

and are permitted to speak their feelings freely to each other. States are divided by narrow aisles, and these antagonists see each other at close range. Mr. Barnes, who is not able to produce a certificate of character from Mr. Roosevelt less than a year old rubs against Mr. Flinn, whom President Taft can not regard with any degree of allowance, and yet there is no physical combat. The Massachusetts delegation is divided half and half; eighteen "demagogues" and a group of eighteen more made up of "bosses," "corrupt politicians," and "representatives of predatory wealth," and yet there has not been a fight. Several of the delegations are divided, some in the middle, and some on the edge, but the best of decorum prevails. Even Senator Bradley of Kentucky, and Mr. Heney of California, can appear upon the same platform without disturbing the peace. They have their differences, and they are fighting them out, but they are doing it in a most creditable way. I am not now passing upon the merits of the decisions rendered, neither am I indorsing the parliamentary methods employed, but I congratulate the republican party on the splendid proof it has given of the ability of a large number of people, intensely in earnest, to discuss their differences calmly and settle the questions involved without recourse to violence. It not only indicates self-restraint, but faith in the incorruptibility of the people, the court of last resort, in a republic.

This report must be put on the wires before the convention opens at 11, and it is impossible at this time to forecast the action that the convention will take.

Mr. Roosevelt's statement has not changed the attitude of the Taft forces in the least. The credentials committee is entirely in the hands of the administration and the Taft delegates are being seated as rapidly as the cases can be disposed of. The contest over the length of time to be given to each case was really "much ado about nothing," because the action of the committee is sure to be the same whether much or little time is given in each case. The facts are thoroughly understood by both sides, and the hearings are merely a matter of form. Unless something unexpected happens, the Taft delegates will be seated, and it looks now as if the regular convention would renominate the president. Some of his delegates, it is said, would prefer a compromise candidate, but the amiable gentleman in the White House is showing that he can sit tight when necessary. His fighting blood is aroused, and if anybody says "enough" the word is not likely to come from anyone living west of the Alleghanies.

At present Mr. Taft has the best of the situation, and it looks as if he had made up his mind to run the ex-president out of the republican party, or make him swallow his words.

Mr. Roosevelt is apparently facing the crisis in his political career. Bolting is easy where one is not a candidate, but it is a more difficult thing where followers are necessary. If Mr. Roosevelt could take his delegates with him, he could organize a convention that would represent a majority of the republican vote of the country, but he can not do so. A considerable number of his delegates will not bolt and his convention, therefore, would not carry with it the moral force that goes with the majority. He can not tell until the split comes exactly how many will walk out, for some are unwilling to decide the question until the time arrives for action. If the president's followers bolt and nominate him, he can not tell whether to accept or not, until after the regular convention acts, and even then he will likely be influenced by the action of the demo-

cratic national convention. He may be put in the attitude, therefore, of refusing to lead a bolt after he has encouraged it. If the democrats are guilty of the criminal folly of nominating a reactionary, they will supply Mr. Roosevelt with the one thing needful, in case he becomes an independent candidate, namely, an issue, and with two reactionaries running for president, he might win and thus intrench himself in power. This convention, therefore, may exert a powerful influence upon the Baltimore convention. W. J. B.

#### CALIFORNIA HAS ITS DAY

Chicago, June 21.—This was California's day. The state occupied the center of the stage and came nearer breaking through the Taft line than any other state has done. Governor Hadley had charge of the case for California, but he yielded to Mr. Heney to open and to Governor Johnson to close. Mr. Heney's speech was a strong, clear argumentative appeal and he raised the Roosevelt followers to their feet when, after describing the president's participation in the selection of the delegates in accordance with the letter of the primary law, he charged him with treason to popular government when he attempted to repudiate the law for the sake of two delegates.

Governor Johnson, however, was the hero of the day. His speech was, all things concerned, the gem of the convention so far. He is a young man, prepossessing in appearance, all of earnestness, and his speech has the ring of sincerity. He made a plea for the progressive cause that surpassed in effectiveness anything heretofore presented to the delegates. His prophecy of victory for progressives this fall, thrilled his hearers.

He dealt with all phases of the subject, condensing what he had to say on each point into a sentence. He told how the predatory interests had controlled his state for generations; how at last the tide of reform had swept them out of office and driven the progressives into control; how the progressives instead of using the party machinery to secure a delegation to the national convention, passed a primary law that vested control in the voters; how the reactionaries, to escape from the influence of state organization then in the hands of progressives, unitedly supported the primary law; how both sides selected a list of delegates in accordance with the law; how President Taft himself gave to his list of delegates the written approval required by law; how all these steps had been taken without objection and without protest, and then how these two delegates, after having been defeated by 77,000 in the state, sought to repudiate their own act and the action of the president and claim election in a district in spite of the fact that it was impossible to ascertain the exact number of votes cast in their district because of fourteen precincts which were partly in one district and partly in another.

He convinced the audience that he had justice on his side, but the audience was not in a position to follow its convictions. A number of delegates told me that they had to vote for the two Taft delegates in order to save the Taft forces from the mortification of defeat, but that the contest ought never to have been made.

Governor Johnson had the satisfaction of seeing the Taft majority whittled down to thirteen, and the administration will find thirteen a very unlucky number out in California this fall. It is surprising that men as intelligent as the leaders of the Taft forces would make the tactical mistake that they have in this case. In some of the contests they have such a strong showing that even the

Roosevelt members of the committee have voted with them, but one case like the California case imparts its weakness to all the others.

If it had been purely a question of principle, there would have been standing ground on both sides of the issue. Governor Johnson emphasized the right of a state to regulate its own affairs, and insisted that the state law should take precedence over a rule of the national convention.

Mr. Watson of Indiana, representing the Taft forces, laid great stress on the rules adopted by the national convention recognizing the congressional district as the unit. There is strength in both arguments, and it is not difficult to reconcile the arguments. If I were deciding the case, I would say that the state law ought to be respected, but that the state made a mistake in substituting a state wide delegation for the district system.

The California case really establishes a unit rule by law, whereas the republican party has come near to the people in giving each district a chance to name and instruct its delegates. It is no argument against the primary system to say that a primary law ought to recognize a district system other than a state wide system in the selection of delegates.

While the Taft men were strong in asserting opposition to the unit rule, they were weak in attempting to overthrow the law after they had acquiesced in it and secured the president's approval of it, and they were weak also because of their inability to show with exactness the number of votes cast in the district which they claimed to have carried by a very small majority.

The convention was in good humor today. The roll call was demanded only in the case of a few states, and the delegates who were being defeated seemed to enjoy themselves about as much as those who were winning. Sometimes all delegates would join in shouting "aye" on a viva voce vote, and then all would join in shouting, "no," when the question was put. It was impossible for Chairman Root to tell on which side the majority was, but he knew what it would be on roll call and so declared.

"The ayes have it," and then the audience would break out into laughter.

The machine has worked beautifully today; it has not slipped a cog. When it was running at full speed, "toot," "toot," would occasionally come from the audience. Sometimes sounds arose that resembled escaping steam, but I am satisfied that no steam escaped. It is all being used and at all pressure, too.

The platform is said to be ready, but there is very little discussion of the platform. The fight has centered in men rather than in measures.

Rumors have it that the Taft men having won out on everything else are inclined to make some concessions to progressives in the wording of the platform.

From present indications Mr. Taft will be nominated on the first ballot or upon the second, if not upon the first. The president discountenances compromise and seems prepared to stake his all upon the result. It is probable, therefore, that the platform will be to his liking, and that he will have the privilege of trying the realities of an election.

Nearly half of the convention will feel like concluding his nomination as a judge concludes the death sentence of a prisoner, "And may the Lord have mercy on your soul."

W. J. B.

#### THE FINAL DAY

Fort Wayne, Ind., June 22.—The break has come and the progressives were happy in their selection of the

time. They waited until the credentials committee had made its last report, until the committee-made majority had voted itself into the convention, until it was demonstrated that no amount of fact or argument availed to reverse the decisions based upon the exigencies of the case rather than upon the merits of the contests and then Delegate Allen of Kansas read Mr. Roosevelt's statement and enforced its pungent paragraphs with pointed remarks of his own.

As Mr. Roosevelt's statement will be published in full I need only refer to it here. It will prove an historic document. Never before in American politics has a committee witnessed such a scene: a man, one of the most forceful figures of his time, twice a president, once by the accident of death and once by the largest majority ever given to a president, contending against an administration that he created, for the honor of a republican nomination. In spite of patronage, in spite of the powerful organization of the dominant party and in spite of great commercial influences he actually secures an undisputed majority of the republican vote. Contrary to all precedent he goes to the convention city and conducts his own fight. He finds himself hedged about by a force with which he can not cope. If he may be likened to a caged lion confined in a cage constructed of regularity, formality and orderly procedure, it must be admitted that he was unable with all his Samson like strength to bend a single bar. But here the simile ends.

Man is more than an animal; he laughs at the limitations of the flesh. He can appeal to a power greater than the political and Mr. Roosevelt has made his appeal. He brings against the convention such an indictment as no party has ever had to meet before. He appeals from leaders inebriated by prolonged power to the voters who can dispassionately weigh policies and measure methods from Philip drunk to Philip sober.

The platform, as might be expected, is for Mr. Taft. It points with pride to what he has done and views with alarm all that Mr. Roosevelt stands for and threatens to do. The curious may read it. But it will play a very small part in the campaign. In the republican mind Mr. Taft has come to stand for stand-pat and Mr. Roosevelt for progressivism and the voter will not make any nice calculations at deciding between them.

The republican party is passing through the same convulsions which the democratic party passed through sixteen years ago, when progressive democracy was born. In the case of our party the mother lived. In the present both a physician and a surgeon are in attendance and it will be some months before the fate of the patient will be known. I was compelled to leave just before former Vice President Fairbanks concluded reading the platform but from what took place, the renomination of the president seemed a foregone conclusion.

As was to be expected, the Chicago convention will exert a marked influence upon the democratic convention about to be held in Baltimore. The fact that more than half of the republican party has been shown to be militant in its progressiveness would seem to make it even more imperatively necessary than before that the democratic convention should in its platform and with its nomination respond to the demands of the progressives of the nation, and thus make a third party unnecessary. This is the way it looks from a distance. I can make a better forecast after reaching Baltimore.

W. J. B.