

CENTENNIAL HISTORY
OF
MISSOURI
(THE CENTER STATE)

One Hundred Years in the Union
1820-1921

By WALTER B. STEVENS



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I was. He said to me: 'It is now inevitable that the general government will attempt the coercion of the southern states. War will ensue, I am a military man, a southern man, and, if we have to fight, will do so on the part of the South.' His subsequent acts are matters of history.

"I must here mention the treatment to which I was subjected, by reason of my vote on the above resolution. On my return home from the convention to Howard county, I found printed placards, calling a meeting of the people at Fayette, to condemn Judge Hall and myself for our vote on this resolution. I attended the meeting, and asked to be heard, but was denied with hisses and shoutings. I asked the privilege of speaking on the steps of the yard to all who wished to hear me; this was denied. Just at this juncture a man with whom I was intimate, whom I knew to be raising a company to go South, came with a number of armed men, took position by my side, and said that I should have the privilege of speaking. I did so, and appealed to the Missourians present, and said: 'This resolution does not propose that Missouri shall go out of the Union on principle, but will abjectly follow the other border states. Now,' I asked, 'is there a Missourian present who would desire me to vote for such a cowardly resolution?' The brave Missourians present gave me a rousing cheer, and voted to approve my vote."

Denounced by the Legislature.

On the 22d of March the legislature received from the convention which had so disappointed the southern rights element the resolution proposing that a convention of all the states be called to frame constitutional amendments in the interest of peace. How resentful the southern rights men felt was shown in the treatment of the resolution. Mr. Vest made the report of the committee to which the matter was referred. That report declared it was inexpedient to take any steps toward calling a national convention. "Going into council with our oppressors, before we have agreed among ourselves, can never result in good. It is not the North that has been wronged but the South, and the South can alone determine what securities in the future will be sufficient."

In the discussion on the report, Mr. Vest said: "The convention has been guilty of falsehood and deceit. It says there is no cause for separation. If this be so, why call a convention? In declaring that if the other border slave states seceded Missouri would still remain within the Union, these wisecracks have perpetrated a libel upon Missouri. So help me God! if the day ever comes when Missouri shall prove so recreant to herself, so recreant to the memories of the past and to the hopes of the future, as to submit tamely to these northern Philistines, I will take up my household goods and leave the state."

The convention adjourned on the 22d of March. The legislature adjourned about one week later. "Submissionist" was added to the political nomenclature of Missouri. As soon as it was evident that the convention was in the control of the anti-secession delegates, the southern rights men dubbed these delegates "submissionists," and thus referred to them in the fiery denunciations on the floor of the legislature and in the columns of the secession newspapers.

Home Rule Taken from St. Louis.

One of the legislative measures of the southern rights members of the general assembly took away from St. Louis home rule in police. The bill was introduced early in the session. It was not passed until March. St. Louis had a Union mayor, Oliver D. Filley. Up to that time the police had been a city department, controlled by the city government. The legislature passed an act

creating a board of four police commissioners to be appointed by the governor. The mayor was a fifth member, ex-officio. This board was given "absolute control of the police, of the volunteer militia of St. Louis, of the sheriff, and of all other conservators of the peace." Snead said: "This act took away from the republican mayor and transferred to the governor, through his appointees, the whole police power of the City of St. Louis. This was its expressed intention. It had other and more important purposes which were carefully concealed." Basil W. Duke was one of the police commissioners appointed under this act. He had been active in the organization of the Minute Men and commanded one of the companies.

The other members of the new police board were J. H. Carlisle, Charles McLaren and John A. Brownlee. Brownlee was a northern man, in favor of peace and against forcible coercion of the South. The others were sympathizers with the South and in favor of the secession of Missouri if war came. The use which could be made of the police force under state control was shown when Lyon, for the better defense of the arsenal, posted some of his men outside of the walls to give warning of an approach. The police commissioners protested against this use of United States soldiers. Lyon was compelled to recall his men within the arsenal. Rumors that the arsenal was to be seized by the state were renewed with the reorganization of the police force. Sentiment in St. Louis about the end of March shifted as the municipal election approached. It became strongly antagonistic to Blair and the Home Guards, most of whom were still without arms.

In the first week of April was held the municipal election. John How was the candidate of the Unconditional Union men. The leaders of the movement which had carried the city by 5,000 against the southern rights men in February supported How. Daniel G. Taylor, a popular democrat, but not a secessionist, was elected by 2,600 majority.