

Waste of Life in Coal Mining.

During the year 1906 nearly 7,000 men were killed or injured in the coal mines of the United States, and indications point to an increase in that number since that period, due to a lack of proper and enforceable mine regulations; to the lack of reliable information concerning explosives used in mining, and the conditions under which they can be used with safety; to the presence of gas and dust encountered in the mines and to the fact that in the development of coal mining not only is the number of coal miners increasing, but many areas from which coal is being taken are either deeper or farther from the entrance, where good ventilation is more difficult and the dangerous accumulations of explosive gas are more frequent. To remedy this state of affairs, says Review of Reviews, the United States must adopt the means that have proved successful in European countries. In 1855 our ratio of killed in every 1,000 employed in mines was 2.67. In 1906 it reached 3.40. Effective mining legislation tells a different tale in Europe. In this country 50 per cent. of all the fatal accidents and 29 per cent. of all the non-fatal accidents were due to falls of roofs and coal. In all European coal-producing countries the use of excessive charges of explosives is prohibited by law, and definite limits are set to the amount of any explosive that may be used. In the United States there is no limit. In this country during 1906 11 per cent. of deaths in coal mines were due to gas and dust explosions. Abroad, governmental testing stations are maintained, where investigations into the use of explosives are conducted.

Be Careful of Your Eyes.

Rest is essential in the treatment of diseased or overworked eyes—rest of eyes, rest of body and mind. Avoid also wind, dust and smoke. Personal habits enter into the question of the causation of eye disease, and their regulation becomes, therefore, a part of the hygienic treatment. Diet is important, chiefly through its effects upon indigestion and general health, which frequently have much to do with the condition of the eye. The first offense against the eyes is reading with a poor light. This requires the ciliary muscle to do extra work to sharpen sight. It applies to dim lights, twilight, and sitting too far from the light. The second offense, says the New York Weekly, is one of posture. Stooping or lying down congests the eye, besides requiring unnatural work of the eye muscles. Reading in railroad trains is a third offense, the motion causing such frequent changes of focus and position as to tax the muscles of accommodation as well as the muscles of fixation. Reading without needed glasses, or with badly fitted ones, is the last infirmity. Eye-strain is certainly a factor in producing disease of every part of the eye. Old age is the time of retribution for those who have sinned against their eyes. Young folk, take good care of your eyes, and when you are old you will reap a rich reward by retaining good eyesight till late in life.

The forthcoming trip by Mrs. Roosevelt and a party of her friends up the Mississippi from the gulf to St. Paul is evidently a direct result of the president's journey down the river when on his way to the Louisiana bear hunt. He expressed himself publicly at the time as enjoying the experience, and no doubt went home and talked enthusiastically about it. The four planned is well worth taking, remarks the Indianapolis Star, and when it is ended the travelers will know many new things about their country. River travel has many attractions for people who wish an outing and are not afflicted with the mad American haste to "get somewhere."

The report by the Illinois Pupils Reading Circle that, during the year 1907 22,739 books were distributed among the school children of the state may well encourage the formation of circulating libraries in every populous school district in other states. For adults, as well as for the children, the good literature thus provided greatly relieves the tedium of the long winter evenings and cultivates a taste for reading that is altogether beneficial. In the rural districts there are already many such libraries, but not enough of them, says the St. Louis Republic.

The editor of one of the fashion papers declares that the men of Salt Lake City dress better than do those of New York. The editor should remember that the men of Salt Lake City have been a long way from Wall Street during the past few months.

England dreads the Kaiser's influence with the heads of the British admiralty, but a study of the portraits of the members of that body makes it doubtful if Emperor Wilhelm wouldn't prefer a pull with their coachmen.

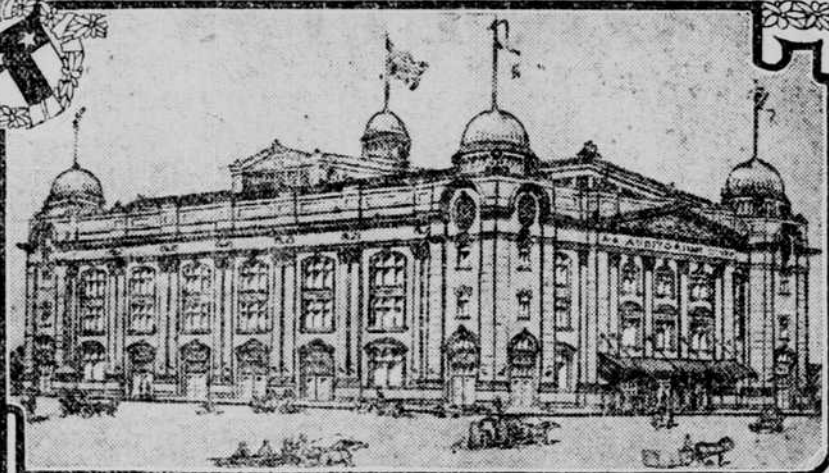
A western editor has solved the problem of "how to keep the boys on the farm." Answer: "Have plenty of girls on the farm and the boys won't go away." Now the only question is how to keep the girls on the farm.

A Boston man has been arrested for whistling on the streets. Forfeited he was in Philadelphia, where he could have burst his lungs if he pleased without awakening more

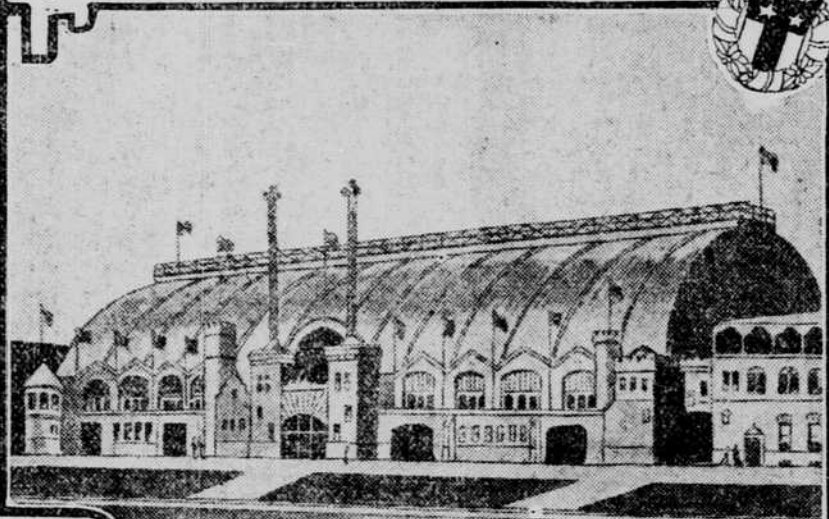
# HOW POLITICAL CONVENTIONS ARE MANAGED

## A PEEP BEHIND THE SCENES

BY ERNEST MCGAFFEY



AUDITORIUM AT DENVER WHERE THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION WILL BE HELD.



COLISEUM AT CHICAGO WHERE THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION WILL BE HELD.

The ordinary political convention is a collection of wild animals, whose antics are extremely amusing, but absolutely without form and void. Nothing outside of a cage full of monkeys can present such an example of futile activity. Each delegate is duly ticketed and loaded with his proper credentials and fondly imagines that he really is of some importance in the gathering; that is, he does if he is a "green hand." If he is a seasoned campaigner, he knows that he merely "represents the people," and the chairman and secretary of the convention "represent" the delegates, and the "bosses" represent the chairman and secretary. By means of this sliding scale of actual power it will be seen that the "bosses" represent the people!

It was my deep delight to have attended a number of political conventions. The "will of the people" stood about "deuce high" in the political deck. The will of the "bosses" was always the "ace," and it could be and was turned from the bottom or top just as the emergencies demanded.

Imagine a long, low, rakish hall, the atmosphere a wavy blue with tobacco smoke. Aisles are cut through to the platform, generally three in number, to admit of committees on this, that and the other to go forward to the platform and hand in their cut-and-dried communications. The different wards and districts are ranged about the hall, each with its particular spot to stay in, like checkers on a board before the game begins. Many of these delegates are in their shirt-sleeves, and many are talking wildly, gesticulating powerfully and in other ways modding the destinies of their country. The very few who are not smoking are choking.

On the platform are two tables, at which the chairman of the convention sits, he having been chosen by the powers that be. He is a mere puppet in their hands, understanding what they want, and at any and all times ready to carry out their wishes. The secretary is a mere echo; the assistant secretaries mere assistant echoes. Two or three highly respectable oblong-bottled varieties of titles sit on the stage to deceive the unintelligent observer into the belief that things are "on the square." A pitcher of water is on the chairman's desk, for he will open the convention with a speech. In that speech he will glorify the proud history of his own party and skin, salt and nail to the political smoke-house the hide of the opposite party. This is a species of buncombe which is always indulged in.

Sometimes a convention is opened with prayer. This is something which cannot be touched on at length, for the devil himself could not conceive a more grotesque blasphemy. Most conventions are opened with political "jimmies," being burlesque aggregations, brought together for purposes of plundering men of their political rights. The chairman has his speech carefully learned by heart, and he is invariably eloquent, pungent, witty, scholarly, terse, dense, flowery and long-winded. But he finally subsides, and then, after the committee reports and the platform are finished, and some more political red tape is gotten through with, the work of nominating candidates is begun. But before the convention has reached the point of being ready to vote there have been a number of battles fought to a finish before the various committees on credentials.

In certain wards of the cities, or certain districts in the country, there may be a dispute about some delegates, these claiming the right to represent "the people," thus putting in a counter-claim for recognition. In such cases, contests are begun and the respective claims thrashed out before the committee on credentials, which have the power to review these disputes in the various districts or wards.

No one but the contestants and the committee and the other delegates are allowed in the committee rooms in these contests. Usually, the contests are determined according to the way the "bosses" want them to be decided, but if it doesn't matter about a vote or two, the "bosses" allow the committee to do as they please. Evidence is heard, speeches are made, and the committee picks the winner.

The "bosses" keep accurate "tab" on the number of votes they need, but are ready to achieve results by any means they consider necessary. One unseated delegate rushed madly up to a "boss" on the floor of the convention and screamed out: "What d'ye mean by throwin' me out? There ain't no contest on me at all." The "boss" looked smilingly down at the fiery face of his questioner, surmounted by its bright red covering of locks and responded easily, gracefully and most urbanely: "I don't like the color of your hair." And the delegate remained "unseated." Men were let out of their delegations for any or no reasons. The only question was to have the majority, or at least the loudest and most pugacious minority. This latter, with the able aid of the chairman and the secretary, will enable any combination to jam through the nomination of their candidates.

Supposing, for instance, that Smith is the candidate the "bosses" want, and Jones the opposition candidate.

The Seventh ward, we will say, is called on and the chairman of the delegation roars out "Fourteen votes for Jones and one for Smith." An assistant secretary repeats to the main secretary, "Fourteen votes for Smith and one for Jones," and it is so recorded. The chairman of the Seventh ward may think the vote of his delegation has been recorded properly. Sometimes, when things appear to be running too close, they will not even give the opposition candidate any votes until the "bosses" candidate is safe. Any motion for a roll-call is "gavelled down" by the chairman, and the sergeant-at-arms, always chosen by the "bosses," are eager to eject any obstreperous patriot who begins any jargon about his "rights."

To "gavel down" a motion is simply to hammer on the table with the gavel and proclaim that a motion has been "carried," or "defeated," just as you want it to go. In this way, no matter what the majority is, the "bosses" and the chairman and secretaries can thwart the will of any convention, unless the convention splits and "a boil" is started. To "boil" is to leave the hall, organize a separate convention and proceed as though the other convention was not in existence.

This is a last resort, and is seldom done. Delegates are timid and they rarely have any independent action. They may fume in private, but they "take the gaff" in public. Party fealty, party cohesion, party this, and that and the other weighs on them and makes them cowards. For the most part the delegates hope to get some crumbs from the party table and they fear to revolt, knowing well they will be marked men with "the organization." Oh! potent phrase, "the organization." There is the "ward organization," the "county organization," the "state organization," the "national organization," all inextricably linked and welded together, and the national committee man can put his finger on a garbage wagon driver in a remote ward and separate him from his job if the driver doesn't do exactly as he is told. It's a beautiful system. Don't imagine that it is not perfected so far as it can be.

Occasionally some fossil of respectability, galvanized into spasmodic action by something particularly brazen on the part of the powers that run the convention, will get up from the platform, where he is supposed to be acquiescent to the program, and start the animals by a fiery diatribe against the bare-faced robbery going on under his very nose. At such a time it is really delightful to see the perfect respect in which his remarks are listened to by the chairman and the "bosses." His remarks may be punctuated by cheers by the malcontents in the delegates' seats, but the "strong-arm" contingent governed by the "bosses" sits quietly until he fires his broadside. Then possibly a "boss" gets up, or the chairman gets in a happy remark or two, and there is a thunder-roll of applause from the "bosses' gang. The respectable gentleman has simply talked for the pleasure of having his cerebellum vibrated. He might as well have recited "Mary had a little lamb."

Our ward stood eight to seven in one convention, and our chairman announced it correctly. He was an opponent of mine, but he did not try to change the vote. But when the vote was announced from the stage it was 15 for the other side. Several of us yelled "bloody murder" at the steal, but, bless you, that convention went right ahead with its business as easily as if seven men standing upright in their seats and howling "Mister Chairman, Mister Chairman," was a mere tableau and nothing that concerned the convention in the remotest degree.

By the way, convention oratory is divided into two kinds, the "turned loose" and the "squelched." The

"bosses" and the chairman have their eyes on their own orators, and very little latitude is allowed the opposition "jaw-smiths." It is laughable to watch the frantic gyrations of some silver-tongued word-juggler, especially if he be a young man, who is trying to get the chairman's eye in order to let off a philippic against the chairman's tyranny. His companions may hoist him high on a chair, where he balances himself precariously while he shrieks "Meastair Chairmannn," and froths like something stricken with hydrophobia, but the chairman goes placidly on. "Twenty-second ward, 18 for Smith" is the announcement, when in fact the announcement was just the other way. This raises a counter-irritant and the Twenty-second ward delegation goes on the war-path. But, tush, what's the use? The game goes merrily on and at last the youthful orator is let down from his pinnacle and expends his energy in loud talk in his immediate vicinity, until some low-browed gentleman advises him to "cut it out," at the same time casting a perfectly annihilating look in his direction.

The old stagers always enjoy these interludes. They smile grimly, get a fresh grip on their cigars and elevate the weeds reminiscently in a skyward angle. They keep watchful cognizance when their wards are about to be reached and, if chairman, rise instantly at the word, shout clearly the vote and, whether it be recorded

### WHAT SAVED "UNCLE JOE"

Old Lifting Machine That Long Ago Proved a Health Preserver.

The secret of perpetual youth, which has permitted "Uncle Joe" Cannon to be as young as he is at 72, has just been rediscovered here by a former senator from New Hampshire, says the Washington correspondent of the Boston Herald. Henry W. Blair, who is no youngster himself, having been born in 1834, and the present speaker were fellow members of the house 30 years ago. Both at that time were in poor health. They suffered from indigestion and were so frail and puny-looking that each anticipated the necessity of purchasing a bouquet to place with reverent hands upon the grave of the other. They lived in the same boarding house in those days and, to prolong their lives, entered into partnership for the purchase of a lifting machine, which they erected in a hallway outside of their rooms and upon which they practiced diligently night and morning with a view to the improvement of their physical beings.

### Laughing Bird of Australia

Biped by No Means Popular with Its Human Neighbors.

To the outside world the greatest ornithological oddity in this country is the kookaburra, says the Sidney, Australia, Times. Though Australians take little notice of it (except occasionally in a hostile way), its cacination appeals irresistibly to the newcomer. Like the shrieks and parrots, the curlew and the mopeke, it is a conspicuous figure in the scenery of a typical bush home, and therefore too common to be worthy of notice. In earlier times it was known as the "settler's clock," from a belief that its joyful peacocks were vented regularly at moon, noon and dusk, being quiescent through the heat of the forenoon and the wane of the afternoon. That belief has long been shattered. The kookaburra laughs just when excited; and it laughs as readily at the violent death of its mother-in-law as it does at the enraged settler when he falls off his hay stack. A wounded bird makes a demoniacal row, which will bring all

right or wrong, they settle down stoically into the attitude of mere spectators. Far be it from them to "holier" if the cards are "stacked" against them. They would do the same if they had the power. The other fellows have the whip-hand today; when it shifts, they will give their opponents the same dose. But to cavort around on the floor waiting out "Meastair Chairmannn," not for them. They are too wise to resort to such puerile foolishness.

Nothing can exceed the perfect repose which marks the proceedings as relates to the officers and head men who have it in charge. There is not a shadow of a smile on the countenances of the chairman and his assistants and the "bosses" move around on the floor of the convention or ascend to the platform with an entirely serious and virtuous air which would indicate extreme self-sacrifice and the most absolute fairness to their opponents.

But once the business is concluded, over the cigars and cocktails these genial gentlemen will unbend and relate delightedly and with rare humor the amusing comedies played on the convention floor. They have remembered the very voices and gestures of the reformers and patriots, they can imitate, and perfectly, the surprised scream of the plundered delegation, or the stentorian yawn of the hard-boiled orator. They enjoy these things with the gusto of the connoisseur, the political bon vivant. But at the hall, and in the midst of the carnage, they are as snave as panthers and as remorseless as cannibals. "Everything goes in politics," is their motto, that is, everything but honesty.

Coming back from my last political convention I met Jack Derby in the "smoker." Jack was from the ward next to mine, and I had raised him just before the voting began. I had noticed a stranger in his seat when I came in rather late, but still in time to vote. Jack was moody and his head was done up in a sandy handkerchief. "What's up?" I said to him. "I didn't see you when the votes were being cast."

"They thru me out," was his reply. "I went over to see a friend of mine in the fourteenth and when I got back to me seat they was a guy there in it. I grabbed him and he caught hold of me arms. The 'sarge' (sergeant-at-arms) came runnin' up 'an' this guy gives him the wink 'an' says this feller's a pick-pocket. Before I could hand him one the 'sarge' grabs me—he's seven feet long and four feet through—and he wings me to the door in four jumps and fires me by the neck and pants. See? An' I lose me vote 'an' I don't get in the hall again."

"That's tough, Jack," was my consolatory reply. "Tough," said Mr. Derby, with an injured air, "an' I was goin' to vote right all the time. I think that sergeant must be bugs."

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She Did Her Duty by Him. One Monday morning the colored "wash lady" did not arrive at the usual hour to do the weekly washing of a family residing in a Pennsylvania town.

When she appeared some time later the mistress of the house descended to the kitchen and was greatly edified by the woman's explanation. "No'm"—carefully removing a hat ornamented by a voluminous black veil—"I wasn't sick. I had to stay home to receive my diseased brother's remainders that was sent from Pittsburg day before yesterday."—Lippincott's.

No Occasion for It. "My dear," said the old man to his only daughter on the morning of her wedding day, "I don't see how I am going to get along without you." "Now, don't let that worry you, papa," replied the fair maid, as she adjusted her bridal veil. "George confessed to me last night that he hadn't enough money even to buy a second-hand stove, so instead of losing me it looks as if we were going to stay right with you."

Responsive. The lecturer had announced that among the Athabascans, on the Koskowiue river, the females were supreme. "Pardon me for the interruption," said a resolute looking spinster, "but I must go." "Are you ill?" asked the speaker, with proper concern. "Never better," responded the departing, "but I'm hitting the trail for the Koskowiue."

Laundry work at home would be much more satisfactory if the right Starch were used. In order to get the desired stiffness, it is usually necessary to use so much starch that the beauty and fineness of the fabric is hidden behind a paste of varying thickness, which not only destroys the appearance, but also affects the wearing quality of the goods. This trouble can be entirely overcome by using Defiance Starch, as it can be applied much more thinly because of its greater strength than other makes.

Thoughtless. "Why doesn't Mrs. Flighty wear that pink dress with her red hair?" "She probably bought the dress before she changed from a brunette."

The more a woman tries to look young the more she doesn't.

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