~~in the~~ on the morning of the 16th there crowded fully 10,000 persons. To the spectator in the gallery the scene was vividly picturesque and animated. Around him were packed hundreds of women gay in the high peaked flower-filled bonnets, the bright shawls and the plaids of the day. Below on the platform and floor were many of the most notable men of the United States, William M. Evarts, Thomas Corwin, Carl Shurz, David Wilmot, Thaddeus Stevens, Joshua Giddings, George William Curtis,

In the multitude the newspaper delegation was an element larger even than the convention. Fully 900 editorial reporters were present and scarcely less interesting in its personnel. Horace Greely, Samuel Bowles, Murat Halsted, Burnley, Medill, Horace White, Henry Willard, A. K. McClure are names familiar to-day who represented various journals and in some cases were active workers in the caucuses. It was evident at once that the convention proper - 600 men out of 10,000 - was not more deeply interested in affairs than the audience whose approval and disapproval quickly and emphatically expressed swayed and to a degree controlled the delegates.

Wednesday and Thursday morning were passed in the usual opening work of a Convention but while officers were elected and platform adopted the real interest was centered in the caucuses held almost uninterruptedly. Illinois was in a frenzy of anxiety. "No man ever worked as our boys did," wrote Swett, "and did not

the whole week sleep two hours a night." They ran from delegation to delegation haranguing, pleading, promising, but do their best they could not concentrate the opposition. The uncertainty on Thursday was harrowing and if the ballot had been taken in the afternoon as was intended Seward probably would have been nominated. Illinois, Indiana and Pennsylvania all felt this and shrewdly managed to draw a reluctant adjournment until Friday morning from the Convention. In spite of the time this manoeuvre gave Seward's nomination seemed sure. At midnight of Thursday, so Greeley wired the Tribune. At the same hour the correspondent of the Herald (N.Y.) wired: "The friends of Seward are firm, and claim 90 votes for him on the first ballot. Opposition to Seward not fixed on any man. Lincoln is the strongest and may have altogether 40 votes. The various delegations are still caucusing."

It was after these messages were sent that Illinois and Indiana summoned all their energies for a final desperate effort to unite the uncertain delegates on Lincoln and that Pennsylvania went through the last violent throes of coming to a decision. The night's work was full of dramatic situation and none more tragic than Seward's hanger's-on confident of success celebrating in advance the nomination of their man while scores of determined men laid the plans for his overthrow. All night the work was kept up.

"Hundreds of Pennsylvanians, Indianas and Illinoises," says Murat Halsted, "never closed their eyes. I saw Henry L. Lane at 1 o'clock, pale and haggard, with cane under his arm walking as if for a wager from one caucus-room to another at the Tremont House. In connection with them he had been operating to bring the Vermontens and Virginians to the point of deserting Seward."

In the Pennsylvania delegation which on Wednesday had agreed on McLean as its second choice and Lincoln third a hot struggle was waged to secure the vote of the delegation as a unit for Cameron until a majority of the delegates directed otherwise. Judge L. Newton Pettis who proposed this resolution worked all night to secure votes for it at the caucus ~~and~~ to be held early in the morning. The Illinois men ran from delegate to caucus, from editor to outsider. No man who knew Lincoln and believed in him indeed was allowed to rest but was dragged away to this or that delegate to persuade him that the "rail candidate" as he had already begun to be called was fit for the place. Col. Hoyt then a resident of Chicago spent half the night telling Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania what he knew of Lincoln. While all this was going on in the upper story of the Tremont House a committee of 12 men, from Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa were consulting. Before the session was over they had agreed that in case Lincoln's votes reached a specified number on the following day, the votes of the states represented in that meeting so far as these 12 men could effect the result should be given him.

The night was over at last and at 10 o'clock the Convention gathered. The great Wigwam was packed with a throng hardly less excited than the members of the actual Convention, while without for blocks away a crowd double that within pushed and strained every nerve alert to catch the movements of the convention.

The Nominations began at once, the Hon. William M. Evarts presenting William H. Seward. The New Yorkers had prepared ^{(into} a tremendous claque which now broke forth ~~with~~ "a deafening shout

which," says Swett, "I confess appalled us a little", but New York in preparing her claque had only given an idea to Illinois. The committee to off-set them had made secret but complete preparations for what it called, a spontaneous demonstration. From the lake front and prairie they had collected every sentorian voice known, and while Seward's men were marching exultantly about the streets they had packed them where their cries would be most effective. The women they had requested at every mention of Lincoln's name to wave their handkerchiefs and hundreds of flags had been distributed to be used in the same way. A series of signals had been arranged to communicate to the thousands without the moment when a war from them might influence the convention within. When N. B. Judd nominated Lincoln this machinery began to work. It did well but a moment later in greeting the seconding of Seward New York out-bellowed Illinois. "Caleb B. Smith of Indiana then seconded the nomination of Lincoln," says Swett, "and the West came to his rescue. No mortal ever before saw such a scene. The idea of us Hoosiers and Suckers being out-screamed would have been as bad to them as the loss of their man. Five thousand people at once leaped to their seats, women not wanting in ~~the~~ the number, and the wild yell made soft vesper breathings of ~~all~~ all that had preceded. No language can describe it. A thousand steam whistles, ten acres of Hotel Gongs, a tribe of Comanches, headed by a choice van-guard from pandemonium, might have mingled in the scene unnoticed."

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As the roar died out a voice cried "Abe Lincoln has it by the sound now. Let us ballot," and Judge Logan beside himself with screeching and excitement called out: "Mr. President in order or out of order I propose this convention and audience give three cheers for the man who is evidently their nominee."

The balloting followed without delay. The Illinois men believed they had a 100 - to start with - on uniting they found they had 102. More hopeful still, no other opposition candidate approached them. Pennsylvania's man according to the printed reports of that day had but $50\frac{1}{2}$ votes, Greeley's man 48, Chase 49, while McLean, Pennsylvania's second choice had but 12. If Seward were to be beaten it must be now and it was for Pennsylvania to say. The delegation hurried to a committee room where Judge Pettis disregarding the action of the caucus by which McLean received second place moved that the second vote be cast solidly for A. Lincoln. The motion was carried. Returning to the house the delegation found the second ballot under way. In a moment they were called. The whole Wigwam heard the answer. "Pennsylvania casts her 52 votes for Abraham Lincoln." Its meaning was clear the break to Lincoln had begun, and New York sat stupidly while all over the house cheer followed cheer.

It seemed but a moment before the second ballot was ended and it was known that Lincoln's vote had risen from 102 to 181. The tension as the third ballot was taken was painful. A hundred pencils kept score, while the delegations were called and hundreds of calculators realized as the answers came that Lincoln was outstripping Seward. The last vote was hardly given before the whisper went around $23\frac{1}{2}$ for Lincoln $3\frac{1}{2}$ more gives him the nomination. An instant of silence followed in which the Con-

vention grappled with the idea and tried to pull its self together to act. The chairman of the Ohio delegation was the first to seize the occasion. "Mr. President," he cried, springing on his chair and stretching out his arm to secure recognition, "I rise to change four votes from Mr. Chase to Mr. Lincoln." It took a moment to realize the truth. New York saw it and the white faces of her noble delegation were bowed in despair. Illinois saw it and tears poured down the faces of more than one of the overwrought, devoted men as they grasped one another's hands and vainly struggled against the sobs which kept down their shouts. The crowd saw it and broke out in a mad hurrah. "The scene which followed," wrote one spectator, # "baffles all human description. After an instant's silence, as deep as death, which seemed to be required to enable the assembly to take in the full force of the announcement, the wildest and mightiest yell (for it can be called by no other name), burst forth from ten thousand voices, which we ever heard from mortal throats. This strange and tremendous demonstration, accompanied with leaping up and down, tossing hats, handkerchiefs and canes recklessly into the air, with the waving of flags, and with every other conceivable mode of exultant and unbridled joy, continued steadily and without pause, for perhaps ten minutes.

"It then began to rise and fall in slow and billowing bursts, and for perhaps the next five minutes these stupendous waves of uncontrollable excitement, now rising into the deepest and fiercest shouts, and then sinking like the ground swell of the

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ocean into hoarse and lessening murmurs, rolled through the multitude. Every now and then it would seem as though the physical power of the assembly was exhausted and that quiet would be restored, when all at once a new hurricane would break out more prolonged and terrific than any thing before. If sheer exhaustion had not prevented, we don't know but the ~~apxat~~ applause would have continued to this hour."