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THE POLITICS OF IOWA  
DURING THE  
CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

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BY  
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## PREFACE

This work is intended to be a contribution to the history of politics in Iowa, during the period from 1860 to 1873, and more especially, through the State as a unit, to throw light upon the National situation. It aims to show the attitude of the State toward the National issues and the part played therein. It traces the changes in political opinion and the attendant party reorganizations. Thus is followed the solidarity of the Republican party, the shifting policy of the Democracy, the question of a "Union" party with the attendant third-party, fusion schemes, to the culmination of the Reconstruction issues in the Liberal Movement. Since the particular field is unworked, it has seemed best to follow, in the main, the chronological method of treatment.

The study is the outgrowth of investigation into the politics of the northern States, during the period of the Civil War and Reconstruction, being carried on by Professor William A. Dunning of Columbia University. In the preparation of this work, the author is indebted to Professor Dunning, not only for his inspiration in its writing, but for his careful reading and revision of the manuscript. Special mention is due Mr. Fred K. Deming, sometime student of the writer, for his aid rendered in the gathering of data. The writer himself is responsible for the many shortcomings of the work.

O. B. C.

APRIL 22, 1911.



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION: THE ANTE-BELLUM POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION OF IOWA

1854-1859

The political transformation of Iowa during the decade preceding the Civil War is one of the land-marks of the State's history. By 1858 the change from the old Democratic régime to the dominance of the Republican party was complete. Although slight changes appear before, this transformation practically began in 1854 by the election of a Whig Governor, James W. Grimes, and ended in 1859 in the choice of Samuel J. Kirkwood, over the Democratic veteran, Augustus C. Dodge. Within these five years the Republican party supplanted the compromising Whig party and became the champion of the issues against the now time-serving Democracy. Before the end of the decade the Republicans came to control the administrative offices of the State, both branches of the legislature, the judicial offices, and the vast complex of local functionaries. They then retired the Democratic members of Iowa from the House of Representatives and the United States Senate.

But while the Republican supremacy was real and the political transformation of the State was complete, yet the Republican majorities were not beyond the danger mark. There was always present the possibility of an overthrow in any active and determined campaign which the Democrats might inaugurate — a fact not always realized or at least acknowledged by partisans. In fact

the Republican majorities — often pluralities — were not large and overwhelming until in the election of 1860. But before that, the Democrats, notwithstanding the enervating discords within their party, were gradually regaining their lost ground, as is seen in the election of 1859, especially for members of the legislature. To comprehend the situation more fully it is necessary to make at least a hasty examination of the votes during the period.

The votes for State officers show, from the first inroads upon Democratic supremacy, a fairly consistent, though small, gain. The Republican increase, however, in 1855 and in 1856 was marked by an unusually large majority, after which the Democrats held their opponents to a declining majority. In the State election of 1854 Mr. Grimes, a Whig, won the governorship over Mr. Curtis Bates, Democratic candidate, by a majority of 2,120 votes in a total of 54,504.<sup>1</sup> The Democrats, it should be noted, saved their position partially by electing three of their candidates for State office. In the off-year State election of 1855 the combining anti-Nebraska forces carried the State by the large average majority of more than 4,400.<sup>2</sup> Again in 1856<sup>3</sup> the Republicans pushed their majority to 7,467 over the Democrats, Elijah Sells defeating George Snyder for Secretary of State. This was the highest point reached before 1860.

The year 1857 is memorable in Iowa for political cam-

<sup>1</sup> Election Archives for 1854.

<sup>2</sup> The vote of 1855 was as follows:—

Commissioner of Des Moines River Improvement: William McKay, 24,743; O. D. Tisdale, 20,001; J. H. Bonney, 19. Register of Des Moines River Improvement: J. C. Lockwood, 24,243; William F. Dewey, 20,323; Anson Hart, 61. Register of State Land Office: Anson Hart, 24,487; B. H. Samuels, 20,046.

<sup>3</sup> Vote for Secretary of State in 1856: Republican, 40,387; Democratic, 32,920.

paigns and elections. Three times did the people rally at the polls. The first time was in the spring, when the Democrats triumphantly elected their candidate, Maturin L. Fisher, to the office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. In August the new State Constitution was ratified; and in October legislative and executive officials were elected, the Republicans winning in both contests. In the gubernatorial election Ralph P. Lowe won over Ben M. Samuels by a plurality of 2,410 in a total vote of 75,592; while a third-party candidate appeared in the person of the Know-Nothing nominee, J. F. Henry, who polled 1006 votes. The Republican majority was thus only 1,404.<sup>4</sup> The next year, however, the Republicans won back their losses in the reëlection of Mr. Sells over Samuel Douglass by a majority of 3,548.<sup>5</sup> This it will be seen was a larger majority than the Republicans secured in the congressional elections, due probably to both the non-political character of the office and the efficiency and popularity of Mr. Sells on the one hand, and the tensivity of the issues involved in the congressional elections on the other. But the Republican majority was again reduced in the fight for the Governorship in 1859, Samuel J. Kirkwood's majority over the vote for Augustus C. Dodge being only 2,964 in a total of 110,048 votes.<sup>6</sup>

The gradual Republicanization of the State is clearly seen in the congressional elections. The first real invasion of the lower house of Congress occurred in the Second District in 1852, when the Whig candidate, John P. Cook, was elected over Lincoln Clark, the Democratic nominee.

<sup>4</sup> Vote for Governor in 1857: Republican, 38,498; Democratic, 36,088; American, 1,006.

<sup>5</sup> Vote for Secretary of State in 1858: Republican, 49,135; Democratic, 45,587.

<sup>6</sup> Vote for Governor: Republican, 56,506; Democratic, 53,542.

Then in 1854<sup>7</sup> the Iowa Whigs shelved Mr. Cook on account of his compromising pro-slavery record and nominated James Thorington, an anti-slavery advocate, and elected him over the Democratic candidate, ex-Governor Stephen Hempstead, by 1562 votes. This was more than twice the majority of Mr. Cook over Mr. Clark in 1852, and shows the growing anti-slavery temper of Iowa. The First District remained Democratic, and Augustus Hall of Keosauqua was easily elected. In the election of 1856<sup>8</sup> both of the Democratic candidates were defeated. In the First District Samuel R. Curtis won over Augustus Hall by 955 votes, while in the Second District the Know-Nothing fusion candidate, Timothy Davis, defeated the veteran ex-Congressman, Shepherd Leffler, by the large majority of 7,017 votes. Finally, in the election of 1858<sup>9</sup> the Republican triumph was complete. Mr. Curtis was reelected in the First District over Henry H. Trimble by a majority of 1,800 votes. In the Second District William Vandever was elected over William E. Leffingwell by 2,739, a much reduced majority as compared to that of 1856. In fact Curtis's majority was also relatively smaller than that of 1856. Thus the decade closed with Democratic encouragement.

The old régime of course was comparatively safe as long as it controlled the General Assembly; and, on the other hand, the Whig triumph in the State was nowhere more important than in the capturing of the State legislature. The contest for the two seats in the United States Senate was first to be fought out in the counties compos-

<sup>7</sup> Vote in the First District: Whig, 11,042; Democratic, 11,219. Vote in the Second District: Whig 11,435; Democratic, 9,873.

<sup>8</sup> Vote in the First District: Republican, 18,065; Democratic, 17,110. Vote in the Second District: Republican, 22,885; Democratic, 15,868.

<sup>9</sup> Vote in the First District: Republican, 23,529; Democratic, 22,729. Vote in the Second District: Republican, 25,503; Democratic, 22,764.



ing the various legislative districts. In the historic transitional year of 1854 the two parties divided honors in the control of the legislature, the Whigs securing the House with a majority of ten, while the Democrats retained the Senate with the slender majority of one. On joint ballot, however, the Whigs had a majority of nine, and in this, the Fifth General Assembly, a United States Senator was to be chosen. This meant the defeat of Senator Dodge for reëlection, and in his stead the choice of James Harlan, the hated abolition sympathizer. In the election Mr. Harlan received the solid majority vote. It was at this time that the defiant Democratic Senate attempted the desperate strategy of bolting the joint convention of the legislature in order to defeat Mr. Harlan.<sup>10</sup> The anti-Nebraska men had just come together in the new Republican party, and in the election of members to the Sixth General Assembly,<sup>11</sup> that party gained control of both houses by almost two to one. The Seventh General Assembly was the first under the new Constitution, adopted in 1857, and also the first at Des Moines, the new capital, convening in January, 1858. The Republican majorities were decreased in both branches of the legislature,<sup>12</sup> a thing highly gratifying to the Democrats, yet it availed them naught so far as the election of a United States Senator was concerned. This legislature was to fill the place to be vacated by Senator George W. Jones, whom his own party now repudiated by putting up

<sup>10</sup> See Dr. Louis Pelzer's article in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. VI, pp. 212-214. See also *Senate Journal*, 1854-1855, p. 116; and *House Journal*, 1854-1855, pp. 185-188.

<sup>11</sup> Sixth General Assembly, 1856-1857:—Senate: Republicans, 23; Democrats, 12; Americans, 1. House: Republicans, 44; Democrats, 22; Americans or Democrats, 6.

<sup>12</sup> Seventh General Assembly, 1857-1858:—Senate: Republicans, 21; Democrats, 15. House: Republicans, 42; Democrats, 30.

Ben M. Samuels for the succession. But the Republicans united on and elected Mr. Grimes, the retiring Governor. Grimes had served as Governor through the formative period of the Republican party, and on January 12, 1858, delivered his last message to the legislature, a message ringing with the Republican slogans of the day, namely: opposition to the Dred Scott Decision and the Lecompton Constitution. On January 26th the houses met in joint convention and Mr. Grimes was elected by the full Republican vote of 64, to 41<sup>13</sup> for Mr. Samuels, the minority candidate.

This legislature is important in view of the fact that upon it devolved the inauguration of the new governmental system, both in law-making and in defining political issues under the new Constitution. For this reason and in view of the approaching crisis of 1860 considerable importance attaches to the personnel of this body. Some of the old leaders are now retiring and many new men appear who are to direct the policies in that crisis. Among the Democrats of former assemblies, who now dropped out, were Joshua Tracy, James M. Love, John L. Corse, Ben M. Samuels, Nathan Udell, James D. Test, P. Gad Bryan, Isaac M. Preston and Maturin L. Fisher. Some of these were promoted — Fisher and Love — while others later bolted the party and joined the Republicans. Still others remained faithful, to run on the successive tickets as sacrifices to the sacred cause of Democracy. There were some strong, able Democrats left — for instance, in the Senate: William F. Coolbaugh, Henry H. Trimble, William G. Stewart and W. H. M. Pusey, besides the ultras, Jairus E. Neal, as well as Aaron Brown and Joseph Mann. Among Republicans or former Whigs who passed from the legislative halls to other govern-

<sup>13</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1858, pp. 119, 120.

mental posts were Reuben Noble, John R. Needham, William H. Holmes, Charles C. Nourse and Samuel B. McCall. But the Senate of the Seventh General Assembly contained an unusual array of talent in such men as Samuel J. Kirkwood, M. L. McPherson, William Loughridge, Alvin Saunders, John W. Rankin, Jonathan W. Cattell, William G. Thompson, Josiah B. Grinnell, William F. Davis and O. P. Sharradan.

In the House was the strong Democratic delegation from Dubuque, Lincoln Clark, Theophilus Crawford and Dennis A. Mahoney; from Keokuk came William W. Belknap; and then there were Martin V. B. Bennett, Philip B. Bradley, Justus Clark and G. W. Gray. The Republican side was also strengthened by new blood. There appeared Cyrus C. Carpenter, William H. Seevers, Benjamin F. Gue, Samuel E. Rankin, George W. McCrary, M. M. Trumbull, Thomas Drummond, and E. E. Cooley. The Speaker of this session was Stephen B. Shelledy; and the clerks were B. F. Jones and William P. Hepburn, the latter just entering upon his long and successful political career. There were the hold-overs of previous sessions, among them "Honest John" Edwards and Ed. Wright. Mr. Wright had been the Speaker of the Sixth General Assembly and is spoken of by a close observer, who then the first time visited the State legislature, as "the best informed man in the House on parliamentary law", and indeed "his calmness was needed to straighten out the kinks".<sup>14</sup>

According to the Constitution the Senators were elected for four and the Representatives for two years; and thus in the next election (1859) members of the lower house only were chosen, except to fill vacancies in the Senate, of which there were fifteen. The election result-

<sup>14</sup> Charles Aldrich in the *Annals of Iowa* (3rd Series), Vol. II, 1895, p. 205.

ed in a relative Republican loss in both houses.<sup>15</sup> Additional strength came to the Senate in the election of James F. Wilson, Paris P. Henderson, and John Scott among the Republicans; while the Democratic side was strengthened by Cyrus Bussey and John F. Duncombe, and Nathan Udell was returned. In the House among Republican leaders appeared Leander C. Noble, Rush Clark, William H. F. Gurley, Samuel Merrill, and Henry C. Caldwell; among the Democrats were Thomas W. Claggett, James E. Williamson, Justus Clark, Harvey Dunlavey, John D. Jennings and Francis A. Gniffke. John Edwards was elected Speaker, and William Thompson chief clerk, with Charles Aldrich, first assistant.

From this study of the legislature of the State, it must appear that while the Republicans maintained the control, their position was not by any means secure. In many of the counties the elections were quite close and all in all the minority party had much to expect in a subsequent election. The next election for assemblymen, however, was not to be until 1861. By that time the whole situation was changed and for years to come the Democrats were doomed to be a hopeless minority in the State legislature.

An examination now of the Presidential votes of 1852 and 1856 will further illustrate the decline of the Democratic control. Here the movement was continuous, owing to the fact that there was no Presidential election between 1856 and 1860. In 1852 the popular vote<sup>16</sup> for Pierce was 17,762, while General Scott, the Whig candidate, polled only 1,902 less. Besides, there was the Free Soil vote of

<sup>15</sup> Eighth General Assembly, 1859-1860:—Senate: Republicans, 23; Democrats, 20. House: Republicans, 50; Democrats, 36.

<sup>16</sup> Presidential vote in 1852: Democratic, 17,762; Whig, 15,856; Free Soil, 1,606.

1,606, thus leaving an actual majority to the Democrats of but 296. Four years later the Republicans carried the State by a plurality of 7,886 votes.<sup>17</sup> But the third-party Fillmore vote of 9,444 made the Republican vote 1,558 less than the combined opposition. The Republican vote was less than the Whig vote of 1852, though of course the Fillmore vote came entirely from the old Whig element; while on the other hand the Free Soil vote of that year went to the Republicans. In studying the vote of 1860, we shall have occasion to compare the votes of 1856 and 1860, to see the relative increase of the Republican and Democratic parties.

The increasing Republican strength in the Presidential elections is best seen in the change of the counties from the Democratic to the Republican column. In 1852 the Democrats carried 74 counties, 29 of them by majorities and 45 by pluralities, while the Whigs had but 14 counties, though 11 were by majorities and only 3 by pluralities. One county returned a tie vote, and in another the Free-Soilers succeeded in getting a plurality.<sup>18</sup> In 1856 there was a general shaking up and old lines were obliterated. Although the Republican vote, as we have seen, was relatively less than the Whig vote of 1852, yet it was so distributed as greatly to increase the Republican strength as compared with that of the Whigs. The 74 Democratic counties had dropped to 24, while the 14 Whig counties had risen to 55 Republican counties. The Democrats had won majorities in but 12 of their 24 counties, while the Republicans had majorities in 44 counties out of their 55. The Fillmore vote was distributed

<sup>17</sup> Presidential vote in 1856: Republican, 44,127; Democratic, 36,241; American, 9,444. Republican plurality, 7,886; combined Democratic and American majority, 1,558.

<sup>18</sup> Clarke County: Hale, 37; Pierce, 32; Scott, 20.

in 68 counties, and while there were some real centers — Appanoose, Davis, Des Moines, Henry, Lee, Muscatine, Scott and Washington counties — yet the party was successful in none.

Again let us look at the votes on the new Constitution. The old Constitution was a Democratic hulk. There could be neither complete political reorganization of the State nor party security in the administration of its affairs, without a new instrument of government. Hence the people were called upon to express themselves on the question of convening a Constitutional Convention to frame a new Constitution. The vote was taken August 4, 1856, and resulted in the one-sided vote of 32,790 for, and 14,162 against the proposition. The next year a new Constitution was framed and, upon being submitted to the people, was ratified by the close vote of 40,311 to 38,681 — a majority of only 1,630. This was practically a strict party vote, and stands in about the same ratio as the later vote in the regular State election of the year 1857. Evidently in the election on calling the convention, the Democrats stayed at home; but when the new Constitution was before them, it proved so revolutionary, that they made such a fight upon it as almost to defeat it.

It is important here to understand the full significance of the political transformation of the State, and to note what changes were wrought in consequence of this reformation and organization of political parties. The Republican party with its principles and organization, gradually revolutionized the State; it undermined the old party in power and set up safeguards for its own perpetuation. Consequently with the establishment of the new Constitution there follows the resulting Republican legislation: the new Code; the State Banking Law; the modification of the two congressional districts — the

eastern end of the line being pushed south to reduce the Democratic majority in the First District; a complete judicial re-districting of the State by several acts from 1853 to 1858, increasing the number of districts from five to eleven; and the establishment of new counties and the changing of boundaries, so as to insure a Republican legislature. In fact Iowa, during the period of transformation, was completely gerrymandered.

Another feature which throws some light upon the politics of this period is the comparative party loyalty. Of course there was discernible most of the time a third-party element, which locally took somewhat the nature of an independent vote. This was chiefly from three sources: the extreme anti-slavery element, the "old guard" remnant of the Whig party, and the liberal or dissatisfied Democrats. The first and third were finally absorbed by the Republican party, some of them by 1860, but most of them not until the high-tide of the war. The old guard of Whiggism went on the rock and scattered to the four winds — cropping out occasionally all through the decade of the sixties, now with one, now with another political group, but never a to-be-counted-upon political asset of any party. The third party was a factor, though negative, in the elections of 1852, 1856, and 1857, but there was very little or none of the "scattering" vote. Party loyalty, then, was a marked feature of the period, increasing with the more clearly defining issues between the parties on the all-absorbing slavery question; but we see practically nothing of the independent vote as known to-day.

Thus in place of an organic independent vote we see the disintegration of the Democratic party and the consequent augmentation and compacting of the Republican party by dissatisfied factions or individuals bolting the

ticket or the party of the former and joining the latter. In 1857, for example, the "Fort Madison clique"<sup>19</sup> led by William F. Coolbaugh threw consternation into the Democratic councils, by bolting the ticket. Later most of these men joined the Republican party. In Dubuque a bitter feud existed for some time, between the Montague faction, led by Senator George W. Jones, and the Capulets, led by Judge Thomas S. Wilson. This fight hastened the disintegration of the Democratic party rather by discrediting it before the public than by these factionists themselves uniting with the Republicans. Instances of leading men deserting the Democratic camp are common; for example, Mr. Enoch W. Eastman left the party early in 1859, issuing a manifesto<sup>20</sup> renouncing his allegiance to it because it had departed from the ancient principles of Democracy. We shall hear of Eastman again. Another phase of the party's predicament is seen in the desertion, on the part of the rank and file, of the old political leaders.

The body of Democrats were becoming alarmed over the desperate straits to which the party had been reduced, and they advocated a change of attitude toward the issues fast consuming them. Thus in the State convention of 1858 they sought to redeem their party by passing a resolution repudiating their action of the year previous in supporting the Lecompton Constitution. This was a new phase of the situation; and now appears for the first time an "old guard" and in a minority rôle at that, which, under the leadership of Stillson Hutchins, George W. Jones, Stephen Hempstead and Ver Planck Van Antwerp, bolted the convention. This bolt, it is needless to

<sup>19</sup> William F. Coolbaugh, Edward Johnston, H. W. Starr, and General Morgan.

<sup>20</sup> For Mr. Eastman's letter, see *The Iowa Citizen* for January 19, 1859, referred to by Doctor Pelzer in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. VII, p. 203.



say, was the work of the stand-pat, pro-slavery element, the Administration wing of the party, a mere rump of the Iowa Democracy, the forerunner of the Breckinridge faction of 1860 and the Secession sympathizers of the Civil War period. Just as the Democratic party was slipping from power and going to pieces, the Republican party was consolidating and fortifying itself on every political hill-top and at every cross-road.

The one man responsible for all this disrupting of Democratic harmony in the State was none other than the man over whom the National Democracy became disrupted — Stephen A. Douglas. At least it was the issues which he championed, that the rank and file of Iowa Democrats had come to look upon as their creed. This creed was definitely formulated by Douglas in 1858, and Iowa Democrats followed with keen interest the Lincoln-Douglas debates,<sup>21</sup> seeking doctrines that would save the wreckage of their party. Iowa Democrats were more concerned about the national situation than about that in the State. They regarded Douglas and his policies as a greater issue than any local matter, and so they followed him in this memorable contest, even aiding him in the Illinois canvass. They rejoiced in his defeat of Lincoln for the United States Senate, holding enthusiastic meetings, and passing resolutions of confidence in him and faith in his principles. This all presaged the course of the Iowa Democrats in the coming campaign of 1860. They were now thoroughly committed to the Northern wing of the party and out of fellowship with the National pro-slavery leadership.

<sup>21</sup> For good accounts of Iowa's interest in these debates see Dr. Pelzer's *History of Political Parties in Iowa from 1857 to 1860* in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. VII, p. 201; also Professor Herriott's *Iowa and the First Nomination of Lincoln* in the *Annals of Iowa* (3rd Series) Vol. VIII, pp. 452-66.

## CHAPTER II

### POLITICAL PARTIES IN 1860

#### IOWA IN THE NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

In Iowa the national campaign of 1860 opened in the autumn of 1859. The issues were already clearly defined on the part of both the leading parties, and also by the third party factions soon to take a hand. It was quite clear from the first that the vast majority of the Democrats were to stand on Douglas's platform, and naturally — since 1858 — they thought of no one but Douglas as their candidate for the presidency.<sup>22</sup> The Democratic newspapers generally ran up the Douglas standard.

The Republicans were united on principles, but unlike the Democrats, they were at sea on the question of a Presidential candidate. For fear of imperiling the larger issues and interests, they quite generally refrained from expressing their preferences. The fact is that Iowa Republicans were much divided on the question of a candidate; they counselled harmony and persisted in regarding with equal favor any of the great names already in the public mind.<sup>23</sup>

The Republican National Committee<sup>24</sup> met in New York City on December 21, 1859, to fix the time and place for the meeting of the next National Convention. They finally chose Chicago and fixed upon May 16, 1860, as the time. This gave much satisfaction to the Republicans of Iowa

<sup>22</sup> See Pelzer's article in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. VII, p. 216.

<sup>23</sup> See Herriott's article in the *Annals of Iowa* (3rd Series), Ante.

<sup>24</sup> Iowa's member of the committee was Andrew J. Stevens.

in common with all westerners. Two weeks before this the *Iowa City Republican* had given out its choice of place, naming in the order of preference, Chicago, St. Louis, and Indianapolis.<sup>25</sup> Consequently when the National Committee named Chicago the *Republican* said: "We think it eminently fit that a city which has maintained her Republicanism amidst such opposition, bearding Douglas in his den, richly deserves this flattering testimonial".<sup>26</sup>

For some time before this, the Republican State Central Committee had had the question of calling a State Convention for the selection of delegates to the National Convention under consideration. After a general expression of public sentiment on the question, through the press and otherwise, they issued a call<sup>27</sup> on December 5, 1859, for the State Convention to convene in Des Moines, on Wednesday, the 18th of January, 1860. The time and place decided upon were regarded as the "most convenient to procure the general representation of counties during the session of the legislature". They at the same time decided another question on which there was divided opinion, resolving to hold two State Conventions, one for choosing delegates to the National Convention and a second to name a State ticket, since the unity of the party would be more reasonably assured after the National platform should have been agreed upon and the ticket named. The call was signed by John A. Kasson, Chairman, together with the eleven district members of the committee,<sup>28</sup> and the representation agreed upon was

<sup>25</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, December 7, 1859.

<sup>26</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, December 28, 1859.

<sup>27</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, December 14, 1859.

<sup>28</sup> Republican State Central Committee: John A. Kasson, Chairman; H. M. Hoxie, Des Moines, Secretary; Rufus L. B. Clark, Mount Pleasant; C.

one delegate for every two hundred votes cast for Governor Kirkwood at the last election. The counties were strongly urged to hold conventions to select their delegations.

On January 18th, the first State Convention met at Des Moines in Sherman Hall. W. W. Hamilton of Dubuque was made permanent chairman. Naturally a large number of the members of the legislature were delegates. The convention was large and enthusiastic, good will prevailing throughout. The key-note of the convention was harmony and this was emphasized in the desire shown to give everybody some place. There were six secretaries and eleven vice-presidents chosen, while still others were put on committees or on the unusually large delegation to the Chicago Convention. There was little speech-making, although while the Committee on Credentials was out, John Johns, a somewhat eccentric Webster County pioneer preacher, brought down the house repeatedly, with a speech which the editors of the *Republican* called "the quaintest remarks ever heard".<sup>29</sup>

The only question eliciting any discussion was that of the number of delegates to the National Convention. The State was entitled to eight votes in the Convention and some wished to send that number of delegates; others wanted five delegates-at-large with two from each Judicial District. It was finally decided to elect thirty "delegates and advisory members," besides a chairman of the delegation. William Penn Clarke was elected chairman on the first ballot, and the choice was spoken of

E. Stone, Council Bluffs; William Loughridge, Oskaloosa; Thomas Drummond, Vinton; A. B. F. Hildreth, Charles City; J. M. Newcomb, Bloomfield; William Bigelow, Sioux City; James Thorington, Davenport; H. A. Weltze, Dubuque; L. L. Pease, Fort Dodge.

<sup>29</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, January 25, 1860.

as "a well deserved compliment."<sup>30</sup> Four delegates-at-large were then elected, resulting in the choice of Leander C. Noble of Fayette County, John A. Kasson of Polk, Henry O'Connor of Muscatine, and James F. Wilson of Jefferson. On motion of Dr. Bowen six additional delegates-at-large were chosen. They were: John W. Rankin of Lee County, editor Coker F. Clarkson of Grundy, Rev. Henry P. Scholte of Marion, Senator M. L. McPherson of Madison, Lieutenant Governor Nicholas J. Rusch of Dubuque, and John Johns, the Webster County pioneer. Besides these two delegates were elected from each of the eleven Judicial Districts,<sup>31</sup> making in all thirty-three<sup>32</sup> delegates from the State, to cast her eight votes in the Convention. Thus the several political divisions, the various classes and nationalities were carefully remembered and harmony guaranteed. The Irish vote was

<sup>30</sup> The proceedings of the Convention are printed in the *Iowa City Republican*, January 25, 1860.

<sup>31</sup> District Delegates to Chicago Convention of 1860:

First District:—Alvin Saunders (Henry), J. C. Walker (Lee).

Second District:—H. Clay Caldwell (Van Buren), M. Baker (Wapello).

Third District:—Ben Rector (Fremont), George A. Hawley (Decatur).

Fourth District:—A. W. Hubbard (Woodbury), J. E. Blackford (Kosuth).

Fifth District:—Thomas Seeley (Guthrie), C. C. Nourse (Polk).

Sixth District:—William M. Stone (Marion), J. B. Grinnell (Powersheik).

Seventh District:—William A. Warren (Jackson), John W. Thompson (Scott).

Eighth District:—John Shane (Benton), William Smyth (Linn).

Ninth District:—William B. Allison (Dubuque), A. F. Brown (Blackhawk).

Tenth District:—Reuben Noble (Clayton), E. G. Bowdoin (Floyd).

Eleventh District:—William P. Hepburn (Marshall), J. F. Brown (Hardin).

Only three of these failed to attend: H. Clay Caldwell, A. W. Hubbard, and J. E. Blackford. Their places were taken by Joseph Caldwell, Herbert M. Hoxie, and Jacob Butler.

<sup>32</sup> The *Proceedings of the Chicago Convention* gives Iowa's delegation as 32, though it prints the 33 names. Certain it is that her delegation numbered 33 in place of 32. *Proceedings*, pp. 111, 174.

represented by Mr. O'Connor, the Germans in the Democratic stronghold of Dubuque by Lieutenant Governor Rusch, and the Dutch by the Rev. Mr. Scholte. The farmers, merchants, and capitalists, the newspapers and various professions were represented on the delegation. These men were not all in the first rank as political leaders; on the contrary, barring a half dozen, they were ordinary citizens, but had they been otherwise they would not have been representative.

The delegation went to Chicago uninstructed. Indeed, the question of a candidate was not even broached in the State Convention and little was said in private on that delicate question. The individual preferences of some of the delegates were not known and their selection could not have had that matter in view. It was State harmony that Iowa was seeking. The Iowa Republicans were determined (it seems, were almost hysterical on the question) not to allow the matter of a nominee to disturb their equilibrium and jeopardize the politics of the State.

At Chicago the Iowa delegation was at home in the Tremont House, where headquarters had been engaged by Mr. Clarke in March.<sup>33</sup> The delegation as a whole, except for its size, was inconspicuous in the Convention.<sup>34</sup> The large delegation, though at home quite politic, was in Chicago rather a joke than a source of strength. Some of the members individually, however, exercised consider-

<sup>33</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, March 28, 1860.

<sup>34</sup> James F. Wilson was a member of the Committee on Permanent Organization, Coker F. Clarkson of the Committee on Credentials, Reuben Noble of the Committee on Business, the Rev. Henry P. Scholte one of the vice-presidents, and William M. Stone one of the Secretaries (later William B. Allison served as a Secretary), while John A. Kasson was on the Committee on Resolutions. Some of Kasson's associates enjoying a national reputation were: George F. Talbot, Amos Tuck, George S. Boutwell, Francis P. Blair, Gustave Koerner, F. P. Tracy, and Horace Greeley.— See *Proceedings*.

able influence — Mr. Kasson, on the Committee on Resolutions, had a large part in drafting the platform. The Iowa vote<sup>35</sup> was scattering on every ballot, and the nominee, Mr. Lincoln, did not receive the solid vote of the delegation. But the nomination was at once accepted by all and the delegates returned home to champion both the platform and the ticket. All Iowa ratified the result.

The Democrats soon followed with their State Convention, convening at Des Moines on February 22, 1860. This date was selected out of patriotic sentiments, according to the action of the State Convention of 1859. The call<sup>36</sup> was issued by D. A. Mahoney as State Chairman, and the meeting was for the purpose of choosing delegates to the Democratic National Convention which was to meet at Charleston, South Carolina, on April 21, 1860. The National Committee had chosen this place at a meeting in Washington,<sup>37</sup> in the very bosom of the National (Administration) Democracy, on December 7, 1859. It was the first time that the National Convention had gone so far south, and under the trying circumstances the Douglas men were not a little nervous and apprehensive of the result.

The State Convention, unlike the Republican, was neither large nor enthusiastic, though fairly harmonious. The delegation of eight was a strong one and solid for Douglas.<sup>38</sup> The delegates were Augustus C. Dodge, Ben

<sup>35</sup> Ballots of the Iowa Delegation at the Chicago Convention of 1860:

First ballot:—Seward 2, Lincoln 2, Cameron 1, Bates 1, McLean 1, Chase 1.

Second ballot:—Lincoln 5, Seward 2, Chase  $\frac{1}{2}$ , McLean  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

Third ballot:—Lincoln  $5\frac{1}{2}$ , Seward 2, Chase  $\frac{1}{2}$ .—*Proceedings*, pp. 151, 152, 153.

<sup>36</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, December 21, 1859.

<sup>37</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, December 14, 1859.

<sup>38</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, February 29, 1860.

M. Samuels, Dan O. Finch, Nathaniel B. Baker, an emigrant from New Hampshire where he had been Governor, W. H. M. Pusey, Thomas W. Claggett, I. M. Bosler, and Edward H. Thayer of the *Muscatine Daily Courier*.

While the Convention did not draw up a series of resolutions at this time, yet an attempt was made to get an expression upon one question. Henry C. Rippey of Winterset introduced a resolution providing for the granting of homesteads of one hundred and sixty acres to actual settlers. Mr. Rippey explained that the Democrats in Congress had had a chance to favor such a measure but instead had defeated it, and he wanted Iowa Democrats to go on record as repudiating their action, by favoring such a law. The Convention rejected the resolution, not because they opposed it, but because they did not at this time wish to bring up questions of platform. The regular State Convention later incorporated the resolution in the platform.

The action of the Charleston Convention is well known. Iowa played a conspicuous part there, as well as at the adjourned meeting at Baltimore, and at both places the entire delegation stood solidly for Douglas.

#### THE STATE NOMINATING CONVENTIONS

Long before the Chicago Convention assembled, the call was issued (March 28th) for the Republican State Convention to meet at Iowa City on May 23rd. This was for the purpose of naming a State ticket and adopting a platform. The call<sup>39</sup> however went further and said, "It is also called for the purpose of ratifying the nominee and platform of the National Republican Convention to be held at Chicago on the 16th of May." This was indeed party loyalty, announcing a meeting to ratify a nominee

<sup>39</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, March 31, 1860.



yet to be chosen and a platform yet to be drawn up, and it further illustrates the confidence of Iowa Republicans in the national party as well as their determination to maintain party unity and harmony.

The Convention assembled with 561 delegates representing fifty-eight counties. They met in what had formerly been known as Metropolitan Hall, but was now named the Republican Wigwam, so imbued were the delegates with the spirit of the great Chicago gathering. The "Wigwam" was crowded almost to suffocation, but the utmost harmony and good will prevailed. The convention however was in the hands of Ed. Wright, the popular Linn County legislator, whose name and ability were enough to keep any body of men in order.

Candidates for State offices, we are told, were nominated with a cordial unanimity most singular, which Mr. Mahin of the *Muscatine Journal* regarded as a "sure guarantee of the ticket."<sup>40</sup> It is true that two of the four candidates were nominated by acclamation — Jonathan W. Cattell, for Auditor, and John W. Jones, for Treasurer — but there were sharp contests for the other two. Charles C. Nourse was re-nominated for Attorney-General, though it required four ballots to do it, there being at first six names presented, with John A. Kasson and William G. Thompson the closest competitors. Elijah Sells was for the third time nominated for the office of Secretary of State, which was clearly a departure from an established custom, and concerning which there was some complaint. Mr. Sells, however, was a most efficient officer, and besides, he was a sort of gubernatorial aspirant, and it was good politics to hold to some way-station toward that goal. The other candidates for the nomination were S. J. W. Tabor of Buchanan County, G. A.

<sup>40</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, May 26, 1860.

Hawley of Decatur, and M. L. McPherson of Madison, but on the first ballot Mr. Sells polled 332½ votes, and after Mr. McPherson's withdrawal the nomination was declared unanimous by acclamation.

Four Presidential electors were chosen, two at large and one from each of the Congressional Districts. An informal ballot for the first was taken and before the votes were counted Col. Fitz Henry Warren of Des Moines County was made one of them by acclamation. On the next ballot J. A. Chapline of Dubuque was chosen as the other. The electors representing the districts were M. L. McPherson for the First and Charles Pomeroy for the Second. These four men had been delegates to the Chicago Convention; while there were some members of the Convention who had not yet been given any honors at the hands of the party. This fact may at least have prompted the motion of William Penn Clarke to name four additional electors-at-large, whose duty it should be to assist the regular electors in canvassing the State. This was adopted and E. N. Bates, William B. Fairfield, J. M. Newcomb, and Benjamin Rector were chosen. Of these, the last named had been at Chicago. Thus Iowa again devised a plan to overcome the handicap of her youth.

The Convention made short work of framing a State platform. A committee,<sup>41</sup> representing Judicial Districts and containing some good men, most of whom had not been honored with other favors, was appointed on platform. At the evening session the committee reported

<sup>41</sup> The Committee on Platform by Districts: (1) Samuel F. Miller of Lee, (2) E. T. Edgerton of Lucas, (3) B. Rector of Fremont, (4) A. Mitler of Humboldt, (5) Thomas Seeley of Guthrie, (6) H. Schofield of Washington, (7) H. J. Campbell of Muscatine, (8) Rush Clark of Johnson, (9) D. W. Cooley of Dubuque, (10) C. A. Newcomb of Fayette, (11) Charles Pomeroy of Boone.

their labors to the Convention. The report, in accordance with the "call", was the ratification of the work of the National Convention. It was the shortest platform up to that time put out by the Republicans of Iowa, containing but four resolutions.<sup>42</sup> They disposed of the National issues in the campaign by declaring that they were prepared to advocate and defend the Chicago platform; that they endorsed the nomination of Lincoln and Hamlin, and pledged to them the undivided support of the Republican party of the State. In State affairs they favored a policy of rigid economy and would hold the State officers to strict account. Finally, expressing confidence in their State ticket, they commended it to the support of the people. The Convention then took steps to organize for the campaign and adjourned.

Thus by June 1st, before the summer was begun and long before the heat of both the summer and the campaign, the Republicans had their issues formulated, their tickets named and were perfecting their campaigning machinery for the great contest at the polls. How was it with the Democrats?

The bolt of the ultra pro-slavery branch of the Democratic party at Charleston in April and the further break at Baltimore two months later, had divided the party into two organic bodies with the Mason and Dixon Line between them. Unfortunately this left the newly formed wings or parties in a disturbed state, by the presence of a hostile, even bitter, though small and comparatively harmless minority faction in each. Thus, while the North was a Douglas Democracy, there were a number of Breckinridge sympathizers to further distract the party locally. This minority in Iowa, as in other Northern States, at once defied the Douglas majority party by de-

<sup>42</sup> Fairall's *Manual of Iowa Politics*, Vol. I (1881), p. 54.

claring an injunction against their use of the old party name. The Breckinridge faction claimed the rightful title to the name; they constituted the National Democratic party. Already at several centers, notably Davenport and Dubuque, the ultras had held meetings ratifying the nomination of Breckinridge, and by an address,<sup>43</sup> issued June 30th, had stated the political issues. They were now also taking steps to hold a Breckinridge State Convention to name electors, though they would make no State nominations.

The Douglas party, controlling the situation, and refusing to give up the name and political privileges, finally got its forces in line and called the Democratic State Convention to convene at Des Moines, on July 12th. In spite of the now completed bolt of the old ultra pro-slavery faction, the Convention was unexpectedly large and, without the stand-patters, quite harmonious.<sup>44</sup> Amos Harris was the chairman and the ticket nominated was: Secretary of State, John M. Corse; Treasurer, John W. Ellis of Davis County; Auditor, George W. Maxwell of Bremer County; Attorney-General, Wm. McClintock of Fayette County; and Register, Patrick Robb of Woodbury County. They chose four of their representative men for candidates for Presidential electors, the four being Martin Van Buren Bennett, LeGrand Byington, Lincoln Clark and Henry Clay Dean.

As to the platform,<sup>45</sup> they did just the reverse of what the Republicans did — drew up the longest platform in their history, containing thirteen resolutions on the gen-

<sup>43</sup> The "Address to the National Democracy of Iowa."— *Iowa Weekly Republican*, July 18, 1860. This address was signed by H. H. Heath, National committeeman for Iowa, and representing the State at the adjourned Breckinridge caucus at Baltimore.

<sup>44</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, July 25, 1860.

<sup>45</sup> Fairall's *Manual of Iowa Politics*, Vol. 1 (1881), pp. 54-57.

eral issues and pledging themselves to ten specific reforms in state affairs.

They "most cordially endorse and approve of the Democratic National Convention" which they regarded as having met at Charleston and having at an adjourned session at Baltimore "concluded its labors by the nomination of Stephen A. Douglas for the Presidency". Then they endorse the principles of popular sovereignty and they condemn "all attempts to compromise the integrity of the Democratic party organization, by putting Democratic candidates for electors upon the same ticket with candidates who are not pledged to vote, if elected, for Douglas and Johnson and for no other persons whatsoever." They also appeal to the conservatives, inviting them "to fall into the Democratic ranks, to crush the hydra-headed monster, Congressional Intervention." They favor a homestead law and call upon the people to make a thorough reform by driving the Republicans from power in Iowa, and pledge themselves to reforms in State taxation and expenditure, in the control of charitable institutions, and in banks and their issues, and promise a revision of the State Constitution. They complain of the misappropriation of public money, and oppose the multiplying of political offices and the schemes of railroad promoting speculations. Much of the platform was of course mere political opposition, yet there were some demands made against certain evils which later became so glaring that the Republican party had to take them up to hold its power.

The Breckinridge faction finally met in convention on August 15th at Davenport.<sup>46</sup> General P. S. Espy of Lee County was made chairman. A brief pointed platform<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, August 22, 1860. Editor Mahoney gives a merciless analysis of the faction.

was adopted. Its demands were based upon the doctrine that the Territories are the common property of all the States. All citizens, thus they argued, being joint owners have the right to settle there with their legal property. Of course the Dred Scott Decision was upheld and Congress was denied the right to interfere with the introduction of slavery into the Territories, nor could the Territories themselves interfere. They were "National" Democrats and so of course applauded Buchanan's administration. A few weeks later the party published an "Address of the National Democrats of the State of Iowa", purporting to have come from the Convention.<sup>48</sup> It was a lengthy statement of the pro-slavery argument.

The Convention chose four Presidential electors and twelve "assistant" electors.<sup>49</sup> The electors-at-large were G. C. R. Mitchell of Davenport and P. S. Espy; J. D. Test was chosen to represent the First District, and John F. Duncombe the Second. The so-called assistant electors no doubt were the committee to look after the canvass of the State. Among them were several men of prominence.<sup>50</sup> No State ticket was nominated, the main purpose of the Convention being to provide an electoral ticket so that none might be deprived of recording his wishes at the ballot-box.

On August 7th a call for a Constitutional Union State Convention, to be held at Iowa City on August 31st, was

<sup>47</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 22, 1860.

<sup>48</sup> *The Lyons City Advocate* (Weekly), September 8, 1860.

<sup>49</sup> *Charles City Intelligencer*, August 23, 1860.

<sup>50</sup> The "Assistant" electors of the Breekinridge Ticket were: C. Franklin, W. H. English, W. G. Morse, Elijah Williams, D. R. Smith, O. C. Treadway, George H. Parker, F. H. Morse, J. C. Knapp, Daniel Bell, L. M. G. Sales, W. C. Wilson.

issued. The call<sup>51</sup> was signed by six men, all residents of the old capital city. They were Easton Morris, W. H. Henderson, George D. Crosthwait, Joseph Troxel, D. W. Henderson, and Walter Curtis. *The Iowa City Republican* gave the political pedigrees<sup>52</sup> of these men and concluded that their action could in no wise influence the result of the election in the State, for the votes won to their cause "must necessarily be drawn principally from the Democratic ranks".<sup>53</sup> According to the call the object was "to form an electoral ticket and to organize the party for efficient action".

The Convention met in pursuance of the call, assembling in Market Hall with Easton Morris as temporary chairman.<sup>54</sup> In adopting the report of a committee on permanent organization,<sup>55</sup> Mr. Ebenezer Cook of Scott County was made permanent chairman and eight honorary vice-presidents<sup>56</sup> and three secretaries<sup>57</sup> were chosen. The convention was small, there being but fifteen counties

<sup>51</sup> The call was first published in the *State Press* and later in the weekly *Iowa State Reporter*, August 29, and in the *Iowa City Republican*, August 29, 1860.

<sup>52</sup> Dr. Crosthwait and the two Hendersons usually acted with the Democratic party; while the other three had been prominent in the American party, although Walter Curtis had lately been identified with the Republican party.

<sup>53</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, August 29, 1860.

<sup>54</sup> The proceedings of the convention may be found in the *Iowa City Republican*, September 5, 1860.

<sup>55</sup> The committee was: T. R. McChesney of Hardin, J. M. Eldredge of Scott, Dr. Crosthwait of Johnson, and G. Worrell of Muscatine.

<sup>56</sup> The Vice-Presidents were: D. W. Henderson of Johnson, F. M. Cummings of Muscatine, M. B. Browning of Des Moines, L. D. Palmer of Woodbury, L. S. Viele of Scott, Dr. Brooks of Polk, C. W. Boyer of Pottawattamie, and Lauren Dewey of Linn.

<sup>57</sup> The Secretaries were: R. M. Littler of Scott, S. C. Dunn of Muscatine, and J. P. Troxell of Johnson.

represented by about fifty delegates.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, this number was doubtless secured by the adoption of a motion providing that "all gentlemen present friendly to the cause" should be admitted as delegates. Certain it is that there were few local mass meetings or conventions held for the purpose of choosing delegates to the State Convention. Two such were held, however, on August 25th, one at Des Moines<sup>59</sup> and the other at Muscatine.<sup>60</sup> All in all, the convention was somewhat of an impromptu affair, yet it proceeded in an ambitious way to get the Constitutional Union issues before the people.

In almost every instance the business of the convention was initiated by special committees. A committee<sup>61</sup> was appointed to name an electoral ticket, and upon its recommendation, Col. W. H. Henderson of Marshall County, and Martin D. McHenry of Polk County were chosen as electors-at-large; and C. W. Boyer of Pottawattamie County, and J. J. Lindley of Scott County were made the District Electors. This not being enough they, like the Republicans, named two "assistant electors", J. C. Savery of Polk County for the First, and Capt. J. H. Wallace of Muscatine for the Second District.

The Committee on Resolutions was composed of Martin D. McHenry, Capt. J. H. Wallace, and L. S. Viele, and re-

<sup>58</sup> This is in accordance with Dr. Pelzer's figures in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. VII, p. 124, and seems as nearly correct as the extant data will warrant. The *Dubuque Herald* of September 5, 1860, however, makes the statement that there were 125 delegates from about half the counties of the State present. But Mr. Cook, on taking the chair, recognized the smallness of the convention, which he probably would not have done had there been as many as 125.

<sup>59</sup> *The Iowa State Register*, August 29, 1860.

<sup>60</sup> *Muscatine Weekly Journal*, August 31, 1860.

<sup>61</sup> The Committee was Charles Harris of Scott, B. Schenck of Muscatine, Lauren Dewey of Linn, Captain J. H. Wallace of Muscatine, and Dr. George D. Crosthwait of Johnson.



ported a platform of five resolutions. The threatened safety of the country they lay at the feet of the two leading parties, and call upon the executive and judicial departments of the National Government to keep within their own individual spheres. Then with a bit of unconscious irony upon their own tendency, they declare that "the prime cause of the present state of affairs" is due to "delusive and ambiguous platforms". The force of this is apparent in their appeal to the people of Iowa to vote for Bell and Everett, since they stand upon the platform of "the Constitution, the union of the States and the enforcement of the laws."

Whatever this party's principles were then, the business of the convention was next directed towards organizing a campaign to carry them at the polls. A committee was appointed<sup>62</sup> to nominate a "State Executive Committee",<sup>63</sup> whose duty it should be to conduct the campaign. It was also authorized to fill any possible vacancies on the ticket. The only question eliciting any considerable discussion was W. H. Henderson's proposition that they name a State ticket. This after a sharp, strenuous contest was voted down. A new paper, the *Messenger*, just launched at Muscatine by Mr. S. C. Dunn and devoted to the cause of Bell and Everett, was recommended as a sort of party organ. After an evening ratification session, at which speeches were delivered by Dr. J. F. Henry, W. H. Worthington, and M. D. McHenry, the convention adjourned. Thus, by the time the contest be-

<sup>62</sup> The Committee was: M. D. McHenry, General Morris, J. F. Dunlap of Lee, A. J. Hyde of Scott, and G. G. Mahan of Muscatine.

<sup>63</sup> State Executive Committee of the Constitutional Union Party: John P. Cook of Scott, L. S. Viele of Scott, W. H. Worthington of Lee, J. F. Henry of Des Moines, H. S. Compton of Muscatine, Easton Morris of Johnson, J. C. Savery of Polk, J. B. Stutzman of Pottawattamie, W. H. Jenkins of Washington, and T. H. Monroe of Dubuque.

tween the Republicans and Democrats was well under way, the second of the two "third" parties was also in line for the final dash to the polls.

#### THE CAMPAIGN

The campaign of 1860 is one memorable in the annals of Iowa, as in the country at large. Its opening, if it can be said to have been opened at any particular time, was, on the part of the Republicans, featured by Lincoln ratification meetings. These immediately followed the State Convention and continued throughout the month of June. Probably the first formal ratification however was held at Keokuk<sup>64</sup> on May 22nd, the day before the State Convention. It was an occasion of great rejoicing, much noise-making, marching and speaking. Large ratification meetings were held at Des Moines<sup>65</sup> on May 31st, at Charles City<sup>66</sup> on June 2nd, with others all through the month, among the last being a great celebration at Ottumwa<sup>67</sup> on June 22nd. These meetings introduced to the masses of the people not only the Presidential candidate and his platform, but the *man* Lincoln, and before the campaign was ended not only were the issues known to all, but the life of Lincoln had become an open book. They accepted him as one of their very own, and as one singled out and called to a great purpose.

While the campaign was conducted with considerable party animosity and personal abuse, accompanied by ludicrous caricatures, noise-making and hurraing, almost equaling the famous campaigns of Jackson and of Harrison, yet, underneath all there probably never was a

<sup>64</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, May 22, 1860.

<sup>65</sup> *State Journal*, June 2, 1860.

<sup>66</sup> *Charles City Intelligencer*, June 7, 1860.

<sup>67</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, June 23, 1860.

political campaign in the West, the issues of which so gripped the average man and held him to judgment, as the campaign of 1860. If organization and persistency ever accomplished anything, such was certainly the case in this campaign — especially on the part of the Republicans. They accepted the challenge, forced the issue, and organized for victory, taking no chances.

It was at the State Convention in May that the Republicans conceived the plan of organization so effective in the canvass of the State. At that time a committee on "State Organization" was appointed to work out a plan to present to the Convention. Mr. Kasson, State Chairman, was a member of the committee,<sup>68</sup> and though he had able assistants in William F. Davis, W. B. Fairfield, and Samuel McFarland, as well as others, the report presented was largely the result of his ideas gathered from experience in such work. The plan adopted was to organize uniformly the counties throughout the State, as the units of the organization; at the head of each was to be the county central committee, representative of the local township units. The chairmen of the several county committees within each Judicial District were to constitute the executive committee for the district. These executive committees, eleven in all, were to be in close touch with the State Central Committee, which should be at the head of all, directing the campaign as a whole. A strong State Central Committee<sup>69</sup> was chosen, and Mr. Kasson was retained as chairman.

<sup>68</sup> Committee on "State Organization", by Districts: (1) Samuel McFarland, (2) S. G. McAchron, (3) C. Watkins, (4) E. G. Morgan, (5) John A. Kasson, (6) J. A. Young, (7) William F. Davis, (8) J. Dysart, (9) J. S. Woodward, (10) W. B. Fairfield, (11) S. G. Winchester.

<sup>69</sup> The Republican State Central Committee for 1860, by Districts: John A. Kasson, Chairman, (1) Samuel F. Miller, (2) James B. Weaver, (3) George A. Hawley, (4) L. H. Smith, (5) H. M. Hoxie, (6) John R. Need-

While the State Central Committee was engaged in working out the details of the campaigning machinery, the Congressional Conventions were being held, nominations made, and declarations issued. The Republicans of the Second District led out with their Convention<sup>70</sup> at Iowa City on May 24th. The Convention was fully represented and enthusiastic, with Mr. Hiram Price as the chairman. The question of making a declaration of principles was disposed of by reaffirming the recently adopted State platform, which in turn, it will be recalled, was a reaffirmation of the National platform — an evidence of perfect party articulation throughout. The Convention endorsed the record of William Vandever in Congress by re-nominating him as their candidate for Representative. Nevertheless, while Mr. Vandever was re-nominated by acclamation, it was not accomplished without a showing of hands by an informal ballot. The ballot<sup>71</sup> revealed two other aspirants, both popular men, William Penn Clarke and Jacob Butler, who together received eighty-eight of the votes cast, as opposed to Mr. Vandever's two hundred and three. Outside of this contest one feature of the Convention was a speech by the eloquent young orator, Mr. Stewart L. Woodford of New York, who had come out west to stir the people with eastern Republicanism.

The First District Republicans met a month later (June 20th) at Oskaloosa.<sup>72</sup> All the counties of the district, save a few of the smaller ones, were represented, and the work of the Convention was spirited. They also re-nominated their Representative, Mr. Samuel R. Curtis,

ham, (7) W. A. Warren, (8) W. H. Tuthill, (9) S. J. W. Tabor, (10) W. B. Fairfield, (11) H. C. Henderson.

<sup>70</sup> Proceedings in the *Iowa City Republican*, May 3, 1860.

<sup>71</sup> The ballot was: William Vandever, 203; William Penn Clarke, 44; Jacob Butler, 44; William Smyth, 1.

<sup>72</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, June 7, 1860.

though with less unanimity than in the Second District. There were three strong men in competition with Mr. Curtis for the prize. They were, William H. Seevers, James F. Wilson, and Alvin Saunders. Mr. Curtis, however, on an informal ballot,<sup>73</sup> received a majority of seventeen votes and by acclamation was made the "unanimous choice" of the convention. It is quite noticeable that as the Republicans came into possession of the offices, the number of aspirants to office-holding increased; yet at this time the common bond of a great national issue kept them from breaking into factions over place, policy and power. This convention drew up a brief platform in keeping with Republican principles.

The Democratic Congressional Conventions were not held until in July. The First District Convention assembled on the 11th at Des Moines, and the Second District Convention at Cedar Rapids on the 17th. The calls for the conventions, however, had been issued early in June.<sup>74</sup> The Des Moines Convention coming just the day before the State Convention was quite large and enthusiastic.<sup>75</sup> In this District the Democrats were hopeful of success, consequently the contest for the nomination was keen. Five candidates, all well known men, appeared in an informal ballot. Then with the withdrawal of one,<sup>76</sup> and a second ballot,<sup>77</sup> Mr. C. C. Cole, although fifty-six votes behind the combined opposition, was made the nominee by "unanimous" action.

<sup>73</sup> The ballot was: Samuel R. Curtis, 124½; William H. Seevers, 64; James F. Wilson, 22½; Alvin Saunders, 21.

<sup>74</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, June 3, 1860.

<sup>75</sup> Proceedings in the *Iowa State Journal*, July 14, 1860.

<sup>76</sup> Henry H. Trimble, who had twice been honored with the nomination.

<sup>77</sup> The second ballot was: C. C. Cole, 104; P. Gad Bryan, 76; Thomas W. Claggett, 48; Henry Clay Dean, 36.

The Cedar Rapids Convention<sup>78</sup> was comparatively small, there being but seventeen out of the fifty-eight counties represented. It was also less enthusiastic than the one at Des Moines and the contest for the nomination was rather tame, probably for the reason that the Democrats by this time had come to regard the nomination for Congress in that District as a forlorn hope. Mr. Ben M. Samuels, on an informal ballot, received almost the entire vote over Senator George Green from Linn County and John H. Peters of Delaware County. Speech-making was indulged in at both these District Conventions, Col. Thomas of Buchanan County arousing the delegates at Cedar Rapids with an old-time Democratic speech; while at Des Moines a number of the leaders reviewed the past and depicted the *status quo*.

Both conventions also passed resolutions. Those of the Second District merely endorsed the "Democratic doctrines on the subject of slavery and all other subjects indicated" in the National platform and ratified the nomination of Douglas and Johnson. The Convention at Des Moines drew up an elaborate platform, restating some of the National and State issues and endorsing the National, State, and Congressional tickets.<sup>79</sup>

Of the organized agencies in this campaign, the one most potent and probably the one destined to live in

<sup>78</sup> *Iowa Democratic Enquirer*, July 26, 1860.

<sup>79</sup> The eulogy on Mr. Cole's Democracy is especially interesting in view of the fact that he was so soon to leave the party. They say: "That in the unanimous nomination of the Hon. C. C. Cole for Representative to Congress, this Convention feels a proud satisfaction in commending him to the people of this entire district as every whit worthy of the station to which he has this day been designated, combining as he does eminent legal and literary acquirements, with great moral worth, coupled with a large amount of political experience, and *unwavering devotion to Democratic principles*; and we hereby pledge ourselves to him and to one another to use all honorable means to secure his election."

men's minds, was the club known as the "Wide-awakes". The importance of the Wide-awake companies was their enlistment of young men. But the Wide-awake movement was the successor of an earlier scheme to interest the young men in the campaign.

One of the first, if not the first, young men's organizations was formed in March at Muscatine, a political hot-house of that time. A call<sup>80</sup> was issued for the organization of a "Young Men's Republican Working Club for Bloomington Township", and it was to aid in the "active work of the approaching Presidential contest". Among the leaders of the movement and signers of the "call" were D. C. Richman, Theodore S. Parvin, Aaron Stein, John O. Wilson, L. H. Washburn, and editor John Mahin.

At a meeting<sup>81</sup> in Tremont Hall on March 26th the organization was effected by the adoption of a constitution and the election of officers. According to the preamble, it was the purpose of the club to secure "the ascendancy and perpetuity of the principles" of the Republican party and also "the election of its candidates to all places of honor and trust in the Government". To this end the work of the club was to hold meetings, circulate "political documents", and promote the thorough organization of the Republican party in that township. Similar clubs were organized in other towns, but all were rather isolated and independent, and ere long gave place to the famous clubs of young Republicans, the Wide-awakes. This movement originated at Hartford, Connecticut,<sup>82</sup> took possession of the East, and rapidly made its way

<sup>80</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, March 22, 1860.

<sup>81</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, March 27, 1860.

<sup>82</sup> See Nicolay and Hay's, *Abraham Lincoln, A History*, Vol. II, pp. 284, 285; and *New York Tribune*, June 2, 1860.

westward. By July when the Republican campaigning propaganda was getting into form the Wide-awake movement reached Iowa. It was at Muscatine again where the first club was formally organized.<sup>83</sup> At this meeting on Thursday evening, July 20th, Mr. Henry O'Connor appeared dressed in a full Wide-awake uniform, consisting of cap and cape of oil-cloth, and a torch "warranted not to spill the fluid on the hand". The Wide-awakes differed from the former clubs not only in their having uniforms, but also in their uniform constitution and organization.

The constitution<sup>84</sup> admitted to membership any Republican over eighteen years of age. All members were required to sign the constitution and to "co-operate for the success of the Republican principles and the election of Lincoln and Hamlin, and the entire Republican ticket", and then upon the payment of the fee of \$2.00, they were given the uniform and became full-fledged Wide-awakes. The members of the companies were furthermore bound upon honor to refrain from profanity, intoxication, and ungentlemanly conduct upon all public occasions. Besides the usual officers of a club, there were a chaplain and three lieutenants to each company. These officers, together with the uniforms, torches and regular drills, were the military features of the organization which were calculated to attract young men. Instances are told of young Democrats being won into the ranks of the Republican party through the Wide-awakes.

A club organized at Ottumwa made its first appearance on August 29th,<sup>85</sup> and so on throughout the State, the work of organization continued until nearly the time of the election. In all the rallies the Wide-awakes were con-

<sup>83</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, July 21, 1860.

<sup>84</sup> Constitution printed in *Muscatine Daily Journal*, July 23, 1860.

<sup>85</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, August 30, 1860.



spicuous factors. In September a "county encampment" was held at Muscatine, which illustrates both the prominence of the Wide-awakes and the character of the campaign rallies. Here they were given the front rank in a long procession which reproduced in pantomime the life of Lincoln, and in which the political issues of the day were also caricatured.<sup>86</sup> Again on October 4th at Iowa City there was a "grand Wide-awake procession" closing with a "grand drill" for a prize of \$100, on the last night of the State Fair. And on October 10th there was a "Great Public Day" at Keokuk,<sup>87</sup> where 25,000 people are reported to have been present to witness a Wide-awake procession of twenty-six companies with 2,500 in line.

The campaign brought out the best known and ablest speakers of each party, as well as many new ones. The Republican cause was strengthened by the great speeches of Senators Harlan and Grimes; while Representatives Curtis and Vandever were in demand on long tours throughout their respective districts. Governor Kirkwood left the executive chamber for the campaign stump, as did also others of the State House force, especially

<sup>86</sup> "The Wide Awake companies came first in line. . . . In the line were numerous flags, banners, mottoes, and many exceedingly ludicrous devices. The 'Rail Splitters' of the Island rather excelled all other delegations in this respect. On one wagon, men were engaged splitting rails; another contained a flat-boat representing Lincoln's early life in Western waters. They had, also, some well gotten up caricatures. One represented a slaveholder about to cross the line separating free from slave territory with his gang of slaves, when he is confronted by the representatives of free labor in the persons of the Irishman, the German and the Yankee each of whom forbids it. . . . The Little Giant is busily endeavoring, with rails labeled respectively 'Lecompton', 'Squatter-Sovereignty', and 'Dred Scott', to fence in his Southern plantation. In this connection, a log represents the Dem. party split in two and rotten at the core. Old Abe stands over it with his maul and says 'I'll finish it'."—*Muscatine Daily Journal*, September 15, 1860.

<sup>87</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, October 11, 1860.

Attorney General C. C. Nourse and J. W. Cattell. Besides these the State-wide field called into service the candidates for State office, the nominees for electors, and some of the leading editors, such as James B. Howell, Clark Dunham, Frank W. Palmer, and others. Then, also, through the County Central Committees a vast army of local speakers took the stump, and the young men especially were enlisted in holding schoolhouse rallies in the rural communities. Never before were such volleys of campaign thunder heard on the prairies of Iowa.

The Democrats were not far behind in furnishing prominent men and able campaigners, though their campaigning organization was much less efficient. All the candidates for State office were out in force and, besides the Congressional candidates, Cole and Samuels, probably the most effective speakers were the electoral nominees, Le Grand Byington, the Rev. Henry Clay Dean, Lincoln Clark, and Martin Van Buren Bennett. The Democratic State Central Committee, as well as the corps of local speakers and newspaper men, were also on the stump. A prominent feature of the campaign was the series of joint debates, especially between the Congressional candidates of the First District, C. C. Cole and S. R. Curtis.<sup>88</sup>

But while the speaking was almost wholly done by home talent, there were at least two prominent out-of-the-state speakers brought to the Iowa platform — William H. Seward and Stephen A. Douglas. Both men spoke to great throngs of people eager to hear the issues from the lips of two of the foremost leaders in the National con-

<sup>88</sup>A Republican hand-bill announcing a joint debate between these two men at Keosauqua calls upon the public to come out and see the daring Democratic candidate, C. C. Cole, torn to pieces by Representative Samuel R. Curtis.

test. Seward spoke at Dubuque<sup>89</sup> on Friday, September 21st, and his speech<sup>90</sup> made a deep impression upon the people. His message exalted free labor, and in his comparisons he struck heavy blows at the system of slave labor. But, while Seward touched the mere border of the State, Douglas made a detour into the State, speaking at Iowa City<sup>91</sup> on October 9th, at Cedar Rapids<sup>92</sup> on the 10th and ending at Dubuque on the 11th. The "Little Giant" was applauded, and with a faith almost reverent the people hung upon his words; yet he appeared as one in the enemy's country, weary and worn almost to exhaustion, fighting a losing battle.

The campaign was thus a contest between the two great parties. The two minor factions did little campaigning and at most could but await the time when they could register their wills at the ballot box. The Republican press as well as the speakers could with impunity ignore the Breckinridge faction, while the Constitutional Union men, more closely related, they could easily answer. This faction was sharply informed that the Republican party was "the only Union Party",<sup>93</sup> since, while all other parties were saying that the Union would be dissolved, it declared that "The Union must and shall be preserved". Thus again, it became quite clear that the contest was one between the Republicans on one side as against all other parties. The Democrats were especially disturbed over the situation; for they felt keenly their loss in the Breckinridge bolt, as also to some extent

<sup>89</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 26, 1860.

<sup>90</sup> Seward's *Works* (Baker's Ed.), Vol. IV, pp. 368-385.

<sup>91</sup> *Iowa State Press*, October 16, 1860.

<sup>92</sup> *Cedar Democrat*, October 11, 1860.

<sup>93</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 6, 1860.

through Bell and Everett, and anxiously declared that something should be done to defeat the Republicans.

There was talk of "fusion", which was advocated by some as the only means of bringing about that much coveted result, but the Democrats themselves divided on the question and misunderstandings arose. The *Davenport Democrat* charged the *Dubuque Herald* with advocating fusion. Editor Mahoney retorted that the only fusion he had advocated was "the laying down of arms by all bolters, and giving their votes to Douglas and Johnson".<sup>94</sup> He then appealed to all, regardless of party, who believed with him that the extremists both in the North and in the South were wrong, to give their support to the "true Democracy". This frenzied despair of the Democrats, that something had to be done to defeat the Republicans, together with the fusion talk, called forth the sarcastic rejoinder of the Republicans that there was only one party trying to elect anybody; all the others were merely opposing that election.<sup>95</sup>

On the eve of the election the Republican press printed the election laws of the State and warned all Republicans to obey the same and to see to it that those of other parties did likewise. Voters on both sides were instructed as to challenging at the polls, they were repeatedly warned against bogus tickets,<sup>96</sup> printed "pasters" were to be prepared for every precinct, and partisans everywhere were cautioned about having sufficient tickets on hand and to see that they were given out to every voter.

<sup>94</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, October 27, 1860.

<sup>95</sup> Said Mr. Mahin: "There is only one party in the country now trying to elect anybody. The Republicans are trying to elect Abraham Lincoln. The other parties are merely opposed to the election of Lincoln."—*Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 5, 1860.

<sup>96</sup> For instance, a ticket headed by Lincoln and Hamlin, with the names of the Democratic electors pinned underneath.

The last admonitions were: "Let no Republican voter remain at home";<sup>97</sup> "Let no Democratic voter stay away from the polls".<sup>98</sup>

Furthermore, election day was looked upon as the best day for effective campaigning. On Monday morning the 5th, editor John Mahin gave out the characteristic order: "Stay by the polls and proffer tickets! Urge the wavering and the doubtful. Let no one scratch his ticket. If you devote the whole day to save a vote for Abraham Lincoln, our State ticket, or Charles S. Foster,<sup>99</sup> it will be the best day's work of the year".<sup>100</sup> This was matched by Mr. Mahoney a week earlier, when he urged, not the Democrats, but "the people", to "come to the polls . . . defeat the hopes of the Lincolnites and give your votes to Douglas".<sup>101</sup> He at the same time appealed to the Democrats to "bring the State back", to which end they were to "vote the Democratic ticket straight". The Democrats apparently were making a real fight to regain the State, while the Republicans, secure in their position, were so nearly absorbed in the national issues that they at the last feared for the safety of the State ticket and for several days previous to, and on the morning of election day, repeatedly called attention to this fact. Interest in the National ticket, however, was really no detraction from the State ticket, and the party went to the polls with the grim determination to "make the election decisive this time",<sup>102</sup> so far as the question of slavery extension

<sup>97</sup> *Iowa State Register*, November 3, 1860.

<sup>98</sup> *Iowa State Journal*, November 5, 1860.

<sup>99</sup> A local candidate for clerk of the District Court of Muscatine County.

<sup>100</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 5, 1860.

<sup>101</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, October 1, 1860.

<sup>102</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 5, 1860.

was concerned. How well the Republicans lined up for a straight party vote will be seen.

#### THE ELECTION

The long, hard-fought campaign came to a climax on election day, Tuesday, November 6th. The next morning and indeed for several days, the returns showed "a strange mixture of odds and ends".<sup>103</sup> The somewhat doubtful confidence of the Republicans as to the election at large was buoyed by the press. Startling headlines, pictures of "the big gun" mounted with the flag — for they could not then disassociate a political campaign from a military encounter — and guesses in large figures adorned the columns of the newspapers.

Iowa Republicans were confident of the outcome of the election at home. The State would without doubt give Lincoln a majority and the estimates ran up all the way from 10,000 to 30,000. Iowans were anxious about the result in other States; they shared the common fear that the closeness of the electoral vote might throw the final choice into the House of Representatives. By the 8th, however, enough was known to make Lincoln's election quite certain, and "Three cheers for Old Abe" was heard everywhere.<sup>104</sup> On the 9th<sup>105</sup> all doubt was cleared away and people read the startling, almost sensational, news that all the northern States but one — New Jersey — had gone for Lincoln, with majorities ranging from 4,500 in Rhode Island to 70,000 each in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, and with even New York not far behind. The Democratic papers generally from the first conceded the election to the Republicans. The *Dubuque Herald* put it

<sup>103</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 7, 1860.

<sup>104</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 8, 1860.

<sup>105</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 9, 1860.

mildly that "Lincoln's election is possible", and admitted that there was a general increase of Republican majorities in the Northern States.<sup>106</sup>

The contest in Iowa, of course, was between the Lincoln and Douglas supporters; consequently with the assured victory of the Republicans the defeated Douglas party had to bear the brunt of Republican exuberance and jibes. The greatest torture that the Democrats could be subjected to, was to see everywhere the comparison of the electoral votes of Lincoln and of Douglas. These were summarized by the graphic method of the pyramid,<sup>107</sup> which conceded to Douglas a hollow shell resting upon the then doubtful State of Missouri, while the Republicans were awarded a solid cone of sixteen States. The Republicans also took great delight in the apparent satisfaction which each of the opposing Democratic factions got out of the defeat of the other. Breckinridge Democrats were heard to express satisfaction in the de-

<sup>106</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, November 7, 1860.

<sup>107</sup> The *Muscatine Daily Journal* of November 20th presented the Republican Pyramid; then on the 22nd printed the Democratic, showing the hollowness of the Douglas vote.

Republican pyramid	Douglas pyramid
Ohio	-
Iowa	- -
Maine	- - -
Indiana	- - - -
Vermont	- - - - -
Illinois	- - - - -
Wisconsin	- - - - -
Michigan	- - - - -
New York	- - - - -
Minnesota	- - - - -
Connecticut	- - - - -
New Hampshire	- - - - -
Rhode Island	- - - - -
Pennsylvania	M i s s o u r i
Massachusetts	Hurrah for D-O-U-G-L-A-S (maybe)

feat of Douglas, while Douglas men rejoiced that "Old Abe had beaten Breckinridge". The Bell and Everett followers had expected nothing and so took great satisfaction in the fact that their "principles" had carried in the border States — a good omen of holding the Union together. "The result seems to satisfy everybody", said John Mahin, "and the country is once more safe".<sup>108</sup> This may have expressed the feelings of the Republicans; but if so, they were soon to be convinced of the falsity of both statements.

The result in the State was attributed both to the systematic campaigning<sup>109</sup> and to the uprising of the masses, after sober investigation, against the evils of slavery.<sup>110</sup> Organization and purpose, then, may be taken as the key to the result in Iowa. It was this too, which characterized Iowa Republicanism throughout the Civil War and the Reconstruction period. Organization in fact both presupposed and necessitated unity of purpose. The leaders felt that they had a mission, and moved somewhat by the spirit of crusaders, they extended their propaganda into every nook and corner of the State, making proselytes to their sacred cause.

But the Republican victory would not be complete without the accompaniment of its logical culmination, a proper recognition of the event. Consequently a series of ratification meetings, love feasts, and celebrations were held the entire State over. During the month of November, nearly every large town and many villages ratified with mass meetings which were characterized by processions, bands, and illuminations, feasting and speech-making. One of the first of the large ratifications held was at Iowa

<sup>108</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 10, 1860.

<sup>109</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 12, 1860.

<sup>110</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, November 21, 1860.



City<sup>111</sup> on the 10th, and among others of considerable interest were those at Ottumwa<sup>112</sup> on the 11th, at Keokuk<sup>113</sup> on the 13th, at Des Moines<sup>114</sup> on the 15th, and on the same date a Lincoln ball at Dubuque,<sup>115</sup> a great meeting at Muscatine<sup>116</sup> on the 16th, and another at Charles City<sup>117</sup> on the 21st.

The ratification at Muscatine is illustrative of these celebrations. It was held on Friday evening, November 16th, after a week's planning,<sup>118</sup> and was an elaborate affair, taking in delegations from several adjoining counties. At the appointed time the city was astir in full dress for the occasion, residences and stores all along the route of the procession being gorgeously decorated with flags, bunting, portraits, and banners. The streets were lined with cheering thousands to witness the procession, long and stately. Here, as in the campaign, the chief attraction were the Wide-awakes who received the Chautauqua salutations of the ladies. The heavens were made radiant with fire works in advance of the procession, while at the courthouse yard, where the speaking was to take place, the thunder of cannons rent the air. At the gathering Judge Mason presided, and enthusiasm was instilled into the throng by the speeches of Jacob Butler, William G. Woodward, George W. Van Horne, and others. At the close of the ceremonies the crowd joined in the accustomed "three cheers" for the Union, the Constitution and the Laws.

<sup>111</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, November 14, 1860.

<sup>112</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, November 15, 1860.

<sup>113</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, November 14, 1860.

<sup>114</sup> *Iowa State Journal*, November 19, 1860.

<sup>115</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, November 17, 1860.

<sup>116</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 19, 1860.

<sup>117</sup> *Charles City Intelligencer*, November 29, 1860.

<sup>118</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 9 and 13, 1860.

At some places the Democrats joined in the jollifications, while at others opposing factions attempted to dampen the ardor by taunting burlesques or mock ratifications. An instance of this is seen in the Muscatine celebration, where Mr. Anderson Chambers draped his residence in black and where transparencies were flung from Garrettson & Wiley's store, bearing the inscription: "Irresistible conflict — Wheat 60 cents and going down — Exchange 5 per cent and going up". At some of the ratifications, as at the earlier rallies also, fights were not uncommon and further hard feelings were engendered. Under the peculiar circumstances it is safe to say that the celebrations were not calculated to assuage the stings of defeat, nor to allay the fears of the Democrats that the Republicans would be revolutionary in the National administration.

That Iowa Republicans should rejoice was but natural and perfectly proper, for they had made large investments in the cause. But while they were all along confident of the State, they were not prepared for such surprising majorities as some counties returned, nor yet for the sweeping victories in many other States. These so intoxicated them that they committed the common error of claiming too much for their State and making the Republican triumph in the State seem greater and more overwhelming than the facts warranted. An examination of this vote will reveal a situation which the partisan student should ponder.

In 1860 the population of the State was 674,913,<sup>119</sup> of which 1,825 were colored. There was a voting population of about 140,000 and the total vote cast for President was 128,431, distributed among the four tickets in the field as

<sup>119</sup> *Official Register for 1909-1910*, p. 808.

follows: Republicans, 70,409; Douglas Democracy, 55,111; Constitutional Union, 1,763; Breckinridge Democracy, 1,048. It is seen that Lincoln thus had a plurality of 15,298, and a majority vote of 12,387.<sup>120</sup> The vote by counties shows that the Republicans had indeed swept the State, and gained a number of counties since the election of 1856, Lincoln carrying 71 to Douglas's 24 counties. The Wright County returns for some reason were not filed with the State Department, although the county went Republican in 1856. To offset this, one county (Marion) now Democratic, had sent in no returns in 1856.<sup>121</sup> Thus the Republicans carried three-fourths of the counties of the State, winning eight<sup>122</sup> which in 1856 were Democratic; while the Democrats won back but one county from the Republican column of 1856.<sup>123</sup> It should be noticed also that of the twenty-four Douglas counties, the election was quite close in at least nine,<sup>124</sup> being one-third of them, while in the seventy-one Lincoln counties it was also close in nine,<sup>125</sup> which was but one-eighth of the total number. Then, too, there were eighteen new counties participating in their first Presidential election. Ten of these were Republican and seven Democratic, while in

<sup>120</sup> Election Archives for 1860.

<sup>121</sup> Two counties, Lyon and Osceola, were still unorganized in 1860.

<sup>122</sup> Des Moines, Jackson, Monona, Guthrie, Lucas, Pottawattamie, Taylor, and Van Buren.

<sup>123</sup> Madison County.

<sup>124</sup> The nine counties were as follows, the Douglas vote being stated first and the Lincoln vote second: Adair, 44 to 42; Calhoun, 20 to 19; Carroll, 26 to 25; Clay, 13 to 8; Lee, 2,635 to 2,618; Marion, 1,607 to 1,508; O'Brien, 10 to 8; Union, 208 to 198; Winnebago, 25 to 24.

<sup>125</sup> The nine counties were as follows, the Lincoln vote being stated first and the Douglas vote second: Allamakee, 1,185 to 1,151; Guthrie, 326 to 306; Harrison, 385 to 357; Jackson, 1,575 to 1,504; Jefferson, 1,462 to 1,285; Keokuk, 1,330 to 1,193; Pottawattamie, 413 to 412; Van Buren, 1,667 to 1,548; Webster, 253 to 213.

one (Buena Vista) the twelve votes tied Lincoln and Douglas. The new counties which went Republican did so by larger majorities than those which went Democratic.

The Democratic strongholds were in the counties of Appanoose, Davis and Dubuque. Fairly large majorities were also secured in Decatur, Fremont, Madison, and Wapello, in all of which Douglas had more votes than that of the combined opposition. In several of the close Douglas counties there was a clear majority — as in Marion and Wayne; and, likewise, where there were no third party votes cast, Douglas had a majority in Audubon, Boone (one exception), Calhoun, Carroll, Clay, Greene, Union, and Winnebago. The proportionally largest Douglas vote is found in the sparsely settled counties of Palo Alto, Sac, and Sioux, where the vote, of course, was small. In Lee and O'Brien counties Douglas won by a plurality vote, as also in Adair, where he tied with all others.<sup>126</sup>

Lincoln had majorities in sixty-nine counties, in seventeen of which there were but the two tickets — Republican and Douglas Democracy; and, like Douglas, in only three counties did Lincoln win by mere pluralities. These were Pottawattamie, Webster, and Woodbury. Only one county in the State gave all its votes to one man, Lincoln getting the thirty-six votes in Emmett County. The large Republican vote as compared to that of the Democrats is seen in the list of eighteen counties<sup>127</sup> giving Lincoln majorities from 100 per cent up. This shows the Republican stronghold to have been in the northeastern part of the State. Besides these there were a num-

<sup>126</sup> Adair went: Douglas, 44; Lincoln, 42; Bell, 1; Breckenridge, 1.

<sup>127</sup> These counties were: Blackhawk, Cerro Gordo, Clayton, Delaware, Fayette, Franklin, Hamilton, Hardin, Henry, Jasper, Linn, Louisa, Marshall, Mitchell, Montgomery, Muscatine, Scott, Winnebago.

ber of small counties which gave Lincoln very large per centum majorities.<sup>128</sup> With such majorities, with an increase in the vote, and with the control of all the State offices as well as many more of the local offices than before, and adding to this the divided state of the Democrats, it is no wonder that the Republicans regarded the State as their own.

A word about the Bell-Everett and Breckinridge votes will suffice. These were small and scattering, the 1,763 votes of the former being distributed in sixty-two counties, and the 1,048 of the latter in fifty-three. There was considerable activity in a few localities, yet there were no real centers of strength. There were only six counties in which more than one hundred votes were cast for Bell and Everett.<sup>129</sup> The largest vote polled was 226 in Davis County, a Douglas stronghold. This was nine times the Breckinridge vote, twenty-five per cent of the Douglas vote, and one and one-half per cent of the Lincoln vote. The highest Breckinridge vote<sup>130</sup> was eighty-five in Muscatine County, where the Republicans had made great gains over the Democrats. This was five per cent of Lincoln's vote and seven per cent of Douglas's vote, while it was but half of the Bell-Everett vote. In only one county did a third-party ticket poll a larger vote than one of the two leading parties.<sup>131</sup> And again, where the largest third-party votes appear, we find that they were mere fractions of the votes cast by the Republicans and Doug-

<sup>128</sup> The vote in these counties was: Cherokee, 10 to 3; Dickinson, 46 to 7; Grundy, 141 to 19; Hancock, 29 to 4; Humboldt, 55 to 8; Kossuth, 64 to 20; Plymouth, 32 to 6; and Worth, 109 to 30.

<sup>129</sup> Bell-Everett vote: 26 counties gave from 1 to 10; 17 counties gave from 10 to 50; 6 counties gave above 100.

<sup>130</sup> Breckinridge vote: 24 counties gave from 1 to 10; 22 counties gave from 10 to 50; 6 counties gave above 50.

<sup>131</sup> Humboldt county: Lincoln, 55; Breckinridge, 10; Douglas, 8.

las Democrats. Hence, from all of the above facts, we may conclude that these political factions were but negative expressions. They were the remnants of the Fillmore vote of 1856 and of the extreme pro-slavery sympathizers, extant in the Republican State of Iowa.

But now the question arises, was this sweeping victory real or apparent? Were the Republicans right in estimating Iowa's vote and in believing that they had effected a party landslide? That they did, is an idea current even to-day. But was the Republican increase relatively so much greater than the Democratic? To get at the facts in the case, it will be necessary to make a comparison of the vote of 1860 with that of 1856.

In the election of 1856, the Republicans had a plurality over the Democrats of 7,784 votes, compared with a plurality of 15,298 in 1860. They thus almost doubled their plurality. However, both parties made large gains, the Republicans gaining 60 per cent, while the Democrats gained 52 per cent — a difference of 8 per cent. The Republican vote, it is fair to assume, was greatly increased by winning over the bulk of the Fillmore vote of 1856, while the Democrats looked largely to migration and naturalization for their increase. But the Democrats must have suffered loss almost to the extent of the Breckinridge votes (1,048), since very few of those came from the old Fillmore vote, which, however, contributed largely if not entirely, to the Bell-Everett vote (1,763). The Republicans then must have received about eight-ninths of the Fillmore vote without losing to a third party as the Democrats must have done. This eight-ninths of the Fillmore vote went to swell the Republican majorities, which was 35 per cent of their increase since 1856.

To get at the relative increase of each party in the State, we must find the per cent increase of each in the

different counties. Obviously the eighteen new counties, since they had no vote in 1856, must be omitted from the comparison, which leaves us seventy-seven counties — sixty-one Republican and sixteen Democratic. Now, there was a Republican increase in all of the sixty-one Republican counties but two — Kossuth and Webster<sup>132</sup>— while the Democrats made gains in all of them. The Republican gain per cent was greater than that of the Democrats in thirty-one counties, and the Democratic gain per cent was greater than that of the Republicans in thirty counties. Thus we see that in the Republican counties, the Democrats were not hopelessly defeated; on the contrary, they kept pace with the Republicans.

Noting now the relative increase in the sixteen Democratic counties, we find that the Democrats made gains in all of them; while the Republicans again lost in two — Adair and Sac. The Republican gain per cent however, was greater than that of the Democrats in eleven counties, while the Democratic gain per cent was greater than that of the Republican in but five counties. Thus the Republican gain was relatively the greatest in the counties under Democratic control. Here and in the new counties is where the difference in favor of the Republicans appears. But the election reveals a remarkable evenness in the increase made by the two parties during a period of four years. Of course the vote in the new counties was to the great advantage of the Republicans, Lincoln's total being 810, to Douglas's 361. Hence the conclusion is, on comparing the votes in the counties which voted for President in both the elections of 1856 and 1860, that the percentage of increase was nearly as great in the Democratic party as in the Republican.

The Republican vote for the State and Congressional

<sup>132</sup> Kossuth lost 56 per cent of the vote of 1856, and Webster lost 37 per cent.

tickets was relatively larger than for the National ticket. Elijah Sells, for Secretary of State,<sup>133</sup> received a majority of 13,670 over John M. Corse. But while this was greater than Lincoln's majority, it was less than his plurality. No doubt some of the Breckinridge Democrats and even Constitutional Union men, since neither had a State ticket, voted for the Democratic candidate; or possibly there were Republicans who voted for the Republican State ticket, but not for the National. The Congressional votes<sup>134</sup> showed great Republican gains, the vote in the First District being a real surprise, for S. R. Curtis won over C. C. Cole by a majority of 3,693. In the Second District William Vandever's majority over Ben M. Samuels was 9,499. This was a larger vote, but a smaller gain than in the First District.

The Republican vote reveals a solidarity lacking in that of the Democrats. It will be seen that the total Republican vote cast for Representatives was about the same (35 more) as the vote for Secretary of State, while the corresponding Democratic vote was 510 greater. It must be that in this case also the adherents of the minor parties fused with the Democrats to defeat the Republican Congressional ticket.

All in all it was a complete triumph for the Republicans. The State was now apparently safe in their grasp. Yet while that was true, they were soon to be disturbed by the threatening attitude of one of the defeated parties in the National contest. Graver questions than manipulating conventions, drafting party platforms, organizing

<sup>133</sup> Vote for Secretary of State: Elijah Sells, 70,706; John M. Corse, 57,036.— Election Archives of 1860.

<sup>134</sup> Vote for Representatives in Congress: First District: Samuel R. Curtis, 33,936; Chester C. Cole, 30,240. Second District: William Vandever, 36,805; Ben M. Samuels, 27,306.— Election Archives of 1860.



campaigns, and making speeches were now to occupy the attention of men, and to test the strength of their political convictions.

## CHAPTER III

### THE POST-ELECTION ISSUES IN IOWA

#### ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SECESSION MOVEMENT

While on the night of election day the Republicans "went to bed satisfied with all the world",<sup>135</sup> and after Lincoln's election was practically assured, rejoiced that everybody seemed to be satisfied with the result and that "the country is once more safe",<sup>136</sup> they little suspected that the election in which they rejoiced was to be the excuse for the greatest crisis in the country's history. The safety of the Nation was soon to be seriously jeopardized. It is true that threats of secession were made during the campaign, conditioned on the election of Mr. Lincoln, but in the main neither the Republicans nor the Democrats gave them serious consideration.

Even now the Republicans generally treated the movement in a light vein.<sup>137</sup> They had no fears of the success of such an attempt; to them it was a huge joke. Mr. James B. Howell, editor of the *Keokuk Gate City*, ridiculed the threat of "the fire-eaters, the dough-faces and the bell-tollers" that Lincoln's election would result in secession.<sup>138</sup> He was not disturbed by any evil forebodings; the heavens were not, on the day after election, "clothed in gloom in anticipation of such an awful split in the Union".<sup>139</sup> On the contrary, to the Republicans

<sup>135</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 9, 1860.

<sup>136</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 10, 1860

<sup>137</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, December 26, 1860.

<sup>138</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, November 6, 1860.

<sup>139</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, November 8, 1860.

the election was "the victory of freedom" and second only in importance to the American Revolution; for, it was the people's re-affirmation of the Declaration of Independence, and would nationalize freedom.<sup>140</sup> This was prophetic of what was so soon to come. Mr. John Mahin called the promised South Carolina Convention "all a bluff". He had no fear for the integrity of the Union, since the conservative masses there would speedily attend to the "demonstrative little faction of traitors".<sup>141</sup> The same opinion was expressed by Mr. Charles Aldrich of the *Hamilton Freeman*.<sup>142</sup>

Nor did the Republicans seem to think secession a great thing even if accomplished. Some thought that the best way to treat South Carolina was to let her alone. Mr. Mahin thought that by such treatment the State, "like a child in a pout", would "come to its supper". He advocated taking away Federal privileges, such as the mails, courts, and custom houses, from the State. Such deprivations together with the loss of \$300,000 from the National Treasury, as well as the loss of their negroes, who in case of secession would not be returned — these things the rebellious little State might suffer for her fun. The only thing now needed, thought he, was for President Buchanan to say: "I will not trouble you; glad to see you take care of yourself, hope you will have success".<sup>143</sup> Similar sentiments were expressed by others, even after

<sup>140</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, November 8, 1860.

<sup>141</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 17, 1860.

<sup>142</sup> *Hamilton Freeman*, November 24, 1860. "The conservative masses of the South — and they outnumber the secessionists more than three to one — are already in motion and their wise and moderate councils seem likely to prevail. That the disunion bubble will only make a fizzling, spluttering, harmless explosion, seems to be the general opinion of the country at large."

<sup>143</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 14, 1860.

the threat had been carried out in action.<sup>144</sup> The *Fort Dodge Republican* accepted secession by saying, "So far as South Carolina is concerned we say let her go and make her stay".<sup>145</sup> As late as February 12th a correspondent to the *Gate City* suggested that there never was a better time for the South to draw off than then. Said he: "We shall be stronger in 1870 without the South than with it, however hard the separation may be."<sup>146</sup>

Later the tone changed. Before the actual secession took place even, as signs appeared more threatening, the editors — those moulders of public opinion and spokesmen for the people — became more serious. And, as at first they dismissed the subject with a few lines in jest, or heaped vituperative rhetoric upon the "fire-eaters", they now began to write lengthy articles analyzing the pros and cons on the question of secession. Naturally the Republicans sought a cause for the threatened secession, other than the election of Lincoln. The feeling was that South Carolina had other and sinister motives, and that they were not hard to find. Said Mr. Howell: "One object of the flurry at the South is without doubt, to frighten the North into a compromise on the slavery question."<sup>147</sup> Mr. Aldrich thought the object was the restoration of the African slave trade.<sup>148</sup> John Mahin also held to this view and thought that the slave States on the bor-

<sup>144</sup> *The Ottumwa Courier* in the issue of December 26, 1860, said: "That pestilent little State or Kingdom of S. C. has at last walked deliberately out of the Union, and so far as she can do it, dissolved her connection with the rest of the world. At last accounts she was trying to find a substitute for the Gov't of Uncle Sam, with a reasonable prospect of having a good time of it."

<sup>145</sup> *Fort Dodge Republican*, January 1, 1861.

<sup>146</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, February 12, 1861.

<sup>147</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, November 22, 1860.

<sup>148</sup> *Hamilton Freeman*, December 2, 1860.

der would act according to a majority vote of their sister States to the south.<sup>149</sup>

Slavery was thus regarded as at the bottom of secession. None believed that Lincoln's election was the real ground for the movement. Furthermore, so far as South Carolina was concerned, she cherished disunion sentiments of long standing, whose ebullitions at stated intervals would of course take place.<sup>150</sup> The northern leaders under the necessity of putting on a bold front, found consolation and peace of mind in the paling hope that the "conservative masses" of the South would assert themselves and dispel the "secession bubble". The abstract right of secession, too, was discussed, and by some decided in the negative, while others regarded its solution as "a problem for the future to determine".<sup>151</sup> Of course along with the question of secession, were discussed, as we shall see, the questions of compromise and coercion.

The Democrats were divided, though naturally the vast majority of them listened for the voice of their idol, Mr. Douglas. His position expressed immediately after the election was generally accepted by them as their platform. The Republicans also accepted it, and used it as Administration-supporting and Union-saving material. Douglas analyzed the situation in a letter<sup>152</sup> written while yet at New Orleans, whence he had gone for his last campaign speech. He held that the election was constitutional, and that, instead of its result being a cause for secession, it was but a pretext of the disunionists for carrying out what they had previously determined upon,

<sup>149</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 15, 1860.

<sup>150</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 26, 1860.

<sup>151</sup> *Fort Dodge Republican*, November 21, 1860.

<sup>152</sup> Letter printed by the *Muscatine Daily Journal* of November 21, 1860, and printed by many other Republican papers.

independent of that event. He assured the South that they had nothing to fear from obnoxious laws, for none would be enacted, since there was an anti-Republican majority in Congress. The only harm that could possibly come to the South from that direction would be by their own withdrawal. Douglas, like most Northerners, however, made the mistake of thinking that the threat was a mere bluff. He thought it would "likely subside when reason gets the better of insane passion". The Republican press everywhere applauded the "Little Giant".

The position, at this time, of Dennis A. Mahoney, who may be counted with the pro-slavery Democrats, is significant in view of his known tendencies and later course. He thought that the threat to dissolve the Union on account of Lincoln's election produced little effect, and regarded his election as harmless, since his party was a minority in Congress.<sup>153</sup> Later, while he regarded the election of Lincoln as no just pretext on the part of the South for secession, he also accepted the *New York Herald's* prophecy that secession would follow, and that the only remedy was to remove the existing causes in the North.<sup>154</sup> His paper became more and more openly sympathetic with secession. His readers were informed of "Enthusiastic Disunion Meetings" in the South, and the successive "Declarations of Independence" were at least passively applauded.<sup>155</sup>

On the day of election Mr. Mahoney published his "Declaration of Principles" and laid down two fundamental Constitutional propositions, namely, that Constitutional rights should be guaranteed and Constitutional safeguards enforced. It is quite plain to what and

<sup>153</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, November 7, 1860.

<sup>154</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, November 21, 1860.

<sup>155</sup> *Dubuque Herald* from November 21st on.

to whom he referred. He also thought that there were fundamental questions of Constitutional law involved in the issues between the Democrats and Republicans, which should be determined by a judicial opinion rather than by a political party. While he recognized the right of a partisan to express his opinions on these questions, yet that might be allowed only until the "judicial opinion" should have been rendered. One can see in this statement the shadow of the Dred Scott Decision, the parting of the ways between Mahoney and the Douglas Democracy. To him, however, the really disconcerting and dangerous thing was the divided state of the Democrats themselves, both factions of whom claimed orthodoxy on opinions of Constitutional law. He now urged them to lay aside their differences on the slavery question and present a united front against the victorious minority party.

That the Republicans were really a minority in Congress was not the only encouraging fact; Mr. Mahoney found hope in the discovery of a great difference between Lincoln and his party. Two weeks after the election, in an editorial on "The President-elect",<sup>156</sup> he proceeds to show that Lincoln's record does not square with the declarations of his party. The South thus has less to fear from the former than from the latter. He believes that a majority of that party are even ready "to break with Seward & Co.;" and, if in that event Lincoln should devote himself to his country's good, "posterity will bless him for preserving the Union and perpetuating the institutions [one of them slavery] which found existence in it, to posterity." With Lincoln, then, it must be either his country or his party, and "he will elevate the one or tear down and destroy the other". Mahoney thus

<sup>156</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, November 21, 1860.

would hold Lincoln absolutely responsible for whatever happens, and tauntingly asks him to choose as between his country and his party. In Lincoln's hands, according to his record, the pro-slavery safeguards will be respected, but not so with his party; for its declarations are dangerous and, according to them, the *status quo* would be disturbed. Two things are quite evident here. One is that Mr. Mahoney did not know the declaration of the Republican platform relative to domestic slavery; and the second is that so far as this exponent of Democracy was concerned the Republican President could with impunity disregard his party declarations. Mr. Mahoney evidently was not a stickler for the binding effects of "party pledges" upon a candidate.

The Democrats also discussed the question of the right of secession and naturally two views appeared. One is the bald "State Sovereignty" view expressed in a letter from "Senex" to the *Dubuque Herald*.<sup>157</sup> The other and most popular view confessed faith in the Jacksonian views of 1832. Said the *State Press* "they [Jackson's views] will unquestionably be adopted by the Democratic party in the present crisis, as the chart by which it will be guided."<sup>158</sup> But when the Administration showed a hesitancy and uncertainty, the *Press* like all the papers turned its attention to the question of compromise. The fact of secession was conceded;<sup>159</sup> and the important question now was not as to the theory, but the immediate need of reversing the fact.

<sup>157</sup> It is not surprising to find so many men, who, we should suppose, ought to know better, denying the right of a sovereign State on any account to separate from the Union. To deny this right is to deny State sovereignty, and to deny State sovereignty is to deny the legality of all Gov't under this Union of States'.—*Dubuque Herald*, January 13, 1861.

<sup>158</sup> *State Press*, November 20, 1860.

<sup>159</sup> *State Press*, December 13, 1860.



## THE COMPROMISE MOVEMENT

Secession had its counter-movement in the compromise proposals. It is generally regarded that the masses were in favor of a compromise — Republicans as well as Democrats. This seems to be an inference drawn from the fact that compromise had been for seventy years the only known method applied to adjusting the differences on the slavery question. Further, it is held that had it not been for a few persistent leaders the breach now threatening would have been closed by the same method; and that, if Lincoln, the President-elect, had spoken the word, the compromise scheme would have succeeded. Lincoln did say the word, but it was emphatically against any compromise; and thus the tide was turned, the compromise failed, and Lincoln must be held responsible for the long and bloody war which followed.<sup>160</sup> Mr. Rhodes reaches the conclusion that Lincoln's influence "was the most potent in defeating the Crittenden Compromise".<sup>161</sup> This may be true, yet there is another fact that is too often overlooked, and that is the attitude of the masses and of many influential men who acted as representatives of the popular will as expressed in the Chicago platform of 1860. Mr. Rhodes recognizes this inadvertently, when he says that Lincoln's mind was made up after studying with care the trend of Northern sentiment with reference to compromise, and concludes thus: "after weighing with care the considerations of each side, it will appear that *the Republicans and Lincoln* may be justified in having refused acceptance of the compromise measures". This is quite significant, although a back-door admission that

<sup>160</sup> This is the position taken by our leading scholars — Rhodes, Nicolay and Hay, Chadwick, and others.

<sup>161</sup> See Rhodes's *History of the United States*, Vol. III, pp. 158-161, 164-170.

Lincoln expressed the will of his party. It recognizes that the party had a creed and that Lincoln was chosen to carry it out, a position which Iowa Republicanism certainly demonstrates. Lincoln could not consistently have taken any other position, nor could his party. It thus becomes obvious and a feature not to be overlooked that Lincoln based his unequivocal determination upon the Chicago platform,<sup>162</sup> and especially on articles 8 and 9 concerning the extension of slavery into the public territory.<sup>163</sup>

Let us turn now to an examination of popular opinion in Iowa. First, the newspapers may be taken as an index of the popular mind. There was but one Republican paper, the *Iowa State Register*, which from the first favored any form of a compromise, all the other Republican papers opposing it — some more positively than others. Later several yielded in a sort of half-way-covenant fashion, but never to the extent of surrendering any of the vital principles of their platform. They invariably based their position on the Chicago platform, looking to that as their rule of faith and guide in time of doubt; and especially now that secession was threatened and compromise suggested.

When, by the middle of November, people were becoming desirous of hearing from the President-elect, and rumors as to what Lincoln would do were floating about, the people of Iowa generally hooted at the idea that he would issue a pre-inaugural manifesto to allay the fears of South Carolina; for his views were known, being re-

<sup>162</sup> See Lincoln's letters of December 11, 1860, to William Kellogg; and of December 17, 1860, to E. B. Washburne.— Nicolay and Hay's, *Abraham Lincoln, A History*, Vol. III, p. 259. See also a letter to Thurlow Weed, December 17, 1860.— Weed's *Memoirs*, Vol. II, p. 310.

<sup>163</sup> See the Chicago Platform in the *First Three Republican Conventions*, pp. 131-133.

corded in the Douglas debates. And besides, he had a platform, the Chicago declarations, upon which he was not afraid to stand. This was the view expressed by Mr. Mahin.<sup>164</sup> By the opening of December, when there was evidence of a movement in the East toward compromise, led by August Belmont<sup>165</sup> representing the commercial interests, the councils of the Republican party became somewhat divided. This divided state of the party, chiefly over the Seward compromise suggestions, Mr. Mahin acknowledged, but significantly declared that all persons he had *talked* with were determined not to yield the fundamental points, namely: the status of the territories, the slave-trade, and the right of the President-elect to the unanimous support of the whole country regardless of party.<sup>166</sup> On this point some people had grave misgivings; for, if concessions were made to the South on the grounds of political defeat, we “would cease to be an elective Republic”, and the people’s will peaceably expressed at the ballot-box could no longer be regarded as “ultimate authority”.<sup>167</sup> This was the view taken by editor Howell of the *Gate City*.

Mr. Howell likewise stood four-square on the Chicago platform. At this same time, when some of the people would approve a compromise, he said: “We feel sure that the Republicans in Congress will assent to no compromise which will surrender any substantial principle or measure contained in the Chicago platform and sanctioned by the people in the election of Lincoln and Ham-

<sup>164</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 17, 1860.

<sup>165</sup> Belmont’s Letter.—Quoted in Rhodes’s *History of the United States*, Vol. III, p. 157.

<sup>166</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, December 4, 1860.

<sup>167</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, January 14, 1861.

lin".<sup>168</sup> Before this he had said that South Carolina was simply playing for an advantageous compromise,<sup>169</sup> and held that the North had rights in the Union as well as the South, and no compromise should be made which ignored these rights.<sup>170</sup> Thus, when the Crittenden proposals were offered, he ridiculed the idea,<sup>171</sup> declaring that the "Republicans of Iowa hold that Mr. Lincoln has been elected President in accordance with the Constitution and do not intend, as a condition precedent to his inauguration, to concede amendments to the Constitution, extending and perpetuating slavery and slave-holding dominion".<sup>172</sup>

The conclusion that the popular feeling in the State was against a compromise is reënforced by expressions from men in the ranks, which show a firm determination to stand by the principles of the party. For example, Mr. Jacob Butler in his speech at the Muscatine Ratification, had counselled all to stand firm upon their ground of the opposition to the encroachments of slavery.<sup>173</sup> And on this point, a subscriber correspondent to the *Muscatine Daily Journal* said: "Let every Republican stand firm. . . . Let us be prudent, but determined and never give way one inch to the present encroachments of slavery."<sup>174</sup>

This attitude is further supported in the position taken by the editor of the *Ottumwa Courier*, who said plainly

<sup>168</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, December 7, 1860.

<sup>169</sup> Said Mr. Howell: "One object of the flurry at the South, is without doubt, to frighten the North into a compromise on the slavery question."—*Keokuk Gate City*, November 22, 1860.

<sup>170</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, November 23, 1860.

<sup>171</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, December 7, 1860.

<sup>172</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, December 8, 1860.

<sup>173</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, November 17, 1860.

<sup>174</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, December 31, 1860.

that he did not like the compromise proposals; to the contrary, "it would be better to tell South Carolina plainly that she cannot secede . . . that if she secedes, she must take the consequences". Then he significantly added: "No sensible person can doubt but that the North is well nigh unanimous in favor of the Union, and they will resist ultimately almost to a man its disruption."<sup>175</sup> This editor either gave expression to a popular feeling or was endeavoring to mould public opinion. In the light of the previously quoted utterances, the writer inclines toward the former explanation. Later, under the caption, "Shall we compromise", the same editor rejected the compromise method as the poorest possible remedy for the existing evils, for the reason that all the compromises demand concessions to one section of the country.<sup>176</sup> He, however, yielded his position to the extent that he favored "compromise and conciliation", but opposed "any considerable portion of the people making concessions to unreasonable demands of any other portion", and branded the various proposed measures as not being fair and just to all sections.<sup>177</sup> This of course means nothing if not straight opposition to the compromise as a method of staying the secession movement.

But the Crittenden Compromise was not merely in direct opposition to the Chicago platform. The Republicans were alert to the situation and urged that it also ran counter to the "principles of popular sovereignty maintained by Douglas".<sup>178</sup> It is at least interesting to see thus early the Republican courtship of the Douglas Democrats. And again, the compromise proposed was

<sup>175</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, December 19, 1860.

<sup>176</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, January 16, 1861.

<sup>177</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, February 20, 1861.

<sup>178</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, January 17, 1861.

not only in conflict with the platform, but it would in fact subvert the Constitution and reverse the spirit and the policy of the fathers — Washington, Madison, Webster, and Clay. Its acceptance would continue our discreditable compromise history, and would perpetuate the policy of compromising with slavery and virtually fasten it upon Mexico and Cuba, all in the name of the Constitution of our boasted land of liberty.<sup>179</sup> Then, just before the final failure of the compromise in Congress, editor Howell gave his parting advice to the Republicans of Iowa. Said he: “Republicans, reflect upon this matter yourselves, and talk it over with your Democratic neighbors. Surely the people of our country cannot be so sunk in ignorance and so debased in character as to consent to amend the Constitution of our fathers in behalf of slavery extension and perpetuation”.<sup>180</sup>

Iowa Democrats generally were inclined towards a compromise. They expressed disappointment that the “conservative element” in the South, of which they boasted and from whom they expected much, should not put up a stubborn fight against secession.<sup>181</sup> To their minds the South had little cause for “nullification”, except that the Republicans had set the example in repudiating the Fugitive Slave Law; but, as Mr. King, editor of the *Muscatine Daily Review*, said, “two wrongs cannot make a right”.<sup>182</sup> As typical of the Democratic minority Mr. King relieved himself from any responsibility by charging the whole agitated condition of the country to the corruption in public offices<sup>183</sup>— which of course

<sup>179</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, January 17, 1861.

<sup>180</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, February 21, 1861.

<sup>181</sup> *Muscatine Daily Review*, November 15, 1860.

<sup>182</sup> *Muscatine Daily Review*, November 17, 1860.

<sup>183</sup> *Muscatine Daily Review*, November 13, 1860.

meant Republican offices. The Republicans were held responsible for the distracted state of affairs; it was all a result of the inevitable logic of the speeches of such men as Sumner, Beecher, Emerson, and "other Abolitionists" who preached the doctrine of "Disunion Better Than Slavery".<sup>184</sup> The prophetic editor of the *Iowa State Journal* saw clearly the end of the Republic, declaring that one month of Lincoln's declared policy would array the fifteen slave States into a solid phalanx against the government.<sup>185</sup> He was greatly humbled at the thought that the Old World would point the finger of ridicule at the failure of self-government in America. This apostle of non-resistance also washed his hands from all blame; he "could but wait and hope, though with a faint heart."<sup>186</sup>

Mr. Mahoney, as we should expect, recommended concessions on the part of the North. This section, he thought, should retrace its steps and repeal all obnoxious legislation.<sup>187</sup> The National Democratic Club of Dubuque passed resolutions on the "state of the country",<sup>188</sup> which were decidedly Southern in tone. They justified the States in the preparations they were making for their own safety, and while they lamented that the "idea of the dissolution of the Union had become fixed", yet they bade the South God-speed in "their rising above party spirit to meet the question like men". Mahoney could not swallow this, and took issue with these sentiments.<sup>189</sup> He, however, expressed the hope that the Republicans would

<sup>184</sup> *Iowa State Journal*, August 25, 1860.

<sup>184</sup> *Iowa State Journal*, December 8, 1860.

<sup>185</sup> *Iowa State Journal*, December 8, 1860.

<sup>187</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, November 21, 1860.

<sup>188</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, November 28, 1860.

<sup>189</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, December 6, 1860.

establish a constitutional slavery line, dividing slave and free territory, for the South, he held, is just as fully entitled to the territories as the Republicans. He then lays down four propositions, which he calls upon all to concede to the South: (1) the regulation of their own domestic affairs without interference; (2) the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law in the North; (3) the Southerners to have the right to take their slaves with them anywhere on business; (4) Southern people to have the right to emigrate with their slave property.<sup>190</sup> The Iowa Democracy was distinctly a Douglas democracy, and therefore this program may be taken as acceptable to them.

It is important to note, further, the attitude of the Republicans of Iowa as seen in the position taken and the part played by her representatives in Congress — all Republicans.<sup>191</sup> Senator Grimes believed that the secession of one or more States was inevitable, but that there would be no yielding of party principles. Said he, "Everybody seems firmly resolved to adhere to his proposed principles and course of action".<sup>192</sup> If this meant anything, it meant that the majority at least were adhering to the platform announced, and that a compromise at that time seemed very doubtful. This was before the President-elect gave expression to his wishes. A little later Mr. Grimes, again writing, speaks of "much talk of all sorts of compromises, but there is not the slightest possibility that anything will be done".<sup>193</sup>

<sup>190</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, December 9, 1860.

<sup>191</sup> The writer is cognizant of the fact that this is not always a safe criterion.

<sup>192</sup> Letter to Mrs. Grimes, December 5, 1860.—*Salter's Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 131.

<sup>193</sup> Letter to Mrs. Grimes, December 16, 1860.—*Salter's Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 132.



Iowa was well represented on the two great compromise committees, Mr. Grimes being on the Committee of Thirteen<sup>194</sup> in the Senate, and Mr. Samuel R. Curtis on the House Committee of Thirty-three.<sup>195</sup> In each case these two men stood out in their respective committees and on the floor of Congress, against any compromise. Said Mr. Grimes later to a committee of his fellow townsmen, upon another occasion, "I have sought to give expression by my votes to what I believe to be the opinions of the people of the State",<sup>196</sup> which action, however, was also based on his own conviction. The statement was in reference to all of his votes in the Senate. Mr. Grimes's assertion is supported by his action on the Committee of Thirteen,<sup>197</sup> where he uniformly voted against the propositions for slavery extension, thus upholding the chief tenet of his party. The votes of Mr. Curtis in the House reveal the same position.

There is little doubt but that Mr. Seward was wavering between December 1st and December 20th, and that he might have yielded if, as Mr. Rhodes says, "he had not been restrained by the unequivocal declaration of Lincoln".<sup>198</sup> This we may grant, and the fact still remains that "unequivocal declarations" had before been made, both in the Chicago platform to which Mr. Lincoln pointed as his authority, and by leading men, and also by the press of the North-west. This is especially true as to

<sup>194</sup> *Congressional Globe*, 2nd Session, 36th Congress, p. 158.

<sup>195</sup> *Congressional Globe*, 2nd Session, 36th Congress, p. 22.

<sup>196</sup> Letter of August 17, 1861, to J. H. Gear and others, in response to an invitation to address the citizens of Burlington—his home.—*Salter's Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 148.

<sup>197</sup> See *Journal of Committee of Thirteen*.

<sup>198</sup> Rhodes's *History of the United States*, Vol. III, p. 157.

Iowa. It was an Iowa man<sup>199</sup> that had the largest part in writing the Chicago platform which Iowans looked to as their guide in faith and their rule of practice. Nevertheless, with reference to Mr. Grimes's attitude, in the Committee of Thirteen, toward the Crittenden proposals, Mr. Rhodes goes on to say: "What would have been the course of Grimes and Doolittle<sup>200</sup> is not so clear; but if the plan had been modified, and if the altered propositions had been urged by Lincoln and championed by Seward, it is a fair presumption that neither Grimes nor Doolittle would have taken the responsibility of defeating such a compromise."<sup>201</sup> Local conditions and the utterances of Grimes all along seem to make such a conclusion doubtful, to say the least.

It is true that in the Committee of Thirteen, Mr. Grimes voted for these two propositions: (1) that Congress shall pass no law interfering with the domestic institutions of any State, and (2) that States should speedily modify their laws so as not to conflict with the Constitution or any law. This, however, was not a departure from the Chicago platform; it was sound Republican doctrine. But Mr. Grimes, in a letter to Governor Kirkwood,<sup>202</sup> credits himself with going further, saying that in the committee he had voted to admit Kansas under the Wyan-

<sup>199</sup> Mr. John A. Kasson of Des Moines, member of the Committee on Resolutions. Horace Greeley said: "That the platform presented is so generally satisfactory as it has proved, is eminently due to John A. Kasson, of Iowa, whose efforts to reconcile differences and secure the largest liberty of sentiment consistent with fidelity to Republican principles, were most effective and untiring."—*New York Tribune*, May 22, 1860. [Mr. Kasson was a member of the sub-committee of five to draft the platform.]

<sup>200</sup> Senator J. R. Doolittle of Wisconsin and a member of the Committee of Thirteen.

<sup>201</sup> Rhodes's *History of the United States*, Vol. III, pp. 166, 167.

<sup>202</sup> Grimes to Kirkwood, January 28, 1861.—*Salter's Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 137.

dotte Constitution, and then to admit the remaining public territory as two States, one north and one south of the old Missouri Compromise line of 36° 30'. This obviously meant that slavery was to be permitted in the State on the south of that line.<sup>203</sup> Mr. Grimes, however, thought that this "could have been adopted without any surrender of principle by anybody or any section, and therefore without any party and personal humiliation". There was room here for difference of opinion, but assuming that Grimes was honest in his belief, he then was positive in his refusal of any and all compromises, for in the same letter, when summing up his chief objections to the Crittenden Compromise, he says "there are other provisions . . . wholly inadmissible, but, let them pass. My objection is to any compromise."<sup>204</sup>

This attitude of Iowa Republicans is further shown by the indifference toward the Peace Congress, which movement the Democrats of the State championed. It was an Iowa Democrat, Mr. Mahoney, who, soon after the election, probably made the first suggestion for a "National Peace Convention" for the purpose of settling all the differences between the two sections of the country.<sup>205</sup> However, when the call finally went out, after it became morally certain that the compromise measures in Congress would fail, and when the secession movement was assuming formidable proportions, it went from the legislature of a slave State — Virginia.

Many Northern people, Republicans as well as Democrats, yielded to the idea, some by a mere passive acquiescence, others in the earnest hope that thus the approaching crisis might be averted. Iowa was among the

<sup>203</sup> See Rhodes's *History of the United States*, Vol. III, p. 176.

<sup>204</sup> Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 134.

<sup>205</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, November 21, 1860.

Northern States which appointed delegates to the Washington Peace Congress. Governor Kirkwood had been importuned, especially by the Democrats, through petition and otherwise, to appoint delegates. He finally did so, and named the two Senators, Grimes and Harlan, and the two Representatives, Curtis and Vandever, to represent the State. For these appointments he was criticized and roundly scolded by the Democratic press, since, "to know the sentiment of Iowa, they should have gone direct from Iowa".<sup>206</sup> The Democrats knew what it meant, for other States, indifferent to the Peace Congress, also commissioned their Congressional delegations to represent them. But so far as Iowa was concerned, the result would have been no different, unless the Governor had appointed a Democratic delegation.

The Iowa delegates played the part of on-lookers in the deliberations of the Peace Congress, Mr. Grimes taking no part at all.<sup>207</sup> In fact the thorough-going Republicans constituted a small class in the convention, and its action, due to the great divergence of opinion of the three or four other factions represented, was almost wholly negative, notwithstanding the fact that there was a comparatively large group of Northerners composed of Union men who were "willing to concede almost anything for compromise".<sup>208</sup> A compromise plan based upon the Missouri line, was submitted by a committee but was decisively defeated by a vote of 8 to 11.<sup>209</sup> Iowa voted in the negative. Then later, through juggling in the convention and in committee, the plan was again presented and carried through by a minority of the States in the convention.

<sup>206</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, February 1, 1861.

<sup>207</sup> Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 138.

<sup>208</sup> Nicolay and Hay's, *Abraham Lincoln, A History*, Vol. III, pp. 231, 232.

<sup>209</sup> Nicolay and Hay's, *Abraham Lincoln, A History*, Vol. III, p. 231.

Iowa stood firm, we are told, but Illinois changed her vote, and New York's vote through a technicality was counted out, while Missouri refrained from voting. The whole thing was a play of politics. When these ill-begotten compromise resolutions went to Congress, the House refused even to receive them,<sup>210</sup> and the Senate rejected them by a vote of 7 to 28.<sup>211</sup> Iowa's representatives, in both instances, consistently voted against the idea of a compromise.

It would seem therefore, that in consideration of the course pursued by the State's representatives at Washington, that by the positive expressions of local leaders and the reiterated opposition of the press, and that with a general endorsement by the rank and file of the party, we have a fair and accurate exposition of the Republican will in Iowa. This was practically universal against any form of compromise, and that too, without waiting for a sign from the President-elect. This conclusion is further supported by the fact that the feeling expressed and the action taken was based upon the Chicago platform, which was definite on the points later involved in the compromise issues. Thus the Republicans of Iowa were not in a frame of mind to compromise; nor were they disposed to the disruption of the Union by peaceful means; they must therefore have been in readiness for, or even willing to assist in, working out the policy of coercion.

<sup>210</sup> *Congressional Globe*, 36th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 1331.

<sup>211</sup> *Congressional Globe*, 36th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 1405.

## CHAPTER IV

### IOWA'S DEFENCE OF THE UNION

#### THE FIRST UNION MOVEMENTS

We have seen that in November Mr. Mahoney suggested a national convention looking toward a settlement of the difficulties between the two sections of the country. On December 9th he proposed the convening of a delegate State Convention<sup>212</sup> to take into consideration the "State of the Union". There had been some talk of convening the State legislature in extra session for that purpose, but the editor of the *Herald* doubted the utility of such a move, since the members of the legislature had been elected in 1859 while the people were under perverting political influences — that is to say, the legislature was Republican. A month later Mr. Mahoney made another appeal for a State convention "to enable Iowa to express her sentiments and will on the state of the Union".<sup>213</sup> Letters from prominent Democrats began to appear,<sup>214</sup> all urging the same course. Among these letters was one from Henry Clay Dean, who urged the im-

<sup>212</sup> "It is about time, in our opinion, that the people of Iowa were taking into consideration the State of the Union, and deciding whether this State prefers to preserve the Union, by conceding to the South its constitutional rights, or to dissolve it by refusing to recognize the right of the South. . . . The sense of the people of Iowa could not be taken by calling the General Assembly together, for the members were elected while the people were under influences which perverted their judgments. A more proper means . . . would be by a Convention of Delegates to a State Convention".— *Dubuque Herald*, December 9, 1860.

<sup>213</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, January 8, 1861.

<sup>214</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, January 12, 1861.

portance of a compromise and thought that anything was better than disunion; "even to live under abolition, the most terrible of all evils, for a time, is preferable to disunion";<sup>215</sup> said he. Finally, Mr. Mahoney, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Democratic party of the State, issued a call<sup>216</sup> for a State Convention to assemble at Iowa City not later than February 22nd, "for the purpose of taking such action on the state of the Union as the crisis, in the judgment of the Convention, might seem to require."

Barring a few ultra pro-slavery sympathizers, both factions of the Democracy of the State seemed eager to profess their love for the Union, and urged a convention as a means of expressing their views on the situation and considering steps "to save the Union". But it is clear that even the larger Douglas party was beginning to divide on this issue. Mr. Mahoney, although a Douglas Democrat, was more conciliatory toward the South and thus his leadership at this time was not acceptable to the rank and file of the party. The less ardently pro-slavery element set about to prevent the party from falling into the hands of Mahoney and the ultras; and, wishing to save the wreckage of the party and at the same time put it on record as a true Union party, they now stepped in at the helm. This faction came out on January 12th, one day ahead of Mahoney, with a call<sup>217</sup> for a Union Convention to be held at Des Moines, on Thursday, January 31st. The call was addressed "To the Democrats and Union men of Iowa", and was signed by twenty-six prominent men, Mr. James A. Williamson of Des Moines heading

<sup>215</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, January 10, 1861.

<sup>216</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, January 13, 1861.

<sup>217</sup> *Iowa State Journal*, January 12, 1861.

the list.<sup>218</sup> Mr. Williamson was the prime mover,<sup>219</sup> though he was ably supported by such well-known men as Martin Van Buren Bennett, Henry C. Rippey, P. Gad Bryan, Chester C. Cole, and Dan O. Finch, as well as others less conspicuous.

The purpose, according to the call, was to give "expression of their opinions as to what is the just and equitable remedy for the troubles and dissensions that are now distracting and severing the Union of the States". Of course it was to be strictly a partisan convention, although the call was shrouded in such terms as might also be applied to Republicans, since it included, besides Democrats, "patriots", "loyal men" and "lovers of the Union". The call, however, did not go to Republicans; it was not a non-partisan affair. The only references to the Republican party were such as "the party in power" and "Northern fanatics", which together with the "Southern fire-eaters" they held responsible for the whole trouble. The call, furthermore, closed with an admonition to "Democrats, Union men and Patriots" to do their duty, which was to stand by the country and the Constitution, leaving "all evil consequences with the party in power, whose duty it is to interpose and save the country", whatever that might have meant; and, they declared that they would hold that party "responsible before God and our Country if they fail to do it".

The convention met and organized with James E. Williamson of Warren County as chairman, and Henry C.

<sup>218</sup> The signers to the call were: J. A. Williamson, P. M. Casady, Thomas Cavanah, P. Gad Bryan, H. C. Rippey, M. V. Bennett, James Seevers, William Tracy, W. W. Webb, B. Rice, Isaac Kuhn, T. A. Walker, Timothy Day, C. D. Bevington, C. C. Cole, I. W. Griffith, Isaac Cooper, F. R. West, D. O. Finch, T. J. Potteft, C. Beal, I. M. Walker, John McWilliams, B. C. Bennett, and S. F. Spofford.

<sup>219</sup> See *Annals of Iowa* (3rd Series), Vol. VI, p. 162.



Rippey of Winterset and G. M. Todd, the chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee, as Secretaries; while Judge L. D. Barnes was honored with the post of Vice President. The chairman appointed a committee on resolutions, consisting of P. Gad Bryan and B. L. Steel of Warren County, James M. Thrift of Boone, Jairus E. Neal of Marion, O. D. Russell of Dallas, J. Cilder of Wright and three Polk County representatives — James A. Williamson, Dan O. Finch and Phineas M. Cassady.

The resolutions adopted can not be said to have been the last will and testament of departed leaders, although they were the product of absent ones. The convention seems to have been animated by the spirit of Henry Clay Dean, the eloquent preacher-politician of the recent campaign, and Judge J. M. Love, recently State Senator and now United States Judge for the Southern District of Iowa. Neither was present. A letter from Dean was read before the convention and it was voted to have one thousand copies printed for the use of the delegates. The letter was replete with sentiments of love for the Union, similar to those contained in the call and such as were embodied in the resolutions adopted. Judge Love's letter, written from his home at Keokuk, January 26th, to C. C. Cole, was also read to the convention. The judge expressed regret that he could not be present, but gave his views on the vital questions before both the country and the convention. The burden of the letter was opposition to coercion, on the grounds that that itself was disunion, and if such a course were persisted in it would plunge the Nation into civil war.<sup>220</sup> This to Judge Love was all wrong; he would first exhaust every peaceful means. But here he stopped — just where the Union

<sup>220</sup> Mr. Howell in the *Keokuk Gate City*, February 9, 1861, calls this letter "a little covert treason-forgiving missile".

Democrats at this time all stopped. They would assume no responsibility after the "peaceful means" should have been exhausted. One would think that the Democrats were a waxing remnant of the late Constitutional Union party. The resolutions as finally adopted came into the convention through a committee of gentlemen from Keokuk and were read to the convention on behalf of the Committee on Resolutions by Mr. Finch. They were unanimously adopted, and the convention voted to have them published with the proceedings,<sup>221</sup> "in the Democratic and Union papers of the State".

The preamble to the resolutions sets forth the causes culminating in the secession crisis and lays down the basic principle according to which the problem must be solved. The cause is found to be the bitter enmity and discord anent the sectional agitation over the institution of slavery, all of which was aggravated by the election of a sectional president. This is clear enough as a general statement; but the next, the governing principle upon which they base the ten resolves of the series, is characteristically vague and indefinite. It is but a negative or passive Constitutional Union party committal and reads: "Recognizing in the existing state of public affairs, a necessity which imperatively demands at the hands of every loyal citizen, the free, frank and unqualified declaration of his position, and the renewed assurance of his attachment for, and devotion to an imperiled Union," therefore, they would state their attitude.

They first record their cherished love for the Union and deprecate all attempts at its disruption. As to secession, they deny such a right, but practically excuse it by declaring their opposition equally "to nullification at the North". Taking up the question of the use of

<sup>221</sup> *Iowa State Journal*, February 1, 1861.

force, they admonish the Federal government to stay its hand until the people themselves "can take such action as our troubles demand". They concede the government's right to protect public property, but not within the jurisdiction of a State unless upon invitation of its civil authorities. They refer to the question of the Fugitive Slave Law and call upon the Northern States to repeal their personal liberty laws, at the same time rejoicing that no such a law has ever passed in Iowa. The Republican party comes in for a sharp rebuke in that it manifests a greater love for party unity than for an harmonious union of the States. They furthermore brand the party cry "no compromise, no concession" as the "inexorable logic of a fatal political consistency". Naturally their main thesis is compromise. They will accept any compromise that has been or that may be proposed. It is the only hope, and they ask that the question be submitted to the people for a vote. They declare that concession and compromise alone can save the country, and that they "as good loyal citizens . . . will abide by and carry out in good faith such just measures of conciliation as may be adopted, looking to the preservation of the Union, and the perpetuation of its countless blessings". Such was the jargon of threats, criticism, constitutional hysteria, and meaningless political vagaries put out by this Union State Convention. It satisfied neither the most conservative nor the most progressive element of the Democratic party and gave nourishment to further divisions within the party.

This state of affairs is further exemplified by the many local Union meetings held in the principal towns of the State. Probably the most active Union center in the State was Keokuk. As alluded to above, the resolutions passed by the State Union meeting came from Keokuk,

where a week before they had been adopted at a Union meeting. At this meeting<sup>222</sup> Judge Love was the chief spokesman, and he made a strong, sane speech against fratricidal war; but he was extremely conciliatory to the Border States in order to hold them in the Union, taking it for granted that the States farther South were already out of the Union. The Democrats generally by this time had come to look upon secession as an accomplished fact, and had their policy been carried out, there is little doubt but that such would have been the case. There were also some Republicans at this meeting and one of them, General Bridgeman, offered a resolution which, although it might in general be taken as faithful to Republican doctrine and no doubt was so meant, nevertheless was really quite as vague as the expressions of "Union" Democrats. The resolution read: "Resolved that our Senators and Representatives in Congress be, and are hereby urged, with all the earnestness demanded by the exigencies of the occasion, to go to the utmost limit required by patriotism, or allowed by principle, in meeting and agreeing with all who are, in good faith and integrity of purpose, striving to preserve the Union of the States."

It must be conceded that considerable latitude is permitted in the phrase "utmost limit required by patriotism, or allowed by principle". The same tenor is seen in a resolution offered by General Bridgeman at a meeting one week before, when he asked that the Senators and Representatives in Congress be urged to use all peaceable means for pacification *without conceding principles*.<sup>223</sup>

Meetings were held in the river town from mid-January all through February, and even in March after the compromise measures had failed. Nevertheless, compromise

<sup>222</sup> Keokuk Gate City, January 25, 1861.

<sup>223</sup> Keokuk Gate City, January 24, 1861.

was the burden of all these meetings held under Democratic auspices. Some of the meetings, however, had in good faith been called non-partisan mass-meetings, a thing very soon demonstrated to be utterly impossible, since a consideration of "the state of the Union" must needs bring out at once the fundamental difference between the two parties. The result was that one or the other element would dominate, or at least attempt to control the meetings. In fact that is what happened at the first Union meeting in Keokuk,<sup>224</sup> when the Democrats gaining control passed resolutions which the Republicans present could not endorse. Real Union meetings at this stage of the crisis were out of the question. Not only that, but it soon became evident that the Democrats themselves were further dividing. At a meeting as late as March 25th the Democracy of Keokuk split into two factions, conservatives and coercionists.<sup>225</sup> The former was led by Thomas W. Claggett and Daniel F. Miller, and the latter by W. W. Belknap and H. W. Sample. Mr. Miller had earlier opposed both compromise and coercion,<sup>226</sup> while Mr. Belknap formerly advocated compromise. It was evident that in the approaching crisis the party must break asunder.

Meanwhile both Democrats and Republicans challenged each other in their loyalty to the Union. Humbler advocates on either side sought the press, and newspapers continued to fill space with lengthy articles from correspondents, signed "Union". Only the contents of the letters would reveal the fact that one was "Union"<sup>227</sup> by com-

<sup>224</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, January 22, 1861.

<sup>225</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, March 26, 1861.

<sup>226</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, January 29, 1861.

<sup>227</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, January 30, 1861.

promise and another was "Union"<sup>228</sup> by coercion. The Democrats were accused of disloyalty to the Union,<sup>229</sup> while the Republicans were accused of advocating a policy tending toward disunion.<sup>230</sup> Some of the ablest men of the time also took this means of keeping the issues straight before the public, Senator Grimes, with his broad firm grasp of the situation, being especially effective in campaigning by letter.<sup>231</sup>

Republican leaders generally saw little good in dealing with the question by holding meetings and passing resolutions. And though they shared in the love and concern felt for the country, they were willing to bide the time till their party should come into power. What the policy of the Republican administration would be was, before the close of the Buchanan régime, not at all uncertain. Several local "Union" meetings, however, were held by the Republicans. One such meeting of considerable importance was held in Des Moines a week before the great Union State Convention. It was an impromptu meeting, no formal call having been made. At this meeting resolutions were drawn up and signed by Governor Kirkwood, the other State officers, several newspaper men, leading politicians and members of the General Assembly then in session.<sup>232</sup> The resolu-

<sup>228</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, February 14, 1861.

<sup>229</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, February 8, 1861.

<sup>230</sup> "No party which cannot hold the Union together one and inseparable should have the confidence of the people".—*Dubuque Herald*, January 13, 1861.

<sup>231</sup> A letter from Mr. Grimes on the state of the Union appeared at this critical time in the *Keokuk Gate City*, February 4, 1861.

<sup>232</sup> The resolutions were signed by Samuel Kirkwood, Amos B. Miller, F. M. Mills, W. P. Davis, S. H. Lunt, H. G. Stewart, C. Haden, Elijah Sells, Lewis Kinsey, John A. Kasson, Stewart Goodrell, J. B. Stewart, P. Melendy, George Sprague, J. W. Cattell, George G. Wright, N. W. Mills, Thomas Mitchell, J. B. Grinnell, M. L. Morris, L. H. Cutler, J. W. Jones, Thomas F. Withrow, John Teesdale, S. C. Brownell, F. W. Palmer, T. H. Shepard.

tions express belief in the permanency of the government under the Constitution and deny even an implied right of secession. The framers declare an "undiminished faith in the ability, patriotism, integrity and impartiality of Hon. Abraham Lincoln and believe that under his administration all rights will be respected and enforced". They, however, favor the repeal of all laws conflicting with the Constitution, or the rights of persons or property. These resolutions are typical and orthodox. Iowa Republicans were ready to join in the inauguration of their policies. They were ready to support the Administration about to be installed at Washington.

#### THE POLICY OF COERCION INAUGURATED

While the people in Iowa, as in other States, were thus discussing the pros and cons of the situation, the crisis was approaching. As the election of Lincoln caused the first step to be taken, and the failure of the compromise measures the second, the third step toward the crisis was the inauguration of Lincoln and the policy of coercion. It seemed that prior to the inauguration the incoming Republican administration and the outgoing Buchanan régime were identical in one particular, namely, each was waiting for the 4th of March — the former because it had no authority; the latter because it had no policy. All the while during the period of hesitation the President-elect was formulating his policy and making up his cabinet. The politicians in the different States gave assistance in both, to the extent of Mr. Lincoln's encouragement. Who should compose the cabinet and what Federal plums might be gathered were queries in the minds of many.<sup>233</sup> But what was Iowa's attitude in this matter?

<sup>233</sup> Iowa politicians at Lincoln's inauguration.— See Mr. Charles Aldrich's reminiscences in the *Annals of Iowa*, Vol. VIII, p. 48.

It would seem that, since the State had shown such unprecedented loyalty, Iowa should be considered in cabinet-making as well as in the formulating of a policy. On the other hand, however, it would be good politics since the State was safe and would be loyal without special favors, to pass Iowa by. The people generally took a broad view of the matter and argued that it was Mr. Lincoln's right and privilege to make his own cabinet.<sup>234</sup> Iowa had some able men, men fit for any cabinet, who would have accepted the honor. If the Republicans of the State had no candidate and were not expecting an appointment, it is nevertheless true that they were interested in one cabinet position, the Postmaster-generalship, and had at least one man, Col. Fitz Henry Warren, whom some mentioned for the place. Editor Charles Aldrich regarded Mr. Warren as well fitted for "the position uppermost in the minds of Iowa Republicans" and named him for the place in case Iowa was to be honored, for "Warren as a soldier in the Republican ranks can hardly be overlooked".<sup>235</sup> The *Davenport Gazette* had before this time proposed that the Republicans vote on the man whom they desired for Postmaster General.<sup>236</sup> Mr. Warren's name had been mentioned before the election returns were in, but the *Ottumwa Courier* frowned upon the cabinet speculations going the rounds and informed its readers that it had advices to the effect that Lincoln had not yet decided who his advisers should be.<sup>237</sup> Later, however, the *Courier* published a list of cabinet possibilities, including the name of Fitz Henry Warren among those for

<sup>234</sup> Mr. Mahin in the *Muscatine Journal*, December 4, 1860.

<sup>235</sup> *Hamilton Freeman*, November 17, 1860.

<sup>236</sup> Quoted by the *Muscatine Journal*, November 12, 1860.

<sup>237</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, November 22, 1860.



Postmaster General.<sup>238</sup> Early in January a delegation of representative men made a trip to Springfield, Illinois, to wait upon the President-elect in behalf of Mr. Warren,<sup>239</sup> but nothing came of it.

But while Iowa Republicans were not to be represented among the cabinet "advisers", they were called to fill other important places. John A. Kasson was soon to be appointed First Assistant Postmaster General; the Secretary of State, Mr. Sells, was also the recipient of a Federal plum; and later on an obscure lawyer at Keokuk, Samuel F. Miller, was appointed by Lincoln to a seat on the Supreme Bench. These were but a few of the many Federal appointments that Lincoln bestowed upon Iowa men. In the meantime Sumter had been fired upon and Iowa was given a chance to aid in working out the policy of coercion. Iowans, not only Republicans, but men of all political faiths, were now called into service.

The coercion idea did not appear suddenly as a fully developed policy by which to deal with secession. Although the use of force was mentioned early in the crisis, yet probably most people thought nothing else than that South Carolina would be allowed to go. Republican leaders, however, differed, and when South Carolina called her Secession Convention and threatened the calling out of troops, we find all sorts of opinions expressed. Mr. Howell seemed to think that no one would disturb the seceding State and all that he asked was that her Federal officers should immediately resign.<sup>240</sup> Yet even in his apparently indifferent position, one can see coercion written

<sup>238</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, January 16, 1861. "While for P. M. General, Gideon Welles of Conn., Charles Francis Adams of Mass., and Fitz Henry Warren of Iowa are mentioned."

<sup>239</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, January 17, 1861.

<sup>240</sup> Said Mr. Howell: "She [S. C.] talks as if she was to be forced to stay in the Union. Nobody is going to disturb her. Let her Federal officers

between the lines. To many, South Carolina's course looked foolish on account of her small population.<sup>241</sup> Moreover her finances, it was held, would preclude her making war, since her revenue was but half as large as her ordinary expenses; and this fact, coupled with the handicap of so large a black population, would leave her in no position for defending herself against attack.<sup>242</sup> Thus the question of using force was settled in terms of South Carolina's inability to resist.

But as the threat of secession began to assume more determined aspects, we find the positive use of force advocated. The editors, J. W. and G. P. Norris, of the *Ottumwa Courier* thought that when the people once realized the real danger, they would meet it firmly and not permit South Carolina to leave the Union.<sup>243</sup> This, of course, meant nothing short of coercion. In January Mr. Aldrich of the *Hamilton Freeman* finally came to the conclusion that "the arbitrament of the sword can alone test the question of the strength of the Constitution".<sup>244</sup> Probably the first active preparation for war was made at Keokuk where as early as November 21st a meeting was called to form an "independent rifle club".<sup>245</sup> Then when Major Anderson made his successful removal to Fort Sumter all Iowa rejoiced and participated in the general movement to organize volunteer companies.

put their resignations into the hands of the general Government. There will be forty applications for every place."—*Keokuk Gate City*, November 16, 1860.

<sup>241</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, November 19, 1860.

<sup>242</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, December 12, 1860.

<sup>243</sup> Said the editors: "The American people debate long before employing force against S. C., but they will not permit her to leave the Union."—*Ottumwa Courier*, December 6, 1860.

<sup>244</sup> *Hamilton Freeman*, January 19, 1861.

<sup>245</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, November 21, 1860.

“We regard the movement”, said Mr. Howell, “as in the right direction, decidedly.”<sup>246</sup> Two weeks later the City Guards of Ottumwa were among those that declared themselves ready to battle for the support of the Government and the upholding and enforcement of the laws.<sup>247</sup> “Jeff” Davis’s alleged threat to “treat the North to Southern powder and steel” amused the people and brought forth sarcastic rejoinders,<sup>248</sup> but, as the signs became earnest, the slogan “In Peace Prepare for War”<sup>249</sup> was popularly discussed. The Republicans were by this time practically a unit on the policy of coercion even before the Ft. Sumter attack.

Democrats also hinted at the use of force. As far back as December the *State Press* advocated giving the President “doubtful powers” as a last effort to save the country from disunion, and the employing of force if necessary.<sup>250</sup> But (as if anticipating the famous July Resolutions of Congress) the Democrats who acceded to the use of force as a last resort, pointed out that the war should be a war for the preservation of the Union, only. In January Mr. Babbitt of the *Council Bluffs Bugle* thought that South Carolina should be allowed to go in peace, but should she attempt to seize public property in so doing, then, said he, “meet her with force, and defend and hold it”.<sup>251</sup> The testing time for Democrats, however, was yet to come. D. A. Mahoney saw in Lincoln’s policy a recognition of the theory of the “Irrepressible Conflict” between the labor systems of the North and the

<sup>246</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, January 3, 1861.

<sup>247</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, January 16, 1861.

<sup>248</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, February 22, 1861.

<sup>249</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, March 27, 1861.

<sup>250</sup> *State Press*, December 13, 1860.

<sup>251</sup> Quoted by the *Keokuk Gate City*, January 17, 1861.

South, and Democrats generally still held with him that the coercion policy tended toward a permanent disruption of the Union.<sup>252</sup> Then when Sumter was attacked demands appeared for calling anti-civil-war meetings,<sup>253</sup> and Mahoney declared it "the solemn moment when the American mind should reflect thoughtfully, and when the American people should act prudently, wisely, patriotically". This was all good and true, and was the course pursued by the Administration at Washington; but in the mind of the editor of the *Herald* it meant a passive course, puerile and powerless. This passivity is further illustrated when the same editor said: "The precipitation of the country into civil war brings upon us all, the solemn duty of rallying our physical energies and mental powers in the sacred cause of our country."<sup>254</sup>

Fort Sumter was the tocsin which inaugurated the coercion policy. Lincoln's call for troops was sent out on April 15th, requisitions upon the States being made first by telegraph, followed later by the formal call. Iowa was asked to raise one regiment. Two days later Governor Kirkwood issued his now famous proclamation<sup>255</sup> for troops. They were to be in rendezvous at Keokuk by May 20th. The response was as overwhelming as the call had been sudden, and tenders were made far in excess of the requisition. Three times this number were ready, we are told, and "would have liked the chance to go".<sup>256</sup>

All Iowa became a bristling camp. No longer could the passive Unionists control the situation; mild resolutions

<sup>252</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, March 23, 1861.

<sup>253</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, April 13, 1861.

<sup>254</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, April 13, 1861.

<sup>255</sup> Shambaugh's *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, Vol. II, p. 469.

<sup>256</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, April 16, 1861.

and compromise meetings gave place to war meetings and military drills, all regardless of party. The meeting at Ottumwa on April 23rd is illustrative of what was going on. The editors of the *Courier* declared that "since we see men of all parties in sublime indifference to the past, in view of the dangers of the present, forgetting old antagonisms, and ranging themselves shoulder to shoulder under the 'Old Flag' . . . we can no longer despair of the Republic".<sup>257</sup> The editors further expressed pride in what both the Democrats and the Republicans of the "city" (Ottumwa) and county had done, especially in ignoring political differences and swearing renewed fealty to the Union. This is illustrative of the non-partisan character of these war meetings all over the State. Towns and county boards were raising companies, equipping them and offering them to the State; and there are also instances of individuals doing the same.<sup>258</sup> Leading capitalists and banks came to the rescue by advancing funds and trusting the State to reimburse them. Among these were Hiram Price, the President of the new State Bank of Iowa, J. K. Graves, Ezekiel Clark, and William T. Smith.<sup>259</sup> During the period from August 12th to November 12th this group of men maintained a rendezvous at Davenport, and several times kept military supplies from being held for express charges<sup>260</sup> by the companies.

Governor Kirkwood, on his own authority, finally went

<sup>257</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, April 24, 1861.

<sup>258</sup> Grenville M. Dodge organized a company at Council Bluffs which claims the distinction of being the first to offer its services to Governor Kirkwood.—*Annals of Iowa* (3rd Series), Vol. V, p. 243.

<sup>259</sup> These men alone advanced \$33,000 on the first regiments, Mr. Price shouldering two-thirds of the amount.

<sup>260</sup> See Mr. Price's article in the *Annals of Iowa* (3rd Series), Vol. I, pp. 10, 11.

so far as to permit the tentative formation of a second regiment, partly, no doubt, to show his appreciation of the generous responses, but also to be in readiness for a call for a second regiment of which he had some inkling and which he was expecting any moment.<sup>261</sup> The men for this regiment were to come from those counties where they were already being raised. Ere long the organization of a third regiment was begun, and before the time for the rendezvous there were a sufficient number of enlistments to make up five additional regiments, which the Governor was implored also to receive. So enthusiastic were the enlisted men and the local leaders in aiding their equipment, that the first regiment was ready for the rendezvous fully twelve days before the time set by the proclamation.

Now there were two grave difficulties in the way of the raising of troops by the Executive: (1) there was no money at the Governor's disposal; and (2) the State had no efficient military law. There was in fact a third obstacle, which though small, was nevertheless irritating. It was the opposition of a factious political minority. The legislature, of course, was the only power with legal authority to act; but the Governor could not wait for action by the legislature, and on the grounds of an emergency took the necessary extra-legal steps. In this, as we have seen, he was not only upheld but implored to act. There were, however, rumblings of discontent, and the Governor's course was criticized by the Mahoney wing of the Douglas party and by the remnant of the "Old Guard".

<sup>261</sup> Shambaugh's *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, Vol. II, p. 257.

## THE EXTRA SESSION OF THE LEGISLATURE

From the first it was Governor Kirkwood's purpose to have his acts legalized, and to that end he called an extra session of the General Assembly to convene on May 15th. But no sooner had the call gone forth than the Governor was criticized for issuing it. The opposition charged extravagance and declared that the legislature was called to aid in the Federal coercion of free and independent States. This was the first challenge to the Administration after official action had been taken. Governor Kirkwood, therefore, in his message to the legislature, was very specific in stating the purpose of calling the extra session. The purpose was, besides legalizing what had already been done, to render further aid to the Federal government and to provide for local defence on the southern and western borders of the State, already threatened. He consequently recommended measures to meet these needs.<sup>262</sup> He argued that there should be more regiments mustered, or a system of minute-men organized to protect the State from invasion. Iowa needed an efficient military law, providing a staff and uniform practice in mustering and organizing troops; means were also required to meet the extraordinary expenses, which should be borne by the whole State. To this end the Governor urged a more stringent revenue law and implored the people to pay taxes cheerfully and honestly. The message closed with a ringing appeal to the loyalty of the people, telling them to face the situation squarely and cautioning them against being counselled and directed by passion and excitement.

The Governor was not disappointed in the General As-

<sup>262</sup> Shambaugh's *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, Vol. II, pp. 259-261.

sembly, for, in a session lasting just thirteen days, they enacted all legislation necessary to put the State upon a war footing. The action was quite unanimous on the main features of the war policy, though party lines were quite sharply drawn in considering the various details of the bills. It was quite evident, too, that new lines of cleavage were forming — the war party against the peace party. This condition was inevitable, and it was just as certain that all the Republicans, together with some of the Democrats, should constitute the former, while the latter should be composed entirely of Democrats. It was not that Republicans did not desire peace, but the line of division was on the method of securing what each side professed to have at heart — the saving of the Union. It seems evident that, just as certainly as the policy of coercion eventually succeeded, so the peace policy would at that time have failed, resulting in permanent disunion.

The peace party was small, a mere faction in the legislature, since the major part of the Democrats worked with the Republicans for the Administration measures. Moreover, the Republicans could have carried all or most of their measures without the support of the Democrats. The House stood fifty Republicans to thirty-six Democrats; the Senate had twenty-three Republicans to twenty Democrats. The Republicans were quick to recognize the new alignment, and they were generous enough to share privilege and position with their new allies the "War Democrats". To be sure, in all this, "good politics" played its part.

A united and harmonious session was essential and it was partly secured at the opening of the session in the organization of the houses. The presiding officers and clerks were Republicans, but in the minor offices and on committees the Democrats were represented to such an



extent that at the time the action was spoken of as being entirely non-partisan. In the House the two most important committees, those of Ways and Means, and Military Affairs, were headed by Henry C. Caldwell and Nathaniel B. Baker, respectively. The latter committee at this time had especially heavy responsibilities, and was composed of three Democrats and four Republicans.<sup>263</sup> Mr. Baker was not only the most popular Democrat in the House, but was probably the most powerful and influential member of the body, and soon became recognized as the "wheel-horse" of the legislature. The Senate Military Committee was enlarged by adding two from each party, and when the Senate went into Committee of the Whole on the Military Bill, a Democrat, David S. Wilson, of Dubuque, was made the chairman. At an important conference on the same bill, the conferees from both houses were Democrats,<sup>264</sup> while a special committee<sup>265</sup> in the Senate was composed of three Democrats and two Republicans. Many other instances might be cited to show the recognition which the Democrats received. Of course it should be borne in mind that the Democrats in the Senate were almost equal in number to the Republicans.

There was less unanimity however than the Republican press proclaimed, and in several bills and resolutions the traditional differences and animosities between the two parties cropped out. In the Senate, especially, there was a coterie of filibustering Democrats who in the debates, by amendments and by voting, threw consider-

<sup>263</sup> Committee on Military Affairs: N. B. Baker (Dem.) Chairman, Stewart Goodsell (Rep.), Patrick Robb (Dem.), Leander C. Noble (Rep.), Racine Kellogg (Dem.), George C. Shipman (Rep.), and Reuben A. Moser (Rep.).

<sup>264</sup> Mr. Baker for the House and Mr. Cyrus Bussey for the Senate.

<sup>265</sup> Committee on Special Memorial to Congress: Johnson, Angle, Bussey (Dem.), Rankin, and Davis (Rep.).

able obstruction in the way of the Republican war program.<sup>266</sup> In some instances they mustered sufficient strength to tie or even to defeat a measure. Some of these maneuvers were of sufficient importance to require further notice.

The first important act of the legislature after the Governor's message had been received, was the adoption of a resolution which was nothing else than the pledging of the State to carry out his policy of coercion. The resolution<sup>267</sup> was offered in the House on May 16th and passed without a dissenting vote.<sup>268</sup> It went to the Senate the next day and after a slight amendment,<sup>269</sup> passed, though the *Senate Journal* does not indicate what the vote was.<sup>270</sup> Both houses now set to work to carry out the resolution in acts preparing for defense and amending the military laws of the State. In the Senate a bill was introduced,

<sup>266</sup> This group of Democrats was composed of Gideon S. Bailey, John A. Johnson, Nathan Udell, Jairus E. Neal, H. H. Williams, Joseph Mann, Harvey W. English, Valentine Buechel, and William E. Taylor.

<sup>267</sup> "Whereas, the President of the United States has appealed to all loyal citizens to favor, facilitate and aid the effort to maintain the honor, the integrity and the existence of the National Union, suppress treason and rebellion against the general government,

"Therefore, be it resolved by the House of Representatives (The Senate concurring therein) that the faith, credit and resources of the State of Iowa, both in men and money, are hereby irrevocably pledged to any amount and to every extent which the Government may *constitutionally* demand to suppress treason, subdue rebellion, enforce the laws, protect the lives and property of loyal citizens, and maintain inviolate the Constitution and Sovereignty of the nation.

"Resolved, that the Governor and Secretary of State be and they are hereby authorized to forward a certified copy of these Resolutions to the President of the United States."

<sup>268</sup> *House Journal*, 1861, p. 15.

<sup>269</sup> Mr. Bailey moved to amend by inserting the word *constitutionally* before the word "demand" in the second paragraph. The amendment was adopted. See above note 267.

<sup>270</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1861, p. 18.

authorizing the Governor to purchase arms, clothing, and necessary supplies, and providing means to pay for them. At once the reactionary, John A. Johnson, interposed with an amendment providing that the equipment should be used for no other purpose than to repel an actual invasion of the State or to suppress insurrection. The amendment was decisively defeated,<sup>271</sup> and Mr. Neal tried his hand on the same point, wording it differently. Before a vote was taken, Mr. Palmer (Democrat) tried to amend Neal's amendment by the following: "Or suppress rebellion in this or any other State of the United States under any order constitutionally made by the President of the United States." Both of these amendments were overwhelmingly defeated and Mr. Neal tried another tack. He wanted vouchers accompanying all expense bills for army provisions, the same to be authenticated by the person furnishing such property. This proposition was also defeated, though by a reduced majority, the vote being fourteen for and twenty-six against. The affirmative voters were all Democrats, including Mr. Cyrus Bussey, who was foremost in the military preparations. Again, others made attacks on the same bill. John F. Duncombe would amend by limiting the entire expenditure to \$250,000. This was defeated by a vote of sixteen to twenty-two,<sup>272</sup> with two Democrats refusing to vote, while two others voted with the majority.

In the House a bill entitled "An Act to amend the Militia Laws of the State of Iowa" was introduced<sup>273</sup> and adopted by a vote of eighty without a dissenting voice.<sup>274</sup>

<sup>271</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1861, p. 25. The vote was thirty-two to six. Mr. Udell, one of the ultras, refrained from voting.

<sup>272</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1861, p. 26.

<sup>273</sup> *House Journal*, 1861, p. 24.

<sup>274</sup> *House Journal*, 1861, p. 81.

There were six Representatives absent or not voting, and among them but one Democrat. Just before the final vote, however, Mr. T. W. Claggett tried to amend the bill so as to reduce the Governor's power somewhat, and was supported in this effort by eight Democrats and two Republicans. The House was relatively more aggressive than the Senate. There was, however, a group of conservative Democrats, among the most conspicuous being, Thomas W. Claggett, Martin V. B. Bennett, Hartley Bracewell, E. S. McCullough of Lee County, Benjamin McCullough of Jackson County, Cornelius Beal, Charles Faulk, and Francis A. Gniffke.

When the House Militia Bill came into the Senate it was attacked by L. L. Ainsworth, Nathan Udell, H. C. Angle, and W. E. Taylor. They attempted to postpone the time when it should go into effect, to limit the number of regiments to be raised, to reduce the salaries stipulated, and to negative the provision for covering the cost at State expense. On some of these propositions the conservative Democrats won over as much as two-thirds of their full party strength. But the Senate had some staunch "War Democrats", such as Bussey, Pusey, Coolbaugh, Gray, Green, Patterson, Wilson, and Trumbull, who invariably voted with the Republicans on the points at issue.

The party spirit in the Senate is amusingly shown in the wrangle over the provision for regimental chaplains. When it was proposed to fix the salary for chaplain at the exorbitant sum of \$30 a month,<sup>275</sup> Gideon Bailey would accept it on condition "that no political preacher be appointed chaplain", an amendment which lacked but two votes of passing. The original motion, however, was also defeated. Later, Mr. Bussey sought to make pro-

<sup>275</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1861, p. 36.

vision for a chaplain by an amendment to the section for regimental musicians, which Mr. Udell again would amend by adding a form of prayer,<sup>276</sup> to be imposed upon the chaplain. Eleven Democrats actually voted for the prayer amendment. It was finally provided that chaplains should be chosen by the companies composing the regiment.

The House Militia Bill after several slight amendments was adopted in the Senate by a vote of thirty to eight. The House, however, did not concur in the Senate amendments and the bill was sent into conference. It was then agreed upon by both houses, but in the Senate by a reduced majority, there being twelve Democrats who finally refused to vote for it.

Party spirit also appeared in the question of supplying the Senators with newspapers, the Democrats generally wishing a large supply — all the way from five to thirty papers for each member. On Mr. Johnson's motion making the number twenty, Senator A. F. Brown (Republican) amended by requiring that the papers be of approved loyalty,<sup>277</sup> whereupon Johnson amended by leaving the individual Senators to be the judges of their own papers.<sup>278</sup> Both of these amendments were prompt-

<sup>276</sup> Mr. Udell's amendment read as follows: "Provided said clergyman shall incorporate into each prayer 'Prepare and turn O God, the hearts of the rulers and leaders on both sides of this unnatural strife to adopt some measures by honorable compromise or otherwise, to bring this warfare to an early close without bloodshed' ".— *Senate Journal*, 1861, p. 37.

<sup>277</sup> Mr. Brown's amendment read as follows: "That no paper shall be subscribed for or obtained at the public expense under this resolution, except such as are fully committed to the maintenance of the honor and integrity of the Government and the preservation of the Union."— *Senate Journal*, 1861, p. 16.

<sup>278</sup> Johnson's amendment read as follows: "That each Senator be allowed to judge for himself of the loyalty of the paper he may desire to take."— *Senate Journal*, 1861, p. 16.

ly voted down, and the Senate finally decided to supply each member with one paper, and the choice was to be confined to one of the Des Moines papers.

A quite significant feature of the work of this session was the action taken on the National issues in the form of resolutions. Petitions from several sections of the State were presented in both the House<sup>279</sup> and the Senate,<sup>280</sup> asking for military aid; but none appeared on either side of the great central question of the national crisis. In other words, these petitions were military, not political; they were moreover mainly petitions by Democrats and offered by Democrats in the legislature.

The very first resolution offered in the Senate was a memorial by John A. Johnson, appealing to Congress to act in behalf of the Union.<sup>281</sup> It was committed to a special committee composed of three Democrats and two Republicans. Then John F. Duncombe, who, it will be recalled, was a Breckinridge electoral candidate, offered a long series of resolutions.<sup>282</sup> He asked that the general government should, while continuing preparations for defense, cease active hostilities until Congress should have time to act, and at the same time recommended that a National Convention to settle the differences be speedily convened. The resolutions opposed a war for the subjugation of the seceded States as long as it was "possible to affect an amicable adjustment of the sectional

<sup>279</sup> In the House a petition from Rev. Henry P. Scholte asked for arms for a military company at Pella, Marion County; Washington County citizens petitioned for an appropriation for the support of families of volunteers; and a third petition concerning military affairs came from Keokuk County.

<sup>280</sup> In the Senate H. H. Trimble and others asked for an appropriation to arm the "Home Guards" of Davis County; John A. McDonald asked the same for the "City Rifles" of Keokuk; and A. Gamble with 75 others requested military aid for Louisa County.

<sup>281</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1861, pp. 7, 8.

<sup>282</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1861, pp. 38, 39.

differences'', and also declared against the war becoming one for the emancipation of the slaves. Senator Bowen at once moved to table the resolutions, but the Senate by vote of eighteen to twenty-one refused to do so, and they were sent to the Committee on Federal Relations.<sup>283</sup>

On May 27th, the day before the legislature was to adjourn, the aforesaid committee reported, presenting both a majority and a minority report. The majority report was signed by A. F. Brown, George M. Davis, and J. C. Hogans, all Republicans, while the minority report was signed by the only Democrat on the committee, Joseph Mann. The latter report consisted of the original Duncombe resolutions, while the majority report<sup>284</sup> was a co-ercionist document. It charged the Southern States with an unjustifiable attempt to overthrow the Government and declared that if the right of secession were admitted, it would inevitably result in the destruction of the Federal Government. Three resolves then followed, favoring the maintenance of the Constitution in all the States, employing the entire resources of the nation to accomplish that end, and expressing belief that the Government desired to adjust the existing sectional difficulties. Finally, the Senate wished to go on record as opposing an attempt to settle the differences on any other terms than an "unconditional submission to the Constitution and the Laws of the United States".

The Committee on Federal Relations in the House was differently constituted and made a different record. The committee was composed of four Democrats, namely, T. W. Claggett, S. R. Peet, F. A. Gniffke, and J. H. Williamson, to one Republican, S. B. Rosenkrans, with Mr. Claggett as chairman. Mr. Williamson, it should be said, was

<sup>283</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1861, pp. 39, 40.

<sup>284</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1861, p. 86.

to all intents and purposes a Republican, but the Democrats controlled the committee, as the results show. The committee made two reports, a majority and a minority report, the first three signing the former and the last named two, the latter.

The majority report, a series of resolutions<sup>285</sup> made by Mr. Claggett, urged the saving of the Union by compromise, recommending two things, namely, a National Peace Convention and the ratification by the State legislature of the Constitutional amendment<sup>286</sup> passed by Congress. Governor Kirkwood did not report this amendment nor Lincoln's message to the legislature until the day before its adjournment, May 27th, and then it was with the recommendation that the amendment be not ratified.<sup>287</sup> For this recommendation, together with his delay in submitting the documents, the Governor was taken to task. The minority report was brief, simply declaring that it was inexpedient to act on the joint resolution of Congress. Mr. Caldwell moved a substitute for the joint "resolution in regard to the National Convention", to the effect that they favor such convention at the proper time "if it can be done with becoming dignity and without dishonor". John Edwards moved to recommit the report and to add Mr. Caldwell to the committee (which would obviously tie the committee), but it was lost and the vote on Mr. Claggett's resolution was ordered. It is at this point the action of the House seems quite singular,

<sup>285</sup> *House Journal*, 1861, p. 132.

<sup>286</sup> The amendment was passed by Congress on March 2, 1861, signed by President Buchanan and on March 16th submitted by President Lincoln to Governor Kirkwood.

<sup>287</sup> *House Journal*, 1861, pp. 104, 105.



for the resolutions were adopted by a vote of fifty to twenty-eight.<sup>288</sup>

The House Joint Resolution was received in the Senate<sup>289</sup> at the evening session of May 28th, and it was at once attacked with substitutes and amendments. Upon David S. Wilson's motion to adopt, James F. Wilson moved to strike out the preamble. Before action was taken, Mr. Bussey moved a coercionist preamble as a substitute, though still favoring a convention for amending the Constitution, "after the suppression of the rebellion". Mr. Rankin moved to adopt this, but George M. Davis would strike out the provision for amending the Constitution. This brought John A. Johnson to his feet with a substitute preamble almost identical with the original, and James F. Wilson moved to lay the whole subject on the table, for which Johnson demanded the yeas and nays. The resolutions and all the amendments were then tabled by a strict party vote of twenty-one to thirteen, not a Democrat voting on the affirmative nor a Republican on the negative. Such "War Democrats" as Bussey, Coolbaugh, and Green could not so ruthlessly thrust aside a peace proposition. In the meantime what had become of the two reports — majority and minority — of the Senate Committee on Federal Relations? They had been ordered to be placed on the calendar, but there they remained, and the Senate refused to go on record as in any way endorsing a peace proposition. The upper house now appeared the more radical of the two.

In brief the work of the legislature was solely in support of the policy of coercion. Twenty-four separate

<sup>288</sup> Vote on majority report — Claggett's resolutions:— Yeas — Democrats, 34; Republicans, 16; Nays — Democrats, 1; Republicans, 27. Absent or not voting — Democrats, 1; Republicans, 7.— *House Journal*, 1861, p. 135.

<sup>289</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1861, pp. 110-112.

acts were passed, besides four resolutions and a memorial; but no milk-and-water "Union" resolutions were permitted to stand upon the records. Naturally, nearly all the measures had to do with preparations for war. The memorial<sup>290</sup> to President Lincoln asked that the Iowa regiments be constituted a brigade with a general of their own. One joint resolution asked that an arsenal for the distribution of arms be established on Rock Island;<sup>291</sup> another that the President should muster a regiment of cavalry in Iowa;<sup>292</sup> and a third that the Governor be authorized to provide additional clothing and munitions of war for the first regiment.<sup>293</sup>

The various military acts included a revision of the militia law<sup>294</sup> of the State, the organization and equipment of militiamen,<sup>295</sup> and provision for the pay of the volunteers,<sup>296</sup> as also for the relief of volunteer soldiers<sup>297</sup> and for the support of the families of volunteers<sup>298</sup>—this latter support to come out of the county funds. Then there was a general appropriation bill<sup>299</sup> and an act providing for the appointment of Auditing Commissioners.<sup>300</sup> Two necessary acts were those providing for the means to meet the extraordinary expenses which the vast military preparations would entail. By one act, that rel-

<sup>290</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1861, p. 36.

<sup>291</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1861, p. 35.

<sup>292</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1861, p. 36.

<sup>293</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1861, p. 35.

<sup>294</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1861, pp. 21-25.

<sup>295</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1861, pp. 25, 26.

<sup>296</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1861, pp. 11, 12.

<sup>297</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1861, p. 6.

<sup>298</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1861, p. 31.

<sup>299</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1861, pp. 7-9.

<sup>300</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1861, pp. 9-11.

ative to the Revenue Law,<sup>301</sup> the rate of levy in taxation was increased, and by the second act the sale of State bonds<sup>302</sup> was authorized and guaranteed by pledging the "Revenue and faith of the State". The proceeds of the sale were to be used for military purposes and were not to exceed \$800,000. The bonds were to be sold for coin only, and two agents<sup>303</sup> were named in the bill to conduct the sales.

To put this vast military equipment into operation and to direct it, the Governor's powers and responsibility were increased and many new offices, military and semi-military, were created to assist him. It was in the choice of men and in the cautious firmness displayed in launching this military organization, that Governor Kirkwood showed himself to be politic, wise, and courageous. The masterful manner in which he fulfilled his difficult task properly won him a place among the great "War Governors". He made his selections without regard to party affiliation, being watchful only of two points, namely, to secure men of undoubted loyalty and of special fitness for the post to be filled. Probably no military position was so important at this critical juncture as that of Adjutant General. For this post the Governor singled out and appointed Nathaniel B. Baker, who had demonstrated his loyalty as also his organizing ability and administrative efficiency in the war session of the legislature. To General Baker is largely due the perfecting of the military system of Iowa — in securing enlistments, in equipment, in hospital service, in communication facilities, and in the keeping of records. Many other legislators stepped into responsible positions both civil and military.

<sup>301</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1861, p. 31.

<sup>302</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1861, pp. 6-20.

<sup>303</sup> The State Treasurer and Mr. Maturin L. Fisher.

Enlistments were going on all the while, and in the urgent need for local protection and the larger service to the nation, people almost forgot their party differences. With the State safely in the hands of the Republicans, which party also controlled the policy at Washington, Iowa was ready to ignore party and to bestow honors and to clothe with authority any who gave satisfactory evidence of their loyalty to, and support of, the policy of coercion.

## CHAPTER V

### THE POLITICAL READJUSTMENT OF 1861

#### THE QUESTION OF PARTY REORGANIZATION

Now that war had actually opened and the prophecies of the Democrats had in a measure been fulfilled, the adoption of a policy consistent with their former declarations was paramount in the minds of the leaders. Since their declaration of principles at the Union Convention of January 31st, the crisis had come, and as we have seen, a number of Democratic partisans announced their support of the Government as the only course open to a loyal citizen. The administration press of Iowa skilfully applied the argument of non-partisan duty to the State and Nation, and it required no deep insight to see that the Republican partisans would, if possible, press the War Democrats who were in the service of the Government, also into the service of their party.

The Republicans seemed to be too busy with the inauguration of the military organization to begin an early agitation in State politics. They were secure in their party organization, and had nothing to gain by premature action. With the Democrats it was otherwise. The leaders beheld a party on the verge of ruin and felt the need of immediate reorganization.<sup>304</sup> Many Democrats were honestly opposed to the war, and if the war could be made the issue, they might upon a Peace platform swing the State back into its natural orbit. But in the matter of party organization they were confronted with serious difficulties.

<sup>304</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, March 5, 1861.

The Republicans, on the other hand, while their party organization was not in danger, and while they were not planning as early a nominating convention as usual, did, however, soon after the extra session of the legislature, announce their purpose to follow a partisan policy in the coming campaign,—notwithstanding the Democratic aid given the State Administration, and their own advocacy of non-partisan support of the Government.

The call<sup>305</sup> for a State Convention was issued by Mr. Hoxie on June 5th, providing for the convention to meet in Des Moines on Wednesday, July 31st. Aside from the nomination of a State ticket, a very significant feature of the call, especially in the light of the course which the Republicans were then pursuing in the States of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York,<sup>306</sup> was that the Convention would take such other action as in its opinion might “contribute to the success of the Republican Party”. So that while the campaign was to begin comparatively late, there was to be no mistaking its partisan character.

As to the Democrats, while they had up to this time done nothing but talk, they really were waiting to see what course the Republican Party meant to pursue and then act accordingly. That was now clear; and the Republicans’ partisanship could be made an issue. The Democrats must gather together the fragments of their party, make the Republicans odious to the War Democrats, and force a defensive campaign upon the party in power. Thus the question which the Democrats had been

<sup>305</sup> *Iowa State Register*, June 5, 1861.

<sup>306</sup> Rhodes’ *History of the United States*, Vol. III, p. 158. Dunning’s *The Second Birth of the Republican Party in the American Historical Review*, October, 1910.

discussing, namely, "Shall the Democracy of Iowa hold a party convention?" was quickly answered, and in the affirmative. It was left to the leader of conservative opinion, D. A. Mahoney, to start things, and three days after the Republican announcement, the call<sup>307</sup> for a Democratic State Convention appeared.

The Convention was to assemble in Des Moines on July 10th, fully three weeks before the Republican Convention. Mr. Mahoney claimed that the Republicans, by calling a partisan convention, had thrown down the gauntlet and he proposed to accept the challenge.<sup>308</sup> Besides this, the call indicated what was to be the Democratic platform. Opposition to the war policy of the Government was to be the issue, and it was declared that the Democrats would meet at the polls that party which had plunged the country into war. The author then enumerated the current charges against the administration, censuring President Lincoln for his assumption and exercise of arbitrary power, referring to what Mahoney himself was so soon to experience, namely the President's suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus*, and also his use of the military courts for the trial of civil cases. The call also stated the business of the convention and fixed the basis of representation, which for obvious reasons was to be upon the vote for Governor in 1859, instead of upon the vote of 1860. There was to be no voting by proxy, and to secure a "full representation" the counties were urged to hold conventions for choosing delegates. This was all business-like and seemed perfectly proper, but the style of the signature was unusual and on its face showed some irregularity. It was signed by D. A. Mahoney, as "Chairman pro tem". Through this call

<sup>307</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, June 8, 1861.

<sup>308</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, June 11, 1861.

the Democracy was to become further embarrassed, and the question as to whether they should hold a State Convention was further complicated by involving them in a heated discussion over the call.

The first response appeared a few days later in the form of a letter<sup>309</sup> from J. B. Dorr to editor Mahoney, protesting against the manner of the call and the time set for the convention. Mr. Dorr objected, in the first place, to the authority back of the call; for in the absence from the State of Mr. Henry Adams, the Chairman, it required a majority of the State Committee to issue a call, and Mr. Mahoney had not even corresponded with a single member. Again, the time was too short to secure a full representation; besides, it would be better to hold the convention after that of the Republicans, even as late as September, for it was just possible that the war would take such a turn as would demand the attention of the Democratic party. Furthermore, the utterances in the call, inasmuch as they constituted a platform on the question of the rebellion, would forestall the State Convention. Mr. Dorr did not wish the party put in the wrong light. "All", said he, "are for the Union and the Government against the robber hordes", while the call was so phrased as to place the Democrats of the State in opposition to the Government. He then paid a high tribute to Lincoln, declaring that what the President did could not be arbitrary when done to prevent a far more arbitrary and infamous course.

Mr. Dorr thus clearly put himself on the side of the Government, though he gave no intimation of abandoning his party; on the contrary, he appealed to the liberal wing to take a hand and control its policy. To this end he expressed the hope that the State Central Committee

<sup>309</sup> The *Dubuque Herald* for June 14, 1861, contains the letter in full.



would suppress the call and issue another, for holding the convention in September, and he revealed the geographical cleavage in the party by concluding: "It remains for true Democrats of the center of the State to see that the convention is not misdirected." This protest is typical of the War Democrats, and shows practically as great a difference between them and the regulars as between the latter and the Republicans. It was for the old line Democrats to say whether the War Democrats should be saved to the party or be driven into the arms of the party in power.

Mr. Mahoney refused to enter into a prolonged discussion with Dorr, but mildly read him out of the party. He charged him with attempting to play the Democracy of the State into the hands of the Republicans, by converting it into an "auxiliary of Republicanism in any and every course that party may take to prosecute the pending war".<sup>310</sup> The *Herald* was now closed to Mr. Dorr, to whom, however, the columns of the local administration paper, the *Dubuque Times*, were quickly opened. Mahoney would not permit his paper to become a "medium for destroying and disorganizing the Democratic party"; the *Times*, he said, was "the proper organ to use for that purpose".<sup>311</sup> Mr. Mahoney may have been right in this, but it was very poor politics, for nothing could hasten more certainly the adherence of the War Democrats to the Republicans.

Judge Lincoln Clark also protested against the call in an able letter to Mr. Mahoney on the "Principles of Government".<sup>312</sup> Other protests and letters from leading Democrats over the State appeared. The *Dubuque*

<sup>310</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, June 14, 1861.

<sup>311</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, June 19, 1861.

<sup>312</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, June 21, 1861.

*Times* published a protest from local Democrats,<sup>313</sup> some of whom, however, being informed that they were contributing to the break up of their party, later protested that they had been deceived in the object sought, and now wished to put themselves right before the public.<sup>314</sup> The Mahoneyites of Dubuque County now also endorsed the call. The *Herald* took advantage of the situation, and for several days, under the caption "The Protesters Protested",<sup>315</sup> published an endorsement of the call with a daily increasing list of signers.<sup>316</sup>

Mahoney's influence was not wholly lost; for while his method was subjected to criticism, his course had also found favor, several journals as well as individuals coming out for the convention as called. The *Davenport Democrat*, the *Iowa State Journal*,<sup>317</sup> and the *Oskaloosa Times*<sup>318</sup> fell in line, the latter two recommending only a change of date for the convention. This was all that Mr. Mahoney wanted, and he now came out with an explanation,<sup>319</sup> to the effect that the State Chairman upon leaving had committed to him the authority to fix the date for the convention; and as to the utterances in the call, he frankly confessed that he took the liberty to set forth the conditions of the country and to state the issues. He also now sought to make definite his opposition to secession and to soften his attack upon the Government's policy. He hoped thus to stay the exodus from the party,

<sup>313</sup> *Dubuque Times*, June 21, 1861.

<sup>314</sup> Mr. Frederick A. Gniffke in *Dubuque Herald*, June 29, 1861.

<sup>315</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, June 25, 1861.

<sup>316</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, June 27 and 28, 1861.

<sup>317</sup> *Davenport Democrat*, June 25, 1861.

<sup>318</sup> *Oskaloosa Times*, June 27, 1861.

<sup>319</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, June 29, 1861.

but the opposition was not placated and remained suspicious of this would-be dictator.

It was decided then to postpone the convention, and the date fixed upon was July 24th. The possible reason for choosing this date will presently appear. But since the postponement was for only two weeks, the real contention of the protesting Democrats was disregarded and it was certain that the party differences would break out in the State convention. The controversy demonstrated clearly that the party was disrupted and that the War Democrats were at sea. They lacked definite purpose, apparently halting between the two courses open, namely, either to control the policy of their party, or to abandon the political hulk and unite with the Republican party.

In the meantime the original Mahoney call had been endorsed by several counties. Besides that of Dubuque the counties of Appanoose, Linn, Jones, Scott, and Washington issued calls for county conventions to elect delegates to the State Convention. In none of these, however, was there a statement of the "issues". But the resolutions of some of them, notably those of Appanoose, were Mahoneyite in tone. These resolutions were drawn up by Judge Amos Harris of Centerville, and emphasized the stock points — opposition to the war, to Lincoln's assumption of power, and to the "Abolition raid on the institution of slavery" — and demanded the right of free discussion.

After the second call was issued, other counties, under divided counsels, hastened as best they could, the re-organization of the party locally, and prepared to go up to Des Moines.

#### THE FIRST "UNION" PARTY MOVEMENT

Before the regular party conventions were held a new

movement appeared. An opposition element was developing within the Republican party as well as in the Democratic. These two factions, having a common end, naturally drew together, and those Republicans who opposed the partisan course of their party joined with the determined War Democrats in an independent course. They would abandon the old parties and form a new organization. It was to be composed of all men on the side of the Government, who were willing now to turn their backs upon their former party affiliations and organize a party which was to be known as the People's Party.

On July 4th a call for a State Convention, to convene in Des Moines on the 25th, was issued. The call went out from Des Moines, and among the signers were Martin D. McHenry and J. C. Savery, both former Constitutional Union men, and Andrew J. Stevens, who at the Chicago Convention of 1860 had been reelected as the Iowa member of the National Republican Committee.

The Convention itself, so far as size and representation is concerned, was small, scarcely anything more than a "one-horse" gathering of local politicians. There were but seven counties represented with thirty delegates, eighteen of whom sat for Polk County. The Convention, however, organized, drafted a platform, and though it did not "deem it prudent" to name a ticket, it planned to conquer the State for a genuine non-partisan campaign. They thus hoped to accomplish in Iowa what was going on in some of the neighboring States and in the East.

The resolutions<sup>320</sup> reported and finally adopted were rather hostile to the Government and hence did not suit all. Upon the issue of the war the Convention divided, Mr. Savery, a "delegate" from Polk County, submitting

<sup>320</sup> *Iowa State Register*, July 31, 1861.

a substitute resolution as an amendment to the war plank in the committee's report. It proposed unqualified loyal support to the National Government "against its adversaries, whether they show themselves as open Rebels in the South or as sympathizers with the rebellion in the North". This was voted down and a mere general declaration adopted in its stead, namely, a pledge "to support the Government in maintaining inviolate the Constitution and the laws, and to suppress rebellion in all its forms".

The resolutions as a whole were not acceptable to all, and so the "Union" party was handicapped from the start. Little could be expected without the moral strength of conviction back of it all. Thus, while the purpose was to consolidate the non-partisan "Union" men of the State, it failed in its object. Republicans looked upon the movement with suspicion and ridiculed the "pretense that all former political associations had fulfilled their uses and ought to be superseded". The Democrats were hopeful of using the new party to their own advantage. The Republicans, for their part, regarded it as rather suspicious that this so-called "People's" Convention should have been called together on the heels of the Democratic State Convention, that certain leading Democrats seemed very much interested in the Convention, and that members of the two groups apparently had so much in common.

There can be little doubt but that fusion was in the minds of some at least, as is seen in the fact of their not putting out a ticket. To the minds of the Republicans this meant danger. After the convention, Mr. Palmer editorially expressed the suspicion of the Republicans. Said he: "Our readers will bear us witness that we have

shown no undue partiality for this People's movement from the beginning."<sup>321</sup>

THE DEMOCRACY IN STATE CONVENTION

The Democratic State Convention assembled in Des Moines on July 24th, with about seventy-five delegates in attendance. These were almost exclusively from the eastern half of the State, there being only three counties — Dallas, Guthrie and Pottawattamie — represented, west from the capital. Even the populous south-eastern counties of Lee and Des Moines, and the north-eastern counties of Allamakee, Clayton, Linn and Scott, failed to send delegates. In the organization of the convention the Mahoneyites were easily in control. Charles Negus of Fairfield was the temporary chairman, and ex-Governor Stephen Hempstead was honored with the permanent chairmanship. Since there was an active opposition minority, the proceedings were marked with sensational incidents from first to last.<sup>322</sup>

Mr. Mahoney properly opened the Convention with a key-note speech which presumably would reappear in the platform. The speech brought to his feet a War Democrat, W. W. Belknap of Keokuk, who though not a delegate, was present to see how things would go. Mr. Belknap arose to explain the status of the Lee County Democracy, and threw a fire-brand into the Convention when he stated that Lee County Democrats did not respond to the "call from Dubuque" because they did not like the looks of it, and protested against the course taken. A delegate moved to make Mr. Belknap a member of the Convention, but he spurned the invitation, and sensation ran riot when he declared that he had "no desire to train in such a crowd". While his position was

<sup>321</sup> *Iowa State Register*, July 31, 1861.

<sup>322</sup> Proceedings in *Iowa State Register*, July 31, 1861.

characteristic of the War Democrats, yet there were enough present as delegates to wage war upon the Mahoneyites in platform-making.

The real contest came on the report of the Committee on Resolutions. The resolutions,<sup>323</sup> ten in number, presented a medley of patriotic sentiments, expressions condemnatory of the Government, and a plan for securing peace. The framers condemned both secession and war; and although they obligated themselves "to preserve and perpetuate the federal union", they did so only so far as constitutional means might be employed. They again opposed the use of force and recommended a representative peace convention; but this was to include the "removal of the question of slavery from the halls of congress and the States of the Union". They thus contended for a belated method in the support of an outworn principle, and proved their inability to frame a really constructive platform.

The peace plank in the resolutions brought out a sharp fight, with Judge Phillips leading the attack on the veterans — Mahoney, Samuels, Neal, and Bennett. To gain some standing ground the War Democrats offered a resolution pledging the Iowa Democracy to the support of the National Administration in the prosecution of the war, in case the Confederate States should refuse to accept an equitable compromise; but they were defeated in this, as also in their attempt to secure an endorsement, rather than a condemnation, of the \$800,000 war loan of the State.

In the nomination of a ticket, the old guard had it all their own way. For the office of Governor they named ex-Judge Charles Mason; for Lieutenant-Governor, Martin L. Fisher; and for Justice, J. M. Ellwood. With

<sup>323</sup> Fairall's *Manual of Iowa Politics*, Vol. I, pp. 58-60.

this ticket, composed of excellent men personally, though standing upon an anti-war platform, and with their party distracted, the Democrats went before the people to face a certain and overwhelming defeat at the polls.

#### THE REPUBLICAN PARTY CONVENTION

Quite otherwise was it with the Republicans when they assembled in Des Moines a week later, on July 31st. Although the Convention was not as large as was expected, it was marked by enthusiasm, determination, and confidence. There were but sixty-four of the ninety-seven counties represented, and several of these were represented by proxy.<sup>324</sup> The comparatively small representation is to be accounted for rather by the fact of the activity in military organization and the general confidence in those who would gather, than because any considerable number of Republicans had become disaffected by the People's party movement.

This Convention is notable in that it was composed of so many able and prominent men, then leaders, or soon to become such, in the councils of the Nation as well as in State politics. The men soon to go to Congress were William B. Allison, Hiram Price, J. B. Grinnell, and G. W. Donnan. Rush Clark was to go into governmental service at Washington, Samuel F. Miller to the Supreme Court, Samuel Merrill to the Governor's chair, and E. W. Eastman to the Lieutenant-Governorship. Then there were present such men as John A. Elliott, J. W. Cattell, N. M. Hubbard, N. W. Rowell, Orville Faville, James T. Lane, P. H. Conger, O. P. Shiras, Isaac Pendleton, J. M. Griffith, P. P. Henderson, and the newspaper men, Clark Dunham, Charles Aldrich, and others. These were the men who shaped the course of Iowa Republicanism in 1861.

<sup>324</sup> The proceedings are found in the *Iowa State Register*, August 7, 1861.



The Convention organized with William G. Woodward and Charles Aldrich as the temporary officers. The German element was honored in the choice of H. A. Wiltse as permanent chairman. The Committee on Resolutions<sup>325</sup> was especially strong and their work politically important. They drew up a short, simple platform, "wisely and patriotically confined to the questions now engaging the Nation".<sup>326</sup> The report, made by Mr. Allison, contained eight resolutions<sup>327</sup> and was, we are told, unanimously adopted. The resolutions declared that "whosoever hesitates or falters" in the cause of the Union, "should receive the execrations of mankind as he surely will the reproaches of posterity", and made an open bid for the support of the War Democrats. This was not a fusionist proposal, but a straight-out, unvarnished invitation to join the Republican party, and was the basic principle upon which the party acted throughout the war. The article reads: "We heartily invite cooperation with us of men of all parties, whatsoever their former political ties, who adhere to these sentiments, and who unite in the patriotic support of the present loyal administration". Besides the platform, two separate resolutions of political significance were adopted. One was in substance the Savery resolution which had been rejected at the "People's Convention"; and the other was by Mr. Grinnell, in praise of the Irish and the German soldiers, with a recommendation for the promotion of Colonel Franz Sigel to a Brigadier Generalship.

The Republicans were less harmonious in making up

<sup>325</sup> Committee on Resolutions: Samuel F. Müller, W. H. Day, N. W. Rowell, Isaac Pendleton, Isaac Brandt, J. Matthews, Hiram Price, E. Cutler, Wm. B. Allison, Orville Faville, Enoch W. Eastman.

<sup>326</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 7, 1861.

<sup>327</sup> Fairall's *Manual of Iowa Politics*, Vol. I, pp. 57, 58.

their ticket than in drafting the platform. The rivalry for the gubernatorial candidacy was especially keen, but the general feeling was that Governor Kirkwood deserved a second term. He had already been tested and had demonstrated that in a crisis, he, calm, resourceful, and honest, could be depended upon. But there were other aspirants, among them Elijah Sells, who it was claimed, had he followed the advice of his friends and deserted Kirkwood, might have swung the convention.<sup>328</sup> Fitz Henry Warren, a man high in the councils of the party and restless out of office, was seeking the nomination, while Samuel F. Miller, to whom the place had been promised after the end of Kirkwood's term, was also in the field.<sup>329</sup> But Governor Kirkwood was easily renominated, first by ballot and then by acclamation.<sup>330</sup> John R. Needham was named for Lieutenant-Governor over S. J. McFarland, S. B. Shelledy, Wm. A. Holmes, and John Edwards. Edwards soon joined the People's movement. The sharpest contest was in the nomination for Justice of the Supreme Court. Here a deadlock prolonged the balloting for Judge Williams, Justice Lowe, and John F. Dillon, which was not broken until the fourteenth ballot, when Justice Lowe was renominated. E. W. Eastman, Jacob Butler, and Samuel F. Miller were also voted for during the deadlock. The ticket was regarded as especially strong and was warmly commended to "the lovers of our common country".

<sup>328</sup> As the result of this contest the two men, Kirkwood and Sells, became estranged. The former later came to believe that Mr. Sells had after all worked underhandedly for the nomination at that time.—See *Annals of Iowa*.

<sup>329</sup> See proceedings of convention, *Iowa State Register*, August 7, 1861.

<sup>330</sup> Informal ballot: Kirkwood, 272½; Miller, 31; Sells, 29; Warren, 29; S. A. Rice, 12½. Formal ballot: Kirkwood, 310½; Warren, 32½; Miller, 19; Sells, 12.

A special committee headed by Mr. Grinnell selected the State Central Committee,<sup>331</sup> whose business it was to Republicanize the State. There was little to indicate that the solidarity of the party was weakened. However, during the month of August and the first days of September, in the heat of the campaign, a wave of desertion struck the party; but for several reasons, as we shall see, the disaffected individuals returned to their party allegiance in time to vote straight.

THE QUESTION OF A UNION PARTY: A SECOND SERIES OF STATE CONVENTIONS

The campaign of 1861 was unique. Campaigning as such could make little headway against the political unrest and war excitement of the summer. There was an increasing demand for peace, for the war was bringing disaster upon the country. The country was in the first shock of consciousness that the war promised to be a very real and stubborn struggle, and not a summer's holiday affair as many Northerners had fancied. After the defeat at Bull Run, although the call for troops was responded to and the State authorities had pushed enlistments, yet the peace party stock rose. The Democrats were disrupted and discredited, the Republicans were being bitterly criticized for their partisan course, and the half way policy of the People's party satisfied no one. The time seemed ripe for a new party with a new name. The feeling now invaded the ranks of the Republican party, alienating quite a large and influential element.

<sup>331</sup> Republican State Central Committee: (1) Samuel F. Miller of Lee, (2) William S. Dungan of Lucas, (3) W. R. Smith of Woodbury, (4) John R. Lockwood of Pottawattamie, (5) J. N. Dewey of Polk, (6) J. H. Saunders of Keokuk, (7) Jacob Butler of Muscatine, (8) J. Shane of Benton, (9) G. W. Metler of Black Hawk, (10) L. Fuller of Fayette, (11) R. H. Taylor of Marshall.

Some, as Senator Grimes<sup>332</sup> for instance, though not disgruntled, were ready to yield the party to the cause of the Government, and form a new party to that end. The result was a second series of conventions: the People's party to organize upon a State-wide basis with a ticket; the Democrats to re-shape their ticket, in the hope of bringing back the deserters.

The second People's Convention assembled at Des Moines on August 28th. The peace party was now strengthened by such men as William Penn Clarke, John Edwards, Reuben Noble, and others from the Republicans, and I. M. Preston, T. W. Claggett, and others from the Democracy. It even claimed Adjutant General Baker. The Convention was larger than the one in July, there being nineteen counties represented, with some forty odd delegates.<sup>333</sup> Colonel Preston was made the permanent chairman, and William Penn Clarke was Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions.

The Convention claimed to be non-partisan, wholly free from political bias, and so the resolutions discredited all partisan platforms and tickets. In substance the resolutions were similar to those adopted in July. Three single resolutions were also adopted, one by Mr. Claggett, which struck at the Lincoln administration, eliciting a fierce discussion, but for the sake of peace it went through.

The main object of this Convention was to name a non-

<sup>332</sup> "Permit me to say that the time has arrived when I am anxious to forget all party names, and party platforms and party organizations, and to unite with anybody and everybody in an honest, ardent and patriotic support of the Government — not as a party Government with a Republican at its head, but as the national Government ordained by and for the benefit of the whole of the country."—Senator Grimes in response to a letter (August 17th, 1861) signed by Republicans and Democrats, inviting him to give an address.—Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 150.

<sup>333</sup> For proceedings of the convention, see the *Iowa State Register*, September 4, 1861.

partisan State ticket. The willingness on the part of some, and the equally determined refusal on the part of others, to accept nominations was the thing which characterized this contest. It developed a feeling which militated against the movement. But how did they make out a non-partisan slate? General Baker, a former Democrat, was named for Governor; Col. Laurin Dewey, a Constitutional Union man of 1860, was named for Lieutenant-Governor; and Reuben Noble, a non-partisan Republican, was nominated for Judge. They could not have been more politic, so far as concerned the recognition of political antecedents in the newly formed party, and the ticket was excellent in its personnel. But with the exception of Colonel Dewey, who was nominated by acclamation, the nominees protested. Besides this, John Edwards and Col. William H. Merritt were prominently in the race for Governor, while J. N. Rogers and Martin D. McHenry would have accepted the nomination for Justice. But the Convention did what it started out to accomplish, and after adopting the name "Union Party" and appointing a State Central Committee, with Dr. A. Y. Hull as chairman, the members adjourned to engage in the campaign.

#### THE SECOND DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION

The Democrats had fixed upon August 29th,<sup>334</sup> the day after the "Union" party Convention, as the time for holding their second convention, but because of the suspicions aroused it was changed to September 3rd. This was to have been a convention of the anti-secession wing of the party, but the Mahoneyites resolved to pack the Convention and thus perchance save their organization and ticket.<sup>335</sup> The result was another imbroglio which only further discredited the Democracy.

<sup>334</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 14, 1861.

<sup>335</sup> *State Journal*, August 28, 1861.

At the appointed time the factions gathered at Des Moines with twenty counties represented. The Mahoneyites, true to their purpose, packed the hall, overawed the "Union" minority, and controlled the Convention; although they did allow the minority to have the chairman, Judge Lincoln Clark.<sup>336</sup> They showed their strength, however, in two particulars, namely, first in seating the Mahoney delegation from Wayne County by a vote of 200 to 71, notwithstanding the fact that the defeated delegation had been regularly chosen; and in the second place, the appointment of the Committee on Resolutions was taken out of the chairman's hands and assumed by the Convention.

In the evening the Convention met in Sherman Hall to hear the report of the Committee on Resolutions and to name the ticket. As might be expected, there were two sets of resolutions reported. The majority of the committee reported the platform which was adopted at the July convention, while the minority report, by William F. Coolbaugh, chairman of the committee, was an out-and-out administration platform. The struggle came on the floor of the Convention, where Coolbaugh was ably supported by Judge J. C. Hall and others, and the chief spokesmen for the regular platform were M. V. B. Bennett and A. J. Baker. During the debate it was "confusion worse confounded", and Mr. Clark tendered his resignation as chairman. He then, in a parting speech, warned the secession element, and with a comparatively large following of War Democrats he left the hall.

After the bolters had retired, the Convention placed Senator Harvey Dunlavy in the chair, passed their resolutions, and revised their former ticket by supplanting

<sup>336</sup> Proceedings found in *Iowa State Register*, September 4, 1861.

Mr. Fisher, the nominee for Lieutenant-Governor, with William H. Merritt.<sup>337</sup> The Convention adjourned, and for a second time the Democrats submitted their work to the people of the State.

The party met with less unanimity in the endorsement of its work than before, few endorsing both platform and ticket. Richard H. Sylvester of the *Iowa City Press*, however, came out with a full endorsement,<sup>338</sup> as did a few others. Mr. Coolbaugh, one of the bolters, as soon as he reached home, issued an address urging the Democracy to vote against Charles Mason and also against Jairus E. Neal, who had just been nominated for Congress, since both men were "taking disunion ground".<sup>339</sup> To such War Democrats as were impressed by Coolbaugh's views, there was obviously nothing left to do but to join the third-party movement.

#### THE REPUBLICAN PARTY AND THE UNION MOVEMENT

The Republicans, beset on all sides, were compelled to defend their particular kind of non-partisanship. They claimed that no better "Union" platform could possibly be drafted than the one adopted by the Republican party, since it was broad enough for everybody to stand upon.<sup>340</sup> As evidence that Republicans were "Union" men and that their party was the "Union" party, they cited the action of the Republican Congress and President in their efforts to save the Union. They pointed out the fact that in the Republican platform all party issues had been ignored; and the non-partisan character of their State con-

<sup>337</sup> The Democratic ticket now was: for Governor, Charles Mason; for Lieutenant-Governor, W. H. Merritt; for Justice of the Supreme Court, J. M. Ellwood.

<sup>338</sup> *Iowa City Press*, September 6, 1861.

<sup>339</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 11, 1861.

<sup>340</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 29, 1861.

vention was shown by the unanimous adoption of the Savery resolution,<sup>341</sup> which was expressly designed to distinguish between the loyal support of a loyal government and the endorsement of purely partisan issues. The Republicans generally held that this "new party" movement was fathered by disappointed office-seekers, both Republican and Democratic, and was designed to defeat Governor Kirkwood.

The invitation to "patriotic Democrats" to join their party seemed to the Republicans both logical and honorable; for, they held, since the issue was simply that of sustaining or opposing the Government, to support their party nominees was the only way of manifesting the individual citizen's loyalty and integrity. Whether the Republicans were sincere or not, the argument they put forth was not wholly convincing to their wavering opponents. One thing, however, was clear, namely, that the Republicans of Iowa had no mind to join in a fusion scheme in 1861, doubtless for the reason that they knew their strength to be sufficient without it.

While in a few counties the People's movement succeeded,<sup>342</sup> in others it was successfully averted by local Republican leaders. At the "People's Convention" of Linn County, held at Cedar Rapids early in September, Judge Isbell threw cold water on the movement. Called upon for a "speech", he declared that the Republican party was victorious and there was no cause for the

<sup>341</sup> It had been rejected by the People's Convention, July 25th. See above, p. 113.

<sup>342</sup> In Delaware County a "Loyal Union Convention" nominated S. G. VanAnda, a former Democrat, for a Representative in the legislature; likewise in Monroe County a "harmonious Union Convention" named Oliver P. Rowles, of Republican antecedents. Both of these men were elected, and in the election returns the Republican press accredited them to the Republican party.—*Iowa State Register*, November 26, 1861.



formation of a new party; nor should the Republican party be called upon to yield anything. It had never deserted and it was dishonorable to ask it to do so now. As to a new party, said he, "however pure the motive or whatever may be the name of such party, confidence is of slow growth and I believe the inevitable practical result must be to engender discord and heated strife detrimental to the best interests of the country and encouraging to its enemies". He thus expressed the general Republican view and with good effect probed the core of the situation.

This determination of the Republicans to maintain their party organization, notwithstanding the clamorous demand from a minority within as well as from without the party, for a non-partisan "Union" policy, is further seen in the choice of a successor to Representative Samuel R. Curtis, who had resigned his seat and gone to the front. His letter to his First District constituents resigning his seat, did not appear until the close of August,<sup>343</sup> but already the Republican Congressional Committee had taken steps to choose his successor.<sup>344</sup> The Republicans assembled at Oskaloosa on September 4th in a largely attended, strictly partisan convention, presided over by S. F. Cooper of Poweshiek County. While it was a foregone conclusion that James F. Wilson would be the almost unanimous choice, yet there were other aspirants — M. L. McPherson, Rufus L. B. Clark, and John Edwards. On the first ballot Wilson secured 153 votes to 69 for the others; on the second ballot he got all but one vote, which went to Edwards. Mr. Wilson's nomination was then made unanimous and he delivered his famous acceptance speech, in which he advocated "can-

<sup>343</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 28, 1861.

<sup>344</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 21, 1861.

non, sword and bayonet" as the "only compromise for traitors".<sup>345</sup> The convention adopted a characteristic Republican platform. The "Union" element in the convention was not satisfied and determined upon an independent course.

Just before the nomination of Wilson the Democrats had held a convention and had nominated Senator Jairus E. Neal. The "Union" faction had supported Dan O. Finch, who was but seven votes behind Mr. Neal.<sup>346</sup> The Democrats could have made no greater mistake at this time, for Mr. Neal was a well-known "rebel sympathizer". As early as June he had delivered a speech at Knoxville which was so pro-Southern as to find acceptable circulation in the South. It was to Neal that the Republicans first applied the cognomen "Rattlesnake" in connection with his candidacy for Congress.<sup>347</sup>

In view of the sharp contests in both party conventions it was quite natural and easy for both dissatisfied factions to decide upon naming a "Union" candidate. A convention met at Oskaloosa on September 11th and, against his wishes, nominated John Edwards, who at the time was winning military glory in Missouri.<sup>348</sup> He had already been endorsed for the Congressional nomination by the Union Convention on August 28th. Mr. Edwards did not accept. The matter, however, was allowed to drag on until October, when the Union party movement had spent itself, before it was officially announced by the chairman of the Union Congressional Convention, Mr. J. B. Bauserman, that Edwards's name had been withdrawn.<sup>349</sup>

<sup>345</sup> Proceedings in *Iowa State Register*, September 6, 1861.

<sup>346</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 4, 1861.

<sup>347</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 2, 1861.

<sup>348</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 19, 1861.

<sup>349</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 2, 1861.

Thus the Republican leaders were beginning to see the end of the danger to their partisan course. They were, however, to be annoyed by the "Fusion" scheme which now took the place of the project for a "Union" party.

#### THE FUSION MOVEMENT AND THE ELECTION

The second Union convention failed to yield the results hoped for by its projectors. The ticket, though a good one, was in a state of suspended acceptance; for the nominees had not yet signified their intentions. The further Democratic split presaged naught but ruin to the party, though the leaders made strenuous efforts to rally their friends in old-time mass meetings. Many dissatisfied Democrats were loath to give up their party and some of the very leaders of the Union movement still claimed to be Democrats. Others who, upon the firing on Sumter, started with the Government, now hesitated. All Democrats comprehended the inevitable result of their divisions, and there came to be a general feeling that their divided state was the explanation for Republican success in the past as also of their inevitable victory at the approaching election.

One of the first attempts toward getting together was at a "Democratic mass meeting" in Des Moines on Thursday, September 3rd, the day of the second Democratic State Convention. It was presided over by Dr. A. Y. Hull, who had just been made State Chairman of the new Union party; while the leading speaker, James Baker, had been prominent in calling the second People's convention. Baker, in his speech, strongly opposed the coercion policy of the Government. Several impromptu speeches were made, among them one as significant as it was typical of the state of mind of the War Democrats in the fall of 1861. This was the speech of Mr. C. C. Cole.

He was one who, after the Sumter affair, sided with the Government, but had not yet joined the Republican party; he confessed to being "politically out in the cold". In his speech he of course attacked the anti-Union sentiments of the Mahoneyites; but on the other hand, endorsed their ticket, while he attacked the Republican ticket and party, though not its principles, urging all to unite to defeat the ticket and destroy the party. Mr. Cole is an example of the hesitating Democrat who, while he could not follow his party, yet feared losing political caste by deserting it outright. At this meeting, in order to unite the opposition factions, an attempt was made to inveigle Governor Kirkwood into a partisan contest by challenging him to a debate on the political issues. The challenge was politely declined, and wisely so; for the Republicans could not hazard their latest non-partisan claims in a partisan encounter.<sup>350</sup>

The two factions of the Democrats, together with some of the Union party adherents, now came close enough together, in their determination to defeat the Republicans, and especially Governor Kirkwood, to hold a joint meeting of the two State Central Committees to decide upon a course of action. The plan agreed upon involved the withdrawal of the nominees of both factions and the making out of a new "joint ticket" by the committees. This was done. They made a distinct bid for the war element by deciding on a military man for Governor, and so they would match Governor Kirkwood with the popular officer, Colonel William H. Merritt. For Lieutenant-Governor they selected the "Union" candidate, Laurin Dewey; while for Justice they agreed upon J. M. Ellwood, who had been placed on both of the previous Democratic tickets. The "Union" representatives on the joint

<sup>350</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 11, 1861.

committee then wished to have Jairus E. Neal yield his nomination for Congress in the First District and all unite on John Edwards, but the Mahoney faction balked, and carried their point.<sup>351</sup> The Republican element was now unrepresented on the new ticket, for Colonel Dewey was an old Constitutional Union man and the other two were Democrats.

As to the original candidates for Governor and Judge on the Union party ticket, neither Baker nor Noble had accepted the nomination; they had simply ignored it, disclaiming all responsibility in the matter. Nevertheless, both now issued rather tardy public declinations. General Baker's declination, although issued on September 4th, was not made public until after the new ticket had been made out,<sup>352</sup> while Mr. Noble's refusal was not made public until October, and bore no date of issue.<sup>353</sup> But Mr. Noble had, before this time, given a clear exposition of his position, which shows him to have been a consistent non-partisan advocate.<sup>354</sup> A faction of the "Union" party, consisting almost exclusively of Democrats and former Constitutional Union men, still insisted upon playing the game to a finish; and so a remnant of the "Central Committee" met to fill the two vacancies

<sup>351</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 18, 1861.

<sup>352</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 18, 1861.

<sup>353</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 2, 1861.

<sup>354</sup> Mr. Noble had not been in favor of a Union party convention and did not attend the convention. Besides this, he had written Mr. A. J. Stevens to the effect that under no circumstances would he become a candidate. He had been urged by Republicans to become a candidate for Governor against Kirkwood, but as he himself explained this a few days after the "Union" convention: "My answer invariably was, that I am opposed to Republican nominations". That is, he was opposed to partisanship of all kinds, and urged the Union convention in August to name Kirkwood for Governor, a Northern Democrat for Lieutenant-Governor, and to support Judge Lowe for reëlection.—*Iowa State Register*, September 4, 1861.

on their ticket. They named Lincoln Clark for Governor and Martin D. McHenry for Judge.<sup>355</sup>

But now the Democrats had to secure Colonel Merritt's consent to head the new ticket, and to carry out the very delicate business of notifying Judge Mason of his shelving and to secure his apparently voluntary declination of the nomination for the office of Governor. For these tasks special committees were appointed, J. W. Griffith being assigned the duty of carrying the news to Mason, and Dan O. Finch and Dr. A. Y. Hull a committee to notify Colonel Merritt of his promotion.

The scheme worked, and two days later Judge Mason sent his letter of withdrawal<sup>356</sup> to J. M. Todd, chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee. Mr. Todd at once issued a circular to the "Democracy of Iowa"<sup>357</sup> informing them of the new coalition ticket. They were informed that both Mason for Governor and Merritt for Lieutenant-Governor had declined to accept, and according to the practice the State Committee was empowered to fill vacancies. It is true that Mason did, under the above described circumstances withdraw, but Merritt had not yet accepted. Nevertheless, the Committee announced the new ticket with Colonel Merritt for Governor and recommended a vigorous, State-wide campaign.<sup>358</sup>

The fusion thus accomplished neither won the support nor allayed the fears of the factions. The ills besetting the Democracy were laid at the feet of the Mahoney die-

<sup>355</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 18, 1861.

<sup>356</sup> "Burlington, Iowa, Sept. 20, 1861. Dear Sir:—Circumstances have induced me to withdraw my name as a candidate for Governor. I now notify you of the fact, that you may act accordingly. Yours truly, Chas. Mason. To G. M. Todd, Esq., Chairman Central Committee."—*Burlington Hawkeye*, September 21, 1861.

<sup>357</sup> Circular in *Iowa State Register*, September 25, 1861.

<sup>358</sup> *Burlington Hawkeye* September 21, 1861.

tatorship. The *Davenport Democrat*, because of the withdrawal of Mason, removed the Democratic ticket from its columns and proposed to be bound by nothing which the State Central Committee might do.<sup>359</sup> Several other papers continued to support the deposed candidate, Mr. Mason,<sup>360</sup> while editor Sylvester came out with the Democratic ticket in blank. The Todd circular was answered by L. W. Babbitt of the *Council Bluffs Bugle*, who showed his independence by declaring that "having always been a Democrat and never a chattel, we don't feel inclined to be sold out to the Abolition party at this time".<sup>361</sup> His opposition of course was to Colonel Merritt, the soldier candidate.

At the ante-bellum Democratic center, Iowa City, the opposition took organic form. It was the first appearance of what came to be known as the Byington Democracy, the negative peace wing of the party. On Thursday, September 26th, at Iowa City, pursuant to a call issued on the 24th by Mr. LeGrand Byington to the Democratic visitors in attendance upon the State Fair, was held an "impromptu meeting". This meeting was organized with A. T. Groendyke of Washington County for chairman, and R. M. Long of Cedar County as secretary. A State ticket was named and a platform adopted. Ben M. Samuels was named for Governor, Colonel Jesse Williams for Lieutenant-Governor, and for Supreme Judge, J. M. Ellwood was accepted.<sup>362</sup> An attempt was made by Samuel Fairall to substitute the name of Colonel W. H. Merritt for that of Samuels, but it was decisively rejected — otherwise what was the need for this newest party!

<sup>359</sup> *Davenport Democrat*, September 22, 1861.

<sup>360</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 4, 1861.

<sup>361</sup> Quoted in *Iowa State Register*, October 2, 1861.

<sup>362</sup> *Iowa State Press*, September 27, 1861.

The platform consisted of five resolves, which declared loyalty to the old Democratic ideals and principles. Nothing was said on the issues of the day — local or national.<sup>363</sup>

While groups of Democrats were thus hunting for a party and making new slates, Thomas H. Benton, Jr.,<sup>364</sup> a War Democrat enlisted in the service, wrote a letter on the duty of loyal citizens to the war. This in the form of a fifteen-page pamphlet<sup>365</sup> scattered broadcast by the Republican State Committee, made excellent “campaign literature”, since the logic of it was the support of the Republican party on the part of War Democrats and “Union” men. This and similar instances had their effect on the course of the campaign.

The “Fusion” movement in fact began to crumble with its mere launching. The bickerings and uncertainties of all the opposition combinations hurt their cause beyond redemption, and when election day came, the result was a foregone conclusion. There had been little campaigning of the old-fashioned kind. The Republicans maintained their partisan policy and successfully expounded the doctrine that working with them meant upholding the Government and the Union, while working with any and all of the opposition combinations meant the break-up of the Union, and the realization of the Southern Confederacy.

The election returns showed that Governor Kirkwood had carried the State by a plurality of 16,608 and by a

<sup>363</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 2, 1861.

<sup>364</sup> Mr. Benton was the nephew of United States Senator Thomas H. Benton, and for fifteen years had figured prominently in Iowa politics. He held the office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction at the outbreak of the War.

<sup>365</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 2, 1861.



majority of 11,534.<sup>366</sup> The relative position of the two parties remained about the same as in 1860. The surprising thing is that the Republican vote was not greater. That there was an organized attack on Kirkwood is doubtless true; for Mr. Needham's vote was considerably larger, while Judge Lowe reached the largest plurality ever attained — 20,000, there being 1,835 votes cast for McHenry and 496 for Noble. Colonel Merritt's vote was swelled by the "Union" party men; but to balance that, there were the votes for Samuels, Dean, and Mason, which represented the different Democratic groups gathering about their personal favorites. The Democrats carried only twenty counties, though this was somewhat shifted in the votes for Judge and for Congressman. The Republicans not only won over a number of counties from their opponents, but carried six counties unanimously — Harrison, Shelby, Winnebago, Winneshiek, Emmett and Crawford, and in four others they secured almost all the votes.

The vote for Congressman was, for Wilson 29,323, and for Neal 21,429, while over 1,000 were cast for Edwards, besides scattering votes for nine other persons. The Republican triumph is most marked in the legislative vote. Of the twenty senators (there were twenty-six hold-overs — fourteen Republicans and twelve Democrats) the Democrats secured but two; while the House stood sixty-two Republicans, thirty Democrats, and two Unionists. The result of the election on the whole, was to strengthen the Republican administration, less, however, by added numbers than by a breaking-up of the opposition party.

<sup>366</sup> Vote for Governor: Kirkwood, 59,853; Merritt, 43,245; Samuels, 4,492; Dean, 463; Mason, 119.—Election Archives for 1861.

## CHAPTER VI

### RETURN TO PARTY SOLIDARITY

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1862

The election ended the bitter party contest. The "Union Movement" for the time being was dead, and political campaigning gave place to law-making, the hunting down of treason, and the all-absorbing prosecution of the war. To be sure, in all these things politics played a part, especially in the winter's legislative affairs.

The Ninth General Assembly convened on January 11, 1862, and the Republican régime was re-inaugurated. Governor Kirkwood in his inaugural address<sup>367</sup> reviewed the sectional strife, placed the responsibility for the war, pictured its progress and horrors, gave assurance that the policy of the National and the State governments would be continued, and sounded an unmistakable warning that emancipation was coming. In his message<sup>368</sup> to the legislature he dwelt upon the military and financial conditions of the State, and recommended remedial legislation, especially in connection with the militia, the collection of taxes, currency, and expenditures.

The legislature was Republican, more than two to one; and although the partisan spirit was tense, one contested election in the House was decided in favor of the Democrats.<sup>369</sup> Moreover, two vacancies in the Senate, one the seat of a Democrat, were filled, after much delay and fili-

<sup>367</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1862, pp. 37-45.

<sup>368</sup> Shambaugh's *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, Vol. II, pp. 364-395.

<sup>369</sup> *Iowa State Register*, February 5, 1862.

bustering on the part of Republicans, by seating the two Democrats knocking for admission, notwithstanding an adverse decision by Attorney General Nourse.<sup>370</sup> In a special election to fill a vacancy in Warren County, the Democrats also gained a member, because of the intestine strife of two Republican factions.<sup>371</sup>

Again, in nearly all the legislation of the session, party divisions were quite marked. Among the many joint resolutions, some of which were political, the most significant one was that of May 29th, "Complimentary to the President of the United States".<sup>372</sup> It was an unqualified endorsement of the National policy and promised continued support, and of course was passed by a strict party vote.

The legislation was remedial in character. The drafting law was amended,<sup>373</sup> and additional assistance was provided for the Adjutant General.<sup>374</sup> The popular demand for the payment of taxes in currency, which Governor Kirkwood also recommended,<sup>375</sup> was met by the Bank Note law,<sup>376</sup> and approved February 17th. But the almost equally popular demand for an income tax law and retrenchment in public expenditures met with defeat. The income tax bill failed to pass, while the retrenchment bill was vetoed by the Governor, on the ground that it reduced the salaries of judges, which were already too

<sup>370</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1862, pp. 51, 52.

<sup>371</sup> Said editor Palmer: "Want of unanimity among Republicans is all right in National politics, but dangerous in local politics."—*Iowa State Register*, February 19, 1862.

<sup>372</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1862, p. 247.

<sup>373</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1862, pp. 235, 236.

<sup>374</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1862, p. 252.

<sup>375</sup> Shambaugh's *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, Vol. II, pp. 274, 275.

<sup>376</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1862, pp. 15-17.

small. The Governor, however, was generally upheld by Republican politicians,<sup>377</sup> and the Democrats were furnished with an issue for the coming campaign. There was some attempt at railroad regulation, but nothing of importance was accomplished. The legislation which aroused the greatest political interest was, of course, the redistricting of the State for Representatives in Congress and for members of the legislature.

Iowa had secured her second Congressman after the census of 1850, but now by the census of 1860, the population having increased two hundred and fifty per cent, the State was entitled to several more Representatives in Congress. By an act<sup>378</sup> of Congress March 4, 1862, provision was made for a House of two hundred and forty-one Representatives, upon a ratio of 127,941, which gave to Iowa four additional Representatives, making six in all. This act not only strengthened the Republican supremacy in Congress, but fairly intoxicated the Iowa politicians on account of the large increase in the number of the State's Representatives. The General Assembly at once set about properly to re-district the State. The Democratic minority pleaded in all fairness for at least one or two districts, but the Republicans conceded nothing; nor could they be expected to be concessive, since to them the cause of the National Government and the interests of the Republican party were one.<sup>379</sup>

The congressional re-districting bill was introduced on

<sup>377</sup> *Iowa State Register*, April 16, 1862.

<sup>378</sup> *United States Statutes at Large*, Vol. XII, p. 353.

<sup>379</sup> Said the Des Moines correspondent to the *Washington* [D. C.] *Press*: "We cannot sit here and watch the Democrats take the war out of the hands of the people, and carry it on for themselves, in order to resuscitate their defunct organization, without understanding that they are laboring to regain the power they have lost more than for any other purpose."—Quoted in the *Iowa State Register*, February 26, 1862.

March 25th by Representative J. P. Eaton, and passed the House on the same day by a vote of fifty-three to twenty-two.<sup>380</sup> It was amended in the Senate,<sup>381</sup> but the House refusing to concur, it went through the hands of two conference committees before an agreement could be reached, and finally on the closing day of the session, April 8th, passed both houses.<sup>382</sup> The act<sup>383</sup> provided for six districts,<sup>384</sup> five full and one fractional. Out of the old First District were made districts One, Four (with several counties of the old Second) and Five; districts Two, Three and Six were carved out of the old Second District. The election of 1860 was taken as the political cue for the grouping of the counties. An examination of this grouping<sup>385</sup> will show the unevenness of the Lincoln vote in the new districts, the reason for this being the fact that in the counties composing districts Two and Three the Republican majorities of 1860 were greatly reduced in 1861; in the counties of the Fourth district even, where Lincoln's majority had been 1,325, Kirkwood's was only 448.<sup>386</sup> The gerrymandering is quite noticeable in the boundary lines between districts Three and Six, as also between the Fourth and the adjacent districts.

In the apportionment of the State into Senatorial and Representative districts, the gerrymander could of course be used only where it was necessary to combine counties

<sup>380</sup> *House Journal*, 1862, p. 692.

<sup>381</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1862, pp. 550, 564, 580, 586.

<sup>382</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1862, p. 595.

<sup>383</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1862, p. 182.

<sup>384</sup> See maps of the old and the new Congressional Districts in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. I, pp. 357, 358.

<sup>385</sup> Schedule showing the Republican majorities of 1860 in the counties composing the new districts: (1) 1501, (2) 3827, (3) 2564, (4) 1325, (5) 1007, (6) 2263.

<sup>386</sup> In the *Muscatine Daily Courier* of July 21st, Mr. Thayer analyzed the politics involved in the redistricting.

to form a district. The Democrats consequently had a fair degree of representation; and although they generally favored a larger population ratio, yet had such been adopted, they must have fared worse than they did, since that would have made fewer districts and thus a larger working of the gerrymander.

The Senatorial apportionment act,<sup>387</sup> approved March 5, 1862, created forty-three districts and provided for forty-six Senators, one for each 17,200 inhabitants; while the Representative apportionment act,<sup>388</sup> approved April 8, 1862, established sixty-six districts with eighty-nine Representatives, on a basis of one for each 8,500 inhabitants. By an examination of the map<sup>389</sup> one is struck with the paucity of settlement of the northwestern part of the State. In only three counties, and these located on the eastern border of the State — Lee, Scott and Dubuque — was the population of each county sufficient to send more than one Senator to the legislature. Seventeen counties could send two Representatives each, Warren being the farthest west; two counties were entitled to three each, while one county could send four. As will be seen, the Republicans made great gains in the election of the next General Assembly, but it was due more to political issues than to the re-apportionment.

#### THE FIRST INDICTMENTS FOR TREASON

Many Northern States during the war were compelled to combat "treason at home". Iowa was no exception. The detection of treason and the punishment of traitors was, as with the National Government, one of the per-

<sup>387</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1862, p. 118.

<sup>388</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1862, p. 199.

<sup>389</sup> See maps in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. II, pp. 570, 572.

plexities of the State authorities. The Republicans naturally came to class all forms of opposition as treason and all opponents as traitors. Democrats were esteemed loyal so long as they were in the military service, or if upon their return they joined the Republican party; but those opposing the war or the Government's policy in its prosecution, were held to be traitors. The terms Democrat and traitor became synonymous. The State early began to ferret out treason within its borders, or to assist the General Government in the work. Governor Kirkwood in his message to the extra session of the legislature in May, 1861, appealing to the loyalty of the people, pressed home the necessity for punishing all forms of treasonable aid to those in rebellion.<sup>390</sup>

The first indictment for treason in Iowa was returned on Monday, November 25, 1861, against William M. Hill, Democratic Clerk of Harrison County. His offence was writing a letter (May 14, 1861) to one Wendell, editor of the *Union Democrat* of Monroe County, Virginia, in which he not only expressed warm sympathies for the Confederacy, but used abusive language against the Federal Government.<sup>391</sup> The letter, failing to reach its destination, came back *via* the Dead Letter Office, to Magnolia, Iowa, where Hill's deputy, J. L. DeForest, received it and exposed its contents. Mr. Hill was arrested, and upon this letter, besides oral testimony, was indicted. C. C. Cole and S. V. White were employed for the defence, while the prosecution was in the hands of the United States District Attorney, W. H. F. Gurley. The case was tried on January 7, 1862, a *nolle prosequi* was entered and Hill was discharged. But subsequently the United States

<sup>390</sup> Shambaugh's *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, Vol. II, p. 263.

<sup>391</sup> Letter published in the *Iowa State Register*, November 27, 1861.

Marshal, H. M. Hoxie, by order of Secretary Seward, arrested Hill and started with him for Fort Lafayette. The counsel for defence telegraphed persons at Davenport to swear out a writ of *habeas corpus*; it was done and Mr. Hoxie was detained. But the next morning the marshal cut the meshes woven by the shrewd lawyers and proceeded with his prisoner. The episode created intense excitement. The Republicans chuckled and generally applauded the act; the moderate Democrats criticized the authorities; while the Confederate sympathizers howled with rage. The object of course was to make an example of Hill and thus strike terror to all "traitors".<sup>392</sup>

It was not long before another arrest was made in Iowa, this time in the person of ex-Senator, and now ex-Minister to Bogota, George W. Jones. He was arrested on Christmas Day, 1861, and was sent to Fort Lafayette. The indictment was based upon a letter written, while in South America, to Jefferson Davis, in which he said: "As soon as I settle my accounts with the Federal Government, I shall join the Confederate army myself."<sup>393</sup> Mr. Jones, however, was not imprisoned long; for by order of President Lincoln he was paroled on February 22d, the only condition being that, on his honor, he render no aid and comfort to the enemy.<sup>394</sup> These arrests, it was asserted, effectually checked treason. Some of the Democratic leaders, however, were quite bold in expressing themselves and defiant toward the Government; while many Republicans were anxious for an excuse to arrest some such person. Henry Clay Dean was a special object of hatred and suspicion. He went over the State

<sup>392</sup> *Iowa State Register*, January 15, 1862.

<sup>393</sup> Two of Mr. Jones's sons had already joined, as also a son of ex-Governor Hempstead.—*Iowa State Register*, January 1, 1862.

<sup>394</sup> *Iowa State Register*, January 29, 1862.



making speeches and addressing "conclaves of traitors",<sup>395</sup> yet the authorities could not catch him in criminal utterances.

The so-called "conclaves" were the meetings of the lodges of the K. G. C.—Knights of the Golden Circle—a secession organization claiming a membership of 10,000 in the State. It was a secret organization, having a weird mystical ritualism with an elaborate ceremony, and was governed by a hierarchy equal to the later Ku Klux Klan of the South. The members, boastful and even threatening, were much feared by the people. Some of the leading Democratic politicians were in active coöperation with them. The arch-offender in this respect was editor D. A. Mahoney, who in order to satisfy the clamor for another example, was on August 15th, 1862, arrested for treasonable utterances, both through his paper and in conversation.<sup>396</sup> Two days later David Sheward of the *Fairfield Union and Constitution* was arrested on the same charge, and together with Mahoney was carried off to Washington, D. C., and with others of their ilk lodged in the old capitol—the traitor's prison. This was during the campaign, and of course the Republicans did not escape the accusation of having made political arrests, while Mahoney was regarded as a "martyr to liberty".<sup>397</sup> He was confined until after the election in November, when he was discharged upon taking the prescribed oath. All through the summer and autumn of 1862 the authorities were kept busy ferreting out K. G. C. lodges,<sup>398</sup> especially on the southern border of the State, where they were in

<sup>395</sup> *Iowa State Register*, January 29, 1862.

<sup>396</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 20, 1862.

<sup>397</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, August 21; *Iowa State Register*, August 27, 1862.

<sup>398</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 27, 1862.

touch with the Missouri lodges.<sup>399</sup> But this was only the beginning of the trouble with the K. G. C's.

Treason became so odious that the least opposition or indifference to the Government was branded as such. The people of Davis County were even required to defend the mere name of their county.<sup>400</sup> They had to explain that it was not named for "Jeff" Davis, President of the Confederacy, but for Garrett Davis, the loyal United States Senator of Kentucky. Illustrative of the time was the action of the legislature in voting to change the name of Buncombe County to that of Lyon, in honor of General Nathaniel Lyon.<sup>401</sup>

The question of treason came up in the extra session of the legislature in September, 1862, and the partisans clashed squarely. Some Republicans favored drastic laws, such as ineligibility for holding office,<sup>402</sup> and an iron-clad oath for all voters,<sup>403</sup> while the Democrats demanded that all suspects should have a speedy trial, and that a military court be established in the State for such purpose.<sup>404</sup> Nothing came of this agitation, however, the Republican majority wisely deciding to leave the law as it was.

#### THE POLITICAL SITUATION

While Iowa was able to maintain her position of loyalty, it was done at great expense and through constant vigilance; and although the Republicans were safely entrenched, yet these conspiracies at home, and the constant outpouring of her people to fill the depleted ranks on the

<sup>399</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 17, 1862.

<sup>400</sup> *Iowa State Register*, March 26, 1862.

<sup>401</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1862 (Extra Session), p. 22.

<sup>402</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), pp. 17, 18.

<sup>403</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), pp. 28, 72.

<sup>404</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), p. 33.

field and to meet the new quotas, taxed even loyal Iowa to the point of breaking and endangering the party in power. Beyond this, the defeats during the fall and winter, the increasingly drastic legislation of Congress, and the new phase of the situation, that of emancipation, together with the appearance of wandering fugitives from the South, created grave political questions. These things required that the Republicans should, as they did, take precaution and enact such legislation as would ensure their military efficiency, financial security, and political supremacy. The Democrats made some telling charges against the party<sup>405</sup> and especially attacked Congress.<sup>406</sup> Besides this, some Republicans feared all along what the Democrats came to predict, a reaction within the party,<sup>407</sup> but the leaders during the spring and summer of 1862 planned against a repetition of the "Union" bolt from the party. They followed the same partisan policy so triumphantly carried out at the previous fall elections, by discrediting Democracy, rewarding the War Democrats, and substantially recognizing all elements within their own party.

The Democratic problem was similar to that of the Republicans, in that the leaders feared a further desertion, although they got some encouragement from the signs of reaction in the Republican party.<sup>408</sup> By accepting the war now they might even hope to win back the War Democrats, and make a fight upon the party in power because of its drastic legislation in Congress. Then by drawing the line on emancipation, they might even hope to win over some Republicans. Thus while the party had alien-

<sup>405</sup> *Muscatine Daily Courier*, July 16, 1862.

<sup>406</sup> *Muscatine Daily Courier*, July, 14, 1862.

<sup>407</sup> *Muscatine Daily Courier*, July 9, 1862.

<sup>408</sup> *Muscatine Daily Courier*, July 9, 1862.

ated such men as Adjutant General Baker, M. M. Crocker, W. W. Belknap, J. A. Williamson, C. C. Cole, H. C. Rippey, and Thos. H. Benton, Jr., as well as others less influential, the unfaithful ones might by a fortuitous turn of events be brought back, since some of them had not yet severed political connection with the party.

But besides these more prominent dissentients the rank and file of the party had become dissatisfied, and the party solidarity endangered. The party machinery was not only in the hands of those whose loyalty was constantly questioned,<sup>409</sup> but the burden of maintaining an efficient organization became too great for the few leaders to bear. The party organs suffered reduced patronage. Some Democratic papers had suspended since the elections of 1860 and 1861. Mr. Babbitt of the *Council Bluffs Bugle*, in May, 1862, declared that unless he received better support for his paper, he would have to write his "valedictory". This was regarded by Republicans as a good omen; for "there would be no better evidence of loyalty than to afford him the opportunity to write his valedictory at his earliest possible convenience".<sup>410</sup>

As a matter of fact the Democrats did not win back the dissentients — men whom they could least afford to lose — but on the contrary, read them out of the party. The party was left wholly in the hands of the conservative, peace Democrats, who also adopted a strict partisan policy. Both parties maintained their solidarity. The hesitating War Democrats, in spite of the hoped-for efficacy of the anti-emancipation program projected by the old leaders, were driven into the arms of the waiting Republicans.

<sup>409</sup> *Iowa State Register*, March 14, 1862.

<sup>410</sup> *Iowa State Register*, March 14, 1862.

## THE DEMOCRATIC STATE CONVENTION

Iowa had a political campaign every year, and this year, 1862, the people were to choose a relay of State officials, headed by the Secretary of State. As we have seen, the rapid movement of affairs in the late winter and spring of 1862 made the political forum exceedingly uncertain. The shaping of events indicated that the Republicans would be compelled to defend emancipation as one of their principles. The politicians were not inclined to press the issue, nor to hurry the State campaign. The Democrats, on the other hand, were anxious to make emancipation the issue and to force the campaign upon the Republicans; and while they wished the Republicans to lead out, they early began to consider the holding of their State Convention. Some wished the convention held in June,<sup>411</sup> others later, the *Davenport Democrat*, piously patriotic, suggesting Independence Day as the most appropriate time;<sup>412</sup> but nothing was done until the Republicans acted.

On June 11th the Republican State Central Committee issued a call<sup>413</sup> for a State Convention to be held on July 23rd at Des Moines. As in 1861 it was to be a strictly partisan convention, but "all loyal citizens regardless of former political associations" were urged to join them. Two weeks later G. M. Todd, State Chairman, sent out a call<sup>414</sup> for the Democratic State Convention to assemble at Des Moines on the 17th of July, hoping thus to put the

<sup>411</sup> *Iowa State Press*, April 7, 1862.

<sup>412</sup> The *Iowa State Register* of April 9, 1862, thought it appropriate for the Democracy, "in the absence of a healthy enthusiasm in the party, to inject a little Fourth of July pyrotechnics into the State Convention, and thus be galvanized into something lively".

<sup>413</sup> *Iowa State Register*, June 11, 1862.

<sup>414</sup> *Muscatine Daily Courier*, June 25, 1862.

Republicans at a disadvantage by anticipating their utterances with an anti-emancipation declaration. It is interesting to note that for the first time the apportionment of delegates was to be based upon "the vote cast for Stephen A. Douglas in 1860".

The Democrats assembled with about one hundred delegates representing fifty counties. Most counties had but one delegate each, and many were appointed after the fashion of the pocket borough system of old England; but in a few counties the party held "monster mass-meetings",<sup>415</sup> as at Cedar Rapids,<sup>416</sup> Muscatine, and a few other places, which carried the leaders back to earlier days and caused them to predict a "rising of the people during the summer's campaign".<sup>417</sup>

The old-time leaders were in the saddle, though there were some of the active young Democrats in this Convention, among them Henry M. Martin of Iowa County, who was temporary chairman; while the permanent chairman was I. B. Thomas of Buchanan County. With the dissentients out of the way, the convention was on the whole quite harmonious and enthusiastic. At only two points was the meeting embarrassed: in making up the Committee on Resolutions,<sup>418</sup> and during the speech-making, while waiting for the committee's report.<sup>419</sup>

Those who made speeches were T. W. Claggett, W. H. Merritt, M. V. B. Bennett, J. C. Turk and C. C. Cole. Mr. Turk spoke of the glory of a by-gone Democracy; Mr.

<sup>415</sup> *Muscatine Daily Courier*, June 25, 1862.

<sup>416</sup> *Iowa State Register*, July 23, 1862.

<sup>417</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, June 26, 1862.

<sup>418</sup> Committee on Resolutions: A. C. Dodge, Chairman, George Gillaspie, Fred Rector, J. M. Ellwood, Charles Negus, Phil. Bradley, N. J. Sayles, J. F. Duncombe, D. A. Mahoney.

<sup>419</sup> Proceedings in *Muscatine Daily Courier*, July 21, 25, and 28, 1862; also in *Iowa State Register*, July 23, 1862.

Claggett harangued against the Lincoln administration; while Colonel Merritt, a veteran of the first enlistments, able to speak with authority on the war, declared that he was convinced that it was an abolition war, for the freedom of the negro and for the enslavement of the white race. It was for Mr. Cole to appeal to his once proud admirers and beg that they take no equivocal position in the crisis. Those in arms against the Government, he held, were alone responsible for the war. As for himself, he was a Democrat upon the platform of 1856, a Douglas Democrat as distinguished from all Breckinridges. His speech was received in absolute silence, except for the applause from the Republicans in the audience.

At the evening session the Convention adopted a platform and named the ticket, both with signal unanimity. General Dodge reported the resolutions, which were similar to the Democratic declarations for the past eighteen months. The platform, however, was distinctive in two particulars: first, the party now accepted the war, and second, they denounced emancipation. They would have no more war "than necessary and proper for the prompt and complete suppression of the rebellion". The anti-emancipation clauses affirmed that the Government was "for white men" and pointed to the joint resolution of Congress of July 21, 1861, as a vindication of their position that the war was not to become an abolition war.

The ticket named was: Richard H. Sylvester for Secretary of State; Samuel L. Lorah for Treasurer; Benton J. Hall for Attorney General; John Browne for Auditor; and Fred Gottschalk for Register. This was an orthodox body of men, notwithstanding the fact that previous to the Convention the Democratic journals were exceedingly generous in naming the many possibilities, including even War Democrats, who it was known had already joined the Republicans.

The partisans generally applauded both the ticket and the platform. Editor Thayer thought the platform "one upon which every man not already wedded to radicalism can stand".<sup>420</sup> The Democrats were even hopeful of winning over those who could not go the lengths of Republican radicalism, and invited such, not to connect themselves with the party, as the Republicans required, but to work with it in sustaining the "Constitution and the Union", on the ground that "men who think alike must act alike". To this end the leaders would let "by-gones be by-gones". But Republicans saw in the platform the same treason as in earlier ones and warned their partisans to beware.<sup>421</sup>

#### THE REPUBLICAN STATE CONVENTION

The Republicans met at Des Moines on July 23rd, the Convention being called to order by Jacob Butler. D. N. Cooley was temporary chairman and Joshua Tracy, now a full-fledged Republican, was made secretary. There were seventy-three counties represented by several hundred delegates, having in all 640 votes. James T. Lane of Davenport was elected permanent chairman, and besides the regular committees, a special committee on the business of the convention was chosen.<sup>422</sup>

In the naming of a ticket the harmony of the Democrats was caught by the Republicans. C. C. Nourse for Attorney General and J. W. Cattell for Auditor were nominated by acclamation, the former for his third term and the latter for his second. There was some "friendly rivalry" in filling the other places — Secretary of State,

<sup>420</sup> *Muscatine Daily Courier*, July 21, 1862.

<sup>421</sup> Said Mr. Palmer: "Jesuitically insidious as is the phraseology of these resolutions, they are little short of treasonable".— *Iowa State Register*, July 23, 1862.

<sup>422</sup> Proceedings in *Iowa State Register*, July 30, 1862.



Treasurer, and Register. These were filled respectively by Dr. James Wright, William H. Holmes, and A. L. Harvey. Mr. Holmes had served in the legislature, and in the recent session had won recognition as chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, while the other two men were comparatively unknown; Dr. Wright represented the north-eastern part of the State and Mr. Harvey the south-western.

The evening session was one of intense enthusiasm, and Sherman Hall was crowded to hear the speeches. Such well-known leaders as Grinnell, Nourse, and the old wheel-horse, Jacob Butler, addressed the Convention, as did also the newer men, Dr. Wright, E. H. Stiles, and C. W. Kittridge; but the interest centered in the maiden speeches of the converts to Republicanism—Dilly of Warren County, Joshua Tracy of Des Moines County, and Thomas H. Benton, Jr. Editor Pahner regarded it as a “hopeful sign to see loyal men coming out of the ranks of a party accursed with ‘ifs’, ‘buts’ and ‘treason’ ”.

The platform,<sup>423</sup> reported by Frank W. Palmer of the Committee on Resolutions, was in substance a duplicate of the one of 1861, there being no indication of compromising issues or party. In the resolutions the Republicans reviewed the events of the year, restated their specific aims and pleaded as never before for the support of the War Democrats. These were asked to aid in “the struggle of *Democratic* Republicanism against treasonous aristocracy, North and South”—a rather unusual juggling of words. They were fulsome in their welcome extended to the former Democrats sitting in the Convention, and invited others to join, commending to them the “patriotic words of the lamented Douglas”, namely: “There are only two sides to this question. Every man

<sup>423</sup> Fairall's *Manual of Iowa Politics*, Vol. I, pp. 62-64.

must be for the United States or against it. There can be no neutrality in this war — only patriots and traitors.” As to the one new issue, that of emancipation, they declared “if, as a last measure for the preservation of the republic, it shall become necessary to blot the institution of slavery from the soil of every State, we will say Amen, letting the consequences fall upon the wicked authors of the war and leaving the final issues with God”. Of course the emphasis was on the preservation of the Union, but the Convention had now spoken on the question of emancipation and it remained to be seen how the people would regard the declaration, and what its effect would be upon Republican success.

#### THE CONGRESSIONAL NOMINATIONS

In the congressional contest of 1862 it was a struggle for the control of the newly formed districts. The Democrats were sworn to deprive the Republicans of at least a portion of the fruits of their little game of gerrymandering in the formation of the districts; while the Republicans were determined to play the game through. The conventions were held by both parties soon after the State Conventions, the Republicans again leading off.

According to the action taken by the Republican Convention of the old First District at Oskaloosa on June 20, 1860, the duty of calling congressional conventions in the new districts to be formed was put in the hands of the county central committees within each district. The first step was taken in the Fifth District. J. B. Steward, chairman of the Polk County committee, issued a letter<sup>424</sup> on May 3rd to the chairmen of the Republican county central committees of the district. The time and place were to be decided upon by them in their responses to Mr.

<sup>424</sup> *Iowa State Register*, May 7, 1862.

Steward. A month later the formal call<sup>425</sup> was issued, being signed by eight county chairmen — all that responded.

It was decided to hold the convention at Winterset on July 22nd. The other Republican conventions were also soon called. Three of them were held on August 6th: the First District Convention at Mt. Pleasant;<sup>426</sup> that of the Third at West Union;<sup>427</sup> and the Fourth at Montezuma.<sup>428</sup> The convention of the Sixth District was held at Webster City<sup>429</sup> on August 7th, and that of the Second on August 13th at DeWitt.<sup>430</sup>

The Democratic conventions were held later in August, the calls all having been issued after the State Convention. In the conventions of both parties there was considerable rivalry for nominations. The Democratic contests for the nominations were sharp in two conventions, the Second and Third.

In the First District<sup>431</sup> the Republicans re-nominated, without a rival, James F. Wilson. Against him the Democrats pitted Joseph K. Hornish, who had been in the camp of the short-lived Union party. The Republicans of the Second District named their foremost financier and the right-hand supporter of Governor Kirkwood, Hiram Price. This district was one which the Democrats had vowed to capture, and so the rivalry among the Democrats was keen.<sup>432</sup> It took five ballots to nominate, and Edward H. Thayer won over four competitors, one of

<sup>425</sup> *Iowa State Register*, June 18, 1862.

<sup>426</sup> *Burlington Hawkeye*, July 24, 1862.

<sup>427</sup> *Charles City Intelligencer*, June 19, 1862.

<sup>428</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, July 9, 1862.

<sup>429</sup> *Fort Dodge Republican*, July 9, 1862.

<sup>430</sup> *Muscatine Journal*, July 15, 1862.

<sup>431</sup> *Burlington Hawkeye*, August 7, 1862.

<sup>432</sup> *Muscatine Daily Courier*, August 26, 1862.

them being I. M. Preston, who had presided over the Union party convention in August, 1861. Editor Thayer, a Democrat of the old school, enjoyed the fullest confidence of his political opponents, even during the most critical time of the war.<sup>433</sup> In the Third District William B. Allison and Dennis A. Mahoney were the nominees. Both were citizens of Dubuque, Allison already a recognized legislator and campaigner,<sup>434</sup> while Mahoney, who was nominated on the third ballot,<sup>435</sup> was one of the most famous anti-war Democrats in the Mississippi Valley, and at the time was under indictment for treason. That may have induced the nomination, but it was politically a bad thing for the party. The convention practically broke up over the issue, Major Coyle, followed by others, forswearing all affinity with the party. The Republicans claimed that Mahoney's nomination was made in defiance of the Government.<sup>436</sup> In the Fourth District the popular preacher-farmer, Josiah B. Grinnell,<sup>437</sup> and the brilliant young Democratic attorney, Henry M. Martin, were the opposing nominees. The greatest rivalry among the Republicans for the nomination was seen in the Fifth District, the race being close between John A. Kasson, Thomas H. Benton, Jr., and M. L. McPherson. Kasson was named<sup>438</sup> on the fifth ballot with a majority of one.<sup>439</sup>

<sup>433</sup> *Annals of Iowa*, (3rd Series), Vol. VI, pp. 637, 638.

<sup>434</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 13, 1862.

<sup>435</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 27, 1862.

<sup>436</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 27, 1862.

<sup>437</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 13, 1862.

<sup>438</sup> Mr. Kasson's nomination, according to the now venerable Judge C. C. Cole, was "quite a surprise". He says: "Thomas H. Benton, then of Council Bluffs, was by the many people expected to be the nominee, but Mr. Kasson's service to the government and the prominence given to him thereby, and the possibilities coming through the appointment of post-masters, which belonged to his department, contributed doubtless to his success in the convention."—Judge Cole in eulogy of John A. Kasson, in *The Register and Leader*, April 9, 1911.

<sup>439</sup> *Iowa State Register*, July 23, 1862.

His fellow-townsmen, Dan O. Finch, was his Democratic opponent. In the Sixth District the Republicans named Asahel W. Hubbard, who had for his competitor the well-known senator, John F. Duncombe.

#### THE ISSUES OF THE CANVASS: THE ELECTION

The campaign was characterized by several new and unusual features. Simultaneous with the conventional "rally", were the congressional joint-debates, the war mass-meetings, the consequent agitation for the soldier vote and the extra session of the legislature, the endeavor on the part of certain religious sects to secure exemption from military service, the prominence of the emancipation issue, and the final repudiation of their old party by the War Democrats.

War meetings were held during the summer months in nearly every county of the State. These were for the purpose of enrolling volunteers and were, of course, non-partisan in character. They, however, too often became occasions for political harangues, a thing in which both parties sinned. One such meeting at Des Moines on August 4th, was captured by the Democrats and turned into an anti-war meeting.<sup>440</sup> Martin D. McHenry presided and appointed a "Committee on Resolutions", which brought in a report entirely out of sympathy with the purpose of the meeting. Speeches were made by such uncertain "Union" men as Dr. A. Y. Hull, J. C. Turk, and J. M. Ellwood. The Republicans became disgusted, and growling out epithets left the meeting.

The joint-debates by the congressional candidates resulted from a challenge by the Republicans, but they were carried out fully in only one district, the Fifth. According to the Republicans, the scheme generally fell through

<sup>440</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 6, 1862.

because the Democrats "backed out"; according to the Democrats, it was because the Republicans were "unfair and abusive". The Kasson-Finch discussions of the Fifth District were apparently so successful and satisfactory to both sides, that upon the completion of the first schedule, commencing at Adel on September 1st and closing on the 13th at Des Moines, a second series was conducted, ending on October 4th at Chariton. Mr. Finch, upholding the Democratic program of opposition to all that the Republicans had done, made his special attack on the emancipation policy,<sup>441</sup> just promulgated. Mr. Kasson, because of his public experience and close connection with the Government, whose course he ably defended, attracted hearers, and he used his prestige to the greatest advantage. The Grinnell-Martin debate opened auspiciously at Newton, on the 12th of September, but was soon discontinued. At this first debate, many Democrats were reported to have declared that they had voted the old party ticket for the last time. In fact, Mr. Martin himself was accused of contemplating desertion.<sup>442</sup> Both parties were doubtless correct in their explanations for the cause of the failure of the debates.

The stress of the campaign came late, although there were occasional addresses and rallies all through the summer. Early in June, Edward Everett delivered an address at Dubuque, on the "Origin and Character of the War", in which he took the ground that secession was premeditated. While he made no profound impression on Iowa, yet he was well received and his utterances endorsed.<sup>443</sup>

<sup>441</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 15, 1862.

<sup>442</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 8, 1862.

<sup>443</sup> Copied by the *Iowa State Register*, June 25, 1862, from the *Dubuque News*.

For campaigners as such, both parties depended upon home talent. The chief speakers at the rallies were the candidates for office. The Republicans made large use of Henry O'Connor, who was home from the war on a furlough. He was indispensable in both the war meetings and the political rallies. The situation at home demanded especially the services of Iowa's strongest man and greatest statesman, Senator Grimes. He was in the field from September 20th to October 10th, beginning at McGregor and going down through the eastern half of the State to Centerville.<sup>444</sup> He was pleased with his success, especially in winning the support of the Quakers, many of whom hitherto had held aloof.<sup>445</sup>

But while these old-time Republican speakers were as effective as usual, it was the War Democrats who probably played the most important part in the campaign. In the final and public repudiation of their old party, the War Democrats certainly exercised a far-reaching influence. They had been slow in forming new party connections; but finally, as they had all along accepted the war, they came also to accept the party that was prosecuting it.

To the Republicans, one of the most valued conversions was that of C. C. Cole. He had long been on probation, and it was no fault of theirs that he had not long ago been received into full fellowship. The first important service which Mr. Cole rendered was in addressing war meetings. It was at such a meeting at Adel, on August 14th, that he laid down the articles of his faith.<sup>446</sup> Pointing out the duty of all citizens toward the war, he declared that "the

<sup>444</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 24, 1862.

<sup>445</sup> Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 216.

<sup>446</sup> Correspondence of Mr. P. T. Russell to the *Iowa State Register*, August 20, 1862.

mass of the Democratic party is true",<sup>447</sup> and told the Democrats that they had no cause for complaint against the National Administration, since many appointments had been made regardless of party. It was therefore the duty of Democrats to sustain the Administration, whose policy and leaders he praised. This address was considered "the speech of the season" and it added recruits for the ranks of both the army and the Republican party.

Another definite commitment to the Republican party was that of J. A. Williamson, who in a letter of October 2nd, stated that he had kept the Democratic creed until then.<sup>448</sup> He left the party because it was "no longer a synonym for patriotism and loyalty". Again, George C. Tichenor, who had been Secretary of the Democratic State Central Committee, and was now also in the army, forsook Democracy. In a letter of October 1st he proposed to aid in the fight against the arrogant Democrats at home by "striking at their confederates in Dixie".<sup>449</sup>

Among other powerful additions to the cause of Republicanism were Adjutant General Baker, Lieutenant James Baker, and Captain H. H. Heath. These men, with Governor Kirkwood, were the speakers at a great meeting in Davenport on October 7th, and of course Metropolitan Hall was crowded to hear the converts make their public professions.<sup>450</sup> Captain Heath's change of heart was something quite out of the ordinary; for it will be recalled that he had been a leader in the organization of the Breckinridge party of 1860,<sup>451</sup> having been the editor of the party's organ in Iowa, *The North West*.

<sup>447</sup> He cited such national characters as: Stanton, Holt, Ben Butler, Governor Sprague, Douglas, Hunter, and Wright.

<sup>448</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 22, 1862.

<sup>449</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 8, 1862.

<sup>450</sup> *Davenport Gazette*, October 8, 1862.

<sup>451</sup> See above, p. 24, note 43.



In this campaign, while there was no Union party organization as in '61, the term "Union" was occasionally used, and it was claimed by both parties, the Republicans not yet gaining sole possession of it. The Democrats adopting the motto, "The Union as it was, and the Constitution as it is", pleaded for the restoration of the Union, which they still accused the Republicans of sundering.<sup>452</sup> The Republicans spoke of their own party as being the "true party of the Union",<sup>453</sup> and they generally used the term "Union" in this sense; although in connection with the returns of the soldiers' vote, they spoke of the vote for the "Republican Union"<sup>454</sup> ticket. Again, at the time of the election, the Republicans of Iowa spoke of the triumph of the "Union ticket" in Illinois, New York, Ohio, and other States, but referred to their own State election as a "Republican victory".<sup>455</sup>

The use of these particular forms of the term during the lull of the Union party movement, is significant, in view of the course pursued by the Iowa Republicans from 1863 to 1864, as well as for several subsequent years.

#### THE INAUGURATION OF THE SOLDIER VOTE

The response of Iowa to the proclamation of President Lincoln for 300,000 more volunteers, followed by Governor Kirkwood's special proclamation<sup>456</sup> of August 17th, urging the speedy filling of the State's quota, raised another grave question, that of endangering both the Republican administration of the State and the seats in Congress. These fears were based upon the supposition

<sup>452</sup> *Muscatine Daily Courier*, July 4, 1862.

<sup>453</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 13, 1862.

<sup>454</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 22, 1862.

<sup>455</sup> *Iowa State Register*, November 6, 1862.

<sup>456</sup> Shambaugh's *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, Vol. II, p. 315.

that among the volunteers Republicans were proportionately more numerous than Democrats. The Democratic minorities at home might thus be changed to majorities, and the election to office of any but Republicans would be a repudiation of Iowa's loyalty to the cause of the National Administration. Therefore, early in the campaign Republican leaders began to inquire about the legality of volunteers voting in the field; for it would be next to impossible for them to return on furloughs to cast their ballots. Why might they not exercise their franchise wherever stationed?

The question was both a constitutional and political one. In order for the soldiers to vote the legislature would have to be convened, and the election law of the State amended. This the Democracy would oppose, since they could expect no political advantage. But Iowa's soldiers, rallying to the calls of the President and the Governor, should not be disfranchised. Illinois had just passed a Soldiers' Vote Law, and why not Iowa?

The interest of the party leaders was quickened, for they saw that this would guarantee the party's control of the State, and at the same time insure an early filling of their quota, since it would encourage enlistments. The leaders held conferences with the Governor, who also received letters of inquiry and voluntary advice; and besides, during the month of August the Governor received applications from nearly all the most populous counties of the State, for an extra session of the legislature.<sup>457</sup> Kirkwood finally accepted the issue and called the Ninth General Assembly to convene in extra session on September 3rd.

Coupled with the demand for a soldiers' vote law, was the need for an immediate acceptance by the State of the

<sup>457</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 20, 1862.

Congressional land grant for the support of colleges of agriculture and the mechanic arts, which, it was felt, should not be delayed until the meeting of the next General Assembly in 1864. When the legislature assembled at the appointed time, the Governor, in his message, emphasized these two things, besides recommending several minor measures in connection with military affairs.<sup>458</sup>

The session lasted nine days, and made a record of "less talking and more work" than had ever been known in the same length of time.<sup>459</sup> There was a good attendance of the law-makers, notwithstanding the busy season and the enlistments going on, even among the members of the legislature. There were absent twelve out of the forty-six Senators,<sup>460</sup> and twenty-one out of the ninety-four Representatives.<sup>461</sup> Party politics was prominent throughout. Repeated attempts were made by the minority to block the aggressive program of the majority. In all there were thirty-nine acts and three resolutions passed.

The question of the soldier vote was brought up in the House by a Democrat, Racine D. Kellogg of Decatur County, who offered a resolution requiring the Committee on Elections to bring in a bill amending the law so as to permit soldiers in the field to vote.<sup>462</sup> At once James T. Lane introduced the Soldiers' Vote bill, making it amendatory of Title 4 of the *Revision of 1860*.<sup>463</sup> The next day a Democratic Representative, Christian Denlinger of Dubuque, introduced a resolution calling for an opinion

<sup>458</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), p. 5.

<sup>459</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 12, 1862.

<sup>460</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), p. 3.

<sup>461</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), p. 3.

<sup>462</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), p. 17.

<sup>463</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), pp. 18, 25.

from the Attorney General on the constitutionality of soldiers voting for State officers while beyond the limits of the district or State.<sup>464</sup> This was adopted and the next day, September 5th, Attorney General Nourse delivered his opinion.<sup>465</sup> It was based upon Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution of the State, which guaranteed the suffrage to every white male citizen twenty-one years old, prescribing the residence "in which he claims his vote". This last phrase, Mr. Nourse held was not intended to fix the place, but rather to prescribe the qualification of electors; consequently, absence in military service did not change the residence. Furthermore, voters were not required to be at home all of the sixty days stipulated; and the Constitution did not contemplate preventing anyone from voting. This opinion was, of course, in harmony with the popular demand for the law, and was in fact a foregone conclusion.

On September 8th the committee reported Lane's bill with amendments,<sup>466</sup> and after further amendment,<sup>467</sup> it passed by a unanimous vote.<sup>468</sup> In the Senate further amendments were added<sup>469</sup> which the House accepted;<sup>470</sup> and although the Democratic Senators attacked certain political features of the bill, the final vote was thirty-seven to one for it. Only one Democrat, Harvey W. English, voted against the measure, while there were seven<sup>471</sup> Democrats who voted for it. On the last day of the session the measure was signed by Governor Kirkwood, and it immediately went into effect.

<sup>464</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), p. 19.

<sup>465</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), pp. 25, 26.

<sup>466</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), pp. 56-59.

<sup>467</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), pp. 61, 62.

<sup>468</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), p. 78.

<sup>469</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), pp. 44-46.

<sup>470</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), p. 80.

<sup>471</sup> These were: Ducombe, Green, Gray, Neal, Trumbull, Hesser, Jennings.

The act<sup>472</sup> provided that every white male citizen twenty-one years of age or over, after six months residence in the State and in the county sixty days "preceding entering on military service" could vote, "whether at the time of voting he shall be within the limits of the State or not", and the votes so cast should be accredited to the county where the electors would be entitled to vote. The elections, conducted by three officers as judges, were to be held on the same day as in the State. The polls were to be established in regiments, battalions, batteries and companies, or in any detachments of the same, and they were to be open from 9 A. M. to 12 M., or even to 6 P. M., or yet longer if necessary. Commissioners were to be appointed for each polling precinct, and were to make the returns to the Secretary of State. These commissioners were to assemble on September 20th at Davenport to ballot for their respective places.

There were thirty-nine regiments of infantry, the First and Third being out of the service, six of cavalry, and three batteries, besides several detachments, thus requiring in all fifty-two commissioners to take the vote. The commissioners were chosen from all parts of the State and from every condition and vocation in life; but so far as can be learned no Democrats were appointed. This was one of the issues during the framing of the law, the Democrats demanding the appointment of commissioners "without respect to party", but the Republicans refused to concede even that much.<sup>473</sup> At this day one can not see how a Democrat, such as would have been considered, could possibly have endangered the vote in the least; but the Republicans of that time were suspicious of any public duty which a Democrat might perform. The list of

<sup>472</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1862 (Extra Session), pp. 28-37.

<sup>473</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), p. 58.

commissioners included several politicians and smacked somewhat of patronage. Among the well-known men were: D. P. Stubbs, Stewart Goodrell, William H. Seevers, John Van Valkenburg, Robert B. Rutledge, Edmond Jeager, John E. Davis of Davenport, J. T. Turner of Iowa City, and the Mexican War veteran, Isaac W. Griffith of Des Moines. Several newspaper men were also appointed, among them F. M. Mills, C. F. Clarkson, E. W. Chapin, and A. K. Bailey.

While the assurance of the privilege of voting may have aided the enlistments, yet there is little doubt but that the soldiers were less exercised over the franchise than were the people at home.<sup>474</sup> Some officers feared the consequences of soldiers on the field exercising a civil function, especially if electioneering were encouraged or permitted. On this point Colonel J. A. Williamson, of the Fourth Iowa, said: "If I were not fully convinced that electioneering and voting in the army are to some extent prejudicial to good order and discipline, I should not hesitate to exert myself in behalf of the measures which I think right".<sup>475</sup> There was less political corruption among the regiments in this first election, however, than in subsequent elections.

As to the effect of the soldiers' vote on the result of the election, it must be said that it was largely negative or passive. The Democratic press generally had supported the measure, but after the election claimed that dishonesty in the conduct of the elections was practiced. The *Burlington Argus*, for instance, complained that the soldier vote operated to defeat the Democratic candidate

<sup>474</sup> Opinion of Colonel J. A. Williamson, in a letter of October 2, 1862.—*Iowa State Register*, October 22, 1862.

<sup>475</sup> Opinion of Colonel J. A. Williamson, in a letter of October 2, 1862.—*Iowa State Register*, October 22, 1862.

for Congress, J. K. Hornish, who otherwise would have defeated Wilson by one hundred votes. But the Democratic claim that a large proportion of the volunteers were Democrats was denied by the Republicans, who held that in addition to the preponderance of Republican soldiers, the Democrats who enlisted were led by their patriotic instincts to act now with the Government.<sup>476</sup>

The soldier vote, compared to the large number of volunteers — more than 50,000 — was small, but this was due chiefly to the large proportion of volunteers who were under age. The total vote was 23,104, of which 18,989 were Republican and 4,115 Democratic, being more than four to one for the former ticket. The vote of course differed in different regiments, and in some instances the Democratic vote equalled that of the Republicans.<sup>477</sup> We shall see, in connection with the full election returns, the real meaning of the soldier vote.

#### THE ATTITUDE OF IOWA TOWARD EMANCIPATION IN 1862

The preliminary emancipation proclamation issued by Lincoln on September 23rd, 1862, was the culmination of his perplexity over the disposition of the slavery question thus far during the war. On no question was he more sorely tried. Slaves in army and camp, fugitives, emancipation by compensation, saving the border States, were among his problems. There was much criticism of, and opposition to, the Government's policy toward fugitives,<sup>478</sup> as well as to emancipation by purchase and all the acts tending to contravene the purpose of the famous

<sup>476</sup> *Iowa State Register*, November 14, 1862.

<sup>477</sup> The fortieth Regiment gave Wright 295 to Sylvester 284, and tied in the vote for Auditor; the Seventh Regiment gave 208 to 5, and 210 to 4, respectively; in the Thirty-seventh the vote was 13 to 0; in the Twenty-first the vote was 486 to 25; the Fifteenth gave 209 to 115 for Secretary of State, and 210 to 114 for Auditor.

<sup>478</sup> Rhodes' *History of the United States*, Vol. III, pp. 467, 468.

war resolution<sup>479</sup> of Congress July 21, 1861. The new policy of military emancipation was a delicate question to introduce in 1862 in the congressional campaign, notwithstanding the pledge of its withdrawal if the rebellious States should return to their allegiance. The fact that the proclamation was a military document did not prevent its becoming at once a political document.

Lincoln, as also the party which upheld him, was at once attacked as playing the role of a despot, and during the campaign in a number of Northern States the Republicans met disaster. While it is true that the proclamation "dampened the enthusiasm of the Northern masses for the war",<sup>480</sup> and resulted in the overthrow of the dominant party in several States — New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin;<sup>481</sup> yet such was notably not the case in Iowa, nor in two other Western States,<sup>482</sup> nor in New England.

In Iowa emancipation was an issue, and a favorite one. As we have seen, both parties had already expressed themselves on the question. Even before the party conventions acted, the Governor, the press, and party leaders had come out either for or against the idea. In his inaugural address before the legislature on January 13th, 1862, Governor Kirkwood expressed himself as to the purpose of the war as follows: "The war is waged by our Government for the preservation of the Union, and not for the extinction of slavery, unless the preservation of the Union shall require the extinction of the other".<sup>483</sup> His moderation is shown in his declaration that he would not spend further treasure or life for the extinction of

<sup>479</sup> *Congressional Globe*, Extra Session, 36th Congress, pp. 222, 265.

<sup>480</sup> Dunning's *Essays on the Civil War and Reconstruction*, p. 40.

<sup>481</sup> Rhodes' *History of the United States*, Vol. IV, p. 163.

<sup>482</sup> Michigan and California.

<sup>483</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1862, p. 42.



slavery, although he might regret that slavery had not also been extinguished if the war should close without it; for it would be a "further bane and pest". Then he significantly added, and in this he was in advance of Lincoln himself: "If I had the power on tomorrow to end this terrible strife and preserve the Union by the extinction of slavery, while to preserve both would require a month's, or a week's, or a day's, or an hour's further war, the spending of an additional dollar or the loss of a single additional life: so surely as the Lord lives, the war would end tomorrow".

These utterances were effective in preparing people for Lincoln's proclamation, and as noted above in even anticipating the issue and causing Iowa really to lead in the demand for emancipation.

The legislature took no special action on the question, but the Iowa Senators and Representatives at Washington were foremost in the various preliminary emancipation acts in Congress,<sup>484</sup> and the people at home applauded their action. "The Senators", said an Iowa correspondent to the *Washington* [D. C.] *Globe*, "are the very antipodes of the ciphers we have had there [in Congress] for many years. . . . After nearly a quarter of a century of subserviency to the lords of the land, Iowa stands proudly erect in the councils of the nation, as well as on the field of battle".<sup>485</sup>

Expressions on the question were given by various bodies. For instance, on April 24th the Presbyterians of the State, in their annual conference at Independence, adopted a resolution to support the Government in the

<sup>484</sup> *Congressional Globe*, 2d Session, 37th Congress, pp. 1526, 1629, 1643, 1648-49.

<sup>485</sup> *Iowa State Register*, May 14, 1862.

abolition of slavery.<sup>486</sup> During the months of June and July some of the Republican county conventions endorsed the action of Congress in calling for 300,000 additional volunteers and in arming the negroes. These resolutions were turned to peculiar use by the Democrats, which shows how they were planning to make capital out of the developing emancipation policy of the party in power. They declared that "party conventions have no right, by word or deed, to obstruct and prevent enlistments".<sup>487</sup> Some Democrats claimed to be emancipationists and held that the only difference between Republicans and Democrats was in the manner of emancipation; that the former, already called Radicals, were ignoring the constitutional right of the people of a State in forcing emancipation upon the States. They also made much of their claim that the war was prosecuted for the very purpose of freeing the slaves.<sup>488</sup>

By the time that the extra session of the legislature opened, emancipation had come to be regarded as "the question of the hour", and the agitation for universal emancipation became popular.<sup>489</sup> Many people believed that the legislature should and would take some action looking toward emancipation. Should this body "fresh from the people" pass a resolution favoring universal liberty, and going out from the capital of the State, it would "nerve the hands" of President Lincoln.<sup>490</sup> Iowa looked upon the President as a trifle too timid, and upon herself as a leader in this new cause. But there were men in the Republican ranks who counselled going slowly, still

<sup>486</sup> *Dubuque Times*, April 25, 1862.

<sup>487</sup> *Muscatine Daily Courier*, July 15, 1862.

<sup>488</sup> *Muscatine Daily Courier*, July 4, 1862.

<sup>489</sup> Burlington letter to the *Iowa State Register*, September 3, 1862.

<sup>490</sup> Burlington letter to the *Iowa State Register*, September 3, 1862.

sharing the former views of Lincoln that radical action would alienate the border States and drive them from the Union.<sup>491</sup>

Meanwhile what did the legislature, "fresh from the people", do? Did the law-makers carry out the county and State resolves? They did not. No action was taken which would commit the legislature to any policy on emancipation. This of course was before the Emancipation Proclamation was issued. The Democrats, on the other hand, seeing that the Republicans were not inclined to push their issue, determined to secure opposite action. Already fugitives were entering the State, and petitions from seven or eight counties, as also from several individuals, were sent to the legislature, asking for a law to prevent negroes and mulattoes from entering the State,<sup>492</sup> on the grounds of competition with white labor. In the Senate such petitions were referred to various committees,<sup>493</sup> while in the House, on motion, the petitions were sent to a special committee of three, to which committee Rush Clark, the Speaker, appointed three Democrats — Christian Denlinger, George Schramm, and Harvey Dunlavy.<sup>494</sup> This committee soon reported a resolution,<sup>495</sup>

<sup>491</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 10, 1862. (Long letter from a "staunch Union man".)

<sup>492</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), pp. 19, 38, 47; *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), pp. 11, 20, 29, 59, 71, 92, 95.

<sup>493</sup> Committee on Federal Relations, Committee on Military Affairs, and Committee on Charitable Institutions.

<sup>494</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), p. 11.

<sup>495</sup> The Resolution reads: "The Committee believes that the people of this State entertain the same opinions on this subject that have been exhibited lately by the people of Illinois; and that in view of the rapid influx into the State, self protection renders it absolutely necessary that some step should be immediately taken to protect the laboring classes of our citizens against the competition of negro labor — to prevent our alms-houses and prisons from being crowded with this class of people, and becoming a tax and burden upon the already over-taxed population of the State".—*House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), p. 76.

and followed it with a bill, which on motion of H. C. Loomis, of Cedar County, a Republican, was rejected by a vote of fifty-eight to nineteen.<sup>496</sup> This vote, with the exception of six Democrats voting with the majority, was a strict partisan vote, and it was another instance of united Republicanism against divided Democracy.

The passive attitude of the legislature was rather the result of policy, coupled with an uncertainty as to the effect of an aggressive course. There can be little doubt that a majority of the legislators were favorable to emancipation. True there was some falling-off of enlistments during the late summer, but upon the appearance of the President's proclamation, and as the campaign warmed, the people rallied and even led the leaders. When Senator Grimes toured the State, he found the people demanding a "radical emancipation program", and "ahead of the politicians in sentiment". Said he: "We took the bull by the horns and made the proclamation an issue".<sup>497</sup>

Mr. Palmer called the Emancipation Proclamation, "The Great Event of the War",<sup>498</sup> thinking it better than fifty victories in the field. To this radical editor, the proclamation was preferable to the annihilation of the Confederate army; for, with the latter, "Conservatives and Commercial Cormorants would have clamored for a patched-up Peace, in which Slavery would have been left with its old guarantees to plot new insurrections. With the former we have a guarantee of perpetual Peace in the annihilation of the cause of the War". A sentiment similar to this, though significantly prophetic of the radicalism of the Reconstruction period, came from a commander

<sup>496</sup> *House Journal*, 1862 (Extra Session), p. 77.

<sup>497</sup> Letter of Grimes to Secretary Chase—*Salter's Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 218.

<sup>498</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 1, 1862.

in the field, and a former War Democrat, Colonel J. A. Williamson. In an open letter of October 2d to the *Iowa State Register* he gloried in "the throwing overboard the ballast of four million slaves", and declared that "all the legislation in regard to Slavery which ought to be done, is now finished — the fate of Slavery is now in the hands of those who own it".<sup>499</sup> The owners, thought he, by laying down their arms could yet save slavery, and by refusing to do so would lose the institution. In the minds and purposes of the Republicans generally, the radical program expressed by Mr. Palmer was the one desired. But we must go to the election to determine finally the extent to which Iowa was influenced by the issue.

#### THE ELECTION

In the election, on November 5th, the Republicans swept the board clean — State officers, Congressional delegation, the District Judges and Attorneys, and the local tickets in all but a few counties. The vote for Secretary of State gave a majority of 15,215 for Dr. Wright, his vote being 66,014 to Mr. Sylvester's 50,809, which shows, notwithstanding the complete triumph of one party, the same ratio of vote between the two parties as in the elections of 1860 and 1861. This party equilibrium is unique in comparison with many Northern States during this time. There was little scratching of tickets. For instance, the Republican "scattering vote" was: for Secretary of State, 4; for Treasurer, 7; and for Attorney General, 9. The Democratic vote showed less solidarity.

Much significance is attached to the congressional vote,<sup>500</sup> for the reason that here, at least, would appear

<sup>499</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 22, 1862.

<sup>500</sup> Election returns for 1862 taken from the Archives at Des Moines:

First District: James F. Wilson (Republican), 12,705; Joseph K. Hornish (Democrat), 10,486; Republican majority, 2,219.

the public will on National issues, which had occasioned far greater interest than State issues. It will be seen that the Republicans won by large majorities in all of the six districts.

It is thus seen that the Republicans had not only maintained their congressional gerrymander, but even overcame the disintegrating factions of 1861; and the majorities in the districts as in the election of 1860 again appear. But the question arises, how did the soldier vote affect the election? So far as the final result is concerned, it was largely passive, though in a few instances it would have altered matters. By an examination of the total vote for Representatives in Congress,<sup>501</sup> for example, it is seen that the Republican candidates had large margins; without the soldier vote, however, these would have been very greatly reduced, and in one case, as seen by the schedule,<sup>502</sup> that of the Grinnell-Martin contest of the Fourth

Second District: Hiram Price (Republican), 12,433; Edward H. Thayer (Democrat), 8,930; Republican majority, 3,503.

Third District: William B. Allison (Republican), 12,112; Dennis A. Mahoney (Democrat), 8,452; Scattering, 14 (L. L. Ainsworth, 9); Republican majority, 4,646.

Fourth District: Josiah B. Grinnell (Republican), 12,900; Henry M. Martin (Democrat), 11,529; Republican majority, 1,371.

Fifth District: John A. Kasson (Republican), 10,306; Dan O. Finch (Democrat), 7,346; Republican majority, 2,960.

Sixth District: Asahel W. Hubbard (Republican), 5,386; John F. Duncombe (Democrat), 2,755; Republican majority, 2,631.

<sup>501</sup> Soldier Vote for Representative in Congress, 1862: First District: James F. Wilson 2499; Joseph K. Hornish, 554. Second District: Hiram Price, 2928; Edward H. Thayer, 828. Third District: William B. Allison, 2248; Dennis A. Mahoney, 125. Fourth District: J. B. Grinnell, 3366; Henry M. Martin, 1136. Fifth District: John A. Kasson, 2609; D. O. Finch, 672. Sixth District: A. W. Hubbard, 1214; John F. Duncombe, 212.

<sup>502</sup> A comparison of the majorities in the Congressional vote: First District: Wilson, with the soldier vote, 2219; without the soldier vote, 274. Second District: Price, with the soldier vote, 3503; without the soldier vote, 1403. Third District: Allison, with the soldier vote, 4646; without the soldier vote, 1537. Fourth District: Grinnell, with the soldier vote,

District, the Democratic candidate, Mr. Martin, would have been elected. But the contention of the Democrats of the First District, that had it not been for the soldier vote, they would also have elected their candidate, Mr. Hornish, was not verified, although the vote was close. Thus the Republicans did need the vote to elect their six representatives, notwithstanding their sanguine expectations.<sup>503</sup> But with this vote Iowa endorsed the course of her Senators and Representatives in Congress, not only in the prosecution of the war, but also in their new rôle as emancipators. The Emancipation Proclamation did not lessen the Republican strength in Iowa.

1371; without the soldier vote, —. Martin, with the soldier vote, —; without the soldier vote, 859. Fifth District: Kasson, with the soldier vote, 2960; without the soldier vote, 1023. Sixth District: Hubbard, with the soldier vote, 2631; without the soldier vote, 1629.

<sup>503</sup> Senator Grimes, in a letter to Secretary Chase said: "We have carried the State triumphantly. We elect all of our six Congressmen. Without the aid of the army vote, our majority will be greater than ever before; with that added, it will be overwhelming."—Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, pp. 217, 218.

## CHAPTER VII

# THE REPUBLICAN PARTY: THE PARTY OF THE UNION

THE POSITION OF THE PARTY  
ATTITUDE TOWARD PARTY ORGANIZATION AND THE USE OF THE TERM  
"UNION PARTY"

The year 1863 marks the high-tide of the war. The Government's method of suppressing the rebellion and saving the Union was beginning to yield results. By mid-summer was sounded the death knell of the Confederacy, whose lines were being pushed farther and farther back before the accumulating resources of the Federal Government. Not only was the "Union" winning back territory, but with Emancipation inaugurated, the Administration was taking its first steps towards restoring the "Union". Thus the policy of "saving the Union" by demanding an unconditional surrender, was effecting a return to Federal allegiance.

Now, the political party in power, through whose policy all these results had been accomplished, naturally claimed the credit for "saving the Union", and accordingly looked upon itself as the "party of the Union", denying at the same time the right of any opposition party thus far during the war to a use of the term "Union". This was especially applicable in Iowa, where at first the Democrats, in their charge that the Republican policy of coercion would sunder the Union, monopolized the



term;<sup>504</sup> then a third party, vaguely hovering between opposition to the war and support of the Government, appropriated the term. In 1863, however, it became the sole possession of the Republican party, which in its various declarations, left no doubt in the minds of people as to what was comprehended by the term "Union" as applied to the party. The idea that it was the party of the Union, as in 1862, was incorporated into a formal call for the State Convention. This call,<sup>505</sup> issued on February 18th, for the Convention to convene in June, was sent out thus early, close upon the triumph of the party at the autumn election, in order to forestall any "Union party" scheme, which might otherwise be inaugurated.

The State Central Committee, of which James T. Lane was chairman, was more explicit than before, as to what party was called to assemble, and with what party people were asked to join. All citizens, without distinction of party, were invited to "unite with the Republican party", by sending delegates, the only tests of fellowship being the support of the Government's war measures and a belief in "the good doctrine of General Jackson, 'The Union, it must and shall be preserved'." The incorporation of Jackson's famous toast was of course meant to be innocently patriotic bait for Democrats. It must be noted that the call was for a Republican convention. County representation was to be based upon the Lincoln vote of

<sup>504</sup> The Democrats, after secession had become an actuality, fell into three classes, namely: first, those who believed that the Union could be saved by conciliation and compromise, and hence opposed coercion; second, those who, after the firing on Fort Sumter, came out in support of the Administration's policy of coercion, and many of whom were absorbed by the Republican party; third, those who supported the war, but remained faithful to the old party organization and through it sought to control the policy of conducting the war.

<sup>505</sup> *Iowa State Register*, February 18, 1863.

1860, and thorough organization was recommended for an effective partisan campaign.

Mr. Frank W. Palmer, of the *Iowa State Register*, on February 18, 1863, editorially set before the public just what the Republican committee meant when they invited all to aid in the selection of delegates to the State Convention, and to share in its deliberations. He presented the case so accurately that it may be well to quote him verbatim. Said he:

We trust, however, that no man will be encouraged to believe that the Republican organization and faith are to be remodeled to meet the views of any class of Unionists who would otherwise refuse to coöperate with us. We know too well the dangers which the State escaped, to be a party to such an error. Two years ago the Republicans of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois abandoned their partisan identity and co-operated in what was called a "Union" organization. Iowa Republicans were beset from within the State and from without to follow the example. Certain good friends in our neighboring State of Illinois were even inclined to take our politics in hand and make the reconstruction for us, whether we would or no. When, however, the moment for action came, the Republicans throughout the State, with a devotion to principle and an exhibition of sagacity which did them honor, rallied with more zeal than ever under the folds of their partisan flag, battled in their own way for the support of the State and National Administrations of their own selection, and when the contest of that year was over it was found [that] they had elected their State and Legislative tickets by a larger majority than had ever been received by the nominees of any party.

This is exactly what was done in 1861. It shows an intense partisan spirit, and it characterizes the party in the State in all the fifty years following. But next follows the exposition on the question of the Republican party organization and its future policy.

We know of only one organization which meets these semi-Traitors boldly at every point, and that is the Republican party.

It sustains Mr. Lincoln in his efforts to reëstablish authority over *all* of the territory of the United States, for it placed him in power. It sustains the Laws of Congress for raising and maintaining an adequate Military force, for the Confiscation of Rebel Property, and for the Emancipation of slaves of Rebel masters, for it was mainly by the votes of its Representatives that these Laws were passed. It believes that the preservation of the Union is a thousand times more important than the preservation of Slavery, and as both cannot exist together, the latter shall give way to the former. It believes that Manhood is not necessarily confined to any particular color or race; that he who battles for the maintenance of the American Union, thereby serves the cause of Political Liberty and should be entitled to its rewards; and that the poorest and most degraded bondman who offers his services in the defence of the Republic, is better than any white Traitor, North or South, who by ballot or bullet is seeking its overthrow.

These are the political parties and creeds between which Northern Freemen are to choose! If a man is a Patriot and a Christian, he will stand by the Party which most zealously stands by the Government and Human Liberty! If he is an incipient or an open Traitor, he will affiliate with any organization which assumes that the Government of our Fathers is of less value than the preservation of African Slavery!

Two things stand out clearly in this editorial, namely, that there are but two parties in Iowa, one of which is the Republican party, the "party of the Union", whose identity and organization are to be kept intact, and whose program is to carry out the letter and the spirit of the Emancipation Proclamation. There was no thought of the abandonment of the party organization, as in some States. That idea was universally spurned by the leaders in 1863. The situation is likewise succinctly stated by the editor of the *Fairfield Ledger*, who said: "We are pleased to have the call made by Republicans. It is the only Union party in the State, and it would be a crime to disband the organization at this crisis of the country's

affairs".<sup>506</sup> He then informs his readers that the "copperheads and traitors" were actively engaged in reorganizing their broken ranks, and urges "all true Union men" to join the Republican party, the only requirement being faithfulness to the Union. There is no suggestion here of fusion, nor any thought of disbanding the party.

This partisan idea was shared now by Senator Grimes,<sup>507</sup> who, it will be recalled, favored the obliteration of the party name, platform, and organization in 1861. He no doubt found the people again in advance of the leaders and he was to be reëlected to the United States Senate. In a letter of May 3d to the editor of the *Linn County Register*, concerning the matter, he said, that while he did not want reëlection, he would accept it, "if they are satisfied that the interests of the country and our party require it".<sup>508</sup>

Preparatory to the State Convention, the Republicans held county "Union mass-meetings" for arousing enthusiasm and for choosing delegates. The first meeting came, in fact, before the call for the State Convention, and was held at Oskaloosa on February 13th.<sup>509</sup> The next day a similar meeting was held at Ottumwa.<sup>510</sup> Both of these meetings were addressed by Mr. Cole, who was the "wheel-horse" speaker during this early campaign. At the latter place the committee had also secured the services of Judge David Rorer<sup>511</sup> of Burlington, and imported from Indiana the Hon. George J. Wright. Mr. Wright spoke in the open air and profoundly stirred the throng

<sup>506</sup> Quoted by the *Iowa State Register*, March 18, 1863.

<sup>507</sup> Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 150.

<sup>508</sup> Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 236.

<sup>509</sup> *Iowa State Register*, February 17, 1863.

<sup>510</sup> *Ottumwa Courier*, February 19, 1863.

<sup>511</sup> *Annals of Iowa* (3rd Series), Vol. VIII, pp. 116-124.

of two thousand people who stood shoe-top deep in mud for two hours, while Mr. Cole spoke to an indoor audience of one thousand, giving a "clear, logical and eloquent argument, addressed to the understanding of all thinking and patriotic men", and Judge Rorer, who followed him, literally "skinned the copperheads alive".<sup>512</sup> Similar meetings were held at Bloomfield on the 21st,<sup>513</sup> at Muscatine on the 28th,<sup>514</sup> at Keokuk on March 2nd,<sup>515</sup> at Indianola on March 3rd,<sup>516</sup> at Burlington on the 6th,<sup>517</sup> at Clarinda on the 13th, and so on through the spring months. In some counties, as for instance in Poweshiek, Union meetings were held in all parts of the county.<sup>518</sup> At the Indianola meeting, which Mr. Cole addressed, "the gallant Unionists of all Warren [County] were greatly encouraged, and many Democrats came to the conclusion that the leaders of the party in this State are essentially hostile to the old flag". The speaker "left no spot where a copperhead might stand". These meetings sufficiently illustrate the Republican spirit in 1863. The Republicans in their "Union" meetings and in their county conventions to choose delegates to the State Convention, were, in the main, emphatic in declaring themselves to be the "Union party".<sup>519</sup> Most of the resolutions endorsed by detailed enumeration the various drastic measures of Congress and acts of the President. They show a marked unanimity of spirit and purpose, and while they reflect

<sup>512</sup> *Iowa State Register*, March 4, 1863.

<sup>513</sup> *Burlington Hawkeye*, March 4, 1863.

<sup>514</sup> *Muscatine Daily Journal*, March 2, 1863.

<sup>515</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, March 2, 1863.

<sup>516</sup> *Iowa State Register*, March 11, 1863.

<sup>517</sup> *Burlington Hawkeye*, March 7, 1863.

<sup>518</sup> *Iowa State Register*, March 25, 1863.

<sup>519</sup> *Burlington Hawkeye*, June 17, 1863.

the primary source of the State platform, they were, if anything, more radical.<sup>520</sup>

The "Union" meeting at Keokuk, above noted, was possibly the one exception to the general rule of these meetings; for here, at this old "Union" center, an attempt was made to launch again a non-partisan "Union" movement. A significant series of resolutions was adopted, the following being illustrative of their position:

Resolved, That we will henceforth recognize no distinction but that of Patriots and Traitors; that the words "Republican" and "Democrat" are obsolete terms and should be expunged from common use and memory, never to be revived again until the Union is entirely saved and the Rebellion only a thing of history.<sup>521</sup>

The last clause is quite interesting in view of the course taken by the Republican party in the nation at large.<sup>522</sup> The "Unionists" at this meeting took a firm stand in support of the Lincoln Administration, but declared that they would "eschew all nominations made by any party". The meeting was in the hands of genuine non-partisan advocates, and while there were Republicans represented, the chief men were the earlier "Unionists" and the War Democrats who honestly favored a fusion party.

To head off this non-partisan movement, and especially, so it was claimed, to counteract the early Democratic activity in the State, the Republicans adopted the plan of forming local "Union Clubs" or "Union Leagues". Editor Palmer, of the *Iowa State Register*, thought that it behooved the Republicans to bestir themselves, or the State would meet the fate of New York, to the "disgrace

<sup>520</sup> The texts of the Lucas and the Mills County resolutions are found in the *Iowa State Register* for April 17th and June 17th, respectively.

<sup>521</sup> Text of Resolutions in *Keokuk Gate City*, March 5, 1863.

<sup>522</sup> See Professor Dunning's article in the *American Historical Review* for October, 1910, pp. 56-63.

of the good name of Iowa".<sup>523</sup> But while Palmer, as also others, emphasized the danger from the Democracy, it was rather a cloak to cover their real concern lest another "Union" party movement should appear to the disquiet and possible disruption of the Republican party. Thus the holding of "Union" meetings, passing "Union" resolves, and choosing "Union" delegates for the *Republican* State Convention, was supplemented by organizing "Union" clubs to further a "Union" campaign by the only "Union" party in the State — the Republican party.

It is true that the first Union Club was formed at the non-partisan "Union" meeting at Keokuk, but at Mr. Palmer's suggestion, the Republican party took up the matter and forestalled the non-partisan movement, turning these clubs into the channels of the Republican party. Then beginning with the formation of a "Union League" at Ottunwa on March 20th,<sup>524</sup> local clubs or leagues were soon formed throughout the State. On June 16th, the day before the Republican State Convention, the Union Clubs convened at Des Moines and organized a State Council,<sup>525</sup> fixing upon June 2nd, 1864, at Marshalltown, as the time and place for the first annual meeting. The Republicans, therefore, retained their party identity and organization, and assured their political supremacy.

#### THE REPUBLICANS IN STATE CONVENTION

After four months of preparation,<sup>526</sup> the Republicans met in State Convention at Des Moines on June 17th. It was the largest convention of the party's history, there being but two small counties unrepresented.<sup>527</sup> As usual

<sup>523</sup> *Iowa State Register*, March 18, 1863.

<sup>524</sup> *Iowa State Register*, March 25, 1863.

<sup>525</sup> *Iowa State Register*, June 23, 1863.

<sup>526</sup> *Burlington Hawkeye*, June 20, 1863.

<sup>527</sup> *Burlington Hawkeye*, June 30, 1863. Full proceedings are given in this issue.

considerable political sagacity was displayed in the organization of the Convention. Major Ed. Wright, home on a furlough, was made temporary chairman, while Joshua Tracy, an early war convert, was the permanent "president"; other former Democrats were put upon committees and every element was in some way recognized.

The convention was notable for the large number of soldiers present. In fact it became a soldiers' reception, and prominent officers — General M. M. Crocker, Colonel J. A. Williamson, Colonel William M. Stone, and others — occupied seats on the platform. While waiting for the report of the Committee on Credentials, enthusiasm ran high; a soldiers' love-feast was held, their deeds were applauded, and they were fêted and lionized. The chief speakers were Attorney General Nourse, J. B. Grinnell, and Hiram Price. But with all the jollification and good feeling there was some real work before the Convention, and at least one stubborn fight — that for the gubernatorial nomination.

There were several persistent candidates for the nomination of Governor, each with his steadfast supporters. An informal ballot<sup>528</sup> was taken which revealed General Fitz Henry Warren and Secretary of State Elijah Sells to be the high men, with Colonel Stone a close possibility. After seven ballots it became evident that neither Warren nor Sells could be nominated. The Sells supporters began to desert him in the fifth ballot, and Warren reached his highest vote, 335, in the sixth. When the 148 solid Sells men saw that they would be beaten, upon the advice<sup>529</sup> of their favorite, they resolved at least to pre-

<sup>528</sup> Informal ballot: Warren, 297; Sells, 254; Stone, 181; Henry C. Caldwell, 31; General Crocker, 18.

<sup>529</sup> *Annals of Iowa* (3rd Series), Vol. II, pp. 525, 526.



vent Warren's receiving the plum, and threw their strength to Colonel Stone, who was named on the eighth ballot.<sup>530</sup> Just before the eighth ballot was taken, however, it was agreed, in order to test the strength of the vote, to take another ballot, no matter what the result might be; but immediately after the ballot General Warren saved his reputation, amid the shouts of the convention, by making a happy speech in withdrawing from the race, while Colonel Stone accepted the honor as apparently coming to him, as his friends claimed, unexpectedly and without solicitation. He could hardly be regarded, however, as a "dark horse", for his supporters were too numerous and too well organized. The interesting point is that a soldier was nominated, a course in keeping with the general feeling that "we ought in these stirring times to have a military man at the head of our State Government".<sup>531</sup> It was this that militated against Mr. Sells and which, had it not been for the Sells forces, would have landed General Warren in the Governor's chair.

The ticket was completed at the evening session by naming Enoch W. Eastman, a man whom Republicans were always glad to honor, for Lieutenant Governor, and for Supreme Justice, John F. Dillon; both men being named on the first ballot. The Convention then turned to platform-making.

The platform<sup>532</sup> was reported by A. B. F. Hildreth, editor of the *Charles City Intelligencer*, a member of the Committee on Resolutions.<sup>533</sup> It was unanimously adopted. The idea of the Republicans on the question of party

<sup>530</sup> Eighth ballot: Stone, 398; Warren, 376; Caldwell, 18; Sells, 11.

<sup>531</sup> *Burlington Hawkeye*, June 22, 1863.

<sup>532</sup> Fairall's *Manual of Iowa Politics*, Vol. I, pp. 66, 67.

<sup>533</sup> The Committee, by districts, was: L. G. Palmer, Dr. Joy, J. B. Packard, Isaac Pendleton, J. H. Gray, William Loughridge, W. S. Eddy, H. W. Gray, C. A. Wellman, A. B. F. Hildreth, J. D. Hunter.

is further emphasized by significantly declaring themselves to be “a convention of *representatives of the loyal people* of the State assembled under the *call of the Republican organization* of the State”. The platform was short. It defended the Government’s right to sustain its natural existence, and endorsed by specific mention the National Administration measures, omitting however, the Emancipation Proclamation as such. They endorsed the soldier vote law, praised the soldiers, “both native and foreign born”, extended thanks to Governor Kirkwood for his wise administration, and declared for the Constitution of the Union, to the subordination of party and all other interests. The platform, therefore, was less radical and partisan than many of the earlier utterances. But this more conservative tone was not so much an indication of partisan weakening, as it was an evidence of political foresight; for such a phrase as “subordination of party” was calculated to ease the minds of conservatives, and it had a potent effect.

#### THE DEMOCRATIC STATE CONVENTION OF 1863

Early in 1863 the Democrats began to consider the question of party reorganization for the State Convention. Their goal was, as ever, the recapture of the State. They followed the policy of the previous two years, of holding their Convention just before that of the administration party, and now even took the lead, calling the convention before the Republicans called theirs. On January 22nd the State Central Committee sent out a call<sup>534</sup> for the State Convention to meet on May 20th at Des Moines, all counties being urged to organize and send a full representation. In consequence Democratic activity began fully a month before the Republican launching.

<sup>534</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, January 22, 1863.

There were no platform declarations in the call, for the party leaders were divided, and while the majority of the State Committee was composed of moderate Democrats — those supporting the war, yet remaining in the party — they wished above all for party harmony. But the old conservative leaders or peace Democrats on the side lines, had a program of their own; they were for peace, and at once began to shape the course in various local centers toward their policy anent the coming convention.

At Democracy's citadel, Dubuque, a call was sent out for a "Grand Peace Convention" to be held on the eve of Washington's birthday, and by a peculiar coincidence it was issued on the 12th of February, Lincoln's birthday. The call<sup>535</sup> was signed by the "Democratic Executive Committee"—George W. Jones, J. F. Bates, Thomas S. Wilson, D. A. Mahoney, and three others — and was sent to "the conservative citizens" of the counties of Dubuque, Clayton, Jones, Jackson and Delaware. Whether it was to be a "Peace Convention" on national issues, or a local get-together Democratic meeting, can not be ascertained by the call, but certain it is, that it was to be conservative, and that the two Dubuque factions of some years' standing were acting together, for both ex-Senator Jones and ex-Judge Wilson were among the signers of the call. The chief speaker of the occasion was to be Henry Clay Dean,<sup>536</sup> while among others were the veteran Augustus C. Dodge, and David Sheean of Galena, Illinois. The meeting was held as per schedule with an attendance of some twelve to fifteen hundred people.<sup>537</sup> The list of speakers was increased, considerable enthusi-

<sup>535</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, February 12, 1863.

<sup>536</sup> Sketch of Dean in the *Annals of Iowa* (3rd Series), Vol. VIII, pp. 299-304.

<sup>537</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, February 22, 1863.

asm was worked up, and the conservative wing of the party launched its peace policy.

Similar meetings were held at other important centers, the first one in fact being on January 31st, at Oskaloosa, where it was reported that from six to eight thousand people were present.<sup>538</sup> Henry Clay Dean, it seems, was foremost in rallying the Democracy to the peace program. He was always a drawing-card, people coming out of curiosity to see him, as well as to hear his vituperative oratory, and especially now to gauge his speech for the detection of treason. On March 31st he appeared in Des Moines, "disguised in a clean shirt," to make a speech, but the large crowd which met "out of curiosity to see the creature" was disappointed, since his speech was less inflammatory than usual.<sup>539</sup> Dean was a leader of the conservatives, who like the Republicans, were wholly committed to the partisan course. He was not in favor of any "Union Party" or fusion movement, nor yet of the Democrats giving countenance to the war. Speaking at Iowa City earlier in March he veritably pulverized the New York Democracy for even moderately supporting the war, and declared that Governor Seymour was the mere "offal of Democracy". But as to the question of policy the party was all along divided. One thing, however, was quite noticeable early in 1863: there was a more temperate tone in the utterances of the Democratic press, as also of the Democratic speakers, and the Republicans, finding less to incriminate the Democrats by, made the most of their general partisan opposition to the Administration.

The hoped-for Democratic awakening was slow in materializing. With all their efforts at arousing interest in

<sup>538</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, February 13, 1863.

<sup>539</sup> *Iowa State Register*, April 8, 1863.

the announced State Convention, it finally became evident to the Democrats, that the preparations, thus far made, would not warrant the holding of the convention as advertised. The leaders also began to mistrust the advisability of leading out with platform utterances and the naming of a ticket. They began to wonder if, after all, it were not the part of wisdom and good politics to let the Republicans take the initiative, and utter the challenges. Consequently it was decided to postpone the Convention, and three weeks before the time set, another call, signed by the State Chairman J. M. Ellwood, and the Secretary, J. C. Turk, to postpone the convention to July 12th, was issued.

At the appointed time, after two months of hard labor on the part of the State Committee, they were repaid by seeing the clans gathering at Des Moines. But despite all efforts, when they assembled, there were but twenty-eight counties represented with two hundred and some thirty odd delegates, and thus the political advantage of following the Republicans was largely negative.

The Convention was presided over by Laurel Summers, while D. N. Richardson of the *Davenport Democrat* was the secretary. From the first it was again clear that the Democrats were hopelessly divided; it was the conservative peace wing, heirs of the Mahoneyites of 1861, as against the liberal or War Democrats. Both factions, however, agreed upon the plan of adopting a platform before naming a ticket, and then the Convention gave itself up to the annual speech-making, participated in by LeGrand Byington, Dan O. Finch, and John F. Duncombe.<sup>540</sup>

The evening session was devoted to platform-making.

<sup>540</sup> Biased proceedings are found in the *Iowa State Register*, July 15, 1863.

The Committee on Resolutions<sup>541</sup> presented a platform<sup>542</sup> of sixteen planks, of which the first five, consisting of a re-statement of the old and sound Democratic principles, reflected their constitutional grievances. They made a distinction between the Government and the Administration, a classification which the Republicans would not admit; and since the Administration was the agent of the Government, the Democrats held the former subject to criticism, disapproval, or even condemnation, according to its acts. The remaining eleven resolves stated their position on National issues, condemning the war, not as a war to save the Union, but as an emancipation war. They urged the restoration of peace, and asked the seceded States to return to their former allegiance, promising them assistance in the process, even to the extent of securing their institutions and their rights. They praised the Iowa soldiery and opposed military government where civil authority only should rule. Finally they expressed satisfaction in the growing conservative sentiment in the North as indicated by the autumn elections, and again avowed their adherence to the Constitution and the Union. There was considerable acrimony displayed in the debate on the resolutions, especially as to their form, and as finally adopted they were a compromise. A separate series of resolutions on State issues was also adopted, which was to have been included in the platform, but apparently was suppressed by the State Committee until late in the campaign.

The testing of the strength of the two factions came in the naming of a ticket, especially in connection with the

<sup>541</sup> Committee: Joseph K. Hornish, Henry H. Trimble, R. B. Parrott, C. C. Smeltzer, P. Gad Bryan, Charles Negus, Edward H. Thayer, Stillson Hutchins, Daniel Hammer, John E. Hull.

<sup>542</sup> Fairall's *Manual of Iowa Politics*, Vol. I, pp. 64-66.

nomination for Governor. The issue was that of a soldier candidate. An informal ballot brought out three candidates, namely, General James M. Tuttle, with 182 votes; LeGrand Byington with 136; and Charles Mason with 104. Before the third ballot was taken Mr. Mason withdrew, and when the vote was cast both factions claimed the victory. A forensic encounter ensued which turned upon General Tuttle's war record. The Tuttle supporters were led by Finch, Trimble, Hammer, McClintock, and Ed. Johnson, while those who assailed Tuttle were Mahoney, Jennings, Hutchins, Negus, Sheward, Cassady, and Byington himself. The latter group deprecated the soldier craze, while the former, influenced by the Republican policy, asserted that with a soldier on the ticket, they could win; otherwise they could not. The Democrats had some good gubernatorial timber but most of it had already deserted the party. James M. Tuttle, however, was among the War Democrats and an officer in the field who remained with the party; such a man, it was thought, ought not to be overlooked, and the Tuttle boom was started.

Prior to the State Convention, the committee forming a close ring decided on Tuttle as the man to head the ticket, and sent an emissary to Vicksburg, to present the matter to General Tuttle, and if possible, to obtain his consent. Arrangements were made with the General that upon his decision to accept the proposed nomination, he should telegraph the fact, together with the kind of platform he would run upon, to Mr. William F. Coolbaugh, then in Chicago, who in turn would inform the inner circle at Des Moines. Soon thereafter, the State Central Committee received the following telegram:

Chicago, July 8, 1863.

D. O. FINCH—Des Moines: The General will accept and prefers the New York soldier.

W. F. COOLBAUGH.<sup>543</sup>

Thus was the Committee apprised, in this cipher despatch, of two things: Tuttle's willingness to run, and the kind of platform he desired. The mysterious term "New York soldier" meant that General Tuttle wanted such a platform as Governor Seymour stood upon in New York. It was a conservative war platform, and by making inroads upon the Republicans, was successful in New York. Why might not the same policy succeed in Iowa? But unlike the New York situation, the Republicans of Iowa were able to hold the conservatives and therefore the Democrats were deprived of a following which the New York Democracy received. Moreover, while there was a strong element among the Iowa Democrats who hoped that, by adopting a conservative war policy and naming a soldier for Governor, they might wrest from the Republicans their monopoly of the State government, yet the peace wing was strong enough to forestall their plan, and the party remained divided.

But how did the scheme to nominate Tuttle work out in the convention? The conservative faction, willing to compromise on the nomination, withdrew Byington's name and put up instead Maturin L. Fisher.<sup>544</sup> The war faction, however, claimed that Tuttle's nomination was already made; the word had been sent out and was received with the most positive approbation. The deadlock was continued for a time, and finally the War Democrats yielded and another ballot was taken which resulted in Fisher's nomination by a majority of thirty-one. The convention became a mob and it was with the greatest

<sup>543</sup> *Iowa State Register*, July 15, 1863.

<sup>544</sup> For portrait of Mr. Fisher see *Annals of Iowa* (3rd Series, Vol. VII, p. 93).



difficulty that a break-up or a bolt was prevented. The absolute necessity of maintaining even apparent harmony produced the anomaly of a "unanimous nomination" accompanied by a protest. The convention then adjourned to the next day, when the ticket was completed. John F. Duncombe was named for Lieutenant-Governor, and Charles Mason for Supreme Justice. Thus the peace wing was in control, having both the ticket and the platform, the latter being almost identical with the Vallandigham platform of Ohio.

An incident illustrative of the folly of the radical conservatives occurred at an overflow meeting at the State Fair Grounds. The victorious peace element, emboldened and defiant, made shipwreck of whatever advantage it had attained. Among the speakers at this meeting was the indefatigable D. A. Mahoney, who declared that since the war was destroying both slavery and the Union, the time for forcible resistance to the Government would soon arrive. This not only made the protesting faction determined upon another course, but it alarmed the Republicans and gave them added material to strengthen their "Union" campaign. The Democracy was facing its most disastrous defeat.

#### THE DEMOCRATS AGAIN CHANGE CANDIDATES

The Democratic State Convention had adjourned amidst the greatest confusion. The party was in no mood to enter heartily into the campaign. The protesting minority, supreme in the State Central Committee, held an aftermath session of several weeks and finally, adopting the desperate course pursued in '61, labored to bring about the desired vacancy at the head of the ticket. They managed their campaign so adroitly that they finally succeeded in frightening Mr. Fisher from the ticket, and

then took formal steps to make General Tuttle the nominee of the party.

On July 23rd, Mr. Fisher sent to D. N. Richardson his letter of declination.<sup>545</sup> He stated that he took the step solely with the good of the party in view, and expressed the hope that his action would result in the party's triumph at the polls. With Mr. Fisher out of the way, the chairman of the committee, Mr. Byington, called them together to fill the vacancy. The committee met at Burlington on August 6th, with such "collateral leaders"<sup>546</sup> as David Sheward, G. M. Todd, Charles Negus, Joseph Street, and Jairus E. Neal, as advisory to the committee, only five of whom were present — Byington, Carpenter, Cassady, Plumer and Seberger.<sup>547</sup> The committee taking formal action, issued the following resolution in justification of its course :

Resolved, That upon mature consideration of the unfortunate dilemma in which the tardy declination of Mr. Fisher has placed the Democracy of Iowa — of the very limited time which is left for prosecuting the canvass — of the disastrous delay and great expense of holding another State Convention, without reasonable prospects to us of securing universal harmony thereby, and especially with no satisfactory assurance that a second nomination would be acquiesced in any more than was Mr. Fisher's — this committee cannot feel justified in calling another convention of the party at this late day.

Then followed in true Democratic fashion a *viva voce* vote to fill the vacancy, resulting in three votes for General Tuttle and two for ex-Judge Mason — Carpenter, Cassady, and Seberger voting for the former, and Byington and Plumer for the latter. Tuttle was then declared to be the nominee. By resolution the chairman of

<sup>545</sup> *Davenport Democrat*, August 5, 1863.

<sup>546</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 12, 1863.

<sup>547</sup> Byington's letter giving an account of the meeting of the Committee. — *Iowa State Press*, August 12, 1863.

the committee was authorized to "restore, if possible, the missing resolutions which were passed by the late Convention upon State issues, and cause the same to be published as part of our party platform during the canvass and also, so far as practicable, to be debated by our public speakers". After ordering that this action should be published in the Democratic papers of the State, as also in the *Chicago Times*, the "Sub-Convention", as it was dubbed, adjourned.

At last the party was ready actively to enter upon the campaign. But Democracy's bark, endeavoring to steer clear of Charybdis and of Scylla, struck a rock and floundered; for it can not be said that General Tuttle's nomination was "acquiesced in" any more than was Fisher's. The action of the State Committee was met with indifference and disgust, with rage and determined opposition. Of course the Democratic opposition was to a soldier candidate. Editor Babbitt's position is illustrative of this element. On the very day the committee met, he declared that if left to a vote of the people, ninety-five per cent would choose a civilian in preference to a military man, the "cries of *availability* raised by political scullions to the contrary notwithstanding", and he showed by the vote of two years before that the popularity of military men among Iowa Democrats was not great.<sup>548</sup>

Mr. Babbitt was a "straight-out" Democrat and called for another State Convention, a good and true one which would name a candidate who had "never endorsed the unconstitutional and despotic acts of the present corrupt and despotic Administration". He wanted a man, therefore, who would support the Constitution and enforce the laws, one who would protect the rights and liberties of

<sup>548</sup> *Council Bluffs Bugle*, August 6, 1863.

the people of Iowa. Such a man, he declared, could be elected, whereas one who professed Democracy and practiced Abolitionism would be defeated. Babbitt was of course right, for people generally prefer a sincere candidate to one who is uncertain and inconsistent.

But while there was large opposition to a "soldier candidate", there was also support for the ticket, and from an hitherto unfriendly source. The *Dubuque Herald* soon came out for the revised ticket, running up the Tuttle standard.<sup>549</sup> This, however, was due to a change in the management of that paper, Mr. Mahoney having early in the year sold out, though not until now, August 11th,<sup>550</sup> issuing his farewell and taking his departure. Patrick Robb, formerly of the *Sioux City Register*, the new owner and a "Union" Democrat,<sup>551</sup> now took charge and although retaining Mr. Hutchins as editor, moderately reversed the policy of the paper.

Mr. Byington was, of course, among those who opposed the nomination of Tuttle, for which he was both applauded and criticised. Just before the election he freed himself and every other Democrat from any obligation to vote for General Tuttle, since he had neither accepted the nomination nor the party's platform.<sup>552</sup> The Republican press was obliged to counteract the soldier capital in the

<sup>549</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, August 15, 1863.

<sup>550</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, August 11, 1863.

<sup>551</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 14, 1863.

<sup>552</sup> Letter in *Iowa State Register*, October 21, 1863:

Iowa City, Aug. 24th, 1863.

W. H. VANCE, Esq.,  
Keokuk, Iowa.

My Dear Sir:—Yours of the 19th inst. reached me this moment. No man in Iowa feels as keenly as myself the unfortunate position in which we have been again placed by disorganizers and time-servers. As Gen. Tuttle has not accepted our nomination or placed himself upon our platform, every democrat must settle with himself the amount of obligation,

new ticket, and did so by showing the inconsistent position of General Tuttle — that of a soldier in the service standing upon an anti-war platform.<sup>553</sup> Thus the Republicans soon had Tuttle classed, according to editor Stewart, with the “malignant copperheads”, who used him merely as a vote catcher.<sup>554</sup> We shall later see what the army thought of the two soldier candidates.

THE CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION OF 1863

Intense partisan feeling was a marked characteristic of the war time, the partisan spirit being generally connected with the question of loyalty to the Government. There were continuous clashings between factions, and a general spirit of lawlessness and of bullying existed everywhere. Lynch law justice was common, all the way from thrashing an offender, destroying his property, or torturing him, to shooting him down. Iowa was beginning to feel the moral effects of the war at home. During the year 1863, fifty-three counties reported five hundred and twenty-two criminal prosecutions in the District Court, and though the larger number of the accused got off with fines, yet one-tenth were sentenced to the penitentiaries.<sup>555</sup> The lionized soldier, on furlough or in rendezvous, was always a political factor to be reckoned with, and in the nature of the issues a disturbing element, as

either of principle or policy, which rests upon him to support such a candidate *as he makes himself*.

Had he accepted the nomination conferred, an *implied obligation*, at least, to stand as the representative of the party would have compelled all democrats to vote for him.

Truly yours,

LEGRAND BYINGTON.

<sup>553</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 12, 1863.

<sup>554</sup> *Dubuque Times*, September 23, 1863.

<sup>555</sup> *Iowa Legislative Documents*, 1864, Vol. II.

well as a dangerous individual to offend. The secret K. G. C.'s among the civilians complicated matters many fold.

Between these groups and their supporters the printing press was always a factor. More than one opposition press suffered at the hands of "soldier boys".<sup>556</sup> Of course the "peace" press was tantalizing, but no more so than was the "loyal" press abusive. This phase of the party spirit caused editor Sheward, of the *Union and Constitution*, to emblazon the "butternut" at the head of his editorial column. It also caused a "butternut school-ma'am" to whip several of her pupils for singing the then new and popular war song, "Rally Round the Flag, Boys", and likewise caused the loyal courts to fine the offending school teacher.<sup>557</sup> The times were too tense for the old-fashioned Fourth of July celebrations. At some places they were dispensed with, or, as at Burlington, where two rival celebrations were held, they were partisan.<sup>558</sup> One of these was conducted by the "peace" citizens, a non-speech-making picnic celebration, at which only the Declaration of Independence and Washington's Farewell Address could be read. The other one was held by the Republicans, in a stuffy hall, where a score of men, among them C. Ben Darwin, Captain T. W. Newman, Rev. William Salter, Joshua Tracey, Charles H. Phelps, and Theodore Guelich, delivered red-hot, five-minute speeches.<sup>559</sup> The "patriotic" war editorials of the "loy-

<sup>556</sup> The press of Claggett's *Keokuk Constitution* was in 1863 dumped into the Mississippi, and in May when Mr. Claggett sought protection at the hands of Governor Kirkwood, he was told to take his case to the civil courts. — *Burlington Hawkeye*, August 17, 1863.

<sup>557</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 30, 1863.

<sup>558</sup> *Burlington Hawkeye*, June 19, 23 and July 3, 1863.

<sup>559</sup> *Burlington Hawkeye*, July 7, 1863.

al" press<sup>560</sup> were equalled by the "treasonous" editorials of the "peace" press.<sup>561</sup>

The Republicans placed their campaign in the hands of Thomas F. Withrow, who had learned the art of campaigning from his friend and brother-in-law, John A. Kasson. He was chosen by the State Central Committee<sup>562</sup> and conducted the campaign with the usual organization and dispatch. Again the leading home speakers took the stump. Of these Colonel Stone probably became the most conspicuous, though both Senators Harlan and Grimes, General S. R. Curtis, C. Ben Darwin, as well as others, were prominent in the canvass. Senator Grimes again made a long tour through the State. He declared that he had never before been in a campaign which required so great labor, and that the Democrats never worked so hard; but he predicted a Republican victory by an "unprecedentedly large majority".<sup>563</sup> Senator Grimes was not seeking reelection, but he was nevertheless interested in the election of the members of the eleventh General Assembly, and viewed with complacent satisfaction the fact that "no Senator or Representative will be elected *by the Republicans* who is not pledged to my election".<sup>564</sup>

At the State Fair grounds in Des Moines a great "Un-

<sup>560</sup> *Burlington Hawkeye*, July 4, 1863.

<sup>561</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, July 4, 1863.

<sup>562</sup> The Republican State Central Committee, by districts: G. N. Edwards, H. W. Yokner, C. E. Milford, H. Ford, Thomas F. Withrow, John R. Needham, Jacob Butler, F. Humphrey, C. A. Wellman, John A. Elliott, J. D. Hunter.

<sup>563</sup> Letters written to Mrs. Grimes from Grinnell, Independence and Dubuque.—Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, pp. 238, 239.

<sup>564</sup> Letter to Mrs. Grimes written from West Union on September 28th.—Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 238. Grimes was reelected to the United States Senate on January 16th, 1864, receiving on joint ballot 123 votes out of 134. Three Democrats voted for him.

ion Mass Meeting”<sup>565</sup> was held on September 12th, where Senator Grimes, Colonel Stone and Mr. Darwin spoke to five thousand people, presided over by General Curtis. The evening session, “down town”, in front of the Savery House, was addressed by Senator Harlan, General Curtis and Mr. Henry C. Rippey, one of the most prominent though belated converts to Republicanism. Mr. Rippey remained with the Democracy until after their last State Convention, when, dissatisfied with platform and ticket, he finally gave public expression to his displeasure<sup>566</sup> and allowed the leaven of desertion to work. But the nomination of Tuttle coming soon after, caused him to hesitate; and then seeking light on the “duty of a loyal Democrat” in the pending election for Governor, he addressed a letter, September 2nd, to Mr. C. C. Cole. Mr. Cole’s answer three days later was regarded as so able and convincing a diagnosis of the case, that it was published as a campaign document.<sup>567</sup> Cole assured his friend that there was no party question involved; that Colonel Stone was nominated by a “so-called Union Convention”, and General Tuttle by a “Democratic Convention so-called”; that both had been efficient officers, though now standing on diametrically opposed platforms, the former supporting the Administration and the latter opposing the war. He advised Mr. Rippey to vote for Stone. Then he significantly added: “I find that neither party has avowed a single former political or partisan issue, but the whole contest is one of support or opposition to the Administration in its prosecution of the war”. While he correctly stated the great issue, his explanation of the party platforms must be taken merely as balm to

<sup>565</sup> *Iowa State Register*, July 22, 1863.

<sup>566</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 14, 1863.

<sup>567</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 9, 1863.



ease the conscience of a deserter. But it evidently satisfied Mr. Rippey, an Administration Democrat, for he at once entered the Republican lists, as we have seen, to champion the cause of the "Union".

Iowa Republicans were very solicitous about the soldier vote. Mr. Grinnell, Representative in Congress, wrote to his constituents in the army, a letter in which he named a list of former Democrats, both officers in the field and leading civilians, who were all for Stone. Letters from former Democrats endorsing Colonel Stone were occasionally published. Although Stone himself was very popular, yet anything coming from the army or from Democrats, was of importance. General John A. McClelland, of Springfield, Illinois, Colonel Stone's old corps commander, wrote him a letter of endorsement, which of course was published.<sup>568</sup> This sort of campaigning the Democrats would match by advertising Fernando Wood of New York, who would stump the State in behalf of General Tuttle. But time passed and no Fernando Wood appeared in Iowa.

The Democrats, divided and out of harmony among themselves, pleaded for peace in the nation. They begged the people to put them back into power, promising in return that great boon. But although their campaign was spasmodic, they put into the field their ablest speakers, besides the nominees. Augustus C. Dodge addressed several meetings, but he, like others, found it difficult to advocate peace and at the same time urge the claims of their soldier ticket. Therefore at Dubuque on September 24th, he confined himself to the former and talked peace, while incidentally electioneering for D. A. Mahoney, who was running for sheriff of that county.<sup>569</sup>

<sup>568</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 23, 1863.

<sup>569</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 30, 1863.

But while the party professed to make peace the issue, the real issue with them was General Tuttle, and they, like the Republicans, were concerned about the soldier vote. With the soldiers, it was hoped, it would be a matter of choice between two popular army officers. The action of the soldiers in the main, however, showed that it was not so much a matter of men as of issues, and General Tuttle's military popularity did not profit him, as is seen by letters from the army and the action of certain regiments, as well as the soldier vote. A typical letter appeared during the canvass from John A. T. Hull, then a private, which illustrates the attitude of the soldiers regardless of party affiliation. The significant portion of the letter<sup>570</sup> reads:

Well, the Democratic party of Iowa is in a pretty muss, isn't it? If Tuttle has one tenth the sense he has always been supposed to possess, he will not only refuse the nomination tendered him, but will renounce his allegiance to the party. It is the only thing which will restore to him the confidence of his soldier friends. He was at one time very popular with the army, but he is fast losing the respect of Iowa soldiers. Colonel Stone will receive an almost unanimous vote. I know of but one Democrat in this Regiment who will not support him. I will not mention his name, but will say he is an officer, and should know better than to say one thing and do another.

The Democratic members of Tuttle's old regiment, the Iowa Second, took formal action on his nomination, unanimously adopting a series of resolutions, charging him with inconsistency in both his career and his letter accepting the nomination on an anti-war platform.<sup>571</sup> The Iowa Seventh also framed resolutions on Tuttle's nomination, one of them reading:

<sup>570</sup> The letter in full appears in the *Iowa State Register*, September 16, 1863.

<sup>571</sup> The resolutions in full are found in the *Iowa State Register*, September 9, 1863.

Resolved, That we will support no man for any office (whatever might have been his standing among patriots) who will identify himself with a party whose avowed principles are so hostile to the best interests of our Government.<sup>572</sup>

They then pledged their individual support to Stone. The campaigning utility of these letters and resolves must be apparent. But the vote itself will tell the story.

Another phase of the campaign and election significant of Republicanism, was the increased use of the term "Union" as applied to the Republican party. This is noticeable especially in the later county nominating conventions, and in reports of the election returns. On August 15th the Jefferson County Republican convention at Fairfield declared:

That we solicit the coöperation of all loyal men, without distinction of party, to unite with us in the election of the ticket presented by this convention.<sup>573</sup>

In none of the many county conventions, so far as observed, do we find that the Republicans abandoned their party organization, or fused in such a way as to obscure it. In several the party name was not mentioned, either in the call or in the resolutions adopted; but neither was there any other name used. The call for the Des Moines County Convention at Burlington, for example, simply called together those electors "in favor of the war for the Union and the sustaining of the Government in its vigorous prosecution". Even here the basis of the delegate representation from the townships was the vote cast for Lincoln, three years prior.<sup>574</sup>

Again, Mr. Palmer in speaking of General Tuttle's candidacy, charged him with inconsistency in accepting a place on a ticket against the "only organized Union party

<sup>572</sup> *Iowa State Register*, September 9, 1863.

<sup>573</sup> *Burlington Hawkeye*, August 18, 1863.

<sup>574</sup> *Burlington Hawkeye*, August 1, 1863.

in the State",<sup>575</sup> The same idea is brought out concerning the action taken by the Seventeenth Iowa Regiment in the report, "That Regiment is unanimously for the Union State ticket headed by Colonel Stone",<sup>576</sup> The Iowa conception of the term is further shown in the reports of the election from the various local units. In a few instances these are reported as Republican victories, but by far the larger number are reported in varying "Union" terms, such as, for example,<sup>577</sup> "Great Union Victory", "Union majority", "All the Union candidates", "Union ticket", "Republican Union ticket", "Union gain", *etc.* These were all reports of the same party returns. There was no fusion "Union" party in Iowa in 1863.

The election resulted in the largest Republican triumph in the State. Not only was the State ticket elected, but the legislature chosen was almost unanimously Republican. Of the 142,314 votes cast for Governor, Colonel Stone received 86,107, to General Tuttle's 56,132, with 75 scattering.<sup>578</sup> Eastman's majority over Duncombe was even greater. Of the forty-six State senators, forty-two were listed as "Unionists" and only four as Democrats. In the House the Republicans did even better, electing eighty-seven to the Democrats' five Representatives. The famous Dubuque district, the Forty-first, however, true to its traditions, chose a solid Democratic delegation of four.

The result of the soldier vote was similar to that of 1862. The same commissioners, with the exception of a few vacancies, were sent to take the vote in the army.

<sup>575</sup> *Iowa State Register*, August 12, 1863.

<sup>576</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 7, 1863.

<sup>577</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 21, and November 4, 1863.

<sup>578</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1864, p. 38.

There were forty regiments of infantry, eight of cavalry, and three batteries participating in this election, and the vote for the head of the ticket was: for Colonel Stone 16,791; for General Tuttle 2,904. Eastman's vote over that of Duncombe was again greater — 17,343 to 2,133. The soldier vote made no difference in the final result of the election. The regimental votes in the main were in accord with the prophecies made during the campaign, based upon the letters written by soldiers and resolutions passed by some of the regiments. In only two, the Fortieth Infantry and a detachment of the Sixth Cavalry, did General Tuttle obtain a majority.<sup>579</sup> In four regiments the vote was about two to one,<sup>580</sup> while in most of them it was much more one-sided, even overwhelming for the Republicans.<sup>581</sup> Two, the Seventh Cavalry and the Fourth Battery, gave a unanimous vote for Stone. General Williamson's Brigade was for Stone by a vote of 1,378 to 318. Williamson lamented that, in comparison with the old regiments, the Sixth and Ninth, "It is not as good as it should be", for their vote was "most unanimous for the Union ticket".<sup>582</sup>

The Republicans were satisfied now with their policy of maintaining an independent partisan organization. They had properly gauged their political assets and successfully maintained their supremacy. On the other hand the Democrats failed again in their double rôle. The

<sup>579</sup> Fortieth Infantry: Stone, 164; Tuttle, 177. Sixth Cavalry: Stone, 56; Tuttle, 58.

<sup>580</sup> Thirtieth Infantry: Stone, 152; Tuttle, 90. Thirty-first Infantry: Stone, 167; Tuttle, 60. Thirty-fourth Infantry: Stone, 175; Tuttle, 67. Thirty-fifth Infantry: Stone, 211; Tuttle, 124.

<sup>581</sup> Fourth Infantry: Stone, 307; Tuttle, 18. Sixth Infantry: Stone, 175; Tuttle, 9. Seventh Infantry: Stone, 297; Tuttle, 1. Ninth Infantry: Stone, 327; Tuttle, 6. Eighteenth Infantry: Stone, 267; Tuttle, 6. Twenty-fourth Infantry: Stone, 271; Tuttle, 10.

<sup>582</sup> *Iowa State Register*, October 28, 1863.

question now was, in view of the near-at-hand Presidential campaign, would the Democrats be able to find an issue and get together? Would the Republicans persist in their partisan policy? If so, could they maintain their solidarity?

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THE POLITICS OF IOWA  
DURING THE  
CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

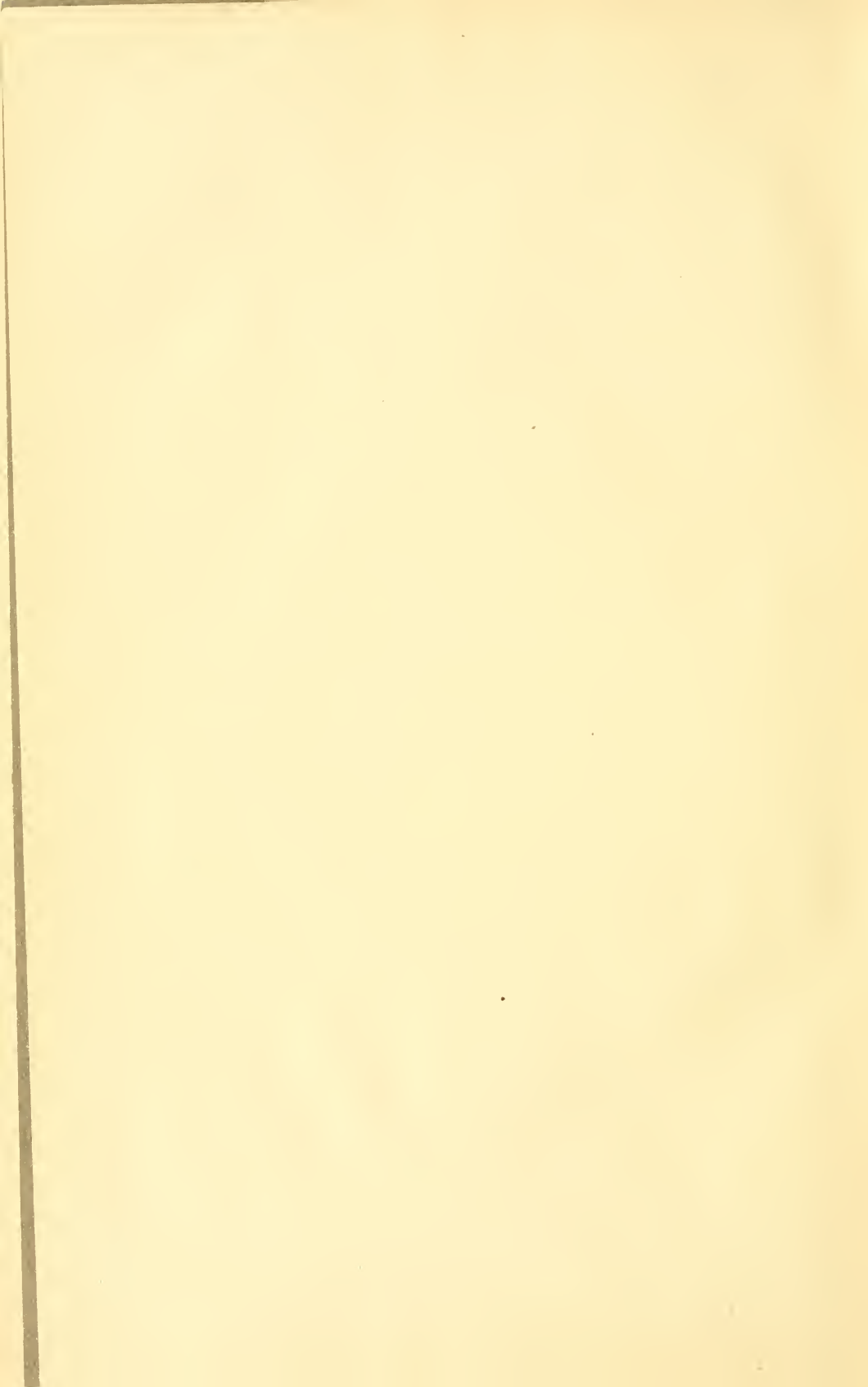
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