INTERNAL CONFLICT IN KEY STATES IN THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION OF 1880

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ONE of the more significant of recent monographs dealing with the period of the Civil War, and especially with the accomplishments of Abraham Lincoln, stresses the fact that the defeat of the Confederacy deprived the concept of "states rights" of plausibility, not only in the South but in the North as well. Yet for decades after the war the Democratic party resisted the fact of national supremacy and operated as though the states were still the dominant units in American society. They refused to face the implications of the transformation of the federal union of quasi-autonomous states into the new nation with its national economy, national culture, and national problems. This ostrich-type "head-in-the-sand" attitude was never better illustrated than in the national conventions of the party from 1864 to 1884. These conclaves were almost totally devoid of national vision and courageous statesmanship. They were, rather, mere arenas for a host of suicidal personal, regional, and economic class conflicts. The delegates to these quadriennial assemblies persisted in acting as though the political climate were the same as in the days of Jackson and Van Buren. One college text of a quarter-century ago provides a superb thumbnail summary of this earlier period with the observation that:

The Whig and Democratic parties and their successors were a bundle of local, sectional, and class interests, whose cross-sections . . . were a jig saw puzzle of radicalism and conservatism, national and state rights, personal loyalties and local issues. Party strategy was directed towards accumulating as many bundles as possible; and

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1 William B. Hesseltine, Lincoln and the War Governors (Madison, 1955).
statesmanship was the art of finding some person or principle common to all the bundles that would make them forget their differences and in union find strength.\textsuperscript{2}

While it may be claimed by some that Republican party gatherings at the national level during the quarter century before 1880 present a somewhat similar picture of personal rivalries, parochial platforms, and unlovely intrigue, yet there is a difference. "Lincoln had given the Republican party a national task and used the party, amid the exigencies of war, to transform a federal union into a new nation."\textsuperscript{3} The party leaders and many of the rank and file had learned this lesson well. When the effectiveness of the moral crusade against slavery and the ante bellum culture of the South wore thin, the Republicans came up with a many-faceted, nationwide economic program which produced a remarkable degree of unity and cohesiveness during presidential canvasses. Not until the 20th century did the Democrats really admit the necessity of embracing national concepts as a prerequisite to political victory. Hence, it is not surprising that the platform and nominations at the national Democratic convention of 1880 held at Cincinnati turned on the outcome of internal struggles in a limited number of key states, and on the supposed stark necessity to bury the bloody shirt forever.

Since no new states were admitted to the Union and no new census or reapportionment occurred in the years 1876-1880, the Democratic political strategists could operate within the framework of the same electoral arithmetic for the campaigns of 1876 and 1880. The changing significance and impact of such issues as reform, tariff, subsidies, and currency may have altered the picture slightly in certain areas, but those responsible in both parties for contriving a national presidential victory were faced with the following continuing political realities:

1. Barring unexpected complications, the eleven southern states with their 95 electoral votes and the five border states with 43 would end up in the Democratic column for a total of 138.
2. The Republicans could count on all of New England except Connecticut, all of the old Northwest and the Great Plains

\textsuperscript{2}Samuel E. Morison and Henry Steele Commager, \textit{The Growth of the American Republic} (New York, 1937), I, 447.

\textsuperscript{3}Hesseltine, \textit{op. cit.}, 5.
states except Indiana and possibly Ohio, as well as on Colorado and Oregon, for a total of 106 electoral votes. When the *probable* Republican states of California, Nevada, Ohio, and Pennsylvania were added to this sum, they would be credited with 166 electoral votes, although their hold on these probables was somewhat precarious as revealed by considerable Democratic success in off-year elections.

3. The four remaining states of New York (35), Indiana (15), New Jersey (9), and Connecticut (6) would probably decide the contest.

4. Since Pennsylvania and Ohio had shown some Democratic tendencies, it was apparent that the battleground would largely be confined to a rather narrow tier of states extending from Connecticut to Indiana. Thus, the platform and candidates should be tailored to appeal to a maximum of the voting strength in these states, without unduly alienating other regions which were expected to support the party program. While the candidates would not necessarily have to be picked from these states, they would have to be able to carry these key regions. Put another way, if it were generally known and expected that a candidate could *not* win in most of these states, it would be suicidal to nominate him, regardless of his virtues.

5. The bulk of the money to finance the campaigns would come from New York, especially New York City. The Republicans could also expect considerable cash from manufacturers in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, but in general the interests and judgments of the very limited number of contributors would determine where and how the money was to be spent. States outside the limits of the battle area could not expect much help in finances and personnel from the national headquarters. The Republicans, being in power, could use all of the resources of the national administration in terms of patronage, civil servant contributions, deputy sheriffs, and even troops to influence the result. This was still true in 1880, despite the efforts of Hayes to clean up the governmental service and despite the vigorous attempts of the Democratic Congress in 1879 and 1880 to prevent the use of “force” in supervising elections.
6. Western and southern desire for varying currency, banking and tariff reforms, and southern hopes for railroad subsidies were exerting increasing pressure on the national leadership, especially among the Democrats. As one southern newspaper man reported in May 1879, "It is a fact not to be concealed that our people are growing weary of being longer bound to the chariot of New York." But a majority of the voters in the crucial states were still opposed to such economic legislation, although the proponents of silver remonetization, Greenbackism, tariff and banking reform had made some progress in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana. Above all, with the exception of limited tariff reform, these programs were anathema to the financial backers of the Democratic party in the Eastern urban areas.

7. The waving of the bloody shirt, the fear of the Solid South or, as sometimes referred to, the concept of the Solid North, though a factor of lessening power, still possessed some potency. It was not clear just when it would cease to be an efficient technique for mobilizing Republican support.

8. Though Hayes' administration was much cleaner than Grant's, still the cry for governmental reform was a strong Democratic weapon, despite the disappointing results of the Potter investigation and the shock of the seeming revelations of the Cipher Dispatches. Most Democratic leaders were firmly convinced that the "robbery and fraud" which served as the foundation for Hayes' title to the presidency were so deeply resented by the American voters that they would sweep the Democrats to victory in 1880. As the son of ex-Governor Joe Brown of Georgia said in June of 1878, "The government was Mexicanized on March 4, 1877, and the wrong should be righted."

9. There was an absence of any recognized and great national moral issue, such as had motivated many of the Republicans

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6 Letters, Julius L. Brown to Manton Marble, June 13, 1878, and George L. Miller to Marble, March 5, 1878, Marble MSS.
for two decades after 1856; thus the campaigns of both 1876 and 1880 would be determined by the skill of the professional party experts in manipulating platforms, candidates, state and city machines, and both state and national delegates and conventions.

10. Prudence and wisdom would seem to have suggested that the candidates might well be chosen from those states in the "crucial tier" in which the party had the best chance of victory, based on the most recent reports. The Democrats, already blessed with the probable advantage of 138 votes in the southern and border states, would need only New York and Indiana to win. The Republicans, not so endowed, must keep Pennsylvania and Ohio, their two big "probables," and also take either Indiana, plus either Connecticut or New Jersey, or New York alone, in order to obtain the magic figure of 185 electoral votes and victory.

When all of the foregoing political verities are examined, the operations of both parties from 1875 through 1880 begin to make sense. As the Democratic House of Representatives, elected in the landslide of 1874, began to investigate the executive departments of the Grant administration in 1875-76, the Republicans joined in an anti-third term resolution in Congress, turned down Speaker James G. Blaine as a presidential candidate because of his tainted reputation and reached into Ohio for an ex-Union general and governor, who possessed an unblemished administrative record, somewhat tinged with reform, and a full-blown conservative economic philosophy acceptable to the Northeast. Then, just to make sure, the party added William A. Wheeler of New York to the ticket as vice-presidential candidate.

The Democrats countered with a "reform" New York governor, who, although an advocate of limited tariff reform, was an economic conservative and a supporter of historic Jeffersonian suspicion of the expansion of the scope of the power of the national government. Then, to balance the ticket, they picked Governor Thomas A. Hendricks of Indiana, who had recently embraced a limited form of currency and banking reform, but was also a Jeffersonian agrarian and constitutional interpreter. The platform of 1876, written largely by Manton Marble of the New York World, indicated ten areas of policy in which "Reform is nec-
The fact that Tilden was a "man with a barrel" did not hurt his chances of nomination, since the party leaders were always interested in adequate financial resources for the campaign.

The combination of strong candidates, inspirational platform, and rather brilliant campaign direction by the national committee made the Democrats strong contenders in the centennial year. Their cries for reform, economy and efficiency in government revealed their continued attachment to old-style Jeffersonianism with its provincial values, but in 1876 these had widespread public appeal. The party achieved a remarkable degree of fleeting and temporary cohesiveness, guided by the voice and political genius of Tilden. But this new-found unity had no lasting national base and could not stand up under the temptations and pressures of the disputed electoral count.

The inauguration of Rutherford B. Hayes as President on March 4, 1877, left in its wake a stunned, disorganized, and angry Democratic party. Some old-time Democrats, such as August Belmont, washed their hands of the party and politics. The rapid unfolding of President Hayes' southern policy brought a measure of relief to those states and chagrin and frustration to northern Democrats, who felt that he had stolen not only the national executive office, but also the political program for the South which they had been advocating for more than a decade. Hayes' southern tour in the summer of 1877 added still more to his stature as a statesman of moderation. He rode out the storm of criticism by the Stalwarts in his party and found the means to carry the army through several months without congressional appropriations until October 1877.

By early 1878 some Democrats recovered their wits, energies, and wind and began to bellow for revenge. They looked for a scapegoat and found several. The southerners who had agreed to

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"Quoted in Horace S. Merrill, *Bourbon Democracy of the Middle West* (Baton Rouge, 1953), 114. See also First Rough Draft of the St. Louis platform in hand of Manton Marble dated June 18, 1876, Marble MSS. Also in same collection letters of Marble to Samuel J. Tilden, June 18, and July, 1876, and Clarkson Potter to Marble, June 24, 1876. A complete summary of Marble's tremendous contribution to many phases of the Tilden canvass is to be found in a letter to Dr. A. G. Mercer, November 5, 1876. *Ibid.*

"Letters, August Belmont to Manton Marble, December 24, 1876, February 1, 11, 28, 1877; J. C. Welling to Marble, March 10, 1877, Perry Belmont to Marble, November 21, 1877, Marble MSS."
the Hayes-Smith-Matthews-Foster-Garfield electoral count bargain were cursed by many Democrats. Others blamed Tilden for his lack of courage and leadership in the crisis. Still others blamed the Democratic congressional authors of the Electoral Commission bill, such as Senators Thurman and Bayard and Congressman Abram S. Hewitt. A few voiced the opinion that Speaker Samuel J. Randall had contributed to the steal by his rulings when the House of Representatives was delaying the count by a considered policy of stalling. Of course, Justice Joseph Bradley's seeming last-minute change of heart in the case of the Florida returns caused him to be damned by all good Democrats.

By mid-summer the defenders of Tilden were forced to take the initiative. Henry L. Watterson carried on an acrimonious controversy with Hewitt in a series of blistering editorials in the Louisville Courier-Journal. Manton Marble and Tilden put together a 5-column, front-page defense which was published in the New York Sun. This was later republished as a 24-page pamphlet with a printing of 10,000 copies, some of which were held back for distribution in the months just preceding the Cincinnati convention. In June of 1878, the Democratic House of Representatives began a full-dress investigation of the frauds in Louisiana and Florida, which continued for six months. But the revelations by the Potter Committee of fraud, perjury, bribery, and other crimes brought out by these hearings were of little benefit to Tilden and the Democrats. Brilliant cross-examination of pro-Democratic witnesses by Republican committee members and the skillful handling of disclosures damaging to Hayes and the Republicans

Letters, F. Eames to Manton Marble, March 20, 1877, and George L. Miller to Marble, May 30, 1878, Marble MSS.  
Henry L. Watterson, Marse Henry (New York, 1919), 408; Alexander C. Flick, Samuel Jones Tilden (New York, 1939), 413.  
Letter, T. O'Leary, Jr., to Samuel J. Randall, March 31, 1879, Randall MSS; Flick, op. cit., 399 and 413.  
Letters, Henry L. Watterson to Samuel J. Tilden, April 13, 1878, and Watterson to Manton Marble, July 2, 8, and 11, 1878, Marble MSS.  
New York Sun, August 5, 1878. A copy of the printed pamphlet is to be found in the Marble MSS under date of August, 1878. See also letters, Henry Watterson to Samuel J. Tilden, August 6 and 22, 1878, and Watterson to Manton Marble, August 6 and 22, 1878, Marble MSS.  
William A. Robinson, Thomas B. Reed, Parliamentarian (New York, 1930), 47-55.
by the Republican press managed to confuse the public and blunt criticism. This was climaxed by the publication of the celebrated “Cipher Dispatches” by the *New York Tribune* in October 1878.\textsuperscript{15}

The net result of this series of events was a grave weakening of the hold of Tilden on the Democratic party and a lessening of the 1880 prospects for the party. This was further accentuated when it became apparent that once again (as so many times before) the contending elements in the Republican party had made considerable progress towards closing their ranks in the face of Democratic aggressiveness. The representatives of the 1876 Tilden “machine” in all areas (but especially in the South and West) reported startling degeneration of pro-Tilden sentiment.\textsuperscript{16} When to these manifestations was added the continuous stream of rumors as to Tilden’s rapidly deteriorating health, and the growing evidence of rebellion against him in his own state, it may be seriously doubted whether he could have been renominated in 1880.

Although the years 1877-1880 saw accumulating evidence of Tilden’s lessening power and prestige both at home in New York state and also on the national scene, and although rumors of his growing physical debility were rampant, he continued to be the strongest single force in the Democratic party. It was generally advocated that the old ticket of “Tilden and Hendricks” should be renominated in 1880 as a gesture of confidence and to vindicate his claims to the presidency in 1876. The expected crop of regional and special interest rivals for the nomination appeared in these same years. But on the surface at least their supporters usually presented such figures as alternative choices in the event that the New York Governor did not see fit to run again. As the successive months of the Hayes’ administration rolled by, the conditional element in the candidacy of some aspirants all but disappeared and they emerged as genuine competitors in their own right. This was, among other things, a reflection of the growing dissatisfaction of some elements and regions with the Tilden influence and tradition. In this category would fall Senators Thomas F. Bayard of

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  \item Letter, Clarkson N. Potter to Manton Marble, September, 1878, Marble MSS; Flick, *op. cit.*, 429-438; Robinson, *op. cit.*, 47-55.
  \item The Randall MSS in 1879 and 1880 contain many, many such missives. This was especially true after the loss of New York State to the Republican in November, 1879. See also letter, John G. Carlisle to Judge William Lindsay, March 7, 1880, William Lindsay MSS (University of Kentucky Library) for evidence of Tilden’s loss of strength in many southern states.
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Delaware and Allen G. Thurman of Ohio, as well as General Winfield S. Hancock of Pennsylvania. Governor Thomas A. Hendricks of Indiana also joined this group with the announcement that nothing could induce him to serve again as the vice-presidential nominee on any ticket with Tilden at the head. Justice Stephen J. Field of California was put forward as a representative of the West Coast and various railroad interests, in a vigorous canvass which sought support in eastern states.

However, until the weeks just preceding the convention at Cincinnati, Speaker Randall of Pennsylvania and Congressman Henry B. Payne of Ohio continued to operate only as loyal supporters of Tilden. Whether this persistent loyalty was actuated by the expectation of becoming the Tilden heir in the event of that worthy's withdrawal cannot be determined definitely. All the candidates listed above hailed from or had significant political followings in the "crucial tier" of states, except for Justice Field. Yet in four of these states (Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York) as well as in Virginia (the traditional bellwether of southern politics), internal conflicts over leadership, policies, and programs of action were tearing the party apart. Whoever could dominate his party in his own state, make alliances with other key states, and acquire considerable support in the South and West would emerge with the nomination. This might be the result of planning, skillful tactics and energy, or the product of the mood of the convention as a species of historical accident. In any event the final result would seem to be greatly influenced by Tilden's intentions and actions, and by the degree of delegate support the candidate could secure from his home state.

The clash in Indiana was between the supporters of William H. English and Thomas A. Hendricks. English was a pre-war Democratic congressman who, after a comparatively undistinguished career in the national House, had devoted himself to banking in Indianapolis. He had built up a substantial fortune through financing and foreclosing on farm mortgages, and thus was known as another "man with a barrel." He was the outstanding representative of the Bourbon Democracy in the Hoosier State and thus disapproved of Governor Hendricks' flirtation with various economic nostrums, such as an expanded currency.17 Hendricks also had

17 See William H. English MSS (Indiana State Historical Society, Indianapolis) for extensive evidence of his bourbonism.
never lost his resentment at being so largely ignored by Tilden when he was the running mate of the New Yorker in 1876. He devoted the years from 1877 to 1880 to expanding his political strength, which called for some negotiations with ex-Tildenites wherever found, including even John Kelly in New York. His gratuitous refusal to support the "old ticket" upset the editors of a host of Tilden newspapers who proceeded "to boom English and sneer at Hendricks."

Ever since his brilliant and successful fight to rescue the Ohio Democracy from the blight of Vallandingham and his cohorts, Allen G. Thurman had been the "noblest Roman of them all" in the eyes of his party in Ohio. He had served brilliantly, if somewhat erratically, for two terms in the United States Senate. Like Hendricks in Indiana he had felt the pressure of the soft-money interests. He had also been one of the authors of the Electoral Commission bill in 1877, but still was (with the help of his able lieutenant, John G. Thompson of Columbus, currently the sergeant-at-arms of the national House of Representatives), the favorite son of most Ohio Democrats. Into this beatific picture of seeming harmony intruded the figure of Henry B. Payne, a Standard Oil attorney then serving in the United States House of Representatives. Payne was also the father-in-law of William C. Whitney, the brilliant corporation counsel of New York City, who had been working closely with Tilden on matters political for several years. Somehow word got around that Mr. Tilden probably would like to have his mantle in the presidential race fall on Henry B. Payne. Considerable money spent in "buying up" delegates to the Ohio state convention did not dislodge from power the famous railroad executive Hugh Judge Jewett, who organized the group in the interest of Thurman. The delegation at Cincinnati was pledged to Thurman as long as he had a chance. A spokesman said that when it became apparent that he had none, a solid vote would be cast for Payne, but the delegation refused to make the change.

18 Letter, Henry L. Watterson to Samuel J. Tilden, July 2, 1878, Marble MSS.
20 Merrill, op. cit., 107.
21 Letters, C. W. Woolley to Samuel J. Randall, May 30 and June 3, 1880, Randall MSS.
when it would have done the most good—on the first roll call for the second ballot.

For several years before 1880 the Democratic organization in Virginia had been in an uproar over the problems of financing public schools and the payment of the state debt. In August of 1879, the Bourbon hierarchy of the Conservative (Democratic) party decided to support the “Funders” by official resolution. They subsequently proceeded to read out of the party all “Readjusters” who would not sustain the infamous McCullough bill. The Readjusters held a convention at Mozart Hall in Richmond on February 25, 1879, and established their own full-blown political party organization for the state, not as Conservatives but as “Readjusters.” In the fall elections of that year they won a resounding victory and control of the legislature. When the General Assembly met in December 1879, it selected the leading Readjuster figure, General William Mahone, as the next United States Senator from the Old Dominion. This was achieved with the help of some Republican Readjusters, but the 79 votes for Mahone were cast by genuine Readjusters in both houses of the legislature. This confusion produced troubled waters in which the supporters of rival presidential candidates in both parties could fish in 1880.

In the spring and early summer of 1879, S. Bassett French, a member of the staff of the Richmond Whig (Readjuster), conducted a poll of Tilden strength in Virginia. He sent out 100 letters to key leaders throughout the state, asking an evaluation of Tilden sentiment in their areas. He found indifference or opposition and reported this fact to Speaker Randall in Washington. He even made abstracts of the replies he had received, and sent these on to Randall for forwarding to New York. French still felt that Virginia could be organized to help nominate Tilden and offered the significant comment that: “What Virginia’s vote will be worth to him I do not know—but this I can say that without it he will be nowhere—and I say further if he sets any value on

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22 Nelson Morehouse Blake, William Mahone of Virginia (Richmond, 1935), 179.
23 Ibid., 173-176.
24 Ibid., 182; letter, S. Bassett French to Samuel J. Randall, January 1, 1880, Randall MSS.
25 Blake, op. cit., 196-199.
it, he had better lose no time in preparation." Randall set about to work with French in a scheme to print a Tilden sales talk on the reverse side of some Readjuster literature that was to be distributed. This was to be printed in all editions of the Whig and supposedly paid for by Tilden or possibly by the Democratic National Committee, through William H. Barnum, but the plan was not carried through.

The overwhelming triumph of the Readjusters in the fall elections changed the situation. Although most of them were Democrats they could not seize control of the party machinery. Also they hesitated to make such a struggle since, even if they succeeded (which would be very difficult), they might lose the support of the Republican Readjusters, especially the Negroes. John Tyler, Jr., was importuning President Hayes and John Sherman to step in with administration influence to support Mahone and the Readjusters. Mahone seems to have been willing at one time to deal with the Grant Republicans in Virginia and Simon Cameron visited Mahone in the fall of 1879 on this project. Randall also went to Petersburg in Tilden's interest and later arranged a conference in Washington between Mahone and Barnum. Possibly because of his own success in arranging a workable compromise in Pennsylvania Democratic politics in the spring of 1880, he thought that such an arrangement could be made in Virginia. Under the terms of his plan it would be possible that one-half of the Virginia delegation would go for Tilden at Cincinnati. But the animosities and principles involved were too deep-seated for compromise—with the result that the Virginia delegation went to Cincinnati loaded with Funders, with James Barbour the only major Readjuster in the entourage.

26 Letters, S. Bassett French to Samuel J. Randall, May 8, 27, and June 16, 1879, Randall MSS.
27 Letter, S. Bassett French to Samuel J. Randall, August 15, 1874, Randall MSS.
28 Letter, William Mahone to Samuel J. Randall, May 18, 1880, Randall MSS.
29 Blake, op. cit., 197-198.
The Democratic party in the Empire State, which in 1876 had presented a picture of remarkable unity and cooperation, was nothing less than a bloody political jungle by 1880. A continuing family quarrel between Tilden and anti-Tilden elements had made a shambles of the once powerful Tilden-led Democratic party of the state. As a great reform governor from 1875-77, Tilden had found a formula for uniting the three basic segments of the party, *vis.* Tammany, anti-Tammany New York City Democrats, and various upstate rural-urban machines such as the remnants of the Albany Regency. Soon after he was counted out of the presidency in March of 1877, the evidences of revolt and erosion of this superb political structure began to appear. His most persistent adversary was John Kelly, the post-Tweed ruler of Tammany Hall. Kelly was a remarkable man with great abilities who had worked with Tilden and others to reconstruct and clean up Tammany after the Tweed exposures. He did just that in the years after 1872, but eventually came to confuse his own desires for power and prestige with the interests of the Hall.

As early as October, 1877, Felix McCloskey, a Brooklyn henchman of Kelly's, was writing Samuel J. Randall, the newly elected Speaker of the House of Representatives, offering Kelly's friendship and support for the 1880 nomination. At this early date he suggested that "New York wants Nothing in the next convention our point will be no Tilden. . . . I would sujjest [sic] that you and him meet somewhere and have an understanding with one another when that is done you can count on New York Kelly controls the State organization and will control the next delegates [sic] to the Convention. . . ." McCloskey had evidently been carried away by the triumph of Kelly and Tammany at the September state Democratic convention of that year. This first victory was obtained while Tilden, Bigelow, Hewitt, and other friends were in Europe, but it was the harbinger of troubles yet to come. In 1878 the Tildenites left Tammany and allied themselves with John Morrisey's

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22 There is an excellent portrait of Kelly to be found in Clancy, *op. cit.*, 57-64 and 72-74. See also Mark D. Hirsch, *William C. Whitney, Modern Warwick* (New York, 1948), 147-153, and Flick, *op. cit.*, 262, 267, and 444-455.

23 Letter, Felix McCloskey to Samuel J. Randall, October 19, 1877, Randall MSS.

24 Flick, *op. cit.*, 421.
Irving Hall Democrats. Together they brought resounding defeat to Kelly in city, county, state, and congressional elections.35

But the feud continued and in 1879 revolved around the question of the renomination of Lucius Robinson, Tilden's personally selected successor as governor. At the Syracuse convention on September 10, 1879, Kelly, Augustus Schell, and the entire Tammany delegation left the convention when it was apparent that they could not resist the Tilden group's determination to renominate Robinson for governor. These bolters then met at Shakespeare Hall and nominated their leader, John Kelly, for governor.36 It is probable that Kelly knew that he had little chance of being elected in November, but felt he would bring down Robinson and Tilden with him. This, of course, happened and the Republicans took over the state. A genuine stalemate existed for a year or more. Tilden controlled the state machinery of the party, Kelly the city organization. Tilden could not carry the state without Kelly's support and Kelly could not control state conventions or delegations to national conventions. Neither could achieve his goals, but each could hurt the other badly. Because of the emotions and personalities involved, compromise was impossible and neither would give up. It should be obvious to all that, although Tilden was able to control the delegation sent to the Cincinnati convention, the serious doubt concerning his ability to carry New York in any type of election contributed greatly to the willingness of his New York delegation and the entire Cincinnati convention to accept his letter of withdrawal in June of 1880 and go about the business of the assemblage.

While this intra-party slugfest undoubtedly hurt Tilden in his home state, his position as the uncrowned President of the United States rendered him a figure of considerable stature on the national stage. To those of the common horde who had first been stirred by his vision of reform, economy, and harmony for all regions and classes, he was, by 1878, translated into an idea that men called Tilden—an idea that was hard to shake. He traveled to Europe. He continued his extensive corporation legal practice. In 1879 he became a country squire, occupied with his flowers and livestock at Greystone in Yonkers. He kept his fingers on the

35 Hirsch, op. cit., 149-150.
36 Ibid., 151-152.
pulse of the party around the country. Dozens of Democratic leaders from all over the nation stopped at his residence for counsel and possibly a fat check. He and his closest agents, such as Marble, Bigelow, Watterston, Hewitt, his nephew William T. Pelton, and also William H. Barnum, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, took care to look out for his interests. Their activity included vigorous support of the speakership candidacy of Samuel J. Randall in both the 45th and the 46th Congresses, and financial support of such Tilden-oriented newspapers as the New York Sun, the Louisville Courier-Journal, and even the little Philadelphia Commonwealth, which was the mouthpiece of Richard Vaux, Chauncey Black, Randall, and other Tildenites in the Keystone State.

Tilden's public appearances and statements were few, but on these rare occasions he always left his audience and/or his readers with renewed awareness of the threat to their heritage of free government which was implicit in the electoral count of 1877. He undoubtedly regarded himself as the general in command of armies that were battling to preserve America's most precious traditions, and he would not desert in the face of the enemy. This conviction provided an excellent rationale for his natural tendency to postpone any decision on the vital question of whether he should be a candidate in 1880. Manton Marble, one of the builders of the Tilden myth and machine, became convinced that as early as 1878 Tilden had made up his mind not to run again.

In the year before Cincinnati hardly a month went by without some Democratic leader, who was supposedly close to Tilden, reporting that the "old leader" would not allow his name to be presented to the convention. These rumors were usually promptly checkmated by some equally authoritative source, reporting just

27 Letters, S. S. Cox to Manton Marble, May 5, 1877; William R. Morrison to Marble, April 13, and October 20, 1877; Marble to W. M. Springer, March 9, 1879; Marble to Senator Wilkinson McCall, March 9, 1879, Marble MSS. See also letters, W. T. Pelton to Samuel J. Randall, April 13, 1877; William H. Barnum to Randall, April 27, 1877; S. L. M. Barlow to Randall, March 5, 1879, Randall MSS.


29 Flick, op. cit., 448.

30 Letter, Manton Marble to G. T. Lanigan, April 30, 1882, Marble MSS.
Yet the rumors of an eventual Tilden withdrawal were so persistent that by convention time in 1880 probably a majority of the delegates felt that such a development would occur, although the timing and manner of bowing out were unknown. This belief, of course, produced endless speculation as to the identity of Tilden's heir. Available evidence on this point, as usual where a decision by Tilden was required, is contradictory. He definitely did not want Hancock, Bayard, Thurman, or Hendricks, for a variety of political and personal reasons. Strangely enough, he was drawn very strongly to Henry B. Payne of Ohio and spent some money to line up the Ohio delegation for that purpose.

Winfield Scott Hancock was portrayed as a beloved son of Pennsylvania when nominated at Cincinnati in 1880. It is difficult to harmonize this view with the facts. He was born in Montgomery Square and spent his youth in Norristown, Pennsylvania, where his father practiced law for forty years. But after leaving home at the age of 16 to attend West Point, the future general was seldom thereafter intimately connected with any phase of life in the Keystone State. He first achieved presidential prominence in the Democratic convention of 1868, largely on the basis of his celebrated General Order No. 40 of November 29, 1867. In this he defied Radical Reconstruction policy and returned his command (Louisiana and Texas) to the authority of the civilian courts in criminal cases. In 1872 and 1876 he was a factor in the pre-convention canvasses of Democratic hopefuls. At St. Louis in 1876 he received the votes of the whole Pennsylvania delegation in both ballots. During the seventies his advocates were to be found in the areas where he had been stationed (Louisiana, Texas, Minnesota, and New York) and in the ranks of those Democrats who felt that the charges of bloody-shirt Republicanism could best be met by nominating a genuine Democratic Union war hero.

Letters, John W. Stevenson to C. E. Sears, April 26 and June 9, 1880, John W. Stevenson MSS (University of Kentucky Library); W. L. Scott to Samuel J. Randall, July 25 and September 13, 1879, Randall MSS. See also Philadelphia Record, "Interview with Samuel J. Randall," December 10, 1879, and April 16, 1880.


Dictionary of American Biography, VIII, 221-222.

To the Keystone delegation at Cincinnati, Hancock really served as the stalking horse for the powerful segment of the Pennsylvania Democracy led by Senator William A. Wallace. Wallace hailed from Clearfield in central Pennsylvania. He practiced law there and entered the state senate in 1863. He was a superb organizer who built his political power lines on the pattern of the elder Cameron whom he admired. His resources as to press, finance, and personal contacts and influence were tremendous. He always drove straight for his goals. His capacities for recuperation after seeming defeat were remarkable, since he was quick to seize shoe-string opportunities and build them substantially. He ruled his cohorts with an iron hand and was plentifully supplied with the prime political prerequisite of patience. In January, 1875, Wallace was elected to the United States Senate, where he proceeded to practice his pro-corporation political philosophy of quasi-nationalism and expand the limits of his ambitions for power. In Pennsylvania itself Wallace was notorious for his friendship with corporations, especially the Pennsylvania Central Railroad. He seems to have been almost too willing to “cooperate” with Republicans such as the Camerons on many occasions, to the extent that he was facetiously referred to as the Democratic member of the Republican firm of Cameron, Son & Co. For years he was a leader of those forces in the United States Senate which were attempting to pass a variety of subsidy bills for the benefit of Tom Scott's Texas-Pacific Railroad. At one time Wallace even served as Vice-President of the Texas-Pacific.

The leader of the rival faction in the state in the 1870's was Samuel J. Randall, a middle-class Philadelphian whose entire career was connected with the Quaker City. After serving in the common council of the city, the state senate, and the Pennsylvania volunteers, he was elected to the national House of Representatives in 1863. He was re-elected continuously until his death in April of 1890. Due to the greatly reduced ranks of the Demo-

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47 New York Sun, April 23, 1880.
48 Letter, Brinton Coxe to Samuel J. Randall, May 24, 1880, Randall MSS.
crats in Congress in the decade after the war, his emergence as a party leader was accelerated. By the early 1870's he had served on significant committees, including a term or two as secretary of the Democratic Congressional Committee. His reputation, stature, and contacts, both at home and in the South and the eastern seaboard states, laid a solid foundation for his eventual election as Speaker of the House in December 1876, after the death of Michael Kerr of Indiana. In four speakership caucuses (1875, 1876, 1877, and 1879) he enjoyed the nearly complete support of the Pennsylvania Democratic delegation in the House, although he heard continuous rumors of Wallace's influence working against him. During most of the decade of the 1870's Wallace was the "leader and spokesman" of the Pennsylvania Democracy, who juggled state party conventions, delegates, and officers to suit his purposes. With their wide divergence on party policy at both state and national levels and with Randall's ever expanding power and prestige, it was only natural to expect that there would be continuous competition, if not conflict, between them. Randall, as the challenger, had the harder task; he had to dethrone the champion.

The long-continued internal split within the party as to philosophy, program, status, and the proper function of the Democracy in the state was summarized by the New York Sun in April, 1880:

For ten years or more there has been an almost continuous antagonism between the adherents of Senator Wallace and Speaker Randall in this State. The result at the annual conventions was ever varying, frequently surprising, always gratifying to the Republicans, and never beneficial to the Democratic Party.

Two weeks later the same journal continued its analysis with the discerning comment that

The differences between Randall and Wallace are not personal or political in the sense of both striving for the same office. They represent widely different ideas about Democratic policy concerning the management of both State and National governments.

60 New York Sun, April 10, 1880.
61 Ibid., April 23, 1880.
The state policy of Randall supposedly included opposition to corporate domination and advocacy of legislation against monopoly, extortion, and freight discrimination. His national beliefs were described as strict construction, rigid economy, anti-subsidy and anti-corruption measures against such things as the Brady Star Route contracts, which Wallace had supported in the Senate.

The rivalry of these leaders broke out in a spectacular clash in 1875. Wallace played his cards right (in both parties) and was chosen United States Senator in January of 1875. But in that month and in February of 1875 Randall’s star also burst into great brilliance. His remarkable leadership of the Democratic filibusters in the House against the Force and the Civil Rights bills, stamped him as a great figure. At home he and Chauncey Black launched a ten-month attack on the supposed ring of thieves which was plundering the state treasury. At the Erie convention in September of 1875 Randall achieved great but not overwhelming success in his campaign to seize control of the party machinery and policy. He succeeded in tying Senator Wallace into the ring, enough at least to make most of the delegates shy away from contact with the Clearfield boss. Except for the damaging silver plank, the platform was adopted as written by Black and Randall.

Wallace, however, made a remarkable recovery following the Democratic defeat in Pennsylvania in the fall of 1875 and succeeded in controlling the Lancaster convention of 1876 and the Pennsylvania delegation to St. Louis in June, 1876. This dominance was maintained for nearly two years. Meanwhile, Randall increasingly was becoming a distinguished national figure. He conducted a vigorous and successful canvass for re-election to the Speakership in October, 1877. He became a full partner with Tilden and leading Democrats in New York and other areas in the formulation of party policy. His papers are full of telegrams from William H. Barnum, various state chairmen, and national committeemen, as well as from William T. Pelton, Tilden’s nephew. He received invitations to join and address the famous Manhattan...

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62 See Albert V. House, “Men, Morals, and Manipulation in the Pennsylvania Democracy of 1875,” in PENNSYLVANIA HISTORY, XXIII (April, 1956) for a detailed story of this campaign.

64 Letter, Harman Yerkes to William A. Wallace, September 14, 1875, Wallace MSS. The author offered his condolences to Wallace for the defeat that they had suffered at Erie.
Club of New York, a type of recognition which admitted him to the inner circle of planning and operations in the Democratic party. As for several years past, his able lieutenant Chauncey Black had ready access to the editorial, news, and special article columns of the New York Sun. He kept up a steady stream of historical sketches, pseudo-interviews, straight news stories, and blistering editorials, which Dana usually printed with little or no change. Since the Sun enjoyed considerable circulation in Pennsylvania, Randall found that whatever messages he might have for the electorate of the Keystone State could most speedily and effectively be transmitted through the journalistic pen of Chauncey Black.

At the Pittsburgh convention in May, 1878, Wallace, or rather Cameron, Son & Co., controlled the major decisions of the assembly. Randall attended and fought for his "state policy" without much success. But by mid-March of 1879 Randall had been re-elected Speaker of the 46th Congress, after a bitter fight with various disaffected elements in his party from Ohio, Illinois, Kentucky, and Virginia. Thus, he could devote the remainder of the year to politicking without any worries over whether his actions and words would adversely affect his tenure as Speaker. He conducted an intensive correspondence with his friends around the state, all designed to achieve control of the July, 1879, convention at Harrisburg. He attempted to have delegates chosen who, in addition to being anti-Wallace, were also pro-Tilden for the presidential contest coming up in 1880. Once again as at Erie in 1875, he obtained considerable but not complete success. Some of his reform-minded supporters from Philadelphia under the leadership of Richard Vaux were not seated and Milton Speer, the chairman of the meeting, was not Randall's preference, but the convention did adopt a resounding, crisp, short, sharp platform written by Chauncey Black and edited by Randall. This was a brilliant statement of Randall's "state policy." In November the

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56 Numerous and varied letters in the Randall MSS in these years illustrate this statement.
57 Letter, C. F. Black to Samuel J. Randall, March, 1879, Randall MSS.
58 See extensive correspondence in 1879 between C. F. Black and Samuel J. Randall in both the Randall MSS and the Jeremiah Black MSS for details.
59 Rathgeber, op. cit., 17.
60 Letters, C. F. Black to Samuel J. Randall, July 4, and August 2, 1879, Randall MSS; Samuel J. Randall to C. F. Black, May 31 and August 11, 1879, Black MSS. See also New York Sun, April 30 and May 3, 1880.
party once more went down to glorious defeat, this time to the tune of over 50,000 votes. This indicated that Pennsylvania might not carry much weight at the Cincinnati convention the next year since it seemed to be hopelessly Republican.\(^6\)

Shortly after the November, 1879, debate Randall picked up the threads of his campaign to stuff the next state convention with double-purpose candidates, \textit{viz}. those who would be anti-Wallace and pro-Tilden. He carried on this activity concurrently with his duties as presiding officer in the House of Representatives in a Democratic Congress that was fighting battle after battle with President Hayes on a great variety of vital policies. He met some of his Pennsylvania cohorts in Baltimore for conferences.\(^6\) He took trips to New York and stopped by Philadelphia for more conferences. He spent every congressional recess in his home state and wrote, wrote, wrote literally hundreds of letters to men of like mind in the various counties of Pennsylvania. His advocacy of Tilden became somewhat of a burden as time went on, since he encountered many who would support him on his state issues but preferred Bayard, Hancock, or himself as a presidential candidate to Tilden.\(^6\)

The most troublesome hazard to the plans of Randall and his friends lay in a bitter intra-party split in Philadelphia.\(^6\) Certain reform elements in the city in both parties had become dissatisfied with the activities of the professional politicians. Eventually, most of these dissidents came to work under the banner of the “Committee of One Hundred,” which evolved from the Richard Vaux-Dallas Sanders Democratic organization, which claimed to represent Philadelphia County. This group sent a full slate of delegates to Harrisburg in July, 1879, which was denied seats in the convention. But at about the same time proposals for compromise were suggested which led to peace and harmony by April, 1880.

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\(^6\) Letters, D. O. Barr to Samuel J. Randall, October 22, 1879; G. W. Miller to Randall, October 8, 1879; C. F. Black to Randall, November 7, 1879, Randall MSS.

\(^6\) Letter, C. F. Black to Samuel J. Randall, November 7, 1879, Randall MSS.

\(^6\) Letters, Perry Belmont to Manton Marble, February 1880, Marble MSS; Samuel J. Randall to C. F. Black, February 27 and April 8, 1880, Black MSS; C. F. Black to Samuel J. Randall, November 7, 1879, Randall MSS. See also New York \textit{Sun}, May 3, 1880.

\(^6\) See Rathgeber, \textit{op. cit.}, 17-19, for a succinct summary of this conflict. See also House, “Political Career of Samuel J. Randall,” 168-185.
Randall was the key figure in the peace negotiations since, with friends in both the regular city and the reform county groups, he was trusted by both. Each group was allowed to send a full delegation of forty-six to the Harrisburg Democratic convention on April 28, 1880, with each man casting a half vote in the proceedings.⁶¹ These twenty-three Randall votes were the decisive factor at the convention and Senator Wallace was overwhelmed.

A resolution favoring Hancock was defeated 84-15. The platform of 1879 was buttressed by a stiff anti-fraud plank and re-adopted, thus putting the party behind the Randall state policy for the second time. A peace commission to provide for a permanent settlement of the Philadelphia split was authorized. The delegation to Cincinnati was evenly divided at 29 Randall supporters and 29 Wallace men. Wallace attempted the adoption of the unit rule but was met head on by Randall in debate and lost by the narrow margin of 125-122.⁶⁵ This last, however, was a Pyrrhic victory for Randall. The delegation was uninstructed and voted as individuals at Cincinnati.

Although Wallace was not unreservedly committed to work for Hancock at Cincinnati, generally he was expected to do just that.⁶⁶ He had cast the full vote of the Pennsylvania delegation at St. Louis for Hancock in 1876, had tried to get a Hancock resolution through the recent Harrisburg convention, and had worked vigorously there for the unit rule. In any event, since Randall and his friends had been dedicated advocates of Tilden, Wallace could be expected to bring his influence to bear in opposition to the New Yorker and in the direction of any other likely candidate, such as Judge Field. Upon leaving the Harrisburg convention, Randall had been in a confident mood. He immediately informed Tilden that “You have 32 marked—opposite the names—I think 13 more from Philada & county marked also . . . thus your vote cannot be under 40—will probably be 45 may go to 50.”⁶⁷ A week later he even advised Chauncey Black that “there is no occasion to rub the sore—rather bring plaster—altho’ I have never re-

⁶¹ New York Sun, April 15, 28, 29, 30 and May 3, 1880.
⁶² Ibid., April 28, 29, 30, and May 3, 1880.
⁶³ New York Weekly World, October 29, 1879. See also letters, Henry Ward to Samuel J. Randall, October 29, 1879; T. O'Leary, Jr., to Randall, March 31, 1879; C. F. Black to Randall, November 7, 1879, Randall MSS.
⁶⁴ Letter, Samuel J. Randall to Samuel J. Tilden, April 30, 1880, Tilden MSS.
ceived the like. He had lost his sense of political reality and continued to work for Tilden in a sort of fool's paradise. He was in fact a prisoner of his three years' work for Tilden, since he could not move in any other direction until the sage was out of the picture.

May, 1880, saw Randall continuing to bombard Tilden with optimistic reports of support the country round. By early June, however, the Speaker began to sense the box he was in. The steady flow of rumors of Tilden's determination to withdraw and the mounting evidence that the grand old man of the party was about to give his blessing to the Payne boom could not help but disturb him. This was true, not only because of the blow to his own prospects involved, but also because it seemed suicidal to entrust the fate of the party to a man with Standard Oil affiliations, who hailed from the same state as the Republican nominee, the popular and capable James A. Garfield. On June 9, 1880, Randall received some very perceptive letters from his old friends Richard Vaux and Dallas Sanders with detailed advice on strategy and tactics. Vaux felt that the basic decision facing Randall was the selection of the exact moment and method when Randall should emerge as a candidate with nominating speeches, and so forth. He counselled that if Randall felt it impossible to allow this development before Tilden's withdrawal, then he should lay his plans to be the "compromise candidate" who would receive the kudos of the convention, when a stalemate occurred. Randall's preference in this matter would determine the course of his friends. Possibly because of a conviction that a stalemate would develop, Randall decided that his name should not be formally presented to the convention.

As the delegates began to assemble at Cincinnati it looked on the surface as though the Tilden forces were still in control. The man who would call the convention to order was William H. Barnum, the national chairman, who had been working for Tilden for three years in the National Committee and around the country. The temporary chairman was to be George Hoadly, who had been

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68 Letter, Samuel J. Randall to C. F. Black, May 5, 1880, Black MSS.
69 There are upwards of a dozen such brief reports in letters from Samuel J. Randall to Samuel J. Tilden in the Tilden MSS in May and June, 1880, confirming this statement.
70 Letters, Richard Vaux to Samuel J. Randall, June 9 and June 1880, and Dallas Sanders to Randall, June 9, 1880, Randall MSS.
a Tilden agent in Ohio,\textsuperscript{71} and the office of permanent president or chairman of the convention fell to John White Stevenson of Kentucky. Stevenson was an ultra-close friend of Vaux and a confirmed admirer of both Tilden and Randall. There is some evidence that his name was first suggested to the Committee on Organization by Randall and Vaux.\textsuperscript{72} The usual atmosphere of intrigue and excitement was, however, heightened by the news that Tilden had determined to withdraw his name from consideration and had sent a letter to the convention announcing this decision. When finally unveiled, this Pickwickian missive was dated June 18, 1880, just five days before the opening of the convention. It was addressed to the New York delegates at that meeting and printed up in pamphlet form. Daniel Manning carried it to the “Queen City of the West” with instructions to hold it in reserve until the proper moment. Further instructions as to just when that time would be were supposedly to be sent on by Tilden in a letter which his brother Henry would deliver to Manning the day before the convention. When Henry arrived with the second letter of instructions, everything proceeded to get out of hand. Evidence strongly suggests that while this was to be read to the New York delegation in closed session in a species of “sneak preview,” actually the contents were not to be revealed generally until the convention was in session.\textsuperscript{73} The grand strategy behind these involved tactics is not clear. Maybe the expectation was that the convention would shout NO! NO! and nominate the old warrior by acclamation. But the news leaked out on June 20 before the convention was in session. Thus, by the time all the delegates had assembled on the floor of Music Hall in Cincinnati on June 22, it was “old hat” and whatever influence might have remained to the Tilden managers was seriously impaired. Amidst the confusion which swept the assembly, it became doubtful whether any substantial portion of the pre-convention Tilden strength could be transferred to any “political heir.”

Since there was a strong feeling that no New Yorker other than Tilden could carry the Empire State, the search for a candidate

\textsuperscript{71} Letter, C. W. Woolley to Samuel J. Randall, June 3, 1880, Randall MSS.

\textsuperscript{72} Letters, John W. Stevenson to Richard Vaux, June 7, 1880, and Stevenson to Rev. W. W. Williams, June 28, 1880, Stevenson MSS.

\textsuperscript{73} Hirsch, \textit{op. cit.}, 156-157 and Flick, \textit{op. cit.}, 456-459, vary somewhat in their parade of evidence but both should be consulted.
went elsewhere. Right or wrong, most of the delegates, while having great affection for Thomas F. Bayard of Delaware, did not believe that he could take New York or make much headway in the five other states of the crucial tier. The Republican nomination of the popular Garfield from Ohio pretty well cut out both Thurman and Payne who hailed from that state, both because of their current political weaknesses (mild Greenbackism, and Standard Oil) and also since Ohio had the annoying habit of voting Republican in national election years. Hendricks was being supported by the New York anti-Tildenites, many of whom were thrown out of the convention on the second day. The Hoosier Governor had lost much of his 1876 strength in the West, but the real kiss of death was that his quasi-soft money tendencies were not welcome to the Northeast.

These developments left in the field one Union general, Winfield Scott Hancock from Pennsylvania, who had been flirting with the presidential idea since 1868; one practicing politician, Samuel J. Randall, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, also from Pennsylvania; and one Supreme Court Justice (and politician), Stephen Field from California. Since Field was thought to be Jay Gould’s candidate, even though that worthy’s paper, the New York World, was clinging to its first choice of Bayard, the convention refused to regard Field’s candidacy seriously. Thus, by the second ballot the real contest was between two natives of Pennsylvania, the state with the second largest electoral vote—in the nation and in the crucial tier. This was a bold attempt to capture one of the Republican “probables” which had not voted Democratic nationally since 1856, although in state and some congressional elections the Democrats had occasionally overcome the Republican margin which was seldom unduly large. Since there was a widely held suspicion that whoever received the combined vote of New York and Pennsylvania would go on to win the necessary two-thirds for the nomination, Randall’s chances looked good when, just before the roll call for the second ballot, New York

74 Letters, George L. Miller to Manton Marble, May 30, 1878, Marble MSS; S. Bassett French to Samuel J. Randall, October, 1879, Randall MSS.
75 Letters, Richard Vaux to Samuel J. Randall, June 9, 1880, and Dallas Sanders to Randall, June 9, 1880, Randall MSS.
76 Letter, Dallas Sanders to Samuel J. Randall, June 9, 1880, Randall MSS.
77 Letters, Edward S. Lawrence to Samuel J. Randall, March 24, 1879, and Dallas Sanders to Randall, June 9, 1880, Randall MSS.
announced that operating under the unit rule it would give its 70 votes to Samuel J. Randall. Obviously, if Randall could get the full 58 votes from his own state, the residue of Tilden strength in Ohio, and a generous proportion of the southern vote as it deserted Bayard, he would be well on his way to the nomination.\textsuperscript{78}

But all this was not to be. Bayard did lose much of his southern support as the call proceeded until New York was reached, but most of these votes went to Hancock, not Randall. Illinois, which had voted on the first ballot for its favorite son, William R. Morrison, switched all of its 42 delegates to Hancock. This was not too surprising, since there had been little love lost between Morrison and Randall since October, 1877, when the Speaker demoted the Illinois colonel when handing out committee chairmanships in the national House of Representatives.\textsuperscript{79} Immediately after New York registered its massive block of 70 votes for Randall, North Carolina was called. All eyes were on the representatives of the Tarheel State to see whether they would yield to the expected “wave of the future” and vote for Randall. Despite his long record of friendship and close personal contact with Democratic leaders in that state, Randall was ignored and a vote of nine for Hancock on the first ballot was transformed into a solid 20 for the General. Both Ohio and Pennsylvania asked to be passed while the members of the delegations conferred. But when Ohio finally reported, it was apparent that she had decided to stick with Thurman for at least one more ballot. Since the unit rule had been defeated by Randall two months before at Harrisburg, the Pennsylvania deputation was polled individually. This resulted in spectacular victory and revenge for Senator Wallace and humiliating defeat for Randall. Thirty-two delegates followed the Clearfield boss into the Hancock camp, leaving Randall with a mere 25 faithful followers. The Hancock fever continued and, after all the states that wished to had climbed on the Hancock bandwagon (including New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio), the “revised” second ballot showed that the bloody shirt had been buried forever and the Civil War hero was nominated by an overwhelming vote.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{78} Official Proceedings, 102.
\textsuperscript{79} Letter, Abram S. Hewitt to Samuel J. Randall, March 26, 1879, Randall MSS.
\textsuperscript{80} Official Proceedings, 108-113.
It might be said that the Tilden machine had lost its grip when Pennsylvania was called on the roll of states for nominating speeches. Malcolm Hay responded that the state had no candidate to propose but announced that Daniel Dogherty had a nomination to make as an individual. His nominating speech for Hancock made history and received thundering applause. By this time also definite word of Tilden's withdrawal had been received and the free-for-all was on. The key delegations which were expected to dominate the convention according to Tilden's wishes floundered and stumbled. Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania procrastinated, divided, or swung round like weather vanes. The stalemate never developed and Randall's great gamble was lost. If we agree with some newspaper observers and even with Governor John White Stevenson of Kentucky, the permanent President of the Convention, the surprising ground swell of emotional fervor for Hancock was simply the reflection of the convention's determination to bury the bloody shirt and "set free 100,000 Republican soldiers who are not politicians—but like their leader better than politics." Without a doubt the first ballot strength of Hancock was much greater than expected, and in the wide-open contest following the withdrawal of Tilden only the Hancock managers seemed to know what they were doing. The pledged delegates of Indiana had continued to vote for Hendricks to the bitter end.

After the nomination, in a light-hearted mood the convention quickly proceeded, without speeches and/or opposition, to nominate William H. English as the running mate for Hancock. English was already serving as chairman of the Democratic state central committee in Indiana, and it was expected that he would "break open his barrel" and sweep the state in his own and the party's interest. The nomination of English was interpreted by the Hendrick's wing of the party as a deliberate humiliation of their hero, though it probably reflected only the desire to guarantee the

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81 Ibid., 85.
82 Letters, John W. Stevenson to Rev. W. W. Williams, June 28, 1880, and Stevenson to Governor W. B. Lawrence, July 6, 1880, Stevenson MSS. See also, Tansill, op. cit., 280-283, and Clancy, op. cit., 139-140, for the flavor of the swing to Hancock.
83 Letter, George H. Bates to Thomas F. Bayard, June 23, 1880, Bayard MSS, as quoted in Tansill, op. cit., 281.
84 Official Proceedings, 136.
85 The William H. English MSS contain several folders of his records as chairman of the Indiana Democratic central committee.
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15 electoral votes of the Hoosier State which were needed for victory.

The convention then produced a platform which repeated traditional Democratic doctrines, rang the changes on the Great Fraud of 1876-77, and avoided specific promises on the explosive issues of civil service reform, protection of labor, and both currency and banking reforms. This platform was thrown together without adequate previous drafting. Chairman Henry L. Watterson of Louisville and David A. Wells of Connecticut of the Resolutions Committee believed so strongly in a vigorous tariff revision that it was easy for the Republican opposition to pin the label of "free-traders" on them. They induced the committee to change the phraseology of an historic Democratic economic battle cry so that it came out in print as "a tariff for revenue only." Eventually this item became a major target of Republican campaign strategy. Since the Democrats generally were uninformed as to the intricacies of tariff schedules, they were unable to answer adequately when the Republicans shifted from the "bloody shirt" to tariff revision after mid-September, 1880.

Randall was, of course, chagrined and somewhat stunned by the outcome at Cincinnati. His bosom political pal Chauncey F. Black had deserted him and both worked and voted for Hancock at Cincinnati. Other close friends had done likewise. He confided to Hendrick B. Wright, who had remained loyal, that "Mr. Tilden unintentionally caused the trouble." In another communication to Wright he confessed that "Mr. Tilden's course is a mystery to me—and he an enigma—. . . his immediate surroundings were no doubt hostile to me. He would have won with any other man than Payne. Ohio a Republican State the convention was unwilling to take the risk of. . . ."

Randall is probably correct in his suggestion that Tilden would have won with any other man than Payne. He could also have

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56 Official Proceedings, 127-129.
57 Ibid., 128. See also letter, David A. Wells to Manton Marble, October 30, 1880, Marble MSS.
58 Hudson, op. cit., 112-114.
59 Letters, Richard Vaux to Samuel J. Randall, June 9, 1880, Randall MSS; Randall to C. F. Black, October 9, 1880, Black MSS; Philadelphia Record, June 28, 1880.
60 Letters, Samuel J. Randall to Hendrick B. Wright, June 26 and July 2, 1880, Hendrick B. Wright MSS (Wyoming Historical and Geological Society, Wilkes-Barre).
added that he (Randall) might have been that man, and also that Tilden's withdrawal should not have been so long delayed. The rivalries in New York, Ohio, Indiana, Virginia, and Pennsylvania also contributed to the ending of the Tilden influence and tradition. While patched up compromises were achieved in Indiana and Pennsylvania on the eve of the convention, they fell apart under the emotions and pressure of events at Cincinnati. The scars of these contests were carried over into the election and contributed mightily to Hancock's defeat by a narrow margin. This observation is highlighted by the spectacle of Indiana lost by a mere 6,000 votes; New York with a Republican majority of only 21,000 and Pennsylvania in the Republican column by 37,000. The conclusion is inescapable that the Democrats had not recovered their old political magic. Various segments of the party were still refusing to "compromise their principles." Compromise, unity, party discipline, and cohesion were just words—not operating policies. Also they had not adjusted their electoral techniques for successful combat with the Republicans in the new national, urbanized society that had been ushered in by the Civil War and its aftermath. Their victory was postponed for four more years until 1884, when most of the internal rivalries, mistakes, and failures to mobilize their maximum political resources on a national basis were not repeated.