

Henry G. Davis is Notified

At White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., August 17, 1904, Henry G. Davis, was formally notified of his nomination by the democratic party to be vice president of the United States. The notification speech was delivered by John Sharp Williams, temporary chairman of the democratic national convention.

Addressing Mr. Davis, Mr. Williams said:

"As soon as I learned that I was to be the mouthpiece of the committee for the performance of this pleasant task I began to look about me in order to see how the duty had been performed by others. I found that for a notification speech a historical essay is altogether the proper thing, absolutely necessary for the emergency. We shall therefore entitle our notification address, 'A Brief Historical Disquisition Upon Some of the Blunders of Our Ancestors as Viewed From the Standpoint of the Wisdom of Republican Statesmen Who Have Embraced the Strenuous Life.'

"The first of these consisted in discriminating against the red man—on account of the race and color and previous condition, supposed incapacities, of which his color was but the outward sign. Be that claim pretense or sincerity, we found, to our astonishment, that 'the door of opportunity and hope' in the way of office-holding and voting had been closed to, lo! the poor Indian. This first violation in America of the divine right of manhood suffrage and of the cherished fundamental dogma that all men of all races are equally capacitated to govern themselves, and especially to govern others, has doubtless been the 'Iliad of all our woes.' Plainly, it was what the Boston Transcript so eloquently calls 'colorphobia.'

"The next great blunder in our early history consisted in taking up arms against King George and his forces, when the latter were actuated, as they themselves confessed, only by the

kindest designs of 'benevolently assimilating' to themselves our resources and our opportunities.

"We know, now, of course, that all our ancestors' talk about 'inalienable right' of self-government, 'no taxation without representation,' habeas corpus and right of trial by jury, freedom of the press, freedom of speech and freedom of assembly were only a pretext resorted to by ranting 'insurgents' in order to throw off the 'civilizing influences' of the best government which the world had that far witnessed.

"Coming on down the current of time we found another period of popular hysterics that is incomprehensible to us of a wiser generation, in view of some enlightening facts in our recent history. Some men in the troublesome little town of Boston, masquerading, as Indians, seized and threw into the sea certain cases of tea belonging to certain merchants of the East Indian company. The consequence was that the entire population of Boston, men, women and children observers of the law as well as law-breakers, were punished and the Boston port bill was passed, thus in a fashion royally excommunicating the little town, commercially and industrially. Our ancestors could not be quieted, but got worse and worse, until their misguided counsels led to the foolish result of 'insurrection' and a free and independent American government.

"The next great historical blunder, in spite of which, strange to say, we have, as I can not too often repeat, prospered right along in every step of our history, with now and then a temporary drop-back, was the immolation of our ancestors of the nation's industrialism upon the altar of free trade within that common domain, notwithstanding already existing state lines furnished convenient place, opportunity and temptation to establish custom-houses.

"That reminds me of another blunder of our ancestors, both under the common law in Great Britain and in the United States. They seem to have entertained the notion that combinations in restraint of trade, seeking monopoly and throttling competition, are in some way adverse to the development of individuality and some how poison the life of trade.

"We know now that combinations of corporations seeking with the power of monopoly the resultant power of robbing consumers by raising prices to an extortionate figure, under the shelter of tariff laws, are, on the whole, beneficial institutions in a free republic of self-governing men.

"Another error of our grandfathers in connection with our foreign affairs has come over me lately with weighing-down emphasis. George Washington thought that our wisest and best and most patriotic foreign policy consisted in amicable relations with all the other nations of the world and entangling alliances with none of them.

"We know now, from our fellow citizen in the white house, that the peoples who may expect our tolerance and friendship are 'those who maintain order and prosperity,' those 'who govern themselves well,' those 'who pay their financial obligations,' and that it may become 'a duty which we can not ignore, certainly in the western hemisphere,' to 'intervene' in some way, more or less indefinite, in the domestic affairs of 'those who do not do all these things' nor 'behave with decency in political and industrial matters,' whatever in the world that may mean, but who, by the omission of the doing of all these things, do 'loosen the ties which bind together civilized society,' which ties, of course, God has appointed us his mundane vicegerent mechanics to tighten up again.

"What a queer, old-time, childish idea was that of our ancestors, that the president of the United States is simply a chief executive and that his duty consists in executing the laws as they are written. I need not tell you, sir, that if you should be elected vice president it will be one of your duties as a sort of heir apparent to the crown to train yourself and influence your chief—Judge Parker—in the way of usurping the functions of the other departments of the government. Your opportunity will not be as great as that of the president himself, but as president of the senate you may have some opportunity.

"In conclusion, sir, pray for war—nobody can tell what great things war will end in when once begun. It might result in making of your chief the first 'emperor and lord protector of the western hemisphere.'

"Remember above all things that our chief duty as citizens, but especially as rulers, is not to be 'weaklings' or 'cowards.' A weakling, sir, is a strangely domesticated animal who listens before he acts and who weighs evidence before he decides, who modestly venerates greatness—in others, who actually prefers 'piping times of peace' to the 'pomp and circumstance of glorious war.' Weaklings are 'men who fear the strenuous life, the only national life that is really worth the living'—the life of crown-colony-conquest, the life militant, in a word. We are getting to be as a people, your committee is glad to say, splendidly military. A flag, brass band and a choice collection of epaulets, escorting a secretary of war to and from the depot in Washington when he augustly leaves or arrives, appeal to the higher flights of our patriotic imagination as nothing else does or can.

"It has been a pleasure to us to do our duty, to notify you of your nomination. This has been a pleasure, not-

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withstanding the fact that you had already been in a manner notified by Elihu Root, who, while pretending to notify Senator Fairbanks, 'could not set his mind off'n you,' as the darkies say, and whose speech consisted principally in saying, 'Go to, thou art an old man,' and in bemoaning the fact that you might possibly die before you got to be president. So might he for that matter.

"In further comment upon Elihu Root's notification of your nomination I will hazard the remark, in reply to one of exceeding good taste on his part, that it is better to run the risk of incurring, as in due course of the flesh we all must, physical 'inability,' than to have been born with that peculiar mental 'inability' for any possible task in life which consists of taking ourselves too seriously and nobody else with respect of reverence."

Mr. Davis' Reply

In replying to the notification address, Mr. Davis said:

"Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Committee: The official notification which you bring of my nomination for the vice presidency of the United States by the national democracy gives me a feeling of the sincerest gratitude to my party for the honor conferred. At the same time it brings to me a deep sense of my responsibility to my party as a candidate and to my country in case of my election.

"A spirit of determination to succeed in the campaign before us appears to pervade the rank and file of our party in all sections of the country. Of that rank and file I have for many years been a member and have at all times devoted my humble powers to party success, believing that success to be for the country's good. Unexpectedly called as I am now to the forefront, I am impelled to an acceptance of the obligation by a sense of gratitude to my fellow workers and the hope that it may be able the



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