

SOUTHERN DAKOTA.

The Body Formally Organizes and Adheres to the Main Purposes of Division and Statehood.

A Constitutional Convention Called to Meet on the 4th of September.

DIVISION AND STATEHOOD.

Huron, Dak., Special Telegram, June 19.—The convention was called to order at 12 o'clock, the large delegation quite filling the Wigwam, which was duly decorated for the occasion with flags, and over the rostrum with the picture of George Washington and the words "State of Dakota, and Fear God and Take Your Own Part." Rev. Wilmot Whitfield called the convention to order. Two bands of music occupied the platform. The call was read at length and the chairman nominated for temporary chairman Hon. B. L. Canfield of Deadwood, who thanked the convention for the honor conferred, and congratulated the people of Southern Dakota upon the demonstration of patriotism and the expression of love of independence and self-government in this convention.

The people of this government, he said, had the right of self government and an enabling act was an innovation which need not be regretted. The sisterhood of States had never yet refused to admit to their numbers any State this country with the requisite number of population, characteristic and wealth of self government. We have assembled here to say to congress that we, the people of Dakota, have the right to Statehood and to ask our admission as a State.

At this request Rev. Dr. Hoyt invoked the divine blessing. Phillip H. Lawrence of Kingsbury and W. B. McChesney of Brown county were elected temporary secretaries. Judge Moody moved the appointment of a committee on credentials, made up of one from each county where there are no contested delegations. A resolution was adopted giving the committee power to consider the rights of the unorganized counties to a larger representation than the one provided for in the call. A committee of seven on permanent organization was appointed as follows: C. H. Winsor, Judge Edmunds, W. L. Hamilton, E. S. Johnson, Gen. Pease, John Cain and E. S. Vorhees. A committee on rules and order, consisting of M. M. Grigsby, Judge Campbell, E. R. Rogers, J. C. Boyle and A. E. Melville, was then appointed. A recess was taken till 3 o'clock.

When the convention was called to order after recess the committee on credentials was not ready to report, and more than half an hour was filled with music by the band and short speeches by Judge Brookings and Judge Campbell, the latter of whom said that—

The occasion was one which required no speeches, represented as Dakota was, by the representatives of the country south of the forty-sixth parallel, of men from all walks of life, demanding two things with surprising unanimity—the division of the Territory and Statehood. If the convention means business, it should be borne in mind that the work before the convention is not a mere form, and he hoped the convention would not adjourn until the leading men from each of the counties had pledged themselves to devotion to this cause. If congress sees fit to refuse us admission when we properly present our claims, then congress becomes revolutionary, and the party which contributes to such a revolt may expect to be relegated to obscurity. Knowing, then, our rights and daring to maintain them, let us go forward to success.

A. B. Melville of Beadle county said: When it was borne in mind that the act passed by the only body of representatives that the Territory has was voted by a foreign power, it was time that this unalloyed vote should be shaken off forever and our independence as a State should be declared. Let our action be calm and wise, so it shall not be said that we are not worthy to govern ourselves.

Hon. John Kinz agreed with the opinion expressed by the preceding speakers and said: He thought that the enemies of the object of the convention would undoubtedly be encountered and designing persons who would propose admission without division. He urged that decision be insisted upon as a cardinal principle in the fight.

A. L. Hamilton of Lawrence spoke in the same strain, pointing out eloquently that Southern Dakota had the population, the intelligence and the country to support such an independent government. Speaking for the Black Hills, he said that the 25,000 or 30,000 people in that country were standing shoulder to shoulder for division, and admission as soon thereafter as possible. The speaker spoke at some length with much warmth, and stirred the audience to shouts of applause and much enthusiasm.

PERMANENT ORGANIZATION. He was interrupted by the return of the committee on credentials, who made their report shortly after 4 o'clock. All the counties were represented except Charles Mix, Custer and Lake. An effort was made to amend the report so as to give Brown county sixteen instead of twelve votes, but the motion did not prevail and the report was adopted. The committee on permanent organization reported the following, who were constituted the permanent officers of the convention:

President—B. L. Canfield of Lawrence. Vice-Presidents—Rev. Joseph Ward, Yankton; F. M. Woodbury, Deadwood; C. B. Pratt, Moody; E. F. Thornton, Dakota; Dr. R. L. Smith, Hand; A. H. Lewis, Grant; D. G. Thomas, Coddington; William M. Curtis, Lincoln; J. J. Dewey, Douglas; John Todd, Bon Homme; C. S. Kimball, Clay; F. E. Foster, Hanson; J. M. Stanton, Douglas. Secretaries—P. Lawrence, Kingsbury; A. B. McChesney, Brown; C. F. Malahan, Union; John Cain, Beadle; E. Premis, Minnehaha.

Hon. John D. White, congressman from Kentucky, was invited to a seat on the platform, and that gentleman being called for, said as one he was willing to admit Dakota as a State, and would not object to division on the forty-sixth parallel.

THE COMMITTEE ON RULES. made a report, recommending that only such subjects as were contained in the call be considered, and that committees be appointed on resolutions, publication, apportionment, address to the people of Dakota and on business. Pending the appointment of these committees, a recess was taken of half-an-hour. The chair appointed as the committees, recommended by the committee on order of business, the following:

Appointment—A. G. Kellum, Brule; C. W. Rober, Beadle; J. W. Shannon, Bonhomme; Robert Dalton, Brookings; D. J. Darrow, Brown; John H. Drake, Clark; Dan R. Fraser, Clay; E. B. Dawson, Coddington; J. A. Kingsbury, Dawson; G. H. Green, DeWitt; M. J. Stanton, Douglas; George H. Woodman, Grant; A. H. Lewis, Hand; B. F. Payne, Hanson; L. P. Chapman, Hutchinson; A. S. Jones, Hughes; H. R. Hunter, Hughes; Thomas H. Ruth, Lawrence; Porter Warner, Lincoln; A. P. Dickson, Miner; J. P. Riely, Sanborn; R. E. Reed, Minnehaha; R. F. Peterson, Moody; C. E. Pratt, McCook; J. E. Rhoads, Spink; W. E. Turner, Turner; J. B. Urban, Union; R. H. Hues, Yankton; J. A. Boyd, Hyde; L. E. Whitteer, Spink; J. A. Malton, Fank; J. A. Heller, Potter; O. H. Mann, Buffalo; E. A. Herman, Campbell; S. S. Bassett, Jerrild; B. F. Chadbourne, Coddington; J. H. Cannon, Williams; H. Keppart, Hand; P. Mannahan, Union.

Business Committee—Barlett, Trip, Yankton; W. W. Brookings, Minnehaha; O. E. Dewey, Coddington; J. W. Taylor, Lincoln; A. Wardell, Grant; A. J. Knight, Lawrence; E. W. Foster, Pink. On Resolutions—H. H. J. Campbell, Hughes; J. C. Moody, Lawrence; W. A. Wilkes, Minnehaha; E. D. Wheeler, Coddington; James Ward, Yankton; A. B. Melville, Beadle; H. E. Maybew, Sanborn; O. L. Mann, Potter; C. H. Walworth, Union. Address to the People—E. W. Caldwell, Sioux Falls; J. H. King, Brule; J. A. Kingsbury, John Cain, Beadle; John Owens, Kingsbury; S. J. Conklin, Clark; R. H. Haswell, Fank; E. S. Vorhees, Hand; H. E. Dewey, Hughes.

The committee on resolutions was instructed to report at the evening session the number of delegates to the constitutional convention, should it be deemed proper to call it, and the convention took a recess, to meet in the evening.

At the evening session a motion was made that the committee on address to the people be authorized to submit the address to the executive committee in the event that it is not prepared in time to submit it to the convention. The motion provoked considerable discussion and developed a decided opposition to hurrying through the proceedings without the most thorough deliberation. The motion was laid on the table.

THE RESOLUTIONS. It was nearly 10 o'clock before the committee on resolutions appeared and presented their report in the form of a resolution affirming what is set forth in the preamble following:

Whereas, experience has abundantly demonstrated that the welfare of the people is promoted and secured by a permanent government, sovereign in character and republican in form, and as all good and just governments are of the people, by the people and for the people;

Whereas, the compact contained in the ordinance of 1787, which has been extended over the people of Dakota by five successive acts of congress, guarantees absolutely and inviolably to them the right to form a permanent constitution and State government whenever the said Territory shall contain 60,000 free inhabitants;

Whereas, the treaty by which the Louisiana purchase was made, which is the supreme law of the land, guarantees to the people of Dakota Territory as absolutely and inviolably as the ordinance of 1787, that they shall be incorporated in the Union of the States as soon as it is possible, according to the principles of the federal constitution, to the enjoyment of all the rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States;

Whereas, under the constitution of the United States, as authoritatively determined by the supreme court of the United States, the Territory of Dakota was acquired and could be acquired only for the purpose and upon the condition that it should be admitted into the Union as a State as soon as its population and situation entitled it to admission; and

Whereas, according to the same authority, congress has no power to hold and govern this Territory permanently in the character of a Territory; and

Whereas, Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, and all power is inherent in the people, and all governments are founded on their authority, and instituted for their safety, peace and happiness, and for the advancement of these ends they have at all times an inalienable and indefeasible right to alter, reform or abolish their government in such manner as they may think proper; and whereas, the principles proclaimed in the declaration of independence and reiterated in the bills of rights of twenty States, are now everywhere acknowledged as the settled and irreversible law of the land;

Whereas, the Territory lying south of the forty-sixth parallel of latitude, has at present a population of more than 250,000 people, which, at its present rate of increase, will in another twelve months number over 300,000 people, which is more than double the population of any State heretofore admitted into the Union out of the Territories; and more than that of seven of the original States at the time of their admission; and

Whereas, the Territory covering an area of 80,000 square miles, which is larger than that contained in any State in the Union except seven; and

Whereas, it has been solemnly and authoritatively determined by the courts, by the precedents of thirteen States, by action and affirmation of congress, and by the approval of the presidents from Washington down, that the people of a Territory, when qualified for State government, have the right in their primary and sovereign capacity, without any claim, then conferred by any other power than their own, to proceed to form their State constitution and State government and apply for admission into the Union; and

Whereas, with the proposed boundaries the State of Dakota will be admitted into the Union in area and will cover an area equal to that of all New England and New Jersey and Delaware, with 8,320 square miles in addition; and

Whereas, the people of Dakota, by virtue of this population, and the rights of their constitutional rights and the treaties, and the compacts of the ordinance of 1787, and the will of the people, are a State and ought without delay to form a State constitution and State government and ask admission into the Union; and

Whereas, the experience of the past has demonstrated that the most important need of the people of Dakota now is a responsible government, a government responsible to the people, elected by the people and acting for the people; and

Whereas, unless such government is obtained speedily we have good reason to apprehend lasting remediless injury to the institutions and the future welfare of the commonwealth; and whereas, the people should and will become the sole and vital issue before all other issues with the people of Dakota until it is determined; and

Whereas, the last legislature of this Territory, wisely acting and in the exercise of its general and earnest wish of the people thereof, did enact a law convening a constitutional convention at the capitol of the Territory in the city of Huron, for the purpose of framing a constitution and State government for that part of Dakota south of the forty-sixth parallel, and for forming all other things essential to the admission of such part of Dakota into the Union of the States; and

Whereas, the said act of the legislature was prevented from becoming a law by the Territorial executive declining to approve the same or return it to the legislature with his objections, thus depriving the body from taking further action relating thereto; and

Whereas, the people having been thus deprived of their ordinary means of declaring and executing their lawful wills with full and unquestioned right and authority to take back upon and exercise the reserved rights and extraordinary powers vested in them and have therefore for that purpose called and created this convention; and

Whereas, it is proposed to convene a constitutional convention of the people that such constitutional convention shall be held, therefore be it

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