

RAIN

The heavens opened and the waters poured down upon the City of Brotherly Love today -- much to the distress of those delegates who are baseball minded. I sat for a while on the floor, with the Georgia delegation, chatting with the best known of all southern editors, Clark Howell of the ATLANTA CONSTITUTION. We were discussing the Democratic platform, what planks are likely to be in it, and so on. An Indian princess, up on the speaker's stand, was singing melodiously, and the southerners around me, United States District Attorney Lawrence Kent and Speaker Ed Rivers of the House down in Georgia, were moaning because the rain had done them out of their ball game and a chance to see Dizzy Dean pitch.

I asked Chairman Farley what would happen if a similar deluge swooped down on Franklin Field Saturday night, when about a hundred and twenty-five thousand people are expected to see the President, and hear him deliver his speech of acceptance. Jim replied then the President would speak in the convention Hall. And a hundred and ten thousand people would be ~~xx~~ obliged to hurry home and tune in on the radio.

ENTERTAINMENT DAY

Today was entertainment day in the convention hall. Songs and jovial speeches.

For a little while I saw with the North Carolina delegation, talking to Turner Battle one of Frances Perkins' Assistant Secretaries of Labor. And he told me a grand yarn about Carter Glass. As we all know, the Senator from Virginia is getting along in years. His health is none too robust. After being at the convention for a while, hearing some of the longest speeches and taking part in a few demonstrations, he decided to get on the train, return home to Washington, rest up and then come back again. He had his tickets. His bags were on the train and he was about to step aboard, when a young newspaper reporter approached him and said: "So you're walking out on the convention, Senator Glass!"

You've heard what a temper Carter Glass has. He's famous for it in the Senate. And the reporter's question made him hopping mad. He gave the reporter a sound dressing down, and then had them take his bags off the train, and turned in his tickets. Said he: "I'll not have anybody put me in the same class with Al Smith! I'm not walking out on any Convention." And back he went.

WOMAN IN RED

After Senator Barkley's keynote speech, while the place was still in pandemonium, the N.B.C. roving microphone - men swing a mike on wire in front of me and said, "Say something." My head was splitting with the noise from having sat through three hours of uproar. And I merely spoke a sentence or two, but enough to bring down a number of angry telegrams today. I spoke about a woman in red. Some who were listening-in must have thought I was ridiculing her, or ridiculing somebody. On the contrary, I was just mentioning one of the curious sidelights, the sort of things that seem to happen at every convention, and a phenomenon that for the life of me I can't understand. Let me tell you about the incident, because it's typical of what goes on at national conventions.

(I was sitting in the press section, listening to Senator Barkley. Mimeographed copies of his keynote speech had been passed out to us some time before, and I had read it through. So I was watching to see whether he stuck to his text, the speech you saw in the newspapers of the land today.)

It was like a game, following the Senator, because he wasn't sticking to his text at all, jumping over paragraphs, extemporizing, ~~and~~ dodging nearly all the statistics.

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Right across the ^{aisle,} ~~hall,~~ in the nearby bleachers, stood a woman in red, who reached down and pulled my hair as I came into the convention hall. And all evening, for three hours, at irregular intervals, she screamed hysterically, a wild, penetrating scream. Have you ever camped for the night in some lonely cañon in Colorado or Arizona, and suddenly been awakened by the blood curdling scream of a wild cat? It was just like that. She stood up the entire time too. What energy! Whenever Senator Barkley mentioned the name of Franklin Roosevelt, she'd scream. If he mentioned Al Smith, she'd scream. If he mentioned the Liberty League, she'd scream. She ~~just~~ screamed without rhyme or reason, and it could be heard from one end of the convention hall to the other.

Shortly before adjournment, when Chairman Farley had taken over the convention again, I stood at the rear of the rostrum chatting with Senator and Mrs. Joe Robinson from Arkansas. We were talking about the "woman in red" who screamed.

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And Senator Robinson's secretary spoke up and said that he believed the woman was planted there by the opposition, by the Republicans, Socialists, anti-New Deal Democrats, or someone out of sympathy with the proceedings. He said the same trick was played on Senator Robinson at the Nineteen Thirty-Two convention in Chicago. The trick being to make a noise at all the wrong places and try and throw the speaker off his stride. And that's the story of the woman in red, who screamed for three hours, ^{right in} ~~within a few feet of~~ my ear.)

FOREIGN

Just for variety, let's take one look at the foreign news. Turning at the other side of the world, we see that trouble in China gaining headway. Nanking coming out with a formal accusation that the revolt of the Cantonese, Kwangsi and Kwangtung governments are all fomented by Japan. Agents of the Mikado, they say, are putting up the cash for the armies mobilized in Kwangsi. The reason: rich mines. Enormously valuable manganese deposits in Kwangsi. And, says Nanking, the Cantonese have hocked those mines to the Japanese for millions of dollars spent in rifles, ~~and~~ airplanes, machine guns.

Canton, on the other hand, has sent a list ~~and~~ of demands to Nanking, demanding armed resistance against the Nipponese invasion of northern China; war with Japan. Declares Canton, refusal means civil war.

The cables were still hot with this news when an official announcement was made in Tokyo which makes the picture still blacker. It affects not only Asia but the whole world.

The war lords of the Mikado reject scornfully all invitations to join in naval treaties. Nippon to be a lone wolf in naval affairs.

Then, in London was a pathetic echo of the Ethiopian War. Bad news to the frail little man whom the newspaper boys nicknamed "Charlie". His full title was, the Emperor Haile Selassie, King of Kings, Lion of Judah. Charlie heard the bad news from the man who had been his ~~pi~~ principal hope, Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden. Captain Eden told the one time King of Kings that he must cease to hope. His former empire gone for good.

GOVERNOR HERRING

To get back to Philadelphia - everything is so cut and dried at this convention that they are already discussing who the Democratic candidate is likely to be four years from now, in Nineteen Forty. Two of those mentioned are Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia, and Governor Clyde Herring of Iowa. Governor Herring told me today that he'd sell his chance for ten dollars.

He also volunteered the information that Kansas is not "a typical prairie state." He says that if any state is typical of the prairie, it's Iowa.

Then the Governor of the prairie state of Iowa told me that he, a Democrat, had recently appointed Republican National Chairman John Hamilton's brother, to the bench. He followed up this up with the explanation that John Hamilton's brother Casey is a good Democrat. He says the Hamilton's are all Democrats -- and that Brother John used to be one. So says the Governor of Iowa.

You may remember that Governor Herring is the gentleman who had that spectacular bet with the Governor of Minnesota last autumn. It all came about as the result of a football incident. The report was that the powerful Gopher team from the University of Minnesota intended to gang-up on Oze Simmons, the fleet-footed, shifty-hipped, colored boy

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playing in the University of Iowa backfield. For a while there was a tense feeling between the folks of Iowa and the inhabitants of Minnesota. But it all ended good-naturedly when Governor Olsen sent down word from St. Paul that he would bet the Governor of Iowa the biggest pig he could find that the Gophers would beat the ~~Hokeyds~~ ^{Buckeyes} in the ~~next~~ annual big game.

I asked Governor Herring if the bet was ever paid, because he lost. He said it most certainly was, and that he had escorted the pig, in person, to St. Paul, had taken it in a crate, on a truck, to the state capitol, had a gang of men carry it to the door of Governor Olsen's office, then smashed open the crate and sent the huge squealing porker charging in upon the Governor of Minnesota. ~~And you should have heard Governor Herring roar with laughter as he told about it!~~

PLATFORM

I dropped in to a meeting of the Democratic Resolutions Committee this afternoon, in the hope of seeing a fight, the long threatened fight over the platform, including that moot question for the two-thirds rule. Then too trouble was expected from the Washington delegation. The delegates from Puget Sound have swallowed the Townsend plan hook, line, sinker -- and rod, reel, creel, golf and everything. The result of their caucus was that their committeeman was instructed to fight for a Townsend pension plank before the Platform drafters - and failing that to take it to the floor of the convention.

The committeeman in question is the interesting Senator Schwellenbach. Fighting is right down his alley. He's one of the youngest senators and you may recall that he had hardly taken his seat before he smashed one of the sacred traditions of Capitol Hill. A new senator is supposed to keep his mouth shut and sit mumchance for three or four years -- letting his seniors do all the orating.

Furthermore, in Gilbertian language, he's supposed to "leave his brains outside and vote just as his leaders tell

him to." Schwellenbach did nothing of the sort. He not only rebelled, but he organized a block of other young senators to join him in the squelching of the late Huey Long.

However, observers were disappointed. No fight.

The proceedings before the Resolutions Committee, with Senator Bob Wagner in the chair, a regular Alphonse and Gaston Affair. The only bit of real excitement came when the chair announced that the next speaker would be William Jennings Bryan; to which he added, "Junior". There was a stir of expectation, also a round of applause. The memory of the Great Commoner is still respected by many thousands of Democrats.

But there was little resemblance to the Great Commoner in the unassuming, conventionally attired lawyer bearing his name, who walked diffidently over to the microphone. Instead of the broad, shaggy-haired, leonine, clear-shaven wide mouthed face of his father the son has a narrow face and small clipped mustache. Also dressed so inconspicuously that you'd lose him in any crowd. His voice and diction, oh, about like any average lawyer.

However, Young Mr. Bryan got up to speak in a cause that was popular with his audience. He referred to the latest big decision of the Supreme Court, the decision that knocked out New York State's minimum wage law for women and children. What Bryan, Jr., wants in the platform is a plank providing that pieces of social legislation may not be knocked out by the U.S. Supreme Court except by unanimous vote. In that he went even further than William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor, Mr. Green wants a constitutional amendment of the ~~fn~~ effect that no law shall be invalidated except by a two-thirds majority of the nine Supreme judges.

But We won't learn ^{any final} ~~in detail any~~ details about the platform until tomorrow. The Committee includes a formidable list of big shot politicoes - no fewer than sixteen United States Senators, two Governors, and one Cabinet Member.

Just as I was leaving the hearing I ran into an old acquaintance whom I hadn't seen since the hectic days of the Hauptmann trial at Flemington. ~~It was~~ The Attorney-General of New Jersey, dapper Dave Wilentz. ~~He is~~ The New Jersey member of the Resolutions Committee. ^{And} he has a plank right in line with his office as Public Prosecutor.

"We need a law enforcement plank," says Dapper Dave. "Since prohibition repeal that question has been sorely ignored by both parties. I am proposing a plank that will not only endorse Attorney-General Cummings and the G-men but guarantee them support. I mean practical support in the shape of ~~adequate~~ adequate appropriations and so forth.

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Strange as it may seem," Mr. Wilentz continued, "there are members of Congress who are opposed to the F.B.I., the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In some cases this attitude

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is due to personal annoyance with the outspoken Mr. J. Edgar Hoover. But as an officer of the law," added New Jersey's Attorney-General, "I can tell you we need those G-men."

Senator Walter F. George of Georgia has been playing an important part in the preparation of the platform. And he was telling me this afternoon of some of the problems of a national convention platform committee. He feels that it always is a hopeless job, because committee members are anxious to avoid committing any party to planks which will be hard to live up to.

"Conditions change rapidly," added Senator George. "Plans and planks become obsolete. Hence the reason that platforms are so evasive.

I ran into Senator Bob Wagner, dashing off alone. He told me he was tired and worn out from the task of platform carpentering. And, he was on his way to an ante-room to stretch out and rest for a while.

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One of the most popular Democrats at the Convention seems to be United States Senator J. C. O'Mahoney, of Cheyenne, Wyoming. While the bands played and the crowd yelled, and Jim Farley shook hands with the faithful, and the blinding lights blistered down upon us, Senator O'Mahoney gave me some news from my old home town in Colorado. He said he had just heard that the Stratton Estate at Cripple Creek had found ore in a rich gold mine where I had worked as a boy, the American Eagle, ore running thirty thousand dollars a ton! And the Senator spoke of that in tones of awe - and so do I.

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Then when I asked him about his name and the way he pronounced it, and what difference there was; if any, between O'Má'honey and O'Mahó'ney, he replied: "When the English first came to Ireland, they couldn't pronounce O'Mahoney. And those who ~~had~~ bowed to the English changed their names to Mahoney. But the O'Mahoneys never did."

SENATOR TYDINGS

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As I stood chatting with Senator Millard Tydings of Maryland, an exceedingly good-looking, fair haired young lady in the distance kept nodding and smiling and making motions at us. I wasn't quite sure whether she was looking at the Senator or at me. At any rate, I said to him: "By the way, Senator Tydings, who is the good-looking blonde?"

To which the statesman from Maryland replied:
"Oh, she's just some little flirt."

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It was his wife! -- as I found out some time later, and s-l-u-t-m.