

## SOURCE MATERIAL OF IOWA HISTORY

[Among the most interesting, and certainly the most lively, of the "Washington Letters" published in the Des Moines *Iowa State Register* during the years of the Civil War are those signed "Linkensale." As everyone in Iowa knew, "Linkensale" was the pseudonym of L. D. Ingersoll, who was variously a newspaperman in Knoxville, Iowa City, and Muscatine, and who, during the war, was working in a government bureau in Washington. Not hampered by modern standards of objectivity, "Link" did not hesitate to give his own opinions of men and events in language both more colorful and more frank than that in general use in the twentieth century. His reporting also contrasts with that of "Miriam," another *Register* correspondent [See JOURNAL for January, 1954], whose formal language carried the full flavor of the Victorian era. "Link's" discussions of the Washington political scene in 1864 are here reproduced as an example of political reporting ninety years ago. — EDITOR.]

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### AN IOWA POLITICAL REPORTER, 1864

[January 12, 1864]

You have such an excellent corps of regular correspondents here that it may seem presumptuous in me to send you a communication. If you do not like it, have one of your messengers sell it to the rag man, wherewithal to treat a Copperhead member of the Legislature to a glass of lager or a ticket to the sterioptocomoromatum, I believe they call the show where you can see dead rebels as large as life, and twice as natural.

The cold weather having set in, our two great armies having gone into winter quarters, poor Little Mac, having already been trotted out by the excellent old ladies who took their tea up at Philadelphia, the other day, Uncle Abe having got over the small pox far enough to tell stories as well as ever, and the White House being thoroughly washed, smoked, fumigated, aired and cleaned up all around, it is a first-rate time for the President-makers. Let me give you a few notes pertaining to that subject, upon the express understanding, however, that I merely report and do not argue, nor express any views or preferences of my own.



At this present writing, five eminent gentlemen of the Union party have adherents enough to make considerable talk. These are: Mr. Lincoln, Mr. [Secretary of the Treasury Salmon Portland] Chase, Gens. [Benjamin F.] Butler, [John C.] Fremont, and [Nathaniel] Banks.

It is universally conceded that Mr. Lincoln has now the inside track, and is far ahead. Mr. Secretary [of State, William H.] Seward, Secretary [of the Interior, John P.] Usher, Attorney General [Edward] Bates, Postmaster [Montgomery] Blair, in the Cabinet; such Senators as [Ira] Harris and [Edwin D.] Morgan, of New York; [Edgar] Cowan of Pennsylvania; [John B.] Henderson of Missouri; [John] Sherman of Ohio; [Henry S.] Lane of Indiana; such Representatives as [Isaac N.] Arnold [of Illinois], [Reuben E.] Fenton [of New York], the Pennsylvania and New York men generally, urge Mr. Lincoln's re-nomination with less or more earnestness, according to the character of the individuals. Mr. Arnold opened the ball in Congress, a few days ago, by reading a speech (he cannot make a speech properly, so-called, to save his life), radical enough on the subject of slavery, and highly eulogistic of the President. Mr. Lincoln might have had a stronger advocate to open up his case, but I reckon the polished gentleman from Chicago couldn't hold in his essay any longer. The very next morning the news came booming down from New Hampshire that the old Granite State was going solid for Lincoln, and the telegrams quite eclipsed the oratory. New Hampshire did more in a minute than the Chicago Senator will accomplish during the session. However that may be, it is certain that the adherents of the President, in Congress and out of Congress, at the "political metropolis" of the country and throughout the rural districts, are hard at work for their chief. They feel strong and are unanimous. They do not abuse those who do not look through their spectacles.

Mr. Chase has a host of friends among the moneyed men of the country. It is admitted by most persons that his services have really been of incalculable benefit to the Union cause — more so, say many, than the services of even our most fortunate general. Where would we have been, to-day, if our finances had been swamped as they were in the war of the Revolution, or as the finances of the Confederacy are now swamped? One dollar of our green-back currency will buy twenty dollars of Confederate money in the rebel capital. It is a strong point, strongly urged by Mr. Chase's friends. They are not confined to the "monetary circles." Such men as [Charles] Sumner [of Massachusetts], [William] Sprague [of Rhode Island, Chase's



son-in-law] and [Samuel C.] Pomeroy [of Kansas] in the Senate, [Elbridge G.] Spaulding [of New York], [George W.] Julian [of Indiana] and [James M.] Ashley [of Ohio] in the House, are his adherents; while in the country thousands of earnest men who knew him of old, and have long admired his ability and his firm devotion to the cause of Freedom, stand by him like a band of brothers. Horace Greeley is understood to be among the number, and they know very little of his influence and his sagacity, who estimate lightly either the one or the other. I might enumerate other men of note, chiefly among those connected with the press, who are warmly for Mr. Chase. In so far as I know the operations of these men, they are not so blindly devoted to the interests of their chief as to wish his success without perfect harmony. Nor do they say anything to the Secretary upon the subject, for the reason that his position in the Cabinet forbids any active exertions on his part against the President.

Gen. Butler has many friends all over the country, and I am convinced there will be a concerted movement, not a little formidable, in his behalf. Old Ben Wade [Senator from Ohio] swears by him, as do a great many who have never believed in rosewater warfare.

In a matter-of-fact letter like this, it would be useless to deny that John C. Fremont has adherents who, if not numerous, are zealous — some of them distinguished men.

I do not pretend to account for it, but for some reason or other, the "conservative chaps" make considerable noise and confusion in behalf of Gen. Banks. The old-line Whigs who used to take their toddy regularly and, as regularly but not as often, vote the Democratic ticket, are for Banks to a man, so far as my acquaintance among that class of people goes, which, indeed, is not very far. Better men than these are for him too; but not many. Fremont and Banks, except so far as combinations are concerned, are practically out of the ring. As the little negro boys put up the pins for us glorious Caucasian fellows to knock down, so do the friends of these gentlemen put their names on the slates for the friends of the stronger parties to wipe out. They will do well enough for "combination" purposes.

Your intelligent readers are familiar with the arguments used in behalf of Mr. Lincoln — his integrity, his popularity with the people, both those at home and the soldiers in the field, his good common sense, the success, in general, of his administration. Mr. Seward, indeed, argues that the present Executive, having been prevented by the rebellion from being President of



the whole country, has next thing to a divine right to the succession — an argument, however, which is more damaging than beneficial to Mr. Lincoln (perhaps for that very reason used by its inventor), and is not argued by his real friends. These arguments I need not elaborate. Admitted to be powerful, you will hear them here in all their varied forms, at the places of public resort — hotels, restaurants, everywhere.

So much for the *pro*; now for the *con*. The Fremont men are personal in their tactics. They denounce the President for his persistent snubbing of the Pathfinder — say that his removal from command in Missouri, the placing over him of his personal enemy, [Gen. John] Pope, the keeping him down ever since, is but a heartless plan adopted by [former Secretary of War Simon] Cameron and carried out by the Executive, to crush one of our best and truest men, one who saw clearly the full nature of this terrible contest and adopted the best measures to settle it long before light glimmered in upon the eyes of the Administration. Outside of this personal matter, they affirm that Fremont's Proclamation [Fremont, without authority, freed the Missouri slaves in 1861 when he was in command in that district; this action resulted in his removal from that command by Lincoln] was heartily and warmly sustained by the loyal people everywhere outside of Kentucky, that even the New York *Herald* threw up its hat and shouted over the intelligence of it, and that it was Mr. Lincoln who split the people in the middle by his recall of that proclamation.

The zealous champions of Mr. Chase, the zealous champions of Gen. Butler, without being positively atrabilarious, harp upon the failures of the Administration, and think their harp is one of a thousand strings. The gloomy early days are not forgotten. They refuse to be comforted because of that unhappy period when the rosewater policy, the diluted rosewater policy, "reigned in Warsaw"; when the country was thereby forced to pass through the valley of the shadow of humiliation; to submit, through all those harrowing months, to the policy which was "conceived in sin, and born in Kentucky"; to submit to the venerable imbecility of [General Winfield] Scott, the pompous incapacity of [General Irvin] McDowell, the slaughter-pens of [General George B.] McClellan, the sublime orders and bathotic performances of Pope, the failures of [General Don Carlos] Buell, the outrages of the Gamble-Schofield dynasty, the unutterable villanies of [General Henry W.] Halleck, the pusillanimities of the State Department. All this, and more, you will hear in the street cars, from little gatherings of



men on the sunny side of the avenue, at the "headquarters" of the different candidates.

Those, therefore, who think that Mr. Lincoln is going to be renominated without a struggle, are greatly mistaken. There may, indeed, be no severe struggle in the Nominating Convention. I hope there will not, and believe there will not be. I believe that if Mr. Lincoln is to be nominated, it will be by acclamation. But I know a vast deal of work is now being done for other men as well as for Mr. Lincoln. If it shall turn out that the President can count more noses than the others, they will leave the course to him. Meantime, the fight will go bravely on till that shall be determined. As for Gen. Grant, it will suffice to say that he is not and will not be a candidate, and that his glorious army is well nigh unanimous for Lincoln. . . .

[Des Moines Iowa State Register, Jan. 20, 1864]

[April 6, 1864]

The failure of Seward to manage our foreign affairs has long been patent to everybody except the Albany regency and its hangers-on. Perhaps there is no failure of his more lamentable than that of his diplomacy touching Mexican affairs. It should seem that he must have been as fearful of Napoleon III as the diplomats and public men generally of Europe used to be fearful of the original Buonaparte. It can hardly be doubted that he has been having perturbed visions of American Magentas and Solferinos, just as the European cabinets used to have perturbed visions of Marengos and Austerlitzes. On no other hypothesis but that of cowardice, can the failure, the fall of William H. Seward be accounted for, unless, indeed, we accept the melancholy one of a softening of the brain. In either case the contemplation is a sad one.

"Imperial Caesar, dead, and turned to clay,  
Might stop a hole, to keep the wind away."

But not even to that useful purpose can you put the premier who lives in the body, but is dead as a mackerel or a last year's gallinipper, in the respect and affections of his countrymen.

The following resolution introduced in the House of Representatives day before yesterday, and passed without an opposing vote, may be regarded as something more than a hint to the Secretary of State, and important in other respects:

"Resolved, By the Senate and House of Representatives of the United



States of America in Congress assembled, That the Congress of the United States are unwilling, by silence, to leave the nations of the world under the impression that they are indifferent spectators of the deplorable events now transpiring in the Republic of Mexico; therefore, they think it fit to declare that it does not accord with the sentiments of the people of the United States to acknowledge a monarchical government erected over the ruins of any Republican government in Mexico, under the auspices of any European Power."

This is, substantially, a re-affirmance of the Monroe Doctrine, which those journals especially friendly to the State Department have been insidiously attempting to fritter away for the past two years. . . . I look upon the passage by the House of Mr. Davis' resolution as an important movement in the right direction — bringing us back to the hereditary doctrine of the Government.

It is also important in another respect, which is, indeed, rather political in the party sense, than national. Many of those earnest Radicals who oppose the renomination of Mr. Lincoln have urged as one objection to his administration its abandonment of the Monroe Doctrine. Perhaps the passage of this resolution by Congress, and its approval by the President, will remove that objection, as it certainly ought to remove it, so far as Uncle Abe himself is concerned. It might do some good to Seward, too, only that formerly astute statesman has got, like the boy in the spelling book, "past redemption."

The only other new phase in the Presidential question is the discussion of the postponement of the Baltimore Convention, the postponement being advocated in the main by those opposed to the renomination of Mr. Lincoln, and objected to by those who favor him. I do not think there will be a postponement. . . .

[Des Moines Iowa State Register, Apr. 13, 1864]

[April 11, 1864]

You must understand, Mr. Editor, that the rather voluminous correspondence which I have the good nature to inflict upon my friends in Iowa is all, or nearly all, composed before breakfast in the morning. I should postpone this epistle until to-morrow morning, with the view of giving you notes of the spicy debate in Congress anticipated for to-day, which was inaugurated on Saturday, but that I might thereby miss being properly set



forth in the very large weekly edition of the *Register* till my lucubrations should become somewhat stale and unprofitable.

On Friday last, Mr. Alexander Long, who misrepresents one of the Hamilton county, Ohio, Districts in Congress, saw fit to unburden his mind of a studied, long deliberated, committed-to-memory speech, which was as full of treason as an egg is of meat. It would have been applauded to the echo had it been delivered in Richmond before that "banditti of man stealers calling themselves the Confederate Government," to whom, indeed, it will render aid, comfort and encouragement, as it will to Mason and Slidell abroad, and the enemies everywhere of freedom and Union. Vallandigham, were he a member of Congress, would scarcely have dared to utter more treasonable, more atrocious sentiments than those uttered, with such deliberate baseness by this man Long on Friday. — He openly avowed himself a disunionist, opposed to giving a man or a dollar to the prosecution of the war, in favor of at once recognizing the Southern Confederacy. In his manner he was haughty and overbearing, so offensive to good breeding and good taste as his sentiments were to patriotism. He shook his auburn locks, or rather ringlets, (for Long, maugre his villainous eyes, is not a bad looking man, reminding me not a little of our old virtuous and honest citizen, Dr. James D. Eads,) as though he were Jupiter Tonans, and all the crowd around about him very "one-horse" gods and goddesses indeed. It made one's blood boil to hear him, and almost gnash one's teeth to see him. I think Washington could not have been more indignant upon learning of Benedict Arnold's raid into Virginia. . . .

The next day, Mr. Speaker Colfax, left his desk and offered a resolution expelling the Ohio traitor. He sustained his resolution in a short, pointed speech, remarkable, as all his speeches are remarkable, for its kindness of tone. Herein, in fact, is the shabby part of Speaker Colfax's character. He is not a good hater, and, affirmatively, is a good deal too mild a mannered man for a leader in these troubled times. To him, Mr. Cox, of Ohio, responded, and, apparently disavowing the treasonable sentiments of his colleague, nevertheless actually sustained him by argument as he did afterwards indirectly by his vote against the expulsion of Harris, whose treasonable utterances he had just heard. I am candid enough to admit, however, that the little Ohio dodger, voted to censure Harris. If that be not water gruel treatment for traitors and diluted water-gruel treatment at that, I do not know what is.



After Cox got through, there was a debate of some four hours, in which, beside Cox himself, who was the principal manager on the side of the Opposition, Julian, Kelley, Dawson, Miller of Pennsylvania, Garfield, Washburne, Harris, J. C. Allen and Fernando Wood, were the participants. Julian did not speak long, but he let fall a few fiery expressions such as only he can use with fine effect, to which Cox retorted with his usual wiry adroitness. Then Kelley of Pennsylvania "sailed in," and spoke for some thirty minutes in his magnificent manner, dealing terrific blows upon his adversaries in this exciting *melee*, like Richard of the Lion Heart within the memorable lists of Ashby. Dawson, Miller and Allen then went around the arena a while, when Garfield rushed in and drove them ignominiously from the field.

Then to drop all these classical, chivalric and warlike figures, Mr. Harris of Maryland got the floor, and delivered himself of even a more treasonable and atrocious speech than that of Long. It had this to say in its favor, however, as compared with the effort of his fellow-rebel from Ohio, that it was evidently unpremeditated. The treason of Mr. Harris flows naturally from the heart without preliminary tapping. He talks treason as naturally as Falstaff talked lies, or as Rev. Joel T. Headley writes fustian, or as Garret Davis talks intolerable and interminable nonsense, or, in short, "anything of that sort." He said, in an excited manner, and with clenched fists beating the air, as well as his glass of water, that our arms had not prevailed against the South, and he prayed God they might not! Well might Kelley say that had our soldiers heard him, they would have brained him where he stood.

After this, the noise and confusion became uproarious, but at last Colfax so far caved in on his resolution as to ask a postponement of its consideration till to-day at two o'clock, when Washburne moved the expulsion of Harris, which carried by a vote of 81 yeas to 58 nays, but was lost for the want of the requisite two-thirds vote. Schenck then offered a resolution declaring Harris to be an unworthy member of the House, and severely censuring him, which was carried — yeas 92, nays 18. And thus the debate on Saturday ended. . . .

Several Democrats voted for Mr. Schenck's resolution, but they all voted against expulsion. Thus have they put themselves on the record as announcing their idea of a "vigorous prosecution of the war" — that traitors should be severely censured! . . .

[Des Moines Iowa State Register, April 20, 1864]



[April 18, 1864]

The debate on the resolution to expel Long from the House of Representatives closed on Thursday, winding up by the courtesy of Mr. Colfax, with a speech from Mr. Long himself, which speech, for the first half of it, was quite penitent and respectable, but then got to be bad enough. I don't think Alexander H. Long could manage to get through with more than thirty minutes of his precious life without falling from grace.

This debate, the first day's portion of which I gave you an account in my last, was admirably conducted on the part of the Republicans. Gen. Schenck, Henry Winter Davis and Mr. Colfax made remarkably fine speeches, whilst all the debaters on that side of the House did themselves no little credit. Mr. Grinnell of our State being among those who added to their reputation and importance in the House. Schenck's speech was what you might call a "regular squelcher." So to day, he skinned Fernando Wood alive, and hung his hide out on the wall to dry. — Every square inch in the galleries was occupied even to the niches for the statuary, and great numbers crowded about the doors, blockading the corridors. Daniel Webster did not have half so large an audience when he made his famous reply to Hayne. The General had everything to inspire him, and made the most of his fine advantages. His speech was a tremendous philippic, crowded full of admirable points, and bursts of indignant invective. "It brought down the house" several times, in spite of all the Speaker could do to prevent it. Henry Winter Davis, in my judgment, made the best speech of the occasion. He is a fine orator, as fine, I think as we have in the country. His very manner is fascinating, while his argumentation is always forcible, and his eloquence irresistible. On this occasion he used no notes whatever, but "spoke right on" for an hour in as admirable a strain as can well be imagined. Mr. Colfax outdid himself when closing the debate on that side. He has never made so strong a speech, and if his imperturbable good nature might have seemed to be a fault at such a time, I do not think he could help it.

A few general words about the discussion on the other side: . . . Mr. Fernando Wood, who is by no means a "little villain" "prayed God" excessively; Mr. Voorhees, who is not commonly understood to be precisely virtuous, "thanked God" at the end of every other sentence, and at the commencement of the rest; whilst Mr. Rogers of New Jersey, who doesn't know how to pronounce the commonest English words, and is owned by the Cam-



den and Amboy besides, "trusted in God" with a faith for which piling Pelion on Ossa would have been merely a recreation. I never saw so pious a set of moral traitors in my life. Here are these men who, so far as words may do so, are rendering aid and comfort to the enemy; are doing all in their power to screen from just punishment the man who defends the most wicked of rebellions; whose private lives are not such as we would commend to the imitation of our children, to say the least of them, who get off more religious expletives than one would hear at a week's "protracted meeting." — The gentlemen I have named, with Cox and Pendleton, made the loudest speeches on the Copperhead side, save only that of Harris. The New Jersey man is, I think, the nearest to a fool of any man out of a straight jacket I ever saw, in or out of Congress. With the exception of his speech, the efforts of the Democrats were not without merit, and one or two were quite ingenious, but it is admitted on all hands that we gained a complete victory. Our friends are jubilant. The friends of Jeff. Davis are sadly down in the mouth. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Apr. 27, 1864]

[May 23, 1864]

The time for the Cleveland and Baltimore Conventions is so near at hand that their probable action must needs excite the attention of politicians everywhere, and especially here where the whole community is stirred by the least political movement like aspen leaves by the breeze. As to the Cleveland convention, it is simply a radical anti-Lincoln movement, and may embarrass more or less the action of the Baltimore Convention. — There is the name of but one distinguished American gentleman upon the call — that of B. Gratz Brown, of Missouri. The others are nearly all Germans.

The Germans in America are for the most part earnestly devoted to the cause of freedom and humanity. They are generally industrious, frugal, intelligent. . . . What I object to in the Germans here is, that they seem to want to Germanize America, refusing themselves to be Americanized, except through the technical forms of the naturalization papers. They held a professedly German convention at Cleveland last year. In a hundred ways they preserve their distinct nationality, and in the instance cited, exhibited it in an offensive manner.

The coming Cleveland Convention will not be wholly German, but it will



be so nearly so that the difference will not be worth calculation. It will, probably, adjourn to Baltimore, meeting there at the same time as the Union Convention. Its managers have already secured the hall of the Maryland Institute, the finest and largest in the city, compelling our Convention to go to a theatre. I suspect there will be a little awkward embarrassment at first, but I cannot see any ground upon which to anticipate serious trouble. Certainly the friends of Mr. Lincoln can afford to be generous, and his opponents cannot afford to be unreasonable. A radical platform, and the certainty of a radical Cabinet, demanded no less by a great majority of the American people than by our German citizens, ought to satisfy all, and less ought not to be thought of by the friends of Mr. Lincoln. That is the right way to settle the hash, and according to present indications, that is the way it will be settled. . . .

[Des Moines Iowa State Register, June 1, 1864]

[June 6, 1864 — Baltimore]

There is skirmishing all along the political lines this forenoon. The town has been full of President-makers for several days. One sees them everywhere — on the innumerable verandahs of Barnum's Hotel, on the long verandah of this fine House [Eutaw House], crowding all the places of public resort, jamming up Baltimore and Calvert streets, and in crowds on Monumental Square, in front of Gen. Lew Wallace's headquarters. It is a lively time, nearly as much so as that liveliest of all times I ever experienced — the week of the Chicago Convention.

There is this difference, however. At Chicago, there were very few Members of Congress, whilst there are many of them here now. A majority of these are opposed to Mr. Lincoln, or, to state the fact more exactly, are opposed to that kite with the Blair family for the tail. The kite, they think, would fly well enough with a new tail. — And that is what causes almost all of the preliminary skirmishing, which has thus far been developed. That and the platform make up the sum total of discussion.

As to the coming meeting at Maryland Institute, it does not, as yet, frighten any body from his propriety. It will no doubt have among members many earnest, patriotic men, but if it was designed to dictate terms for, or split the Union party in two, it will signally fail, according to present indications, both in the one and the other. I have no little respect for political spleen, and considerable affection for lager beer; but "rule or ruin" is



an article of secession faith to which I do not subscribe. Nor will any considerable portion of the people. That is what the Maryland Institute folks are having put through their wool this morning.

The Iowa delegation, thanks to the foresight of Hub Hoxie, have tip-top accommodations at this hotel, one of the best in the country. They are all in good spirits this evening, and agree that a radical platform and Mr. Lincoln is the programme that the Convention ought to adopt. That it is the programme which, it is thought, will win. — Other delegations think the same way. I guess they are right who think so.

Mr. Greeley makes no assaults on the President, I learn, though I have not seen him. — Thurlow Weed is lying low and pulling wires — a useless labor. Mr. Lincoln is stronger without his help than with it. There are prejudices against the Albany manipulator, as there are against Fred Douglass. I set off the one against the other, and Greeley against Seward, thereby making the outside pressure from New York about equal on both sides. Nobody seems to care much for Mr. Raymond [Henry J. Raymond, editor of the *New York Times*].

Cameron and Forney from Pennsylvania, are working together this time, but on the whole the professional politicians are pretty equally divided between the friends and opponents of Mr. Lincoln, while few pretend to deny that he is the choice of the masses. A survey of the whole field, to-night, makes me think the prospects of harmonious action are good.

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, June 8, 1864]

[June 7, 1864 — Baltimore]

The place of meeting for the Union Convention is called Front Street Theatre . . . because it is in the back part of the city. It must have been in the days of Lord Baltimore, when the street could have appropriately have been called Front Street. It is fully a mile from Monumental Square, and a mile and a half from here. In getting to it one goes up Gay street, after leaving Baltimore, first in a circular direction, and then zig-zag-wise, after the manner of a worm fence. This will probably suit many of the delegates who "refrigerate" themselves frequently by getting around cooling beverages.

All the principal ways to the theatre were alive with people at an early hour of the day, and long before noon the immense building was found to be entirely inadequate for the crowd. Front street, a rather narrow and



very crooked thoroughfare, was a jam of people for a square to the east and west of the theatre, whilst Gay seemed to be as full as possible all the way down to Baltimore street. It was hard work for the street cars to get along at all in several localities. I think there was not less than five thousand people in the theatre within five minutes after the doors were thrown open. They swarmed in, in one tremendous bulge, and settled down in the parquette, dress circle and pit. It was a sea of faces — three seas of faces, in fact. The place for the Orchestra, the orchestra chairs, the stage, are used by the Convention and the reporters. The arrangements are not so good as at Chicago in 1860, but they are the best that could be had at Baltimore.

The temporary organization was smoothly gone through with, and many think the whole work of the Convention will be completed to-morrow.

The great themes of discussion this evening are the platform and the Vice Presidency. No doubt the members of the platform committee can profit by the outside discussions, if they only will. There is a great deal of noise and confusion on the Monroe Doctrine especially. On this point most of the sly old political foxes are in favor of a Janus-faced resolution, one that Mr. Seward can "magnificently explain" to Mr. Dayton, and which our orators can spread themselves over before the people. But the popular outside feeling is strong for a plain, straightforward, bold resolution of affirmance. No person on the streets speaks against a radical platform. But we shall see.

Old Abe seems to be the only nag yet entered. All the indications to-night point to his nomination by acclamation. Andy Johnson and Mr. Hamlin are the men most talked of for Vice. It looks like Hamlin would get it. Some sensible men talk of Robert J. Walker, and others of John Andrew.

I just heard a distinguished New Yorker say we should have a lively time on the platform. I do not think there will be serious trouble.

The outside pressure against the Blairs is terrific.

[Des Moines Iowa State Register, June 15, 1864]

[June 11, 1864]

Perhaps the most tiresome, the most exhaustive work a man can engage in is this thing of attending Conventions, especially National Conventions, as a Reporter. One has to be on his legs so much, standing on stone pavements or the marble halls of first class hotels, that one must soon become as "exhausted" in the proper sense, as the pious Friar Tuck ever was, on



canary or claret. Moreover, during the sittings of the Convention the Reporter must all the while give the closest attention to the proceedings. The chairman may get "mixed up" and wound all around clear out of sight in the labyrinths of total discomboberation, but such would be an unpardonable offense on the part of one with a purple ticket in his pocket. He must always know "where we are." It is hard work; hence, since my last dispatch to you, I have been taking a couple days rest, and must confess I do not yet feel as vigorous as I used to feel, before I had but little hair on the top of my head in the place where the hair ought to grow, and what is left had been turned from gorgeous auburn to dapple gray. If I do not quit getting old I shall be played out before the end of the century. But that is neither here nor there after all. I proceed:

The Baltimore Convention was in many respects remarkable — remarkable for the harmony of its proceedings, the utter want of wire pulling, its courage, and the celerity with which it got along with its business. Only upon one subject was there anything like a want of nearly absolute unanimity — the admission of Tennessee, Louisiana, and Arkansas — and the decision of the majority herein was submitted to by the strong minority with great good nature. All the other animated discussions were simply discussions upon points of order, not upon principles nor upon measures of policy. The Missouri radicals were admitted by a crushing majority, 440 to 4. South Carolina was left out in the cold with the most imperturbable *nonchalance* [sic]. Old Virginia ditto. But there were considerations connected with Tennessee especially, and with Louisiana and Arkansas, which could not be ignored, and in regard to which there was, naturally enough, some difference of opinion. The discussion, however, was not productive of a drop of bad blood. It served to give animation to the Convention for an hour or two, and then all went on as though the delegates were a band of brothers. It was about the same with the nomination of a candidate for Vice President. The friends of the eminent gentlemen voted for were earnest friends, but a bare plurality sufficed to make the nomination certain on the first ballot. I think a similar result would have occurred had Mr. Hamlin or Mr. Dickinson or any of the other candidates been ahead at the conclusion of the roll call. We had got along gloriously so far and weren't going to quarrel over minor matters. That was the feeling of the Convention. . . .

Henry J. Raymond, of New York, a rather tallow-faced — perhaps I should say with a countenance sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought —



diminutive, black-haired, bright-eyed, intellectual looking person, is one of the best readers I ever heard. Murdock himself scarcely surpassed Raymond in clearness, musicalness, strength of voice, whilst his emphasis and cadences are always natural and correct. And he even surpassed himself in the reading of the excellent platform of the Convention, of which he had been the principal composer. Each resolution was enthusiastically cheered, but when Mr. Raymond read, "Resolved, third, That as Slavery was the cause, and now constitutes the strength of this rebellion, and it must be, always and everywhere, hostile to the principles of a republican government, justice and the National safety demand its *utter and complete extirpation from the soil of the Republic*" — when he had read that sentence, I say, I thought the roof of the building would be lifted from its place by the tremendous and long continued shoutings. The whole platform was most acceptable, and will doubtless meet the hearty approval of loyal people everywhere. The re-affirmation of the Monroe Doctrine was next in popularity to the third resolution. And so our Cleveland folks were cut under all around.

The nomination of Mr. Lincoln was greeted with quite as hearty applause as was the case at Chicago. Bands played but could scarcely be heard on account of the shoutings; cannon were fired in salute, but they seemed to boom far off. It was, in short, the Chicago scene over again. It was somewhat subdued in the case of Johnson, but not for want of enthusiasm. Men couldn't "holler" nor women scream joyfully with so much noise, simply because they had to some extent exhausted their lungs on Lincoln.

Quite an unpleasant episode took place just before the nomination of Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Samuel Wilkeson, the Jacobin correspondent of the *Tribune* thus refers to it:

"Twas not easy to come down from this sublime to the paths that the feet of politicians make in National Conventions. But the haste of men famished for office, or demented with vanity to get ahead in the sorry race for precedence in nominating an inevitable candidate for the Presidency, had to be endured. Iowa must breed men of nerve or men without nerves. The insensibility of one of her sons to the jeers and laughter and scorn of the Convention, while he scrambled through all rules and all courtesy and all decency, to snatch from Cameron of Pennsylvania the distinction of moving the nomination of Mr. Lincoln by acclamation, was a marvelous spectacle. But it furnished the fun of the day, and men were in the end as



grateful to him of Iowa as if he had been a Ravel and had sought before our eyes to slake his thirst out of a bottle whose cork had no end."

This refers to Gov. Stone, who seemed to be very anxious to nominate the President. It was unquestionably the feeling of the Convention, and especially of the reporters, that propriety demanded the nomination from another source — either from the Illinois delegation or from Gen. Cameron, who was chairman of the Pennsylvania delegation, had been one of Mr. Lincoln's confidential advisers, and the man of his Cabinet first to take a stand in favor of emancipation. The galleries, however, stood by Stone, and all must agree that the above attack by the *Tribune* man is grossly abusive, unjust in the main, and entirely uncalled for. It was at most only a question of propriety and if eastern dilettanti cannot appreciate a little determination in the rough, it is their fault and not ours.

Let me conclude with saying that our Iowa delegation was "eminently sound" and practical throughout. If the members did not talk, they were all the time up to snuff, and invariably voted wisely. Some of them are now here, and will remain still a day or two in order to see, in all his magnificent proportions, our Washington elephant. . . .

[Des Moines Iowa State Register, June 22, 1864]

[June 16, 1864]

The ratification meeting last night in front of the Patent Office was what you would call out west a rip-snorter — most emphatically a big thing. It would have been, by reason of the numbers in attendance and the enthusiasm manifested "all along the lines," an important meeting almost anywhere. It may justly be stated to have been one of the most, if not absolutely the most, successful popular demonstrations ever had in this city.

Mrs. Linkensale and the two little Linkensales of the female persuasion having got the New York fever, as well as Mrs. Theophilus Dobbs, have left me at home as a sort of general superintendent and dry nurse for Harrie. He had just said his prayers, at 6½ last evening, and was listening with all due attention to my clumsy rendering of "Home, Sweet Home" on the flute, when bang went a great gun, and soon bang! bang!! bang!! went more; in ran the landlady shrieking "rebels! rebels!!" at the top of the feminine gamut, and I had to stop playing long enough to assure her that my life was insured in the New England, and the rebels aforeshrieked were only a Union battery doing the honors to Old Abe and Andy Johnson. Which



was exactly true. The guns thundered away awhile, the boy fell asleep, and I proceeded to the scene of action.

Already the crowd was large. Before dark, there were not less than 10,000 persons in front of the Patent Office. By twilight, bands were playing, rockets were piercing and ensparing the skies, transparencies were lightened up, the whole south front of the immense Patent office and north front of the Post office, immediately opposite, were brilliantly illuminated, and the surging crowd at 8 o'clock stood in as bright a light as at noon-day without a cloud this side of New Foundland.

The Patent office is the largest building in America, and one of the largest in the world. Many of your readers are aware that it is built in the Doric style of architecture, of white marble, with an immense portico extending from each front, supported by fluted pillars and columns some sixty feet in height. The building extends all the way from 7th to 9th streets, and it was from the portico in the middle, and exactly fronting 8th street, that the orators of the occasion spoke. — Half way up the front row of pillars was an immense transparency showing the names of "Lincoln and Johnson" so distinctly that they might have been read by the pilots on the Potomac, a mile away. Immediately above the speakers' stand was a prodigious gas jet, which brought out the word Union in gigantic letters, and above it was an arch of flame. Laurels, flowers, evergreens hung in graceful festoons on the pillars and extended between them. Small transparencies were plenty. On one I noticed the inscription "Emancipation Proclamation — for this act I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God." On another, "America wants no friend who, in war, condemns the justice of her cause; all such are traitors. — *Douglas*." On another, "If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. — *Lincoln*." "You should be treated as traitors, tried as traitors, and hanged as traitors. — *Johnson*." All the other transparencies had something good on them, but I have quoted enough to show you that the world moves even here.

The crowd blocked up F street almost all the way between Seventh and Ninth, and pushed its way far down into Eighth. The average number present was about 10,000, but I think there were not less than 15,000 there during the evening. Thousands went away because they could not get near enough to hear well.

Judge Edmunds of the General Land Office, the President of the meeting, talked through his nose, and blew that necessary organ by turns awhile, and



then introduced Judge Kelley, of Pennsylvania, who made an excellent, eloquent speech. He always does. Lane of Indiana made a good speech, chiefly about the platform. Many parts of it were very fine, I always thought they were, from the time I first heard them, about fifteen years ago. All us old Hoosiers have had them committed to memory for a dozen years. Intellectually Henry S. Lane is played out. Howard of Michigan, Denio of Illinois (not of Iowa, as the miserable *Chronicle* has it), Gov. Randall of Wisconsin, and Green Adams of Ky., all made good speeches. Take it all in all, the speechifying was very respectable all around, that of Lane being the most popular to those who were unacquainted with his old jokes, antics and second-hand wit.

The Baltimore nominations and platform were ratified with tremendous enthusiasm, and it was very late when the meeting adjourned, with nine cheers and a savage tiger for Lincoln, Johnson and Grant.

And this reminds me, by association, that I promised to give you sketches of some of the celebrities of the Baltimore Convention. My linked sweetness, however, has already got to be so long drawn out that I must hurry to close the chapter.

Gov. Dennison, the President of the Convention, maugre his ignorance, frankly confessed, of parliamentary rules, was a tip-top presiding officer — quick, decided, and impartial. . . . Preston King is a tun [sic] of a man, the Falstaff of politics. He has about three finger-lengths of flesh on his ribs, and elsewhere in the same vast proportions. Herein lies the cream of Jim Lane's joke — "Mr. President," said Jim, who was sitting on one side of the chair, "as the gentleman from New York has his back towards this part of the hall, his voice is so far off we can't hear him at all!" Whereupon old Preston laughed and waddled up to the stand. He is so fat, he speaks after the fashion of excessively fat people. "Bister Chairban," said he, "I think the bere suggestion of by abendbent is all that is necessary. No arguebent of bine can change the deterbination of the Convention, whatever that bay be." He is a jolly old soul, and had the good sense to vote against his own amendment, and admit the Radicals of Missouri. — Tremain of New York is a splendid looking man, with a most dignified and aldermanic abdomen. He speaks splendidly. — Cameron is a free and easy old gentleman, not caring a hill of beans for dignity. He didn't care half so much about our Governor's contest with him on the nominating motion as the reporters did. *Per contra*, he quite admired Stone's pluck and persis-



tency. He and Breckenridge took their tobacco out of the same box, to-wit: your correspondent's. On the whole, Cameron must be set down as a gay, plucky, rather thick-tongued, estimable, good looking old gentleman. Jim Lane is a bald-headed, rough, tough, tall, lank, lean, "rantankerous old cuss." He is a miserable fellow, but he has energy, brass, presumption infinite, and so had a good deal of weight in the Convention. . . .

[Des Moines Iowa State Register, June 29, 1864]

[July 4, 1864]

. . . The great event of last week was the resignation of Secretary Chase. Taking the newspapers at a distance for my guide, I judge it created quite a profound sensation everywhere. But I presume it did not affect other communities so thoroughly as it did this. It is the absolute truth that Washington City was not more gloomy upon receiving news of our defeat at Bull Run than it was between the time when Mr. Chase's resignation became known and the time when Mr. Fessenden was appointed in his place. Every intelligent man knew that David Tod, at first nominated to the vacancy, would be hopelessly and irretrievably swamped within a fortnight. Fortunately, the Senate would not permit him to take the vacant place, and, taking time by the forelock, he "declined." — Meantime, gold went up like a kite, government securities went down, and heavy gloom settled upon the hearts of all patriotic men.

"We could have better endured a defeat before Richmond or Atlanta" — that was the expression upon the tongues of all Union men here. I never again want to go through two such days as last Thursday and Friday.

The causes which led to Mr. Chase's resignation are manifold. He has long been the target for the attacks of the Blairs and Thurlow Weed. Nevertheless, they retain the confidence of the Executive. This, of course, could not help making the Secretary restive. The tongue of a gossiping woman is beyond all expression tantalizing and unendurable. Mrs. Lincoln did not scruple to attack the Secretary with all the weapons known to warfare of the speaking organ. She carried this so far that a blunt old Major General, who bore honorable scars upon his body, had to tell her the other day that she must quit it or retire from the White House on the 4th of March. Mr. Chase and the President are essentially different in their organizations. — The one is humorous, fond of jokes, sublimely good natured. He goes to the theatre, tells his stories to every body, and takes things as they come



generally, without apparent fretting and fuming. The other is fearfully earnest, serious, and all wrought up in our national struggle. I do not suppose that Mr. Lincoln is really less in earnest than Mr. Chase, but their organizations are so different that I suspect the President thinks the late Secretary is a fanatic, and he thinks the President is a mere jester. Both are herein in the wrong, but none the less disagreeable associates. It is what they would call "incompatibility of temper" in an Indiana divorce case.

These were the little things which, like gnats, annoyed Mr. Chase. Perhaps the moving cause of his resignation was the failure of this Congress, than which there never has been one more cowardly, to provide the revenue he thought necessary to carry on the government during our fearful struggle. A score or two of fip-and-a-bit members, whom we wouldn't elect road supervisors in Iowa, thought they knew all about all questions of finance, and were continually clogging his system by amendments and by opposition, in fact selfish, though not, in many cases, intentionally so. What with a multitude of little annoyances, therefore, and others of great weight, he thought it best to give up a position which, it must be universally conceded, he had filled with profound ability. Mr. Chase has faults — one, very prominent, that he does not thoroughly understand human nature; another, that he does not stand by his friends; another, that he lacks the highest order of courage — but if there is a public man in the country who is, upon the whole, entitled to more admiration, or has done more valuable service to America, I do not know him. The Blairs, the political bandits generally, may rejoice that he has been compelled, by the force of circumstances, to retire from the public service, but the country cannot help lamenting it.

It is not yet certain that Mr. Fessenden [Senator from Maine] will accept the portfolio tendered him. I think there is no man more capable of conducting our financial affairs. William Pitt Fessenden is confessedly the leader of the Senate. Neither as a debater nor a legislator does he have a superior in that body. — His mind is acute, strong, great. He can see both the details of a great measure and its general effect. There is no man more practical than he, and no man who hates your Utopian statesmen more sharply. He has been chairman of the Senate Finance Committee for several years, and is completely versed in all the financial legislation of Congress and the practical workings of our present system. I am most anxious to learn, when I go down town this morning, . . . that he has accepted.

The only trouble with Mr. Fessenden is, his dyspepsia. It makes him



"cross," hence arises one of the jokes of the street: That it is a rule of the Senate that Sumner must speak daily, Fessenden get mad, and McDougal drunk! . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, July 13, 1864]

[August 15, 1864]

. . . Only a few words about politics: The address of Ben Wade and Winter Davis upon the subject of Mr. Lincoln's proclamation, assigning reasons for not signing the reconstruction bill [Lincoln had pocket-vetoed the Wade-Davis bill on reconstruction of the South], made a great deal of talk in this city, which, as you know, lives and moves and has its being in political discussion. The document is certainly a very ably written paper, and coming from men so well known, from one so long and favorably known to the friends of freedom, cannot help having much influence during the coming campaign. It is now stated, whether with absolute truth I do not know, that another document, written by Winter Davis, arraigning the shortcomings of the Administration and calling an independent Convention at Buffalo, is being circulated among the prominent men of the country, and is being signed by many. I do not know anything about it of my own knowledge, as above mentioned, but I suspect there is some foundation for the report. It is useless to deny the fact that, since Mr. Chase was somehow got out of the Cabinet, and Mr. Blair somehow kept in, there has been a growing uneasiness exhibited by many of the best friends the country has. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Aug. 24, 1864]

[July 16, 1864]

. . . I have received a letter from a friend in Iowa, of which these are extracts: "I have read your letter in the *Register* wherein you quote from Wilkenson's dirty attack on Stone, and must confess I am at a loss to know whether you intended to defend him or curse him. It is at best a very *dubious* concern. \* \* Your comments have been copied into nearly all the Copperhead papers in the State. (Glad they had lively reading matter for once. — Link.) \* \* I don't myself believe you intended to do Stone any harm, believe you are friendly toward him, as I know he is toward you, but you must admit you sometimes have an extremely *awkward* way of praising your friends."



That is good! My friend is a "gay old boy." It was not my intention, when I commenced writing the letter above referred to, to say one word about any particular member of our regular delegation at Baltimore, or about Gov. Stone, who was placed in the delegation to fill the place of an absentee. — Before getting through, however, it struck me that it would be a simple act of justice to the regular delegates to refer to Mr. Wilkenson's attack, in which no name was mentioned, and to state *whom* that writer attacked. That was my judgment, and I have not yet changed my mind. That it was not incorrect is abundantly proved by the fact that several Iowa papers quoted the obnoxious paragraph before my letter appeared in the *Register*, with the significant inquiry "who is it?" In my opinion it would have been grossly wrong in me, under such circumstances, to have said nothing about the matter. I therefore quoted the "dirty attack," named the target aimed at, and said some few words in explanation, but with no intention of fully "defending" Gov. Stone, and certainly with none of "cursing" him. It is my custom in attacking any body, to hit him "fair and square" between the eyes, and not go at him in a round about style; and I do not know that Governors are entitled to more consideration in this respect than other men. No one could have misunderstood me had I "intended to curse" the Governor. — What I said outside of briefly referring to the matter in a reportorial manner, was strongly in favor of the Governor.

And I say now that if the "Copperhead papers of the State" are trying to make capital against the Governor upon the authority of your correspondent, they are sustaining their reputation mighty well as magnificent liars. If they twist my words into meanings which they will not bear, it is their fault, not mine. I must regret it, but cannot help it.

I intended to give you some extracts from published letters and editorials of leading journals which were favorable to Stone, but it is not necessary, since you have printed the article upon the subject from the *Missouri Democrat*, which is a candid *expose* of the whole matter. I will add that I am very sure no reputable correspondent would have said one word in condemnation of our Governor, had his real object been known. That object was, to defeat Mr. Hamlin's renomination (a thing any delegate certainly had a right to do, and ought to have attempted, if he thought another nomination better and wiser), and *not* simply to get the "glory" of nominating Mr. Lincoln. It was to accomplish *this* end that Governor Stone labored,



and he labored pluckily, persistently, efficiently except on one point. I stood by him stoutly in the Convention — have done so since, and feel like getting indignant at those who think otherwise. For they must so think without rhyme or reason.

Finally, I do not care about being any further troubled with this matter, nor do I see any wisdom in burdening the press with it further. The Governor can stand a good many "paper bullets of the brain" without being mortally wounded; and I certainly shall endeavor to endure a good many misunderstandings (necessarily incident to correspondence which must be rapidly written) without losing my appetite. This is the second explanation I ever made of anything written for the public press, and it must be the last. Were my own good name only at issue, I should pass it by with the same perfect silence I have ever borne in such cases, but it is not right that I should allow our Executive to be assailed as by my authority without a solemn protest against it.

[Des Moines Iowa State Register, July 27, 1864]

[August 18, 1864]

The political and military "situations" are so interesting just at this juncture, especially from this point of view, that I must go in on my muscle and give your delighted readers another interloping epistle. . . .

Washingtonians live and move and have their being in politics. It is the plain truth they now are giving a hundred times as much attention to the recent pronunciamento of Ben Wade and Winter Davis, and to discussions arising therefrom, as they are giving to Grant, Sheridan and glorious old Farragut put together.

Forney's *Chronicle* yesterday morning had a studied, thickly italicized (an earmark of the chevalier himself), heavy, double leaded leader, of which the following is the conclusion:

"We would not insult Senator Wade of Ohio, or Henry Winter Davis of Maryland, by comparing or contrasting them with the Vallandighams or Woods, but with their grave relations to the Union party, and their close connections with it, it is our deliberate and sorrowful judgment that their late manifesto has done more lasting injury among the only consolidated friends of the Government than twenty of the pronunciamentos from the escaped refugees in Canada, or the remorseless prince of discord in the House. Now that Slavery is absolutely gone, we would sacrifice all other



things but the Union to save the Union. We would see Mr. Lincoln himself out of the canvass, with all our attachment to his person and our high sense of his prescience, which so many did not see three years ago who now so readily recognize it, if by such a surrender we could save the country from the election of a representative of a dishonorable peace on the basis of separation. From that catastrophe we must be saved at all hazards."

Being interpreted, Forney, who has heretofore lavished upon Mr. Lincoln more unmixed adulation than any honest person ever gave any man, turns tail and runs before the menaces of Wade and Davis.

It has often been remarked that Mr. Lincoln's worst enemies were his best friends. The Blair tribe, Thurlow Weed, *et id genus omne*, all the "scurvy politicians" that is, have done him more harm by their friendship than they ever could have done if they had been out and out opponents. They have lessened the moral power of the administration. And now they charge upon better men than themselves the doing of more "lasting injury" to the Nation's cause than could have been done by the Copperheads! Very true. Yet it is these very men who have made it possible for such a man as Ben Wade to act so harmfully. Upon them, and not upon him, should the curses of the nation fall. If Abraham Lincoln would but be himself, if he would but shake off from his skirts the bad men who hang thereto, he would have the hearty friendship and support of the masses of the people not only, but of the public men who would add dignity, sincerity, moral power, exalted statesmanship to the administration. Thereby his success in November would be cast beyond any doubt, and by so overwhelming a support that the rebellion could speedily and easily be completely crushed. If he will not pursue this course, he must rely solely upon military success. . . .

[Des Moines Iowa State Register, August 31, 1864]

[September 3, 1864]

I haven't been so pleased for a long time as I have been since the Chicago Convention. [At Chicago the Democrats had nominated General George B. McClellan and George H. Pendleton of Ohio for President and Vice President.] Had Grant taken Richmond, or Sherman Atlanta, it would hardly have been better for the Union cause. . . . Only think of nominating Little Mac, who couldn't take Centreville, defended by wooden guns and say 40,000 ragged rebels, for an office whose duties would require him to take lots of Centrevilles, defended by real guns — of Little Mac, who couldn't



get his canal boats into the Potomac, as commander of our navies, and Semmes not dead yet! It is a good joke.

And then Pendleton as a tail to that preposterous kite! But it is an old trick of the "democracy," after all. Whenever they see they have no show for success they always put up their rotten pins to be knocked down. They have a knack of shelving their ambitious nincompoops which is worthy of considerable admiration. The shrewd managers wanted to get Little Mac out of the way, and so they put him up at Chicago, knowing that, after the greenhorns had spent considerable money, a great deal of wind, and lots of sky-rockets, just enough to keep the organization from going to pieces entirely — he would be so badly whaled that he would receive the pity of the charitable and the contempt of the just, with the general regret of his own supporters that Seymour, for instance, had not been nominated, to make at least a decent race. The Chicago Convention, I repeat, could not have done more service to the country, had it been managed by our own friends. It is another instance of the old saying, whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad. The Convention was out of its mind. It is an absolute fact that "old strategy" has very little more ability than say the "historian of the Puritans," whilst George H. Pendleton and Vallandigham are as much like as twin cherries on the same stem.

Whereas, before the Convention, the prospects of our success were not brilliant, there is now no sort of doubt that Mr. Lincoln's election is certain and that by an overwhelming majority. The friends of the Union everywhere are jubilant. Dispatches and letters have been coming in from all parts of the country, showing that the apathy which heretofore existed and the bickerings which arose from such documents as the Wade manifesto are no more. I think it perfectly safe to say that in the State of New York Mr. Lincoln has to-day at least twenty-five thousand more votes than he had on last Monday. And a similar fact is true of other States, with the exception, perhaps, of Pennsylvania, where poor Little Mac has less unpopularity with the people than everywhere else.

But it is not only the Chicago ticket which is unpopular. There are thousands who might have supported McClellan and even swallowed Pendleton, who indignantly spurn the platform. It is a peace platform of the worst kind. It requires those who support it to get down on their knees before Jeff Davis and beg his pardon for having attempted to prevent him from destroying the Union. It has no word of condemnation for those who have



brought all the desolation and woes of the last three years upon the country. The man who supports that platform must blot out from his mind and heart all approbation of, and all sympathy for, the Government established by Washington and his illustrious compeers, and yield both his approbation and sympathy to that piratical and heathenish manifesto, the Montgomery Constitution. The platform is made in the interests of the Vallandighams, the Longs, the Woods, the Voorhees, and others of the North, who form the silent co-partners with the red-handed rebels of the South. It must be a solid fool who can believe that any large portion of the people will have anything to do with it. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Sept. 14, 1864]

[September 21, 1864]

The intelligence of Sheridan's great victory in the Shenandoah Valley reached this city yesterday morning, and created a tremendous excitement and a fine glow of enthusiasm all around. Cheers and "tigers" were vociferated boisterously all over the city, whilst a battery of artillery banged a salute of a hundred guns, to the great damage of window glass and the great disgust of Copperheads. I haven't seen a more jolly time since the victory at Gettysburg and at Vicksburg. I haven't seen so many long Copperhead faces at any time since the war began.

The fact is, the opposition had relied upon the defeat of Sheridan, and another invasion of Pennsylvania. They thought that if they succeeded herein, they could, in the first place, dampen the ardor of the friends of the administration, raise the premium on gold and get the tide fairly set to flowing against the friends of the Union. They thought, in the second place, they could thus get up a diversion in favor of poor Little Mac, by swearing if *he* had only been in command, Pennsylvania would not have been invaded, and all that sort of thing. In the third place, they thought they could altogether defeat the draft, and stop reinforcements for the armies by bringing about a depression of feeling and want of confidence in the administration, consequent upon another defeat.

And now, all their calculations knocked "into a forty-foot cocked hat," what shall become of them? They are lugubrious, long-faced, melancholic, and altogether disheartened. They are used up — played out. They show it themselves, and everybody sees it. Poor Little Mac's stock has gone down fifty per cent to day, even in this city, which is half full of secessionists.



Sheridan has carried Indiana, the only doubtful State among those voting in October. You can now bet on Morton. Thus it is, that with the success of our gallant armies in the field, the cause of the country is bright. What must we think of the party which can only succeed upon the defeat of our armies, upon the ruin of the country?

Sheridan has exhibited masterly generalship in this campaign. He has done precisely what ought to have been done, at precisely the right time. He kept a large force away from Richmond, permitting it to eat out of house and home the rebel inhabitants of the Valley — prevented it from crossing into Pennsylvania and Maryland, and finally threshed it so completely that what is left of it is on a panic-stricken foot race toward Richmond, the most fearfully demoralized army of the war. The country owes a great debt of gratitude to Phil. Sheridan and his gallant army, in which, by the way, and no doubt doing manly service, were the 22d, 24th, and 28th Iowa Regiments.

The Little Mac folks had a ratification meeting here the other night, which was quite largely attended by Gov. Seymour's friends — (one of 'em piously asked me as I picked my teeth in front of the National "where the divil the mating-house of the Mick Lillen gintlemen was?") and Union people who had a curiosity to see the show and hear the speechifying. The procession was about half as large as we used to get up in Iowa City during the campaign of '60, on a day's notice. . . . The said speechifying was tolerably dull, very abusive, and very treasonable — so much so that many honest citizens, who had theretofore expressed a preference for McClellan, were indignant, left in disgust, and are now strong for the Rail-Splitter. Such, beyond all peradventure, will be the result of most of the opposition meetings of the campaign. Let the people see, as they must see at these meetings, that the leaders of the opposition are at heart for a disgraceful peace upon the basis of disunion, and the bottom must fall out of the concern. And then it is such a unique concern that when the bottom is gone all is gone. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Oct. 5, 1864]

[September 26, 1864]

"Now by Saint Paul, the work goes bravely on!" In short, I feel jubilant. Copperheads can't knock the chips off Union men's shoulders as much as they did awhile back. Seven big victories right along in a row in the space of one month are enough to make a dumb man shout. And there they are:



— Mobile Bay, one; Chicago, two; Atlanta, three; Winchester, four; Strasburg, five; Fremont, six; and Montgomery Blair, seven. It is the lucky number. The rebellion is, so to say, played out. Its "eyes is sot." The beginning of the end is here!

The seven great victories to which I have alluded, are very diverse in their nature and comprehensive in their results. They make the oligarchy of Richmond tremble — they bring consternation and blank despair into the faces of its sympathizers in the North. They bring joy to the hearts of all who love their country, over and above party, whether they live in the loyal portions or that section which treason has devastated and made miserable. Chicago was a victory for the Union, because the Convention unmasked batteries which had theretofore been concealed. The guns were spiked in less than no time. Farragut's achievements were glorious for the country, and shameful for the Democracy, which had not even a word of enforced sympathy for the navy! The fall of Atlanta was to the rebellion well nigh a Waterloo defeat. Sheridan at Winchester and Strasburg has made the cleanest fighting we have had. Early's whole army of 35,000 men is virtually destroyed. It is fleeing in panic-stricken rout before our pursuing forces, and as it runs it leaves artillery, muskets and supplies all along its course. It can be followed by the immense lines of military *debris*, like the line of Bonaparte's retreat from Moscow. The old Stonewall Brigade is wiped from the face of the earth. It is as completely gone as last year's frost. Five thousand completely fresh men could gobble up all that is left of that "grand army" which was to "capture Washington" and dictate peace under the dome of the Capitol! It would be serene to listen to a peace orator declaiming, just now, upon "the failure of the war." These glorious victories of our navy and army are of incalculable value.

The other two I have named are of a different sort, but are of great value nevertheless. The men of earnest principles who fought the good fight of 1856, under the standard of Fremont, will be glad to learn they were not mistaken in their man. Shabbier treatment than he has had did no man ever receive. Better cause for personal resentment no man ever had. That he forgets both is what, indeed, he ought to do, but which would not be done by any other public man of whom I have any knowledge. [A group of extreme radicals had, in May, nominated Fremont on an independent ticket at Cleveland; Fremont had at first accepted but, after the fall of Atlanta, had withdrawn.] His declination will add very largely to the Union vote, espe-



cially in all those localities where the radical element largely predominates. It is as good as a victory, and hence may well enough be called one.

I never had the pleasure of witnessing a prize fight, but I believe the pinks of civilization who control those amiable institutions have a certain peremptory rule about "time." That is to say, when A. has a fight with B., and Mr. C. keeps tally, so to speak, it is his duty to cry "Time up" on a certain emergency. If A. has been pummeling B. pretty soundly, gouging out one or two of his eyes, smashing up his nose, putting his head into chancery, causing a compound not to say confounded, fracture of his skull, and pounding his lovely face into a nice black-and-blue jelly all around — if A. has done all this, I say, and in consequence thereof B. fails to come up to the scratch again before Mr. C. sings out "Time up!" it is all day with the aforementioned B. If I be wrong herein, some of your British readers can correct me. Mr. Montgomery Blair failed to come to time. He was at last so beautifully whaled by the well-directed blows of the earnest men of the country, that he could stand up no longer. And Mr. Lincoln, with the most admirable imperturbability, cries out, "*The time has come!*"

Mr. Lincoln has done many things for which the country owes him grateful acknowledgments, but he has done nothing, in the political line, calculated to do him more service than removing Montgomery Blair. It will be a source of satisfaction to hundreds of thousands of men who could not be satisfied with the administration upon any other terms whatever. It will infuse enthusiasm into many, very many, who could not be enthusiastic in their support of Mr. Lincoln whilst the Maryland political juggler continued in the cabinet. I do not know what others may think, but as I see, in my mind's eye, the retired Postmaster laying battered and gouged in the arena, utterly unable to come to time, and hear Uncle Abe crying out, "Time up!" to the consternation of the red-haired gentleman's backer, I can only rejoice at the "Deep damnation of his taking off."

And so the political situation is perfectly splendid. The tide is all rushing heavily in the right direction, and it seems to be beyond the power of man to stop it. I do not now believe that Mr. McClellan will carry more than two States — New Jersey and Kentucky — [McClellan actually carried three states: New Jersey, Kentucky, and Delaware] and those by such beggarly majorities as would not suffice to get up a tallow-candle illumination in Berks County. It is even asserted by intelligent gentlemen from that State that Mr. Lincoln will carry New Jersey. McDonald may defeat Mor-



ton in Indiana at the October election, but if so it will be by the skin of his teeth. Ex-Governor Wright says we shall carry the State by a handsome majority. Mr. Colfax, however, is scared, as usual. I guess Wright is right. At any rate, admitting that Morton may be defeated by a small majority, the other States voting on that day will go so strongly Union that Indiana will wheel into line by November. If we had in Indiana few more men not quite so easily frightened as Colfax and Defrees, no harm would ensue. That all the other States will go right, there is no more doubt than that the sun will rise to-morrow. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Oct. 5, 1864]

[Feb. 9, 1865]

. . . And here must end, for the present at any rate, my connection with the *Register*. My official duties, and labors upon a history of our Iowa troops [published at Philadelphia in 1866, under title *Iowa and the Rebellion* . . .] occupy all my time. I bid good-bye to my readers with feelings like those one has when parting from old friends. I beg them to recollect that this correspondence, which has now been continued about a year, has been hastily written, and ought on that account to receive their charitable criticism. If I have said anything unworthy of a man who loves his country and his fellow men of all climates, nations, and colors, ungenerous toward the party against which I have written, mealy-mouthed or white-livered toward the foes of America and of men — anything which a Christian gentleman could not read without blushing to his family, I shall ever regret it. If I have given any satisfaction or pleasure to the many who have read my lucubrations, I shall be satisfied. I conclude my labors in the columns of the *Register* with the kindest possible wishes for its increasing prosperity and usefulness, and for the long continued happiness of all connected with it, and of its friends everywhere. . . . Good-bye.

LINKENSALE

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Feb. 22, 1865]