The Two-Thirds Rule.

ITS ORIGIN—PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS FROM THE TIME OF JEFFERSON DOWN.

Sir: The action of the Maine Democracy foreshadows an attempt in the St. Louis convention, to abrogate the two-thirds rule. In view of the discussion which the effort will occassion, and particularly since some misapprehensions seem to prevail as to the origin and policy of this famous regulation a brief review of its history may not be without interest and instruction.

The congressional caucus, itself borrowed from the politics of England, was the original of the national convention.

In 1800, at Philadelphia, a caucus composed of representatives and senators nominated Jefferson and Burr for president and vice-president of the United States.

At Washington on the 18th of January, 1808, a similar caucus nominated Madison for the presidency; and in 1812 a caucus presented him for reelection. Meanwhile, much discontent with this method of selecting candidates had spread among the Republicans; so that on the 11th of March, 1816 when a congressional caucus met in Washington to choose a successor to Mr. Madison nineteen members of the party refused to attend. After a severe struggle between Monroe and Crawford, the former was nominated by a vote sixty-five to fifty four. Monroe was reelected without opposition. In 1824, notwithstanding the popular clamor against the system a caucus of Republican congressmen presented Crawford for the presidency; but his nomination was largely repudiated by the party; and in default of a majority vote in the college of electors Adams was elected by the House of Representatives over Jackson.

The result was to the last degree odious and disappointing to the country, and being imputed to the operation of the method of nomination, as well as to a shameful intrigue between Clay and Adams, "King Caucus," as it was called in the slang of the day was abjured forever, and its memory exists only for "admonition and reproof."

General Jackson was nominated, both for his first and second term by the legislatures of the states. The first national convention for the nomination of candidates was held in Baltimore in September, 1831, by the Anti-Masonic party; and they presented William Wirt for president, and Amos Ellmaker for vice president. [If more information of this party and convention be desired, reference may be had to the venerable Thurlow Weed.)

In December of the same year styling itself National Republican met at Baltimore and nominated Henry Clay and John Sergeant for president and vice president.

The Democrats as they now began to distinguish themselves, had already, by the state legislatures, presented Jackson for a second term; but controversey existing in the choice of a candidate for vice president, for solution of the difficulty New Hampshire proposed the expedient of a national convention.

The first Democratic national convention was called to nominate a vice president only, and it met in Baltimore on the 21st of May, 1832, Robert Ducas, of Ohio, was chosen president of the body. In determining the selection of a candidate the convention, on motion of Romuius M. Saunders, of North Carolina, adopted the following resolution:

Resolved, That each state be entitled, in the nomination to be made of a candidate for the vice presidency, to a number of votes equal to the number that they will be entitled to in the electoral colleges under the new appointment of voting for president and vice president, *and that two thirds of the whole number of votes in the convention shall be necessary to constitute a choice.*

That is the origin of the famous two-thirds rule. Martin Van Buron received the requisite vote for the nomination, and was elected on the ticket with Andrew Jackson.

The next Democratic national convention met in Baltimore, May 30, 1835, and by unanimous vote nominated Van Buron to succeed Johnson in the presidency. In 1840 Van Buron was presented by another convention at Baltimore for a second term; but was defeated by Gen. Harrison, whom the Whigs had nominated in convention at Harrisburg. The ambition of the "Sage of Kinderhook" was not to be appeased without another incumbency of the presidency; and accordingly his friends urged his nomination by the Democratic convention which met at Baltimore on the 27th of May, 1844. But Mr. Romuius M. Saunders was again present with his two-thirds rule; and on his motion the convention adopted it by a vote of 148 to 118. On the first ballot Van Buron received 146 votes, a majority, but not two-thirds of the convention. After the seventh ballot an attempt was made to repeal the two-thirds rule, but was defeated by the same vote by which it was adopted, namely, 118 for and 148 against the repeal.—On the ninth ballot James K. Polk was nominated by a unanimous vote.

In the Democratic convention which met at Baltimore on the 22d of May, 1848, the two-thirds rule was again adopted, and under its operation Lewis Cass was nominated for the presidency.

The same rule was re-enacted at Baltimore in 1852, and has been retained by every succeeding Democratic convention.

It is not true, then, as popularly reported, that the two-thirds rule originated in the convention of 1844, and was devised to prevent the nomination of Mr. Van Buron. It was adopted in 1832 by the first Democratic nominal convention ever held, and is, in truth, an original, traditional, and fundimental principle of the Democratic constitution.

The policy of the rule consists in its efficacy as a safeguard against the nomination of a candidate by states which cannot contribute to his election.

But this original argument for its adoption is indefinately strengthened by the modern practice of a unit vote in convention. A large number of states now cast their vote as a whole, without reference to the will of the minority. It is obvious that if all the states were to adopt this expedient, a candidate might be chosen by the minority of the convention. For illustration; Take three states with three votes each; in each of two states a particular candidate has two votes, and one against him, while the third states gives its three votes for the candidate of the minority in the other two states. This latter candidate has actually five votes, and the other four, yet, by operation of the unit rule, the man with four votes is nominated over the man with five votes! As affording some guarantee against this absurd and iniquitous result, the two thirds rule should be held inviolate.

Madness Cured by a Baloon.

The late Agustus Hemenway of Boston, who died recently in Cuba, was probably the wealthiest man in America. He began life as a shop-boy and ultimately established a business the magnitude of which was astounding. He first established himself in Valparaiso and laid the foundation of his colossal fortune by buying hides, wool, copper, and all kinds of South America produce sending them to the United States and bringing back an assortment of American goods. His business in a few years had become so great that he found it necessary to return to Boston and establish a house in that city.

He sent his brother Charles P. Hemenway, to South America to manage the house there and, remaining himself in Boston, enlarged his operations until the magnitude of them demanded every moment of his time. He even built his own ships, and made additional profits by carrying his own goods. He owned sugar plantations in Cuba, copper mines in South America, and had business relations with the Barings of such magnitude as to astonish even that colossal house, and the whole of this immense business he managed himself.

About fifteen years ago, however, he discovered that his mind was affected, and after drawing up a power of attorney confiding the management of his business to his brother and one or two posted friends, he went voluntarily into retirement and placed himself under the care of an eminent medical man at Litchfield, Conn. He was moody and brusque in manners, and spoke very seldom, but read the papers continually.

When during the year 1873 the preparations for the Graphic transatlantic balloon experiment were going on, and the newspapers were full of information and speculation on the subject Mr. Hemenway was observed to show some interest in the matter though he never spoke of it. When finally the ascension was made, and the air currents carried the balloon not out over the ocean but over Conneticut, it passed close by Litchfield, and when some persons near the cottage where Mr. Hemenway resided made remarks about the balloon, he threw down the periodical he was reading and exclaiming in great excitement, "By gracious! I must see that balloon," rushed out of doors to behold the magnificent aerostat sailing grandly through the skies.

The intense and sudden excitement cured him of his mental malady, and the next day his friends were astonished at receiving a despatch worded thus: "Bring me your trial balance—Agustus Hemenway." The brother telegraphed to the physician and received for answer: "Patient perfectly recovered." Mr. Hemenway received his brother with his former urbane and polite manners and examined the balance-sheet with his usual business sagacity.

A few days afterwards he walked into his counting room in Boston, and quietly resumed his accustomed employment. His business had enormously increased during his thirteen years of self-imposed retirement, and he took up the management of the different branches with his accustomed energy and marvellous success and when he died he was probably one of the wealthiest men in the world.

Mr. Hemenway made no secret of the cause of his restoration to complete mental health, and I understand that Mrs. Leonowens, the well-known author of an interesting book on Siam when on a visit at Mr. Hemenway's, a few months after his return to business, heard the whole story from his lips at the dinner table one day.

It takes 28,000 lawyers to do the legal work of this state.

Twenty thousand acres of land in Pike county, Pennsylvania, have been sold for arrearages.

The Lancaster pike running between that city and Philadelphia, was built in 1792, and is the oldest in America.

Wayne county is out of debt and has $60,000 in its treasury which it proposes to spend in the erection of a new court house.

Not a serious accident has occured to a centennial visitor, nor has a drunken man been arrested on the grounds.

A Lyon Captures a Child.

Last Wednesday several families of emigrants, traveling to Oregon by wagon, camped for the night near Point of Rocks, a station on the Union Pacific, Mountain Division.

In the dusk of the evening, the children were at a play a short distance from the wagons, when a piercing scream, proceeding from the bevy of juveniles, alarming the camp, and called the men to the rescue. They were met by the frightened youngsters, who said one of their number, a two-year-old girl, had been carried off by an animal.

From the description given by the children and the size and shape of the tracks, the beast was supposed to be a mountain lyon. A dilligent and exciting search for the child was kept up until midnight, but unsuccessfully. Meantime the mother of the child was raving in a most frenzied manner, rejecting all hope of the recovery of the offspring, and refusing to be comforted.

At dawn Thursday morning the search was resumed. The tracks of the beast were traced a distance of five miles from camp, when, owing to the rocks, they became too indistinct to be followed further. The search was continued, however, and at one o'clock in the afternoon, one of the party found the child on top of a huge upheavel of rocks, rising two hundred feet above the level of the surrounding sand plane.

The child, nearly denuded of clothing and with several ugly looking scratches about the face and breast, was lying on its back, perfectly quiet and its eyes dozing under the sunlight. With the exception of the scratches, or clawmarks, the little thing was uninjured.

When the infant was brought back to camp, at sight of it the distracted mother swooned, and on being restored to consciousness, clasped her child in frenzied fondness, and insisted for some time that it was dead, notwithstanding that the rescued cherub was kicking, squirming and squalling in the customary way. The blending of grief and gladness in the camp was highly pathetic if not picturesque.

That the lion could have lugged that baby five miles without severely injuring it, and left it high and dry on the lonesome ledge, seems almost incredible, but the above facts are reliably vouched for. The mountain lyon is known to be very powerful, and this one appears to have tempered its strenght with mercy, and simply kidnapped the infant without making a meal of it.—*Denver News.*

Mrs. Mollie Moyer of Strausstown, Pa., 80 years of age recently participated in a dance at Barnville. She walked seven miles to the place and then led the dance in person.

Hon. Wilson M'Candless has served as judge of the United States court for the Western district of Pennsylvania for seventeen years, having been appointed in 1859.

George Allen a farmer, single, 30 years of age, and a native of England, hung himself with a clothes-line at Millvale Allegheny county, on Sunday. He was financially embarrassed and had previously tried to kill himself with a gun.

Philip Showers, Esq., of Crawford township Clinton county is serving his 32d year as Justice of the Peace. A better reccomendation could not be given any man by his neighbors.

Three skeletons of dead Indians were plowed up at Ulster Flats, Bradford county last week. One of the skeletons were found in a cavity neatly lined with cobble stones laid in cement.

The Sweeds of Bethlehem invited their countrymen to join them at Philadelphia on the 26th of August, to celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of their own and the centennial of their adopted country.

It is reported that the Susquehanna boom company at Williamsport refuse to deliver logs to lumbermen at the reduced toll required by the late act of the legislature and that legal action will have to be taken by the owners of logs in order to get possession of their property.

The reunion of the society of the army of the Cumberland will take place in Philadelphia on the 6th and 7th of July next. General Sheridan will preside, and a large attendance of Western soldiers is expected. The academy of music has been engaged for the ceremonies and preparations are being made to give the society a hearty welcome.

A base-ball player named Miller, formerly catcher of the St. Louis Club, died in Philadelphia recently. In his last moments he was delirious, and fancied he was at his place in the ball field facing his old pitcher, Bradley. His last words were: 'Two out, Brad—steady, now—he wants a high ball—steady, Brad—there, I knew it—that settles it."

A Pennsylvania editor boasts of having visited the centennial nearly 100 miles distant at a cost of only five cents. He had a pass on the Pennsylvania railroad, a pass to the grounds and sustained himself on a glass of milk for which he paid five cents. He should be exhibited among the Centennial curiosities.

On the next Fourth of July there will be placed in position at Carlisle, Pa., a monument over the grave of "Captain Moll Pitcher," the woman who displayed great bravery at the battle of Monmouth on the 28th of June, 1778, and who, in a well known picture of the conflict is represented handling the ramrod of a cannon. Her grave has hitherto been unmarked.