

THE CONVENTION.

The Orators of the Convention Still Remain Relentless and Uncompromising.

The Single-Body Legislative Plan is Knocked Out in the Second Round.

County Seat Location is a Subject Upon Which all are Competent to Speak.

Twentieth Day.

[From Wednesday's Daily.]

Convention met at 2 o'clock p. m.

Mr. Camp introduced a resolution providing that none of the debates of the committee of the whole shall be reported by the official stenographer for publication in the official report.

Mr. Stevens raised the point of order that this resolution was in conflict with one already adopted and hence out of order.

The point of order was sustained. Mr. Williams offered a resolution providing that the president of the convention shall, immediately after adjournment, cause the constitution to be deposited in the office of the governor, and if it is approved by the people, the governor shall forward a certified copy of the same, together with an abstract of the votes polled. Carried.

The subject for consideration in the committee of the whole was that of county and township organization. Mr. Stevens maintained that the 'single-house' proposition should be first considered, as it was before the committee of the whole when the committee rose last evening.

Mr. Miller moved that the consideration of the county and township article be postponed until Thursday.

Mr. Lauder opposed this delay. He did not believe the convention should adjourn to suit the personal convenience of the delegates. His business was important to him, but he remained at work in the hope of hastening the day of final adjournment.

Mr. Miller: I did not ask for the postponement on personal grounds, but because a number of gentlemen had prepared speeches on the "single-house" question, the discussion of which would consume the afternoon.

The motion to postpone was lost.

Col. McHugh moved that the "one-house" resolution be indefinitely postponed.

Mr. Stevens said that the committee of the whole had reported progress and asked leave to sit again.

Mr. Parsons moved that the convention go into committee of the whole.

Mr. Stevens hoped the convention would go into committee of the whole. The "one house" men had their day and he hoped those opposed would have an opportunity to speak.

The convention resolved itself into committee of the whole—Mr. O'Brien called to the chair.

JUDGE CARLAND'S REMARKS.

The first to speak was Judge Carland, who opposed the proposition to vest the legislative power in a single body. He was surprised to find delegates assuming that the question is new and novel. This was far from the fact. It is a question that was discussed a century ago and which was settled by the people in favor of two houses. So far from being new or novel, the proposition to vest the legislative power in a single body had been thoroughly discussed in the past, the plan was tried, discarded, and is now obsolete. It had been truthfully said that it is dangerous for a country to forget its past. During colonial times the legislative power was vested in one house, but after a thorough test it was found inadequate and unsatisfactory. The state of Delaware started out with a single body in 1701, but in 1776, after seventy-five years' experience with the system, it was abolished and two houses established. Rhode Island lived under the "single-house" system from 1663 until 1842, and then gave it up forever. South Carolina had a like experience. Vermont tried it from 1779 to 1886, and Pennsylvania from 1776 to 1790. These were the experiments made by the states, and the national legislative body was also changed from a single house to a house of representatives and a senate. And yet men spoke as though the question were new. It has been said that the constitution of the United States was adopted by a single body. True, but it was necessary for it to be ratified by two-thirds of the states before it became law. The gentlemen allude to the fact that the constitutional convention to prepare a constitution for a great state, is a single body, but they forget that the convention in the case of the states was approved of the people to whom it must be submitted for a vote. 'Tis different with the legislative assembly. Its action is final, and unless the constitution is so framed that the legislative enactment must be approved by the people before it becomes law, these comparisons have no force. There should be some restraining influence. Men are too often controlled by their passions or prejudices, and this was the evil of the one-house system, which was so long ago discarded by our forefathers. Even the people will make mistakes. The people have their flatterers as well as the king. Man's first loyalty is to himself. He acts for himself or his family first, then for his neighbors, then for the municipality, and last for the state. A single representative body with every man working in his own interest or that of his few constituents, could not be for the general good, and it must be plain that a coordinate branch, called the senate, the members of which are elected for a longer term, will act as a check on evil legislation. The proposition under discussion had never, since the days of its failure, been advocated save by enthusiasts or unbalanced agitators. The history of the governments of Europe and closed by saying, "I cannot agree with the gentleman from Ransom (Mr. Stevens) when he says that if we adopt the single-body legislature we will be the bright north star of the union to whom all other states will look with admiration. I would sooner think that its adoption would change the boundary of the United States, and that when the traveler from the south crossed the northern boundary of South Dakota he would feel that he was in the Canadian province of Manitoba, under the protection of her imperial majesty." [Great applause.]

The judge's remarks were extended and forceful, and in his historical figures he gave the convention much enlightenment. It was a most satisfactory argument.

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Mr. Lauder, who had given the subject consideration, delivered a most logical argument in answer to Judge Carland and made many points which struck the nail on the head from the one-house standpoint. He did not see the force of Judge Carland's allusion to changing the boundaries of the union and making Dakota a part of Canada, for the "two-house" men are the ones who are copying the English. But for England, no one would ever thought of having two branches to the legislative bodies in the United States, and the senate is in imitation of the useless house of lords. In the first place, everything else being equal, the single body is less expensive and hence more desirable. The one-house is not elected as a check on the house, because both are elected by the same people. The people of a county do not vote for two senators as a check on their four representatives, but they vote for them because it gives them six instead of four in the legislative assembly. Mr. Lauder favored one house on the ground of economy, expediency and the public welfare.

Mr. Harris inquired in the survival of the fittest. Nearly every civilized nation on the earth has abandoned the one-house idea and adopted the two-house plan.

Mr. Parsons said that if the upper branch of the legislature would be representative of the people—one from each township—it would be in favor of two houses. But if the legislatures of the future are to be the same as those of the past, he would be in favor of one house. The question had been debated as though the present conditions were the same as those of a century ago. He believed the present issues that demanded attention—wrongs to be righted and reforms to be introduced.

All of the speakers were given hearty applause, and the discussion was pronounced the most interesting of the session. A vote being taken, the single-house resolution was defeated by an overwhelming majority.

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Mr. Camp moved that the entire section on the amendments be stricken out. Lost.

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The amendment was lost.

Mr. Hennington moved that the committee rise and report progress. Carried.

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