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# PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

# NATIONAL CONVENTION

OF

JOURNEYMEN PRINTERS OF THE UNITED STATES,

HÉLD IN NEW YORK, DECEMBER 2, 1850;

TOGETHER WITH

AN ADDRESS.



PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE CONVENTION.

PHILADELPHIA:  
JOURNEYMEN PRINTERS' UNION.  
1851.





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TO THE PUBLIC.

The proceedings of the late National Convention of Journeymen Printers, contained in this pamphlet, are published by order of that body. Previous to its adjournment it instructed the National Executive Committee to prepare them. In the discharge of that duty, the Committee have adopted the greater portion of the reports published in the *New York Tribune*. They have been induced to do this because those reports, in addition to being as correct as the Secretary's minutes, embody an abstract of the speeches made on some of the most interesting subjects which engaged the attention of the Convention. This cannot but be regarded as an advantage, inasmuch as it places before the reader the views presented, the ideas which prevailed, &c.

The Committee have taken the liberty to append an "Address to the Journeymen Printers of the United States," prepared by order of the Convention, and already published in many of the newspapers.

They would solicit for both a general circulation and perusal.

On behalf of the Committee,

M. F. CONWAY, *Chairman*.

*Baltimore*, December 16th, 1850.





PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
NATIONAL CONVENTION OF JOURNEYMEN PRINTERS.

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DECEMBER 2d, 1850, 7 o'clock, P. M.

The members of the Convention, comprising delegates from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Kentucky, assembled at Stoneall's Hotel, Fulton street.

A temporary organization was effected, by calling John F. Keyser, of Philadelphia, to the chair, and appointing F. J. Ottarson, of New York, Secretary.

On motion, a committee, consisting of one from each State, to select officers for the permanent organization of the Convention, was appointed. They retired for a few minutes, and returned with the following report, which was unanimously adopted :

PRESIDENT,

JOHN W. PEREGOY, of Maryland.

VICE PRESIDENTS,

GEORGE E. GREENE, of Kentucky; M. C. BROWN, of Pennsylvania.

SECRETARIES,

F. J. OTTARSON, of New York; JOHN HARTMAN, of New Jersey.

A committee of seven was then appointed to prepare and present business for the transaction of the Convention. The committee was as follows: M. F. Conway, of Baltimore; John Hartman, of Trenton; G. K. Winne, of Albany; George E. Greene, of Louisville; William Molineux and E. H. Rogers, of New York; and R. B. Smyth, of Philadelphia.

The Convention then adjourned until Tuesday afternoon at 3 o'clock.

TUESDAY, Dec. 2d, 3 o'clock, P. M.

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment. The Secretary being absent, on motion of Mr. Conway, Mr. Nafew was appointed Secretary *pro tem*.

The proceedings of the last meeting were read and approved.

Mr. Conway, from the Committee on Business, made a report in part, which was accepted, and the committee granted leave to sit again.

Mr. Keyser read a letter from the Association of Printers in St. Louis, expressing their hearty sympathy with the movement, and their regret at not having information of the intended Convention in time to send Delegates.

The Convention then proceeded to consider the first proposition reported by the Committee on Business, which is as follows:

*Resolved*, That a Standing National Executive Committee, of three from each State, be appointed to enforce the execution of all resolutions of this Convention, bearing upon the different sections here represented; to gather information on all matters of interest to the trade; to report the same quarterly to the different Unions, and to the next Convention when it assembles; to make arrangements for the assembling of the next Convention; and also to attend to whatever else the Convention may direct, during the interim between the adjournment of this and the assembling of the next Convention.

After some debate, the resolution was adopted.

The second proposition submitted by the committee was then read, as follows:

*Resolved*, That this Convention recommend to the Journeymen Printers of every city and town in the United States to form themselves into Unions, and to establish a connection with each other, for the purpose of securing united action upon any and every question involving the interest of the trade, upon the following basis:

1st. Regulation and adjustment of the different Scales of Prices, so as not to conflict with each other.

2d. Giving travelling certificates to their members, in good standing, to be legal for one year, which shall recommend the holders thereof to assistance and travelling expenses from the Union, in any city or town where they cannot obtain work; providing said holders have done nothing in the meantime to disqualify them from the same, of which fact the National Executive Committee shall notify the Unions or Societies in other places.

3d. Keeping a registry of the names of "rats," and other unworthy members of the trade, and description of their persons, to be sent to every Union or Society in the country, and to be kept by each Union for reference.

4th. Receiving no stranger as a member of any Union or Society, who shall not produce a legal certificate of membership from the Society or Union of the place to which he belongs; provided a Union or Society existed in such place at the time he left.

5th. Levying a monthly contribution upon each member, sufficiently large to enable it to accumulate within two years a sum equivalent, at least, to \$15 for each member, as a reserve fund, in view of their being compelled to quit work in vindication of their rights.

6th. Establishing the right of any sister Union or Society to call upon them for pecuniary assistance, if necessary, to the amount of \$1.00 from each member; provided that all sums thus loaned shall be repaid in monthly instalments, equivalent to at least five per cent. of the original loan; the first instalment to be paid within one month after the difficulty calling for the loan shall have passed away.

7th. Granting certificates from one Union, to enable the members thereof to become attached to any other, without paying an entrance fee; provided the holder intends residing permanently within the bounds of the Union into which he seeks admission.

Mr. Conway, of Baltimore, offered the following resolutions, in lieu of the first one proposed by the committee :

*Resolved*, That on and after the first day of February next, no printer coming from any city or town known to contain ten journeymen printers or more, will be allowed to work in any locality embraced within this organization, unless he exhibit a certificate of membership from the Society situated in the place from which he comes.

*And Resolved, further*, That the members of the National Executive Committee are specially enjoined to have the above resolution faithfully adhered to, and strictly carried into effect.

*Resolved*, That the following propositions be recommended to the various organizations throughout the country, and earnestly urged upon them for their adoption.

Mr. Conway stated, that the main object of the Convention was to extend our organization as far as possible over the country. A National Organization was the first thing to be effected through a National Convention. Merely to *recommend*, would have but little influence in inducing men to organize themselves. He thought it would be better to render it *necessary* for men in country towns and elsewhere to *belong* to a Society, if we desire or expect them to get up organizations. Men desiring to go to points embraced within this organization, for work, through the binding force of the first resolution which he proposed, would be *compelled* to interest themselves in instituting societies.



Mr. Smyth, of Philadelphia, thought the resolution offered by Mr. Conway, was not practicable. New York city could not observe it. The journeymen printers in New York could not say what they would do. They had not the power. It would fall a perfect blank in New York.

Mr. Keyser, of Philadelphia, favored the substitute. He spoke at some length on the subject.

Mr. Brown, of Philadelphia, and Mr. Molineux, of New York, also spoke in favor of the substitute, and Mr. McDonald and Mr. Glen, of New York, against it.

Mr. Conway suggested that New York might be excepted from the operation of the resolution.

Mr. Greene, of Louisville, offered a substitute for both the resolutions proposed by the committee and the one offered by Mr. Conway.

Pending the question on these several propositions, the Convention adjourned until Wednesday morning at 9 o'clock.

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WEDNESDAY, Dec. 4th, 9 o'clock, A. M.

The Convention met again this morning.

Mr. Frederick Young, a Delegate from Baltimore, appeared, presented his credentials, and took his seat.

Mr. McDonald called the attention of the Convention to an error in *The Tribune's* publication of the proceedings of yesterday, in which, in the sixth section of the second proposition of the Committee on Business, "\$100" is made to take the place of "1."

Mr. Keyser read an eloquent letter from Francis McNerhany, Esq., of Washington.

The report of the Committee on Business was taken up. The question was on the adoption of Mr. Greene's substitute, for the substitute offered by Mr. Conway for the second resolution of the committee, and for the resolution of the committee itself, which reads as follows:

*Resolved,* That this Convention strenuously urge the Journeymen Printers of every city and town in the United States, (provided there are six or more employed in such place,) to form themselves into Unions and establish connection with each other, for the purpose of securing united action upon every question involving the interests of the Trade; and that on and after the first day of February, 1851, no Journeyman Printer, coming from any city or town known to contain the organization provided for above, will be allowed to work in any locality embraced within this organization, unless he exhibit a certificate of membership from the Society situated in the place from which he comes.



Mr. Conway hoped that the substitute offered by Mr. Greene might not be adopted, because he did not believe it would secure the end sought to be accomplished. If it was necessary, he would ask leave to alter his resolution, so as to except the city of New York from its operation.

The question being called for on Mr. Greene's proposition, it was taken, and decided in the affirmative.

The first section of the second proposition of the committee was then taken up and adopted without debate.

The second section was taken up, amended at the suggestion of Mr. Young, so as to read as follows, and adopted :

2d. Giving travelling certificates to their members, in good standing, to be legal for one year, which shall recommend the holders thereof to assistance and travelling expenses from the Union in any city or town where they cannot obtain work: provided said holders have done nothing in the the meantime, by a course of intemperance or otherwise, to disqualify them from the same, of which fact the National Executive Committee shall notify the Unions or Societies in other places.

The third section was adopted.

The fourth section was also adopted, after being amended, at the suggestion of Mr. Young, to read as follows:

4th. Receiving no stranger as a member of any Union or Society, who shall not produce a legal certificate of membership from the Society or Union of the place to which he belongs.

Mr. Young offered an amendment to the 5th section, to strike out the words "\$15" and to leave a blank instead.

Mr. Smyth opposed the amendment.

Mr. Young then withdrew it by unanimous consent.

Mr. Keyser moved to amend by striking out "\$15" and inserting "10." This was agreed to, and the section, as amended, adopted.

The 6th and 7th sections were adopted without debate.

Mr. Nafew offered the following as a preamble to the several sections thus adopted:

*Resolved,* That this Convention recommend to our brethren throughout the country the formation of Unions on the following basis:

This was agreed to; and the report of the committee then taken up, and adopted as a whole.

Mr. Conway offered the following resolution:

*Resolved,* That the principle now in successful operation in Baltimore city, limiting the number of apprentices employed in the various printing offices, be earnestly recommended to the trade throughout the country.

Mr. Keyser spoke against it.

Mr. Winne thought the proposition should be adopted. It was working well in Albany; and he thought it would do great good if adopted in every section of the country.

Mr. Smyth, though favorable to the principle in itself, was opposed to its being so openly proclaimed. He thought it would be employed to injure the trade.

Mr. Young concurred in the opinion of Mr. Smyth.

Mr. Keyser offered the following as a substitute:

*Resolved,* That the limiting of the number of apprentices be earnestly recommended to the different Unions throughout the country, for their adoption.

Mr. Keyser was favorable to the principle, in itself, but was opposed to the Baltimore plan of enforcing it. He therefore hoped his substitute would be adopted.

Mr. Conway explained that his intention was not to recommend the Baltimore *plan*, nor did he think his resolution would bear such a construction. It plainly recommended the "*principle* of limiting the number of apprentices," (which was working well in Baltimore,) to the adoption of the trade throughout the country. By unanimous consent, however, he accepted the amendment proposed by Mr. Keyser.

Mr. Smyth was as much opposed to the resolution as amended as to the original one. He thought it would have a bad effect. It was necessary to observe caution in our movements, to insure success. Let the Unions in the different cities and towns adopt it themselves, without drawing public attention so forcibly to it. He was not opposed to the principle, but to the expediency of its being publicly proclaimed by a National Convention. That was the only question before the Convention. All agreed as to its utility and justice; the only question was as to its expediency.

Mr. Conway agreed that the only question before the Convention was one of expediency. All seemed favorable to the limitation of apprentices. The only question was as to whether the Convention should call the attention of the various Unions to the subject, and to

urge its adoption upon them. The gentlemen on the other side urged that it should be adopted by the different Unions quietly, without exciting public attention to the subject. He thought that the *adoption* of it by the different Unions would excite more attention and hostility than the mere *recommendation* of it, by this Convention. But he did not think that we could be injured by any opposition which either its adoption or its recommendation might provoke. The same objection might be urged to every measure of reform which was proposed. If we are going to be regulated in our actions by the opinions of the employing class, and those whom they control, we might as well go home at once, and submit ourselves entirely to established usages. He came here to *do* something, if possible, practically beneficial. Those who sent him here expected something to be done. If there were people hostile to this, so were there people hostile to the assembling of this Convention, or to the adoption of any measures calculated to redeem the trade from the control of the capitalist. We are not to consult *their* selfish views, but *our own* interests, in our actions upon this as well as all other measures.

Mr. Brown favored the proposition. He thought too many printers had been manufactured of late years. New York City afforded a miserable proof of this fact. The present system is prolific of "rats." Our trade should be purged of this vermin, and made respectable throughout. Let apprentices be limited, and journeymen would be in demand. The price of labor would be increased, and placed in a position which would enable it to compete successfully with the power of capital.

Mr. McDonald made a speech in favor of the adoption of the resolution. He gave an account of the apprentice system in New York.

The question being called for, it was taken and the resolution adopted.

Mr. Conway moved to appoint a committee to prepare an Address to the Printers of the United States. Adopted.

The Chair appointed the following gentlemen to constitute the committee: Messrs. Conway, Greene, Atkinson, Nafew and Bechtel.

Mr. Keyser moved that when the Convention adjourns, it adjourn to meet this evening at 7 o'clock.

Mr. McDonald called the attention of the Convention to the invitation which was extended on the first night of the session to the



members of the New York and all other Unions to attend the deliberations of the Convention, and hoped it would be published.

Mr. Walsh offered the following preamble and resolution, which was laid on the table until this evening:

*Whereas*, The system, so universally adopted by the Legislatures of the several States, and by the Congress of the Nation, of giving out the printing for those several bodies by contract, to the lowest bidder, is repugnant to the spirit of republican institutions, inasmuch as its effect is to degrade labor below the standard of its merit, by throwing it into market for the competition of men not practical printers, who have neither the character nor the interests of the trade at heart—as the style of the public printing generally evinces—being in its mechanical execution disgraceful not alone to the trade, but to the nation; and whereas, it is our duty not only as Printers, but as Workingmen, to respectfully protest against such a system, unless applied to every branch of the machinery of government, other than the elective portion thereof: therefore,

*Resolved*, That this Convention recommend to the trade at large to respectfully protest, in a formal manner, against the contract system in every branch of public work; and that the Executive Committee to be appointed by this Convention be requested to urge upon the various Unions some general action upon this subject.

The Convention then adjourned until this (Wednesday) evening at seven o'clock.

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EVENING SESSION; 7 o'clock, P. M.

The Convention assembled this evening.

Mr. Conway offered the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the New York Printers' Union, as well all other Typographical Societies in the country having them, be earnestly recommended to abolish the so-called benefit systems.

An interesting debate sprung up on the subject, in which Messrs. Keyser, Smyth, Nafew, Glen, Rogers, Molineux, McDonald and Young, participated.

Mr. Nafew offered the following as a substitute:

*Resolved*, That it be recommended to all Typographical Trade Associations to abolish the so-called benefit system.

Mr. Conway, by unanimous consent, accepted the substitute as an amendment.

After some further debate on the subject, the question was taken on the resolution, as amended, and it was unanimously adopted.

The resolution offered by Mr. Walsh this morning, respecting the contract system, was called up.



Mr. Nafew moved that it be laid over until the next meeting, which was agreed to.

Mr. Young offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That the Employing Printers of the United States are urgently requested to have their apprentices indentured for a period not less than five years.

Mr. Molineux submitted to the Convention a "Regenerative Plan." Referred to the Business Committee.

Mr. Rogers read a letter from the Typographical Association of San Francisco, addressed to the New York Union.

Mr. Conway moved, that when the Convention adjourns, it adjourn until to-morrow afternoon at 2 o'clock. Agreed to.

The Convention then adjourned.

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THURSDAY, Nov. 5th, 2 o'clock, P. M.

The Convention met.

The resolution offered by Mr. Walsh, respecting the contract system, was called up.

Mr. Young spoke on it. Thought it was a very important matter, and should be carefully considered. He hoped Mr. Nafew, who had devoted some consideration to the subject, would give his opinions on it.

Mr. Nafew was opposed to it. A great political party in New York State divided on the subject, which he thought might make it a breach of propriety for the Convention to express an opinion on it.

Mr. Walsh thought that that was rather a reason why we should say something about it. There was a probability of its being abolished, and he thought that all the influence which could be brought to bear against it should be.

Mr. Keyser was opposed to the present contract system; and gave some striking instances of its operations upon the producing classes. He stated that the most distinguished members of Congress were opposed to the system. The day was not far distant when the Printers of Washington would make a handsome dividend of what is now distributed among political favorites. That day would certainly arrive. The system of Public Schools had a tendency to that end. He thought that *intellect* was not now confined to the higher professions.

Mr. Rogers thought that under the contract system the people had been robbed, but they had been robbed also under the other system. He was in favor of the contract system. That system was as favorable to practical printers as to any body else. They can bid for contracts as well as others. Let them get up a Joint Stock Company and make their bids, and they would be more favored than any other bidders. Mr. R. gave an interesting account of the doings of the politician-printers of late years. He thought Government was tired enough of them.

Mr. Greene was surprised to hear the gentleman from New York favor the contract system. It cannot be anything else than disadvantageous to the journeymen. It produces competition, and competition produces low prices. Whenever the contract is obtained by virtue of low bids, the journeymen are made to suffer, not the contractor.

Mr. Conway spoke in favor of the resolution proposed. He was not opposed to the contract system, because *contracting* was essential in every department of business, and was not to be objected to; but he was opposed to the *auctioning* system. He thought it was a botch system, paid botch prices, and produced botch work.

Mr. Rogers would like to hear some better system proposed. He was decidedly opposed to the old system of favoritism.

Mr. Young was opposed to the present contract system. The Government work was not half done since the old system was abolished. The printing of Congress has not been fit to be presented to the public for the last three years. Such botch work injured our reputation. It was an absolute disgrace to our calling. Journeymen Printers had a better time and did better work under the old system.

Mr. Greene moved to strike out, (which was carried,) so as to make it read as follows :

*Whereas*, The system so universally adopted by the Legislatures of the several States, and by the Congress of the Nation, of giving out the printing for their several bodies by contract, to the lowest bidder, is repugnant to the spirit of republican institutions, inasmuch as its effect is to degrade labor below the standard of its merit, by throwing it into market for the competition of men not practical printers, who have neither the character nor the interests of the trade at heart—as the style of the public printing generally evinces—being in its mechanical execution disgraceful not alone to the trade, but to the nation; and whereas it is our duty not only as Printers, but as Workingmen, to respectfully protest against such a system;

*Resolved*, That this Convention recommend to the trade at large to respectfully

protest. in a formal manner, against the contract system, in every branch of public work; and that the Executive Committee to be appointed by this Convention be requested to urge upon the various Unions some general action upon this subject.

The resolutions, as amended, were then adopted.

Mr. Keyser offered the following, which was unanimously adopted :

*Resolved*, That the proposed establishment of a Government Printing Office would be subversive of the interest of the trade, and that the same would have a tendency to political favoritism; therefore, we do most solemnly protest against the establishment of the same, and hereby recommend to Congress the propriety of withholding the public printing from all persons who are not practical printers.

Mr. Walsh submitted the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That the National Executive Committee be directed to take charge of the official proceedings of this Convention, prepare them for publication, and place them in the hands of the officers of the Philadelphia Printers' Union, to be printed.

*Resolved*, That the Philadelphia Printers' Union be requested to have them printed in pamphlet form, and that they supply all local "Unions" and individuals, with any number of copies they may order, at a cost which the Philadelphia Union will regulate.

*Resolved*, That it be recommended to the various "Unions" of the United States to furnish every newspaper in the State in which they are individually located, with a copy of the official proceedings of this Convention, with a request that they publish the whole, or an outline of the matter therein contained.

*Resolved*, That the National Executive Committee be empowered and directed to call our next National Convention at Baltimore, Md., on the 12th of September, 1851.

They were taken up separately and adopted without debate, with the exception of the last, which gave rise to some discussion as to the time and place of calling the next Convention. It was finally passed, however, as reported.

Mr. Conway, from the Business Committee, reported the following, and moved its reference to the next National Convention, which was carried :

*Resolved*, That the National Executive Committee have power to correspond with the several Unions which are or may be established, on the subject of joint stock offices, and particularly to ascertain from such Unions if funds can be subscribed by the members thereof, in amount sufficient to warrant the establishment of a National Union for doing the printing of the United States Government.



Mr. Bechtel offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

*Resolved*, That our thanks be extended to the New York Union, for furnishing the Convention with a Hall and other facilities during its sittings.

Mr. Greene offered the following:

*Resolved*, That we return our sincere thanks to Mr. J. W. PEREGOY, for the dignified, faithful and impartial manner in which he has discharged the duties of President of this Convention.

*Resolved*, That J. T. NAFEW, of Albany, is entitled to our thanks for the correct and faithful performance of the duties of Secretary of this Convention.

Mr. Greene explained to the Convention why Cincinnati had not sent delegates. Her sympathies were with us, and at the next Convention her delegates would also be.

The Chairman announced the following as the

#### NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

*New York*—T. J. Walsh, Albany; Edwin H. Rogers, Peter McDonald, New York City.

*Pennsylvania*—R. B. Smyth, John F. Keyser, W. B. Eckert, Philadelphia.

*New Jersey*—Charles Bechtel, John Hartman, William Gillispy, Trenton.

*Maryland*—M. F. Conway, Frederick Young, John W. Peregoy, Baltimore.

*Kentucky*—George E. Greene, J. L. Gibbons, Raymond Lynch, Louisville.

Mr. Walsh announced to the Convention that Mr. M. F. Conway, of Maryland, had been elected Chairman of the National Executive Committee.

The Convention then adjourned *sine die*.



## A D D R E S S

### TO THE JOURNEYMEN PRINTERS OF THE UNITED STATES.

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For some time past the project of calling together a National Convention of Journeymen Printers has met with considerable attention and favor from the trade in various portions of the country. Aware of this fact, and partaking also in the general desire, the Unions of New York, Philadelphia and Boston, about a month since, issued a Circular, requesting the different Societies throughout the country to send delegates to a National Convention, to be held in New York, on Monday, December 2, 1850. In consequence of the very short space of time intervening between the receipt of the Circular and the meeting of the Convention, but five States have sent delegates, viz: New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Kentucky. These delegates met in Convention at the time and place specified, and, through their committee, now address you.

It is useless for us to disguise from ourselves the fact that, under the present arrangement of things, there exists a perpetual antagonism between Labor and Capital. The Toilers are involuntarily pitted against the Employers; one side striving to sell their labor for *as much*, and the other striving to buy it for *as little*, as they can. In this war of interests, Labor, of itself, stands no chance. The power is all on the other side. Every addition to the number of laborers in the market decreases their power; while the power of Capital grows in a ratio commensurate with the increase of the Capital itself. On the one side, the greater the number of dollars, the *greater* the ability to succeed in the conflict; on the other, the greater the number of laborers, the *less* the ability to succeed. Add to this the fact that

wealth accumulates, on the one side, much faster as the laborers accumulate on the other, and the utter impotency of unorganized Labor in a warfare against Capital becomes manifest.

To remedy the many disastrous grievances arising from this disparity of power, combination, for mutual agreement in determining rates of wages, and for concert of action in maintaining them, has been resorted to in many trades, and principally in our own. Its success has abundantly demonstrated its utility. Indeed, while the present Wages System continues in operation, as an immediate protection from pressing calamities, it is clearly the only effective means which Labor can adopt. So far as it extends, it destroys competition in the labor market, unites the working people, and produces a sort of equilibrium in the power of the conflicting parties.

This being the case, it appears evident that an extensive organization, embracing the whole country, would secure to our own, or to any other trade, a power which could be derived from no other source. The delegates here assembled have come together deeply impressed with this conviction. They regard such an organization not only as an agent of immediate relief, but also as essential to the ultimate destruction of those unnatural relations at present subsisting between the interests of the employing and the employed classes. All their actions have accordingly been regulated with a view to the establishment of such an organization. They have recommended the formation of Societies in all the cities and towns throughout the country. They have rendered it obligatory upon all members of the profession travelling to any point embraced in the representation here, for work, to have with them Certificates of Membership from the Society located in the place from which they come. They have established a National Executive Committee, to urge the enforcement of their recommendations and requirements. They have also instructed that committee to use their utmost exertions to have a full representation of the whole country in the next National Convention, which they have ordered to be held in Baltimore, Maryland, on the 12th of next September.

The members of the Convention are well aware that, to secure the adoption of the measures they recommend, they must recommend those alone which are best calculated to effect the immediate well-being of the individual members of the trade. The establishment of a general organization must be effected upon certain principles. In proportion as the advantages of the operation of those principles are felt and observed, the establishment of that organization will be rendered certain or doubtful. The principles, therefore, recommended by the Convention, upon which it urges the formation of Societies throughout the country, are such as cannot fail to enlist in their favor the most potent considerations of self-interest. Among them are—

*First*—An understanding in the regulation of Scales of Prices in different localities, so that those in one place may not be permitted to become so comparatively high as to induce work to be sent elsewhere.

*Second*—The enforcement of the principle of limiting the number of apprentices; by which measure a too rapid increase in the number of workmen, too little care in the selection of boys for the business, and the employment of herds of half men at half wages, to the detriment of good workmen, will be effectually prevented.

*Third*—The issuing of Travelling Certificates, by which the distresses of brother craftsmen, incurred in journeying from one place to another, in search of work, may be relieved. In this we have one of those means of attracting and attaching to our Societies men who, not troubled largely with abstract principles of strict duty, are nevertheless willing to become “repentant prodigals” for the sake of the “fatted calf.” Beside, it is eminently calculated to produce a warmer attachment on the part of superior men, inasmuch as it will bind them in the ties of gratitude, and in the luxurious fellowship of good deeds.

*Fourth*—Measures to prevent disgraced members of the profession enjoying, anywhere in the United States, those privileges which belong

exclusively to honorable printers. They consist in keeping a registry of "rats," to be sent by the Executive Committee to every Union in the country, for reference; and admitting to membership no stranger, who does not produce evidence of his having been a member in good standing of the Society, if any existed, in the place from which he comes.

*Fifth*—The gradual collection of a sum of money by each Union sufficient to enable it to hold out successfully against the employers, in the event of a contention for higher wages.

*Sixth*—The recognition of the right of a Union to borrow from any other, when necessary, a sum of money to the amount of one dollar for each member thereof, to be repaid in a manner prescribed. This is intended, in conjunction with other measures proposed, to strengthen each individual Society in the struggles which it may be called on to make, from time to time, against unjust employers. Its efficacy needs no explanation.

*Seventh*—Measures for the attainment of several other objects of less importance, which are calculated to give efficacy to the whole.

Such has been the main work of the Convention; and, while the members thereof are aware that it is but the commencement of an undertaking which, in its full completion, must necessarily be more or less protractive, they look with confidence to those who shall follow them, in subsequent Conventions, to conduct it to a successful consummation.

The project of establishing a Joint Stock Office, at Washington City, for the purpose of executing the printing of the United States Government, was introduced into the Convention; but its newness, as a matter of practical concern, to the great body of Journeymen Printers, with the necessity of having a thorough deliberation on so important a matter, and the propriety of delegates being elected with a special regard to its consideration, prompted its reference to the next Convention. The practicability of the working people employ-



ing themselves, and realizing the profits of their own labor, there can be no doubt might be illustrated and established, if the Journeymen Printers of the United States would resolve to try the experiment. In fact, our Philadelphia brethren have already, to a great extent, succeeded in an effort of the kind. A Publishing Establishment has been instituted in that city, by the Union there; and thus far has answered the most sanguine expectations of its projectors and friends. If a similar concern, on a large scale, could be instituted in Washington, a similar result might be reasonably apprehended. The subject is, at least, well worthy a full and deliberate consideration; and may be regarded as one of the most important and interesting which will engage the attention of the next Convention.

Combination merely to fix and sustain a Scale of Prices, is of minor importance, compared with that combination which looks to an ultimate redemption of Labor. Scales of Prices, to keep up the value of Labor, are only necessary under a system which, in its uninterrupted operation, gives to that value a continual downward tendency. But when Labor determines to sell itself no longer to speculators, but to become its own employer; to own and enjoy itself and the fruit thereof; the necessity for scales of prices will have passed away, and Labor will be for ever rescued from the control of the capitalist. It will then be free, fruitful, honorable. The shackles of a disastrous conventionalism will have fallen from its limbs; and it will appear in the character which nature designed it to sustain. This is certainly a consummation most devoutly to be wished; and, however difficult it may be to attain, if within the range of possibility, ought to constitute the great end to which all our other aims and efforts should be made subsidiary.

The Journeymen Printers of the United States are earnestly invoked, by their brethren here, to employ their most effective endeavors in the prosecution of this work. Its success now rests with them; and it is to be hoped they will feel the full weight of the



responsibility. We beg them to take into favorable consideration the measures we have recommended for their adoption. We beg them to assist the National Executive Committee, by every possible means, in the fulfilment of its duties. We beg them to circulate the Official Proceedings of this Convention, (published in pamphlet form, by the Union of Philadelphia,) wherever such circulation will be calculated to excite an interest in the movement. And we beg them, finally, to send a full representation to the next Convention, from every section of the country. They owe a duty which they are thus called upon to discharge, not only to us, who have commenced in this movement—not alone to themselves, who are so deeply interested in it—but also to the laborers of all trades and vocations, who are anxiously awaiting the development of some sure plan of amelioration, which they can all adopt. Public opinion places us at the head of the mechanical professions. Let us not belie that opinion, by falling behind it. Something is expected of us; and when the next Convention assembles, let its numbers and its actions justify and realize the public expectation. Let something be evolved, during its deliberations, which will redound to the benefit of our own trade, and, by way of example, to the benefit of all others.

Respectfully,

M. F. CONWAY,	}	<i>Committee.</i>
GEO. E. GREENE,		
AND. J. ATKINSON,		
J. T. NAFEW,		
CHAS. BECHTEL,		

By order of the Convention.

JOHN W. PEREGOY, *President.*

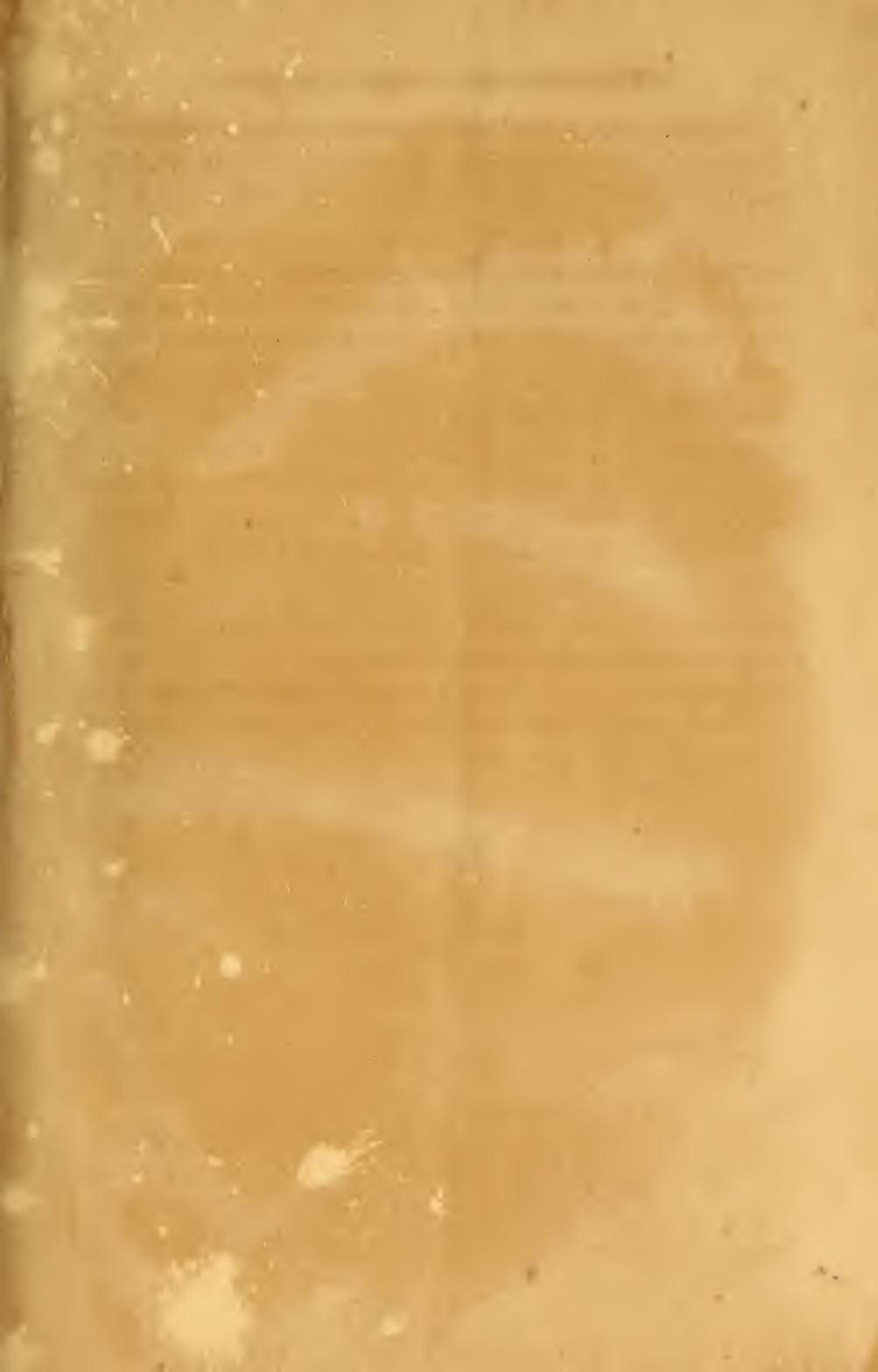
GEO. E. GREENE,	}	<i>Vice Presidents.</i>
M. C. BROWN,		

F. J. OTTARSON,	}	<i>Secretaries.</i>
JOHN HARTMAN,		

New York, Dec. 7, 1850.























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