THE ORIGINS OF THE LIBERAL
REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT
IN MISSOURI

by

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Introduction.

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The Civil War witnessed in Missouri the complete breakdown and demoralization of the old political parties. Even before 1860, party lines had become almost obliterated. The Democratic Party, since 1850, had been torn by internal struggles. The Whigs, never strong, had vanished from the field in 1856, while the new "black" Republican organization found little sympathy and support except among the Germans, most of whom lived in St. Louis. The Republican leaders were B. Gratz Brown and Frank P. Blair. Nevertheless, in order to completely understand the origins of the Liberal Republican movement in Missouri, which took place between the years 1865-1870, a brief survey of parties and party politics during the Civil War period is essential.

The campaign and election of 1860 had shown that a majority of the people of the State were inclined toward conservatism.¹ Missourians seemed loath to accept the accomplished facts of rebellion, in no section was the hope for final compromise more deep than in Missouri. The extremists of both North and South were in a minority, the majority favored a safe and sane policy, with the

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1. Harding, Missouri Party Struggles during the Civil War Period, in the Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1900, Vol. I 87-103.
The election figures for 1860 were:
Douglas, 58,801
Bell, 58,372
Breckenridge, 32,317
Lincoln, 17,028.
Switzler, History of Missouri, 297.

preservation of the Union.² Early in 1861, the Convention which was to govern the State for over two years, met. Its proceedings and the subsequent happenings showed plainly that a majority of the people of the State for the Union.³ By the close of August 1861, the question of union or disunion was firmly settled; Missouri, like Maryland and Kentucky, cast her lot with the northern cause.⁴

From September 1861 until January 1865, the paramount issue in the State was over the question of emancipation. This problem was of great significance. Over it, the original Union Party split asunder into two factions. One of these, known as the Radicals, urged immediate emancipation of all slaves, without compensation. The Conservative elements, who favored gradual emancipation, were led by Gov. Hamilton R. Gamble. This group proved to be the strongest and at the last session of the Convention held in June 1863, succeeded in having passed an ordinance which abolished slavery in Missouri after 1870.⁵

Until the summer of 1863, the two factions of the Union organization remained united. But after the passage of the Emancipation Ordinance, came a definite break. In the judicial election of that year each group nominated separate candidates, and the terms

2. Harding, Ibid. 90.

3. Switzler, Ibid, 324-332.

4. Harding, Ibid. 87.

5. For the full text of the ordinance see the Convention Proceedings, June 1863, Appendix, 4. The Radicals led by Isador Bush and Chas. D. Drake wished to abolish slavery on January 1, 1864.

"Radical" and "Conservative" came to have a definite party meaning.⁶ In the election, the Conservatives were completely victorious. The State was not yet ready to abandon that conservative policy, which to the Radical leaders seemed weak and vacillating.

The Unionists, which included men of every shade of loyalism, were anxious to make certain that the control of the State government remained in the possession of those concerning whose allegiance to the Union there could be no doubt. Technically speaking there was in Missouri from 1860 to 1862, two state governments. One of these included the officials elected in 1860, the other was the Convention, which had selected as provisional Governor, Hamilton R. Gamble, and assumed entire control of the State administration.⁷

The governmental situation was, therefore, very complicated. In the confusion which resulted, there were many men whose exact political status was unknown, as well as many who were known to be disloyal to the provisional government. It is but natural that those in command deemed it necessary for the safety of the State that all office holders and officials swear to an oath of loyalty. The first of these was passed by the Convention at its second meeting in October 1861. It provided that every civil officer in the state should take an oath to support the Constitution and laws of both the United States and the provisional government of the State of Missouri.⁸ This was the first oath of loyalty ever promulgated

6. Switzler, History of Missouri, 446.

7. At its second meeting, the Convention had declared the offices under the Jackson administration to be vacated, and had chosen new officials.

8. Convention Proceedings, for Oct. 1861, Appendix 4-7.

in Missouri.⁹

At the next meeting of the Convention, in June 1862, a new ordinance was passed, which embodied a much more inclusive oath. The approaching legislative campaign of 1862 had made necessary additional qualifications for both office holders and voters. The new oath provided that to be eligible for voting and officeholding, all men must subscribe to certain requirements.¹⁰ There was also incorporated into the ordinance an oath to which all attorneys, jurymen, teachers, and professors in the State University must swear.

But the Radicals were not satisfied. After their failure in the judicial election of 1863, they held a convention in September 1863. They bitterly denounced the existing State government, demanded immediate emancipation, and declared for a constitutional amendment which would disfranchise not only those who had actually taken up arms against the United States, but also that large class which had "adhered to the enemies thereof", a clause capable of wide interpretation, as the later years were to show.¹¹ The leader of this Convention was Charles D. Drake, whose utterances

9. Switzler, History of Missouri, 336.

10. Convention Proceedings, June 1862, Appendix 13-14. Every voter was obliged to swear that he had not taken up arms against the United States or the provisional government of Missouri, since Dec. 17, 1861. Ibid, 14.

11. The 7th provision of the platform read: "That we are in favor of a constitutional enactment for the disfranchisement of all those who have taken up arms, or levied against the Government, or adhered to the enemies thereof in the present rebellion." From the Convention Proceedings, 38-39, found in the Sampson Collection, now in the State Historical Society of Missouri.

were indicative of his future course.¹² Drake was also chairman of the Committee of 70, who visited President Lincoln, to lay before him the grievances of the Missouri Radicals.¹³ It was to this committee that Mr. Lincoln made his famous analysis of the situation.¹⁴

The Radicals were deeply disappointed by Lincoln's refusal to interfere in the Missouri struggle. There was little enthusiasm among them for his renomination, and the Missouri delegation was the only one which was not pledged to support his candidacy at Baltimore.¹⁵ After his renomination, however, he was generally supported, and received a majority of over 40,000 in the election.¹⁶ At the same election, the proposition to hold a Constitutional Convention was adopted. The election of 1864 was a triumph for the Radicals. Despite the influence of Lincoln and the ability and popularity of Gamble, they had been steadily growing stronger. Led by a group of intense and sincere men, like Brown and Drake, the Radicals knew for what they were fighting, and gradually their numerical strength advanced. The affirmative vote for a convention was an indication that they were gaining in influence, and that the people of the state were looking upon their ideas with approbation.

12. Concerning disfranchisement, he said; "Demand the perpetual disfranchisement of every men who has taken part, here or elsewhere, in this damnable rebellion. Enforce your demand by every lawful agency, device, and influence, with energy and fidelity, with firm confidence and steady perseverance, and there is no power on earth that can resist you." Ibid, 19.

13. See Nicolay and Hay, Abraham Lincoln, VIII.

14. Ibid.

15. Stevens, Lincoln and Missouri, in the Missouri Historical Review, X. 2, 109-112.

16. Switzler, History of Missouri, 297.

Thus, the years from 1860 to 1865 saw the downfall of the old political organizations, the triumph of the Unionists, their split over the emancipation question, into Radicals and Conservatives, the victory of the Conservatives, aided by Lincoln, and later in the war, the gradual tendency toward more radical measures. The Radical Convention of protest in September 1863 well voiced the sentiments of the party which was to rule Missouri. The death of Governor Gamble in 1864, and the absence from the state of the other Conservative leader, General Blair, saw the extremists, under aggressive leadership, secure control of the State, a control which they were able to maintain for over five years.

Chapter I. The Constitutional Convention of 1865
and
The Struggle over Ratification

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and

The Struggle over Ratification

Called into existence in November 1864 by a majority vote of about 29,000, the State Constitutional Convention, which assembled in St. Louis in January 1865 was a gathering of the greatest significance in Missouri history. The act of the General Assembly, which had authorized the Convention to assemble, had also provided that it should consider two questions; first, such Constitutional amendments necessary to abolish slavery in Missouri, and second, such Constitutional amendments as would guarantee only to the loyal citizens the right to vote.¹

The Convention consisted of 66 members, very few of whom were particularly well known to the state-at-large and most of whom went back into immediate obscurity when the convention terminated. Arnold Krekel, a St. Charles County German of considerable ability was elected president of the convention, but the real leader was the vice-president Mr. Charles D. Drake, a St. Louis lawyer, who had managed, one way and another, to secure the leadership of the Radical party in the state. Mr. Drake had been a Whig, a Know Nothing, and then a Democrat, who in 1860 had stumped the state in behalf of Claiborne F. Jackson and

1. Switzler, History of Missouri, 451-52.
Laws of Missouri, 1864. 22-24.

Stephen A. Douglas.² It delighted Mr. Drake's enemies to say that during the war he sat in his law office planning on his future course, while brave men were at the front. When "Federal bayonets were thicker than leaves of summer grass", Mr. Drake ventured forth, ardently professing Unionism.³ The German element which constituted such an important part of the Radical party strength, always looked with extreme dislike upon Drake. This dislike, it was generally supposed, was occasioned by Drake's "Puritanical ideas", one of which contemplated a Sunday closing law for St. Louis saloons.⁴ Whatever else Charles D. Drake may have been, the fact that he was an able, dogmatic, and spirited leader stands out above all else.⁵ It is to be seriously doubted whether any man ever dominated an Assembly in Missouri more

2. Missouri Statesman, June 29, 1866. Hereafter cited as the Statesman: Amos P. Foster, of Franklin County was Secretary and John W. Stephens of Phelps was Sargeant-at-arms of the Convention. The personnel of the Convention of 1861 is very different from that of 1865. Only two men, Isador Bush and Moses Linton, sat in both bodies. About ten who attended the Emancipation Convention, in 1863, are found at St. Louis in 1865. In the main, very few men of prominence sat in the 1865 Convention.
3. St. Louis Dispatch, April 28, 1868. Hereafter cited as the Dispatch.
4. Drake, born in Ohio in 1810, had been educated for the navy, but became a lawyer. He moved to St. Louis in 1834, and became a prominent attorney there. He changed politics several times, but prior to 1860 he was a strong Democrat. As a member of the Legislature in 1859 Drake had sponsered a bill which prohibited the employment of women in saloons and had also advocated a more strict observance of the Sabbath. Drake was an intensely religious man, and claims to have been one of the strongest Union men in the State during the war. Encyclopaedia of the History of St. Louis, I. 598.
5. Statesman, March 17, 1865.
Switzler, History of Missouri, 453, note.

thoroughly than Drake ruled the Convention of 1865. It is common knowledge in Missouri history that the document which the Convention drew up was always spoken of by opponents as "The Drake Constitution".

Hardly had the meeting organized and before the appointment of the usual committees, the Convention plunged into the emancipation question. A special committee of five, headed by Delegate George P. Strong, of St. Louis, considered the various proposals for emancipation.⁶ On January 11, 1865, this committee brought in its ordinance abolishing slavery forever in Missouri.

It was easily passed by the overwhelming majority of 60 to 4. The state received favorably the news of the passage of the ordinance. It represented the will of the people. The Missouri Democrat, the Radical organ of St. Louis, was well satisfied with it, while in Jefferson City, the administration officials were overjoyed, especially Governor Fletcher, who remarked to a friend, "It is time for all Rebels to leave the State".⁷ The passing of this ordinance gave a legal tinge to the abolition of slavery in the State, which had existed in a practical way for sometime, and was recognized as dead even by the slave owners.⁸

6. The Journal does not record the names of the other members.

7. Quoted in Missouri Democrat, Jan. 13, 1865. Hereafter cited as the Democrat.

8. Carr, Missouri, A Bone of Contention, 365.

After the emancipation issue had been settled, the Convention turned to the troublesome franchise question. To another special committee, that "on Elective Franchise", were all the propositions dealing in any way with the **suffrage** referred.⁹ The debate on the **suffrage** issue were the most prolonged and the bitterest of any of the Convention. They show only too plainly that the delegates had too recently come from those sections of the state in which either regular or guerilla warfare was the order of the day. It was manifestly impossible for the electors to display cool and careful judgment, while actual warfare was going on. The delegates had been elected the previous fall, while a Confederate force was sweeping opposition before it at Pilot Knob, at Lexington, and at Independence.¹⁰ The Convention could hardly deal fairly with fundamental questions of government such as the **suffrage**, while men's minds still retained a bitter feeling of revenge toward all "rebels" and "traitors". The control of a few extreme Radicals such as Drake was instrumental in pushing through measures which could not have possibly been passed except in time of stress. Despite protracted opposition the majority succeeded in passing on April 1, 1865, the Second Article of the Constitution, which contained the **suffrage** provisions,

9. The members of that committee were; Bonham, of Empire Prairie, Folmsbee, of Gallatin, Clover, of St. Louis, Foster, of Warrensburg, Evans, of Cuba, Adams of Danville, and Drake, of St. Louis.

10. McDougal, A Decade of Missouri Politics, 143. In Missouri Historical Review, V. III No.2.

including the famous "Test Oath".¹¹ The terms of these suffrage provisions so generally regarded as being outrageous and unjust, proved so unpopular with the citizens of the State that an agitation was begun which did not terminate until they were abolished five years later.¹² In addition to stringent qualifications for voters and state officials, the Convention invaded the fields of religion, law, and education by providing that all preachers, lawyers, and teachers be required to subscribe to the oath of loyalty.¹³ This section was probably the most unpopular clause of the entire document, and it is pretty certain that the Radical party was decidedly relieved when, after over two years of bitterness occasioned by numerous prosecutions, the Supreme Court of the United States declared the provisions unconstitutional.¹⁴

11. See the Constitution of 1865; article II, sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, and 18 are the most important sections which related to the suffrage. Every voter must swear that he had never, directly or indirectly, 1. Been in armed hostility to the United States, or to the Government of Missouri. 2. Given aid of any kind to, or sympathized with any persons who were hostile to the Government of the United States, 3. Had any connection or communication with the "Confederate States of America". 4. Had engaged in any form of guerrilla warfare.

A person who could not swear to all these provisions, and others, was prohibited from voting, from holding any State position from being a director or officer in any corporation, from acting as a teacher in any educational institution or common school.

12. Overwhelmingly repealed in November 1870;

13. Constitution of 1865: Article II, Section 9.

14. In *Cummings v. Missouri* the court declared the law *ex post facto*. This case was argued before the Supreme Court in March 1866, and the decision was handed down in Jan. 1867. It may be found in U.S. Supreme Court Reports, v. 71, pp. 356-366.

It was evident, soon after the Convention assembled, that the leaders would not be content to merely amend the existing Constitution, but would push through an entirely new organic law. Led by Drake, this program was begun as early as January 16th. It is doubtful if the law which called the convention into existence gave the power to do more than amend the existing body of law, but the majority of the Convention rode rough shod over the small minority, and presently had laid the foundations for a new Constitution.¹⁵ Later, during the campaign for adoption, the opponents of ratification argued that the Convention did not have the power to frame a new Constitution. The minority, outvoted and numbered, could do nothing but protest. They had early enlisted the aid of Mr. Emil Preetorious, the able editor of the Westliche Post, who, in common with many other Germans, was highly indignant that the Convention had not struck out the word "white" from the new provisions for voting and for office holding.¹⁶

Public expression of protest was given at a meeting at Turner Hall, 18th of February, over which Mr. Preetorious presided. Led by Delegates Owens, of Franklin, and St. Gem, of Cape Girardeau, the meeting went on record as opposing "such obnoxious enactments as have already been proposed and discussed" in the Convention and gave its promise to earnestly oppose any new law which might embody such provisions.¹⁷

15. Most important, perhaps, were the reports of the Committee on the Legislative Department, of which Drake was chairman.

16. The Democrat, Jan. 25, 1865, contains a quotation from the Post which shows German sentiment.

17. For a complete account of this meeting see the Democrat for Feb. 22, 1865. The effect of this meeting on the Convention was not noticeable. On two later occasions the delegates

This meeting is significant as it marks the first organized opposition to the suffrage provisions. To the Germans, these provisions were not radical enough, to the conservative members of the Convention, they were too radical.

From the standpoint of practical politics, however, the Radicals, if they were to maintain power, were forced to enact stringent laws. It was perfectly clear to the party leaders and the party press that if they were to remain permanently in power, measures of disfranchisement must be passed.¹⁸ The "loyal" party in the State, once having secured the power, could not have been expected, in the nature of things, to pass magnanimous laws for their opponents. Without the "rebel" vote, they argued, the Democratic party was helpless; and events proved this to be the case.¹⁹ It was not until the Radical party split, that the new Democratic organization was able to secure control.

Men's judgements were warped by the events of the times; the only way they believed to place Missouri, once and for all, in the

defeated by tie votes, any attempt to strike out the word "white" as a qualification for the office of Governor or for the State Assembly. Convention Journal, 141, 148.

18. "The question of rebel disfranchisement, which goes to the bottom of our entire state policy, is destined to overthrow all incidental issues, because upon its decision in Missouri depend the political power and destiny of the state". From the Democrat; February 24, 1865. The Radicals view that the Democratic Party of 1860 and of 1865 were the same is wrong.

19. Ibid; February 24, 1865.

ranks of the "loyal" states was by these test oaths and registration acts. Nor must it be forgotten that these acts would retain the Radical party in control of the state government, a control to which it believe itself fully entitled, and which it had only enjoyed for a short time.²⁰

The Convention continued in session until April 10, 1865. Late on the afternoon of April 8, Mr. Drake had demanded the ayes and noes on the final adoption of the Constitution, in whose making he had played such an important part. The vote stood ayes 38, noes 13, absent with leave 6, absent without leave 5, sick 2.²¹ When the Convention adjourned it had drawn up an entirely new organic law, and had provided that the people should vote on its adoption, June 6, 1865, not failing to add a provision that no person would be allowed to vote on the question of adoption or rejection unless he had first taken the oath indicated by the third section of the second article.²²

The campaign which followed was the most unusual in the history of the State. Probably the largest single element in opposition to the new Constitution were the former "old line Whigs" of Missouri, men who during the years of war, had either stood firmly for the Union, or at least remained neutral.²³ The venerable

20. Contrary to general belief, it was not until the election of 1864 that the Radicals got full control of the State government. Governor Gamble had never been in sympathy with them, and President Lincoln had been influenced by his faction rather than by the radical group. Says the Democrat, Feb. 8, 1865. "It is not now necessary to imagine what malign influence has operated upon the mind of the President to keep him so long in opposition to the Radicals of Missouri."

21. Journal, 247.

22. "The ironclad oath".

23. Their spokesman in the press was Col. William F. Switzler of the Columbia Statesman.

Edward Bates returning to St. Louis from Washington early in the canvass had denounced the Convention as a revolutionary body whose deliberations had no legal aspect whatsoever.²⁴ The intolerance, the taxation clauses, and the disfranchisement sections were highly distasteful to James S. Rollins, who was an ardent opponent of the new document.²⁵ To many of these former Whigs, the Radicals appeared as a narrow group of politicians who were endeavoring to fasten their rule upon the State forever.²⁶ The root and branch opponents of the Constitution are best seen in this type of old fashioned conservative. The press of St. Louis, with the single exception of the Missouri Democrat, lined up solidly against the new Constitution.²⁷

Another class of opponents to the new Constitution were the Democrats, who in 1865 labored under the stigma of "rebels" and

24. Statesman, April 28, 1865. Mr. Bates, for years a leader in the Whig party, and candidate for the Republican nomination in 1860, had been Attorney General in Lincoln's cabinet.

25. For Rollins' view, see his letter to Chauncey I. Filley, printed in the Statesman, May 26, 1865. James S. Rollins had long been head of the Whig Party in Missouri. A man of great personal popularity, and absolute integrity, he had been his party's choice for United States Senator, for Governor twice, in 1848 and 1857, and a member of Congress for two terms and the Legislature for nine. In 1860, he had come out as a Union man and remained as such during the war. A full account of Rollins' life may be found in Smith, James Sidney Rollins.

26. "The issue in this state is not between Union men and Rebels, but one between the people of the State and a narrow-minded factious set of hot-headed fanatics". From the Statesman, April 14, 1865.

27. The Republican, was perhaps the leading organ of opposition.

"traitors", terms which the average Radical always used in describing the personnel of that party. The medium thru which the Democratic activity manifested itself was the State Central Committee, which had managed, no one knows how, to keep up a pretense of organization since the election of 1864. The weight of the accusation, "party of slavery" was too heavy a burden for the Democrats to carry, and it is to be seriously doubted whether their influence against adoption did ought else than to the more strongly solidify the opposition in its favor.²⁸

Early in the canvass, it appeared as if the Radical party itself was split over the question of adoption. Governor Fletcher, in an open letter, had come out flatly against the Constitution, The "iron clad oath", and the other obnoxious restrictions were the objections he urged most strongly.²⁹ The Radical organ of St. Louis announced that the governor had rushed to his political suicide.³⁰ Fletcher later became advocate of its adoption.

It was early rumored that Senator B. Gratz Brown would return to Missouri to head a movement of opposition. Senator Brown, who would have liked nothing better than to remain out of the fight was thus forced to declare himself, which he did. He announced that he was in favor of the Constitution but if it was adopted, he wished to see amendments to it passed very soon. He deprecated,

28. One of the **appeals** of the committee may be found in the Democrat, May 22, 1865. It advises all Democrats to vote against adoption. This, the Democrat ironically adds, is impossible, because no Democrats can vote.

29. The Statesman, April 21, 1865 prints the letter in full.

30. Democrat, April 24, 1865. "He has turned his back upon those to whom he is indebted for putting him in the Governor's chair."

the bitterness of the campaign.³¹ Senator Henderson, it was alleged, was also antagonistic to the Radical program, but he withdrew his opposition before the campaign was in full sway.³² In order to understand the shifting of the various gentlemen it is necessary to trace briefly the course of the Radicals, led by the grim thoroughness which Drake's methods called forth.

The Radical party, throughout the campaign, attempted to classify all those opposed to the new Constitution as rebels and disloyalists.³³ It was obvious that if the party could keep uppermost the old loyalty question, its chances of winning would be greatly enhanced. Accordingly, the majority of those who were opposed to ratification were denounced as "rebels" or "traitors", while the remainder were comprehensively condemned as "copperheads".³⁴ The only way, said Drake, to perpetuate loyalty in Missouri, as well as prosperity, was by Radical rule. A system of disfranchisement was necessary, because, once given the franchise, the heterogeneous group which made up the opposition would become a unified mass, which would soon, through the

31. Democrat, April 28, 1865. Brown was, in fact, about ready to announce for universal suffrage.
32. Republican, May 10, 1865, indicates that the fear of Drake shaped Henderson's course, as well as Browns'. Official opposition was withdrawn at a meeting in St. Louis, early in May, at which Senators Brown and Henderson, as well as several Congressmen agreed to support the new Constitution, Democrat, May 3, 1865.
33. For the best expression of the Radical view, see Drake's seven open letters, which appeared in the Democrat, in April 1865.
34. The opponents of the Radicals resented this classification. "The issue in this case is not between Union men and rebels, but one between the people of the State and a narrow minded, factious set of hot-headed fanatics". Statesman, April 14, 1865.

instrumentality of the ballot box, sweep out of power the "loyal" men. By making the question of adoption a strong party issue, the Radicals showed shrewd political wisdom, as this method would whip into line a considerable number of reluctant voters.³⁵

The strong minority, which had led the opposition in the Convention, was either forced back into Radical ranks, or read out of the party. Those who left it were later instrumental in forming the Conservative Union party.³⁶

As the campaign advanced it became evident that the Radicals would derive their chief support from the outlying portions of the State, rather than in St. Louis, where the new Constitution was coldly received, or in the old Whig strong holds the Missouri river counties. From the northwest and southwest portions of the State encouraging reports reached Radical headquarters.³⁷ The rural districts, announced the partizan Democrat, have been much closer to treason and have seen more clearly the evils of slavery than have the city population, and so are eager to stand behind the party which were driving both from the state.³⁸

A more reasonable interpretation, however, is that the border, largely peopled by immigrants from free states, saw an opportunity to secure control of the state administration, which, it believed, had been too long dominated by St. Louis, This could best be

35. The Westliche Post, however, contended that the question was a non-partizan issue.

36. The quarrel between Johnson and Congress, which came later, greatly intensified the division in Missouri.

37. Democrat, May 3, 1865. Drake, during his vigorous canvass of the state, came to the same conclusion. Ibid; May 17, 1865. Another report showed strong and favorable Radical sentiment for the Constitution in 32 counties, particularly in the northwest and southwest portions of the state. Ibid; May 19, 1865.

38. Democrat, May 10, 1865.

accomplished by disfranchising the "Rebel Aristocracy" of St. Louis and the central portion of the state, thus throwing the balance of power to the border counties, where lay the Radical strength. This border element might have looked on the new Constitution as an instrument by which it could the more easily secure control.³⁹

By May 1, the Radical machine was running smoothly, ready for the final weeks of the campaign. The opponents of adoption, whatever their name, were too loosely organized to be an effective fighting force, and only in St. Louis could they maintain an organization worthy to combat the Radical machine. A small group in St. Louis undertook to conduct a state campaign, but only partial success resulted.⁴⁰

Late in the campaign, St. Louis became the center upon which the Radicals concentrated their forces. Here, as seen above, natural conservatism, a desire to put aside politics to again resume the business activity, which the Civil War had interrupted, and the almost solid opposition of the press to the new document, led thoughtful men to look askance on the violent utterances of the Radical leaders, as well as upon the stringent clauses of the new Constitution.⁴¹ Against adoption was thrown also the whole weight of the Federal office holders in St. Louis; men whom, it was alleged, owed their appointments to Francis P. Blair, Jr., and to Edward Bates.⁴²

39. It was pointed out that the much needed immigration and capital would never venture into a "rebel ruled" state.

40. The leaders of this body were James O. Broadhead, C. P. Johnson, S. J. Glover, Louis V. Bogy. Speakers were sent out, and pamphlets issued, but the organization lacked compactness. The Radical canvass was headed by Drake, who visited every part of the State, and by Krekel.

41. During the latter part of May, nightly meetings were held by both sides in all parts of the city, which the leaders addressed. For a typical Radical meeting see Democrat, May 24, 1865.

42. Democrat, June 7, 1865.

The election took place on June 6. Early returns indicated a defeat for the new Constitution. The vote in St. Louis, and in the old Whig section, was overwhelmingly against adoption.⁴³ The premature rejoicing of the Conservative press was suddenly cut short when the returns from the border counties were received. These counties gave, usually, a comfortable majority for adoption.⁴⁴ The election, however, was in grave doubt until the soldier's votes came in. The Convention had provided by ordinance that the Governor send election officials to the front to secure the soldiers' vote.⁴⁵ The Missouri men still in camp decided the election.⁴⁶ By July 1, it was generally admitted that the Constitution had been adopted.⁴⁷

43. In St. Louis, the vote stood, for 5272, against, 11,239. Democrat, June 7, 1865. Boone County defeated adoption 1762 to 132, while Pike and Calloway rejected it by heavy majorities Statesman, June 16, 1865. According to the Democrat, great numbers of "returned rebels" voted illegally in St. Louis, i.e. all against adoption.
44. Polk, Putnam, Greene, and Harrison gave immense majorities in favor of the Constitution. Statesman, July 7, 1865.
45. Journal, 283.
46. The soldiers vote was for, 2,995, against 1,168, in the official figures published in the Statesman, July 7, 1865. The Republican, June 26, 1865, claimed it was impossible to give the exact figures on the soldiers' vote, as the officers of the companies had, in person, taken the results to Secretary Rodman's office, and the final vote was announced from there.
47. Final vote was 43,670 for, and 41,808 against adoption. Statesman, July 7, 1865.

With the official vote, came Governor Fletcher's proclamation which declared the new law effective July 4, 1865. The Radicals, despite strong opposition, had triumphed. How to keep control of the state government and reap the benefits of office became the party's problem.⁴⁸

48. It has always been maintained by the opponents of the Constitution that it was rejected by a majority of the voters, but that the Secretary of State, Francis Rodman, in whose office the votes were counted had fraudently manipulated the returns in order to secure adoption. He had also refused to a committee of the opposition access to the files of his office. Republican, June 26, 1865.

Chapter II. The First Fruits of Radical Rule.

The First Fruits of Radical Rule.

The five months from the adoption of the Constitution to the convening of the General Assembly are concerned chiefly with the Test Oath in its application to the professional classes. The American people have always disliked a close connection between Church and State, and the clause of the new Constitution, which provided that all lawyers, who wished to continue practice, all preachers and teachers who desired to pursue their professions must subscribe, and file said oath, proved intensely unpopular.¹

Indeed, provisions of this nature are so unusual in American History that the classes affected by them knew hardly how to proceed. The ministers were advised by some to entirely disregard the oath, the state's attempt to interfere with religion and education being regarded as unwarrantable.² The report got abroad that there was a well organized movement in the state among the ministers to continue preaching and teaching without ever taking the oath.³ The Radical organ saw in this plan a scheme by which the Conservatives sought to weld together two organized classes, the lawyers and the preachers, in opposition to the Constitution, groups which might, of course become a permanent part of Conservative strength.⁴ Nor were the ministers less puzzled than the editors.

1. Constitution of 1865, Article II, Section 9. It was necessary to take the oath sixty days after the Constitution had been ratified.

2. Statesman, July 28, 1865.

3. Dispatch, July 25, 1865 contains an account of this movement.

4. Democrat, July 26, 1865. The Anzeiger advised a "preachers rebellion", but no plan for accomplishing this is given.

To each denomination the question was presented, sometimes in the annual conferences, sometimes by consultation with the Bishops and other leaders of the Church. The Missouri Baptists, at their 13th Annual Association, agreed to decline to take the required oath.⁵ At the St. Louis Conference of the Methodist Church, South, Bishop Kavanaugh's sermon strongly advised against taking any oath which would put the temporal power above the spiritual power.⁶ The Episcopal clergymen turned for guidance to Bishop Hawk who urged them to take the oath or resign, adding that in his opinion the oath was so obnoxious that it would soon be repealed by the civil powers.⁷ Of the Roman Catholic attitude little is known. Through the Bishop of that Church in St. Louis, Rev. Peter Richard, came offers of assistance and advice for members of his flock who were effected by the oath.⁸

These manifestations of discontent brought forth from the Radicals sharp replies and a defense of the oath. Those who expound and teach the laws of God are not themselves above the laws of men, remarked the Democrat, adding that there was no necessity to separate the preacher from the citizen.⁹

5. Annual Cyclopaedia, 1865, 591.

6. Democrat, August 28, 1865.

7. Annual Cyclopaedia, 1865, 591. The Bishop, personally was opposed to the oath in a political way. For his letter to the clergy see the Democrat, August 28, 1865.

8. Ibid.

9. Democrat, August 7, 1865. "If the State has no just power to require the preacher to be loyal, it has no just power to require him to obey the laws in any particular."

With the active ooposition of the various Church Conferences, the Radicals were even more intolerant. Impartial men everywhere, it was said, will now know the true conditions of affairs in the state, and the oath will be "vindicated by its enemies."¹⁰

It was early evident that the Conservatives could hope for little from the Radical State administration. To dispel any idea of leniency toward the enforcement of the unpopular clause, Governor Fletcher announced in no uncertain tone that the exact provisions of that document would be carried out with all the power at his command.¹¹ It was, he declared, the duty of the courts, not the executive, to settle any case which might arise. Nor was this all. Later, the governor became almost ridiculous by his extreme statements. He talked of enlarging the State Penitentiary in order to accommodate all teachers and preachers who refused to take the oath.¹² Statements of this kind the state found it hard to take seriously,

10. "The proceedings of the rebel conclave (Conference of the Methodists) which has just been in session, assembled under the name of a religious conference, will serve to open the eyes of all impartial men to the true state of things among us, and will show them with what class of men they range themselves, in taking position against the Law, or any of its requirements". Democrat, August 28, 1865.

11. Democrat, August 1, 1865.

12. Statesman, September 10, 1865. During the summer of 1865 Fletcher made many speeches. Besides upholding the new Constitution, he advocated both social and political equality for the negro, and reviewed his own career as a sturdy abolitionist.

while they but increased the contempt which many felt toward the chief executive.¹³

Among the lawyers the provisions caused no little discontent. It was charged that thousands were forced by the oath from the practice of their profession, and that the failure of the head of a family to earn a living in turn forced extreme hardship upon his wife and children.¹⁴ The provision which required that a Court must administer the oath to all jurors was to many a source of irritation.¹⁵ The failure of jurors to swear to the oath and the different interpretation which the judges placed on this section led everywhere to confusion and delay.¹⁶

The Governor's course in enforcing the "ousting ordinance" of the Constitution proved extremely unpopular.

13. Leftwich, Martyrdom in Missouri, II. Chap. 14-19. This very partizan book contains a detailed account of the Test Oath in its application to the clergy. It describes the cases of many ministers who were indicted and tried for refusing to take the oath.
14. See C. P. Johnson's speech in the Missouri House of Representatives, Nov. 17, 1865. The speech may be found in a bound volume of pamphlets, formerly owned by Mr. F. A. Sampson, and now in the possession of the State Historical Society of Missouri.
15. Constitution of 1865, Article II. Section 11.
16. Annual Cyclopaedia, 1865. 591. I could find no definite record of definite organization among the legal classes to oppose the section.

among the legal classes. Justices Dryden and Bay, of the Missouri Supreme Court, on refusing to abide by the ordinance, were forcibly removed by the order of Fletcher, and their successors, his own appointees, installed. This action was generally regarded by the lawyers as a usurpation of power on the part of the Governor, as well as an attack on the judiciary. The controversy, in addition to its purely legal side, stirred up considerable animosity toward the State administration.¹⁷

The summer of 1865 had brought sharply before the people of the state the "iniquities" of the new constitution, and evidences of organized protest began to show themselves. The most obvious mode of relief was, of course, by legislative action, and for months before the Legislature met schemes for amending the obnoxious sections were afoot. Indeed, the Ratification election was hardly over before one of the insurgents of the Convention, Mr. George Husmann, of Gasconade, came forward with a proposal of eleven amendments for the Constitution.¹⁸ Both of the United States Senators from Missouri expressed themselves as advocates of early amendment. Senator Brown had made known his views in a letter to Governor Fletcher. He announced that he would be glad to see the document amended in several important

17. The Statesman, June 23, 1865, gives an account of the affair.

18. Statesman, July 14, 1865. Mr. Husmann advocated abrogation of the test oath for ministers, the striking out of the word "white" in suffrage qualifications, and a shortening of the Test Oath.

respects, but was rather vague as to the time at which these amendments would be in force.¹⁹ In discussing his favorite topic, universal suffrage, Mr. Brown was less vague. He declared at St. Louis, in September 1865, that he strongly favored this policy in the nation-at-large, and said it was the duty of both the national and state governments to reconstruct along this line.²⁰ More emphatic in his desire for amendment was Senator Henderson. In a very interesting address, delivered at St. Louis in the fall of 1865, Mr. Henderson reviewed the history of disfranchisement in Missouri, declared that the Radical Party had overstepped all bounds of party government by the enactment of tyrannous measures which ere clearly unconstitutional, and which would, if continued, bring disaster upon the party organization. In conclusion, he urged repeal of the test oath.²¹

19. The Statesman, October 6, 1865, contains the letter in full. In part Brown says, -----"I am not one of those who believe the present Constitution to be a perfect instrument, and I shall be glad to see it amended in several important reports, at as early a date as practicable."-----

20. This speech may be found in a bound volume of political pamphlets, formerly owned by Col. Wm. F. Switzler, of Columbia, Mo., and now in the State Historical Society of Missouri. Brown delivered the speech at Turner Hall, St. Louis. He touched only upon national issues. The German element of the State were strong supporters of negro suffrage,, and Brown was generally regarded as their spokesman.

21. Switzler's Pamphlets contain a copy of the address. The tone of the speech is conciliatory, and Henderson gives no indication of what his course will be in the case of the Radicals fail to repeal or amend the constitution. The Conservatives of Pike County resented Henderson's course, and accused him of being a hypocrite. See the speech of R. A. Campbell in the Conservative Convention of October 1865, also found in pamphlet form in the same volume.

In addition to these utterances of public officials, and probably of more weight, was the course of General Francis P. Blair, who had returned to St. Louis from the front late in June 1865. Mr. Blair, although admitting he had never read the new Constitution, predicted for it a speedy revision. He added, in his impulsive way, that it should never have adopted until the men at the front returned.²² His trip to Kentucky there to aid the Conservative party against the Radical Union men was but an indication of his future course in Missouri. He announced very plainly that general amnesty and a pardon for all participants in the rebellion were the first steps toward real reconstruction.²³ Thus far, no movement of organized protest had been launched. The rank and file of the Radicals had held aloof from any amendment scheme, and it was to be seriously doubted whether that party would adopt any course of leniency, which might endanger its control of the state government. In fact, the Democrat had voiced the belief that the only problem was how to keep the state out of disloyal hands, assuming that this could be done by a very stringent registration act.²⁴

The movement for a state organization to reestablish political and religious liberty in Missouri had its origin in St. Louis.

22. Democrat, June 26, 1865.

23. Blair denounced in his speeches Chase, Stanton, and particularly Joseph Holt, the Radical leader of Kentucky. Democrat, July 14, 1865. Chase had urged upon Johnson immediate enfranchisement of the freemen. Rhodes History of the United States, V., 522-525.

24. Democrat, June 9, 1865.

Its leaders were about the same type of men who had opposed the new Constitution, but other elements included Generals Blair and Smith, and several former prominent Democrats, such as Lewis V. Bogy and John S. Phelps. Thus, every group was represented. The majority of these men had been strong Unionists during the war, and supporters of President Lincoln and Governor Gamble.²⁵

The Conservatives inaugurated their movement by calling a Mass Convention, to be held in St. Louis.²⁶ This Convention was to endorse Andrew Johnson's plan of reconstruction, and to discuss at length the situation in Missouri. With the exception of a few prominent Radicals, Johnson's policy of reorganization of the southern states, which began on May 29th, with his amnesty proclamation, had been well received at the North.²⁷

It appeared that the president's scheme would be successful in operation, and many state conventions, meeting during the summer and fall, made haste to put their stamp of approval on executive reconstruction.²⁸ It is not strange, therefore, that the Conservatives in Missouri wished to bring together those who favored the president's course with those

25. Mr. L. V. Bogy, who was a prominent figure in the later meeting, had been a strong Confederate sympathizer during the war. Bay, Reminiscences of the Bench and Bar in Missouri, 578. Mr. Phelps, after serving eighteen years in Congress as a Democrat, had become, during the war, a strong Union man. He lived in southwest Missouri.

26. The meeting is commonly known as the "Verandah Hall Convention".

27. Rhodes, V. 533. Wade, Sumner, and Stevens were wholly out of sympathy with Johnson's plan.

28. Rhodes, V. 516-541. Gives an account of public sentiment on reconstruction during the summer and fall of 1865.

who were dissatisfied with the Missouri Constitution. Such a combination might, if properly organized, prove of formidable strength in coming elections. While the management of the Mass Convention was in the hands of St. Louisans, it was desired that the whole state should participate in the movement. The proclamation, which called together the meeting, declared the Convention was to endorse President Johnson's policies, and dwelt at length on the state affairs in Missouri under Radical rule.²⁹ The call met with a ready response among the Conservatives throughout the state.

The Radical press manifested considerable interest in Conservative program. For several weeks before the meeting convened, the Democrat fully discussed what it conceived to be the real reason for calling the Convention.³⁰ In general the Radicals held that the purpose of the mass meeting was, not to aid Johnson, but to overthrow the Constitution.³¹

To add respectability to the affair, and to give a Union coloring to the movement, the name of the president was used. To wrest party control from the Radicals was the real cause of the Conservative campaign. And to this end, had the

29. This proclamation may be found in the Statesman, Oct. 13, 1865. It strongly denounces the test oath in every phase, but is especially severe on the provisions relating to preachers, teachers, and lawyers. The signatures of over seventy-five men were attached to the proclamation.

30. In addition to its own views, the Democrat, published reports from the various counties of the state, which summarized political happenings there.

31. "The grand object is to overthrow the new Constitution in Missouri, and put rebels in power, and to do this the Union friends of President Johnson are invited to give their aid." Democrat, October 2, 1865.

Copperheads, like Lewis V. Bogy, combined with the Blair-Claybank faction of government officials.³² It is, no doubt, quite true that the Conservatives wished to organize opposition into a party.³³ The ratification election had shown the utter failure of opposition, unless organized and under the direction of strong leaders. It was fortunate for the Conservatives that they had so early enlisted the services of the enthusiastic General Blair. A man of immense personal popularity, one of the earliest Union men in the State, and an officer of prominence in the Civil War, Mr. Blair brought to the Conservative ranks considerable strength.³⁴ It was galling to the Radicals to find him so conspicuous in the party of protest.³⁵ The Radical idea, however, that that the so called party of "Union-oath haters", which called the meeting, was in form and in name, as well as in

32. Democrat, October 6, 1865. Mr. Bogy had been for years a prominent lawyer and Democratic leader of the State.
33. The first call for the Convention had the words: "for the purpose of forming a state organization to give effect to their views through the ballot box," Democrat, October 6, 1865. The italics are the Democrats. Later proclamations had these words stricken out.
34. There are several campaign lives of Blair, which are decidedly partizan. Good brief accounts can be found in Scharf, History of St. Louis, I, 625-627, and in the Encyclopædia of the History of St. Louis, I, 171-173.
35. "That Mr. Blair and some others, who have been landmarks on the route of progress and freedom in Missouri should permit themselves to be catspaws of a party composed of the odds and ends of rebellion, is no less singular than disgusting". Democrat, October 18, 1865.

fact, the Democratic Party, is erroneous.³⁶ Many old line Whigs were actively identified with the movement, men, who for years had been prominent in state politics, and who now sought relief from what they considered tyrannical government.³⁷

The Convention convened at St. Louis on October 26, with over one thousand delegates in attendance. From Boone County went two hundred delegates, headed by Mr. Rollins.³⁸ Nearly every quarter of the State sent its delegation. The old, substantial classes of Missouri were well represented. In session three days, the Convention was largely concerned with discussing the new Constitution, although a few perfunctory resolutions, touching upon national affairs, and praising Andrew Johnson, were passed.⁴⁰ Mr. Blair returned from a stumping tour of the state

36. See the Democrat, October 20, 1865, for this view.

37. James O. Broadhead, James S. Rollins, Robert A. Campbell, and William F. Switzler are examples. These men did not definitely join the Democratic Party until the election of 1868. They formed an important element in the Conservative Union Party, which failed in the Congressional election of 1866.

38. Statesman, October 27, 1865. The names of many prominent men are included in the list.

39. See speech of R. A. Campbell, of Pike, delivered at the Convention. Proceedings of the Conservative Convention, 25, found in Switzler's Political Pamphlets.

40. The best account of the Verandah Hall Convention is found in Switzler's Political Pamphlets, which contain detailed description of the meeting. The account, in places, is somewhat partizan. Proceedings from day to day may be found in the Democrat and Republican for October 26-29, 1865. Barton Able, of St. Louis, was the temporary, and S. L. Glover, the permanent chairman of the Convention. Able had been a strong Benton Democrat, then a Free Soiler. He had supported Lincoln in 1860, and throughout the war had been a strong Union man. Scharf, History of St. Louis, I, 603-605. Glover, one of the most ardent Union men in the State, was one of the first to protest against the Test Oath. ibid, II. 1494.

in time to deliver, in his characteristic vein, the principal address of the meeting.

On the side of constructive organization, the Convention made little headway. Most of the sessions were confined chiefly to a vigorous denunciation of the existing conditions in Missouri, all of which, it was claimed, grew out of the iniquities of the Radical rule. The Convention named two committees, one to lay before President Johnson the proceedings of the meeting, the other, consisting of one delegate from each Congressional district, was to take steps toward organizing a party to overthrow the existing state government.⁴¹ Just how this was to be done, the various speakers failed to show. The majority of them condemned any procedure which involved violence. But beyond bringing together the discontented elements in the state, and laying the foundation for future activity, the much heralded Convention accomplished little.

The Radicals could see in the meeting only an attempt of Blair to regain his political power by a combination with "rebels", to whom Blair, to advance his own interests, had made overtures for support.⁴² Before discussion about the Convention had died away, all eyes were turned toward Jefferson City, where the General Assembly was about to convene.

The adjourned session of the 23rd Assembly contained a

41. Statesman, November 3, 1865. The delegates which went to Washington included L. V. Bogy, J. O. Broadhead, A. A. King, T. E. Noell, and J. S. Rollins.

42. "The sole object of the men managing that Convention", said the Democrat of October 30, 1865, "is to gain political power-----the minority in attendance, who have always professed to be Union men, like Frank Blair and his shoddy followers, want political power for the advancement of their own selfish ends, and have gone over to the Rebels to get it."

large Radical majority. The speaker elected was Mr. Andrew Harlan, of Andrew County, who received practically the entire Radical vote.⁴³ The message of Governor Fletcher contained several recommendations to the Radicals. He advocated, first the enactment of a law for a complete and uniform registration of voters, which should guard carefully the elective franchise.⁴⁴ From the requirements of the second article of the suffrage section, the Test Oath, the governor urged exemption of all those interested in corporations, except where the state or nation was a stockholder, creditor, or contributor. All professors and teachers in schools, not supported in any way by the state, should likewise be exempt. The Supreme Court of the United States, he adds, will definitely settle the question of the oath as far as ecclesiastics are concerned.⁴⁵ There is a striking difference between the tone of the Governor's speeches in the fall of 1865, and the conciliatory attitude of his message. But he had evidently misjudged Radical feeling. The response of the press of that party to his suggestions, was chilling, while the acts of the Legislature point out only too plainly that the

43. Journal, House of Representatives, Adjourned Session of the 23rd General Assembly, 4, 5. Harlan got 69 votes, while M. J. Payne, his opponent, received only 18, with 38 absent.
44. Journal, House, 13-22 contains the message in full.
45. He refers to the case of Cummings V. Missouri. On refusing to take the oath, Father Cummings, a priest of Pike County, was fined and thrown into jail. The case went soon to the United States Supreme Court. The Democrat, September 20, 1865, contains a story of the case.

Radical leaders would be extremely loath to adopt any plan which might endanger their supremacy.⁴⁶ With the exception of the Registration Act, the majority in the Legislature made no effort to bring forward as a party measure any recommendation which the Governor had made. Every attempt of the Conservatives to investigate, through committees, the adoption of the Constitution, or to put through any resolutions for amending it, the Radicals unceremoniously put aside. Senator Doniphan's effort to have the election returns investigated was defeated.⁴⁷ The proposal of C. P. Johnson, of St. Louis, to abrogate by constitutional amendment, the test oath for preachers, teachers, and lawyers was postponed from time to time by the Radicals, until within a few days of the close of the session, when his resolutions were defeated 61 to 30.⁴⁸ In both the House and the Senate a small group of Conservatives fought the Radicals at every opportunity.⁴⁹

The Radicals, on the other hand, lost little time in enacting the Registry Law, which they deemed essential to their continued success. This law was regarded as the great measure of

46. Democrat, November 6, 1865.

47. By a vote in the Senate of 12 to 11. Journal, Senate 129, 130.

48. Journal, House, 907.

49. The Radicals were ably led in the Senate by J. J. Gravelly, of Bolivar. Senator Doniphan led the Senate opposition which numbered about nine. In the House, about twenty men, headed by Johnson, a former Radical, conducted the fight. The Conservatives wished for a Constitutional amendment repealing this test oath; some, too, desired a Constitutional Convention as well. All their resolutions were crushed by the Radical majority.

the entire session, and had behind it at all times and under all conditions the immense Radical majority.⁵⁰ Despite numerous attempts led by Doniphan to amend the Registry bill, it passed the Senate 20 to 9.⁵¹ The House, with its enormous majority had already acted favorably.⁵² The passage of the bill was regarded by the Radical press as a triumph second only to the adoption of the new Constitution.⁵³ The State was now firmly

50. Democrat, November 13, 1865. It was claimed that C. D. Drake was the author of the bill, and went to Jefferson City in order to put it through. Statesman, November 17, 1865.

51. Journal, Senate, 166.

52. The vote, taken December 6, was 91 to 19. Journal, House, 175-6.

53. Democrat, December 19, 1865. The details of the Registry law are very numerous and complicated. For our purpose, the following may be noted: 1. The Governor appointed a supervisor of registration for each county, who was president of the board of appeals and revision.

2. Each election district had an officer of registration named by the supervisor.

3. Before this officer, the voter must subscribe to the Test Oath. The voter could be questioned by the officer, who upon his own knowledge, or upon evidence submitted to him, had the power to reject the voters name, even though he had previously taken the oath.

4. The officers of registration for each district, together with the supervisor, constituted a board of appeals and revision. They heard all complaints, and added or removed voters names as they saw fit.

5. The officers were given all the powers of a Circuit Judge, in maintaining order, summoning witnesses, etc.

6. The judges of election were compelled to use the lists of qualified voters, prepared by the officers. No one could vote whose name was not on this list. Thus, the act placed in the hands of the dominant political party, all the machinery of election. It gave the revision board judicial powers, and the officers of registration, if unscrupulous, could, on the slightest pretext, dominate hundreds of voters. For the full text of the law, see Laws of Missouri, 1865, 117-124.

secure in the hands of loyal men, who would place Missouri to the fore as a loyal and prosperous state. Conservatives everywhere regarded the law as the crowning act of Radical intolerance and fanaticism. Its pretended object, that of maintaining the purity of the ballot box, was only a sham. Its real object was to keep in power a political party.⁵⁴ The truth is, that the measure was of great aid in maintaining Radical power in Missouri, and had been recognized as such by the Radical leaders.⁵⁵

The year 1866 dawned with the Radicals supreme, but in many portions of the State unrest, discontent, and even violence manifested itself. The state of peace was hardly less quiet than the state of war had been. The Conservatives were daily becoming more desperate, while the Radicals, confident of their majority, pressed forward to more obnoxious measures of government.

54. Statesman, January 5, 1866.

55. General Gravelly had argued this during the passage of the bill, see History of Radical Legislature 1865-66, in Switzler's Political Pamphlets. To keep the state "loyal" meant to keep it in Radical control.

Chapter III.

The Election of 1866, and the Failure of the
Conservative Union
Party.

Chapter III.

While the agitation over the Test Oath was at its height and while men spoke with increasing bitterness about Radical rule, the movement was set on foot for the organization of the Conservative Union Party. The great mass convention of October 26, 1865, commonly known as the "Verandah Hall" Convention, had accomplished a real purpose by laying the foundations for the future expansion and development of the Conservative elements into a definite organization. The light of future happenings made very significant Mr. Broadhead's resolution, submitted at the opening session of the convention, that there be appointed a State Executive Committee of fifteen members "for the purpose of organizing the people of the State in support of the Reconstructive policy of President Johnson and in opposition to the new Constitution".¹ Nothing was said concerning the program or organization of this Executive Committee, but later events showed that the six members from St. Louis assumed the management of the campaign.² Although the "Verandah Hall" Convention did not in any formal sense attempt the organization of a new party, it was plain that both Radicals and Conservatives

1. Democrat, Oct. 30, 1865. This committee consisted of one member from each Congressional district and six from the state at large, who were to be citizens of St. Louis. Among those appointed were : J.R.McCormack, T.T.Crittenden, J. W. Glover, W. F. Switzler, E.B.Brown, Barton Able, L.V.Bogy, J.O.Broadhead, and Geo. Knapp, the editor of the Republican.
2. Gen. E. B. Brown was Chairman and Alden R. Smith was Secretary of the committee.

believed that this would be the ultimate result.³ For several weeks following the meeting; the two strong Conservative organs in St. Louis rejoice that a new party, consisting of elements of Conservatism, has been launched.⁴ One of the members of the new committee, through his newspaper remarked that "to direct popular suffrage in approval of the Conservative policy" had been one of the purposes of the Convention.⁵

The committee thus appointed lost little time in perfecting an organization. On November 9, at St. Louis, a thorough and efficient plan was formulated.⁶ In addition to the State Executive Committee it was further provided that each Congressional district organize a committee which was to consist of a representative of each county within the district.⁷ Thus, by the close of 1865, the framework for the organization of the new party had been made.

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3. The platform contained no provisions which expressly spoke of a new party. It announced that the present issues were "above mere party consideration" and appealed to all citizens "to cordially unite with us" in redeeming the State from its perils. Statesman, Nov. 10, 1865. Just who "us" may be is not specified.
4. The Republican and the Dispatch boasted of this. The Democrat Nov. 3 and 5, 1865 gives both the Conservative and Radical view of this formation and composition of this party.
5. Col. Switzler, on returning to Columbia, writes: "They were there to organize public opinion and direct popular suffrage in approval of the Conservative policy of President Johnson and against the infamies and blunders of the late State Convention". Statesman, Nov. 3, 1865.
6. It was agreed that seven should constitute a quorum to transact all business. Gen. Brown was named as Chairman, and C. J. Corwin, of Cole, as Secretary. Statesman, Nov. 24, 1865. Mr. Corwin was succeeded by A. R. Smith.
7. Statesman, Dec. 15, 1865.

The early months of 1866 saw perfected, under the leadership of the Executive Committee, a definite organization, known as the Conservative Union Party.⁸ It was to be in existence almost a year, and was to mark a necessary transition in the political rearrangements of the years 1865-1872. The Conservative Union Party in this State was made up of those elements, which had now, for almost a year, remained in solid opposition to the new Constitution. These men also favored Executive Reconstruction, but professed, at the same time, ardent Unionism. It was Mr. Blair who assumed the leadership of the Conservative forces.⁹ Whether he was led, as the Radicals often charged, by his own ambitions and desire for office, to found a new party, it is difficult to say.¹⁰ It is, of course, highly probable that if the Conservative Party was successful it would naturally choose Gen. Blair for one of the highest offices, presumably the United States Senatorship. But to insist that Blair was thinking only of furthering his own ends or those of his family is to impute to him an insincerity and selfishness of which he was quite incapable. Nor must it be forgotten that Mr. Blair had made haste to repudiate the Radical Party and all its works, which probably accounts for the Radical attitude toward him.

But the attention of politicians and people alike did not center wholly on State issues. The national situation, daily becoming more acute, forced attention toward Washington. In Missouri, it was the occasion for many meetings, at which the

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8. The usual form of communication was by announcements and addresses to the Conservative voters. For a typical example see the Republican, Jan. 3, 1866.

9. Democrat, Jan. 3, 1866.

10. For example see the Democrat, Oct. 28 and 30, 1865, immediately after the adjournment of the Convention. The Radicals were quite positive that the Democrats of the State would never join the movement.

leaders of each party spoke about the other with hatred,¹¹ and distrust. No one could be quite certain of what either Congress or Johnson contemplated, but the widening of the breach between the chief executive and the Radical leaders but made sharper in Missouri the division between Radical Republican and Conservative Unionists.

In the beginning, indeed, the Radicals had looked with contempt upon the efforts to organize into a party the Conservative forces. The "old Copperhead Democracy", they asserted, who had been shamefully ignored by Blair at the mass convention, would be extremely loath to surrender its party name and individuality to any new organization led by Boggy and Blair.¹² That these gentlemen could incorporate into their party the older Democratic group was considered extremely doubtful.

It was evidently a part of Blair's program to include in the new party the old Democratic element. Obviously, to merge the Conservatives, as a party, with the Democracy, would have been, in 1866, from the standpoint of practical politics, a great mistake. To many men, the very name "Democrat" signified disloyalty and rebellion; it was far better to keep uppermost the Conservative Union idea, and to bid for Democrat support. It looked, at first, that Mr. Blair's plan would not succeed. The Democratic State

11. For an account of a Johnson meeting, see the Republican, Jan. 10, 1866. The Democrat, Jan. 22, 1866 discusses a Radical meeting held at Turner Hall.

12. Democrat, Feb. 21, 1866. "Two elements only, loyal and disloyal, can make only two parties. The old party of rebellion and disloyalty was the Democratic Party, and the new one will be the same."

Committee, although disheartened by the recent lean years, issued a call for a Democratic meeting to be held in St. Louis on February 22.¹³ The procedure of the gathering varied little from scores of other Johnson meetings, which had been held. No matter for what purpose called, it seemed impossible to bar at these meeting a full discussion of state issues. In all probability the state situation was more vital to the average man than was the national. Concerning any future organization of the Democracy as a party, nothing was said, while the Conservative group might have seen in a certain resolution which was passed, definite hopes of a Democratic alliance.¹⁴

Before further action could be taken, the news of the veto of the Freedman's Bureau Bill reached the state.¹⁵ In Missouri, as elsewhere, it caused a great outburst of partizan

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13. This meeting was not held, however, to formulate any campaign plans. It was called, ostensibly, to support Johnson's course. All who opposed the new Constitution and Radical Reconstruction were invited to attend. Republican, Feb. 19, 1866.
 14. The Republican, Feb. 23, 1865 contains the resolution in full. Number 10 reads: "That the present Constitution of the State of Missouri was formed by a faction, inaugurated by fraud and violence, and is in direct conflict with the established principles of liberty; and the Democrats pledge themselves to one another, to labor for its speedy overthrow."
 15. This bill, which had the support of some who favored the president, had easily passed both Houses of Congress. The Senate refused to override the veto, and the quarrel between Johnson and Congress was fairly begun. Rhodes, History of the United States, V. 568-580.

feeling. Each party made haste to approve or denounce the veto, and with the definite break between President Johnson and his Congress came an opportunity for the Radicals and Conservatives in Missouri to join issue on national as well as state questions. The General Assembly paused long enough in its discussion of state business to pass resolution which strongly upheld Congressional Reconstruction.¹⁶

Throughout the state, the press and the thorough going politicians of the Radical Party were dismayed and angered by the presidents course. Not merely the veto, but what it indicated concerning future relations between Executive and Congress, caused Radical leaders everywhere to quickly condemn Andrew Johnson. The newspapers spoke out very plainly on the subject, losing no opportunity to stir up anew the factional bitterness of the previous years. In every Radical quarter the veto was regarded as a great mistake, the result of which would be to definitely align

16. These may be found in the Democrat, Feb. 26, 1866. The House vote was 77 to 25, the Senate 21 to 5. To Senator Henderson, Gov. Fletcher dispatched a telegram, which read: "----- Our bitter experience makes us recognize but two parties, the loyal and disloyal. We are not willing to divide the control of the Government with the latter-----stand firm, trust God and the people."

At a Radical caucus in Jefferson City, held to discuss the national situation, it was urged that Missouri's senators and representatives at Washington vote with the Radical wing. Statesman, March 9, 1866.

the President with the Copperheads and force him to abandon the party which had put him in office. Many were relieved, they said, to find out just what his attitude was on Reconstruction questions.¹⁷

The Conservative Union adherents welcomed Johnson's act. The chief executive, in their opinion, had shown himself to be a broadminded, courageous, and patriotic man.¹⁸ In St. Louis on February 24, at the call of the Executive Committee of the Conservative Unionists, an immense crowd gathered to listen to several speeches, which not only approved Johnson's veto and general policy, but assured him of Conservative support from Missouri.¹⁹ Nor did the meeting adjourn without hearing state problems fully expounded. The conservative Mr. Broadhead and the fiery Col. Claiborne vied with each other in heaping invective upon the Radical

17. Democrat, Feb. 21, 1866. For copied editorials from the leading Radical papers of the state, see the Statesman, March 9, 1866. very few of the papers seem particularly surprised at the veto. The tone of the articles show pretty clearly that the Radicals have despaired of the president, and have resolved to treat him as an enemy.
18. Switzler, in his enthusiasm, announced that "among the great events of the day may properly be ranked the veto and speech of President Johnson". Statesman, March 2, 1866.
In fact, Missouri Conservatives seem to have regarded favorably Johnson's impolitic harrangue of February 22.
19. John How, a former prominent Whig and Mayor of St. Louis, wired Johnson: "Ten thousand freemen of Missouri in Mass meeting assembled, cordially endorse your veto message and pledge themselves stand by you in every conflict." Statesman, March 9, 1866.

administration.²⁰

There was, however, a significance in the veto which is not generally recognized. Its real importance lay, not in its able legal arguments, but in the fact that, in Missouri, it was instrumental in welding into a more compact unit the Conservative elements.²¹ In addition, the veto thoroughly united the Radicals of the Legislature, who probably carried back to all portions of the state the effects of the veto on the state administration.²² The first opportunity the voters had to uphold or cast aside the president's policy were the municipal elections of the spring of 1866. The Conservatives took the field as a regular organization, the Radicals did likewise. No mere city issue could hold first place in any municipal campaign, the speakers of both parties continually discussed Reconstruction issues of both state and nation.²³

20. Republican, Feb. 26, 1866. Broadhead declared: "If I go to the polls and my right of suffrage is denied, so help me God, I will shoot the man that does it." Meetings of a similar character were held in many towns of the state. Those at Jefferson City and Mexico are typical. Statesman, March 23, 1866.
21. The Democrat, March 10, 1866 remarks upon this phase of the veto.
22. Statesman, March 6, 1866, quoting a dispatch, says: "The Radical Union men here (Jefferson City) are as thoroughly united by the recent Executive Bull, at Washington, as Rebels and Copperheads are rejoiced by it."
23. Late in March, a poll of the state press showed 43 papers against the president's policy, and 28 for it. Democrat, March 21, 1866.

Beginning with the St. Louis city election of April, the Radicals met with reverse after reverse. It seemed, indeed, that the entire state, through its municipalities, was uniting against them. Test Oaths were powerless to stem the tide of defeat. Large cities and small towns vied with each other in rolling up Conservative majorities.²⁴ Radical rule in Missouri, with its fanaticism and tyranny, announced the Republican, is almost at an end.²⁵ It is significant that the new Registry Law was not in operation at this election. The majority of Conservatives failed to realize this fact, but the St. Louis Dispatch, a strong Johnson paper, well expressed the Radical view.²⁶

The Radicals, dismayed at their setback, concluded it was due to indifference and to lack of organization.²⁷ Only by thorough party organization and a complete elimination of overconfidence and factional quarrels could victory come in the fall elections warned the Radical Executive Committee.²⁸ All through the spring of 1866 the party press, led by the Democrat, waved, with more than customary vigor, the "bloody shirt", while urging party unity and solidarity.

The Conservative Union Party, meanwhile, had opened its

24. In St. Louis, Kansas City, Sedalia, Macon, Chillicothe, and Palmyra, the Conservatives were successful. Republican, May 9, 1866.

25. Ibid.

26. "Some of the unsubdued Radicals are attempting to find consolation for the tremendous thrashing they received Tuesday, in the reflection that they have an inner line of works still left, the Registry Law." Quoted in the Democrat, April 9, 1866.

27. Democrat, April 6, 1866.

28. The letter which contained these directions may be found in the Democrat, May 16, 1866. In addition, it advocated support of Congress and a reestablishment of the war time leagues and associations.

headquarters in St. Louis. From there, on April 18, Mr. Blair had departed to address eighteen counties in the state.²⁹ The Conservative leaders had issued a call for a State Convention to assemble in St. Louis, early in June.³⁰ The foundations for an effective state wide organization had been laid by the formation, in every township and county in the state, of a Johnson Club, composed of all citizens who were opposed to Congressional Reconstruction and the Missouri Constitution.³¹ Blair's trip through the state created great excitement. His fiery utterances on state and national politics increased in the men of both parties the spirit of bitter partizanship. All the crudities, as well as the violence and even the danger of stump speaking, were manifested.³² Few Radical speakers in Missouri could cope with Gen. Blair; that party, put to it, called in Gov. Stone of Iowa, and Gov. Oglesby, of Illinois, to debate with him and with other Conservative leaders.³³

29. Statesman, May 4, 1866 gives the itinerary. Blair spoke in Columbia on May 21. He discussed state issues.
30. Ibid. The date for this meeting was later changed to July 3. "To agree upon a course of action in regard to the coming election" was the purpose of the Convention.
31. By June, nearly every County and many townships had formed these clubs. Statesman, June 8, 1866.
32. At Warrensburg, a gang of ruffians attempted to assassinate Blair, Republican, June 5, 1866.
33. Statesman, June 15, 1866. Mr. Rollins, who debated with Gov. Stone, was several times hooted down by the audience, who shouted "rebel" at him.

It was on the Test Oath that Mr. Blair directed most of his attention. He proclaimed on every occasion that the Supreme Court of the United States had declared the oath unconstitutional. This decision had not been made public, but one of the justices, he said had privately informed him of the Court's action.³⁴ John Hogan, who represented Missouri in Congress, had from the platform announced the same thing.³⁵

Assuming this statement to be true, the Conservative plan of action, as advocated by the leaders, was that qualified voters should offer to register and to vote. The judge of election must, by law, receive the ballot of every man offering to vote, whether or not he was registered. They were also required to make a return of the rejected voters, but forbidden to count them in making out the certificates of election. If defeated, all Conservative candidates were advised to immediately contest the election of their opponents. When these contested cases came up, presumably in December, the decision of

34. Democrat, June 4, 1866. Although Blair and his father and brother were on intimate terms with the Conservative leaders of official Washington, it is doubtful if they could secure in advance the decision of the Supreme Court.

35. Hogan, who represented the First, and Thomas F. Noell, who represented the Third District, were both opponents of Congressional Reconstruction.

A letter to Hogan from Senator Beverly Johnson of Maryland who had argued the Cummings case before the Supreme Court, indicates that a majority of the Court has declared the Test Oath unconstitutional, and that the decision will be handed down at the next term, December 1866. For this letter, see the Statesman, June 8, 1866.

the Supreme Court would be known and both the Legislature and the Judiciary forced to recognize the unconstitutionality of the Test Oath. In the recount of every contested election, the votes of many Conservatives, whose names are on the rejected lists, because the Radical Registrar, even after they took the oath, has refused to accept their ballots, will be considered as legal votes, and thus many apparently defeated Conservative candidates would be declared elected. By this plan, then the Conservatives thought to overthrow Radicalism and establish themselves in power.³⁶ All but those who had been in actual arms against the United States Government, Blair urged to take the oath.³⁷ "Swear and vote" became the fundamental tenet of the Conservative Unionists. As the oath was certain to be declared unconstitutional, no man should hesitate to swear to it. This plan, naturally, had the enthusiastic support of the Conservative leaders and the Conservative press.

Little had been heard, in the meantime of the Democratic Party, if party it could be called. The spasmodic attempts, early in 1866, to arouse enthusiasm had been attended by no real results and had failed. This failure was, no doubt, in part due to the fact that most of the former Democratic leaders, like Bogy and Phelps, had become enthusiastic members of the Conservative group, and had shown no inclination to give their support to separate organization. The Democrats had no

36. This plan is carefully outlined in the Statesman, May 11, 1866. If carried out, it would establish the same qualifications for voting as had existed in 1862.

37. Statesman, June 29, 1866. The Conservatives generally spoke of this oath taking as "pious perjury".

choice but to join their fortunes with those of the Unionists; a divided party of opposition to Radicalism could accomplish nothing. Both parties were contending for practically the same things, and the superior Conservative organization and leadership made it imperative that the Democracy surrender, at least temporarily, its separate identity.

The state situation had sufficed to hold together the Conservative Party, and it had been but the more united by the new issues growing out of the quarrel between Johnson and Congress. It went into the campaign of 1866 on a platform which opposed the Radical policies of Congress and demanded a change in the existing Missouri government. And the Democracy had to follow. Any attempt to maintain a separate organization which would have had any chance of success was, in the nature of things, impossible. This fact seems to have been generally recognized in St. Louis, the headquarters of all political groups.³⁸

Worthy of notice, however, is a final attempt to "re-organize" the Democracy. In May 1866, the Democrats of Boone County were informed of a meeting to be held later in the month at Columbia.³⁹ Instantly a protest arose. The Unionists spoke out in no uncertain tone against any Democrat plans for separate

38. I could find no evidence that any special agreement had been made between Democratic and Conservative leaders.

39. Statesman, May 21, 1866. Part of the call read: "The re-organization of the Democratic Party is necessary to the reestablishment and perpetuation of our liberties----- and will materially contribute in upholding the President of the United States in his determined and heroic struggle with the enemies of Constitutional Liberty."

tickets or candidates. They feared, evidently, the spread of the movement from Boone County, and so made haste to oppose it.⁴⁰

Gen. Blair had said very frankly that he hoped the people would discountenance the whole movement, as he feared it would encourage elsewhere similar dissension, and thus harm the Conservative cause.⁴¹

The day the meeting was held, May 26, Conservatives as well as Democrats flocked to the Fair Grounds. In an eloquent speech, Mr. Rollins pleaded for one party of opposition to the Radicals. To this appeal, Warren Woodson, the Chairman of the meeting, and a prominent Democrat, announced that the Democracy, to overthrow the intolerable state administration, would unite with any party.⁴² The effort of the Democracy of

40. The Statesman, for May 18, 1866 gives the Conservative view of the proposed meeting. There are, it said no longer the old parties; the war has destroyed them. Both state and national, the policies of the Democrats must be those of the Conservatives. Finally, a division would ruin any chance of success and insure a Radical triumph.

41. See his speech at Rocheport, of May 22, in the Statesman, May 27, 1866. He later made light of the Democratic meeting, saying it was got up by petty politicians to secure for themselves the county offices.

It is of interest that about this time, Blair's father and his brother, Montgomery, dissatisfied with Johnson because he would not dismiss Seward, intimated that the Democrats might go into the campaign independent of both President and Congress. Diary of Gideon Welles, II. 528-529. Francis Blair, Jr. was, no doubt primarily interested in the Missouri situation, while his father and brother spoke, of course, of the National Democratic Party.

42. The proceedings of the meeting are given in full in the Statesman, June 1, 1866. The attendance of many Conservatives no doubt helped the Democrats to decide that a special organization would be detrimental to both parties.

Boone to reorganize was the final attempt to rehabilitate the Democratic Party. Henceforth, the two groups were as one.

Both Radicals and Conservatives throughout the state were watching with interest the outcome in Boone. Radical satisfaction over the supposed Democratic break, announced the Republican, will be changed to sorrow when it is learned that the Democracy has wisely decided to fight the battle in Conservative ranks.⁴³ All movements of 1866 to reorganize the Democratic Party had ended in failure.

The Conservative forces began to assemble at St. Louis early in July for the State Convention. By this time, the differences between the President and Congress had become irreconcilable.⁴⁴ In Washington, the Administration plans for a mid-summer convention in Philadelphia were well under way. This meeting was to be a demonstration in the President's behalf, and was to include representatives of every state in the Union.⁴⁵ Almost two thousand assembled in the Mercantile Library Hall on

43. From an article reprinted in the Statesman, June 8, 1866. "It is hard", the Republican adds, "to put life into that which is no where a living body, and against which dead carcass the enmity of thousands is uncontrollably bitter."

44. The veto of the Civil Right Bill completed the breach. Rhodes, United States, V.586.

45. Got by Senators Dixon and Doolittle and Representative Raymond, it had the cooperation of Johnson and a majority of his cabinet. Schouler, United States, VII. 66. Welles Diary, II. 528-545.

the morning of July 3, at the first session of the Conservative Convention.⁴⁶ Many of the leaders of the "Verandah Hall" Convention were present, the personnel of the two conventions were very similar.⁴⁷

For two days the Conservatives listened to plans for overthrowing Radicalism at the fall election. Foundations were laid for a more effective organization. Various speakers once more lamented the downfall of civil liberty and constitutional government in both State and Nation. Interested above all in the Missouri situation, the delegates, on hearing a letter read from Representative Hogan, added their approval to the plan for the August "National Union" Convention at Philadelphia. Mr. Hogan had suggested that the Missouri Conservatives send to Philadelphia from each Congressional district two delegates, one Democrat and one Conservative, in addition to four from the State-at-large.⁴⁸ The Convention enthusiastically complied with this request, appointing double the number asked.⁴⁹

Despite earlier Conservative opposition to any movement which might take men's minds away from the state situation

46. Statesman, July 6, 1866.

47. Except that there were more present, the personnel of this gathering was almost identical with that of the previous fall. Hall, Blair, Phelps, Rollins, Broadhead, Bogy, Switzer, English, Rozier, and Richardson were prominent at both meetings.

48. Statesman, July 6, 1866.

49. A full list of the delegates can be found in the Statesman, July 13, 1866. In addition to the well known leaders, the names of several of the younger group, Hockaday, Phillips, and Crittenden appear.

the Convention overwhelmingly endorsed the national movement and promised to aid in the union of all Conservative elements of whatever name.⁵⁰

The Convention adjourned, as it thought, with every prospect of success. Under the competent Executive Committee, the State had been well organized for the final days of the campaign. The loyal and enthusiastic response which the Convention had made to the National Union call was an indication that the Conservatives were not limited by state boundaries.

The Radicals had not been idle. By county and town meetings, at which their leaders spoke, by an active, and by a vigorous opposition to the Conservative cause, they had sought to maintain their supremacy. Toward Johnson, their bitterness had increased, while the Radical Congressional leaders early found that they could depend for support upon seven of Missouri's nine representatives. The Radicals, or as they pleased to call themselves, the "loyal" men of Missouri, in meeting after meeting, during the early summer of 1866, approved Congressional Reconstruction and then turned to discuss and defend the state

50. "It is much more important just now, said the Statesman, May 25, 1866, to organize a State party to overthrow the new Constitution; a party composed of men of all parties. Ours is a State and not a National movement. It concerns Missouri and not New York, Ohio, Maine,-----what we need is a combination of the people, regardless of old names, to overthrow Missouri Radicalism". These words had been written, of course, when the fear of possible Democratic organization was uppermost. For the resolutions endorsing the Philadelphia gathering, see the Statesman, July 13, 1866.

situation.⁵¹ To them, the issues of 1866 were substantially those of 1860 and 1861. The two parties of 1861, the loyal and disloyal, were the two of 1866.⁵² Every Radical speaker and organization promised to uphold, if need be by force, the Registry Act. In the Conservative program of "swear and vote", the Radicals saw nought but a manifestation of perjury, which would result in the breakdown of representative government. Mr. Blair's advocacy of resistance to the laws would require that thousands perjure themselves.⁵³ Throughout the campaign it was denied that the Supreme Court had declared the Test Oath unconstitutional.

Led by Drake, the extremists were in control of the Radical organization.⁵⁴ From Washington, early in July, Senator

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51. Accounts of typical Radical meetings may be found in a scrapbook of political clippings for the year 1866, 331, 346, 349, 350. This book, compiled by Col. W. F. Switzler, is in the State Historical Society of Missouri. One would hardly judge, from reading the resolutions adopted, that the war was over. They all speak revengefully of "rebels" and traitors" who must, at all costs, be put down.
52. This sentiment was voiced at a Radical Mass Meeting of Lincoln, Warren, and Montgomery Counties. Ibid, 312.
53. Democrat, August 21, 1866. The Radical campaign was managed by a Radical Union Executive Committee, of which J. H. Lightner was chairman.
54. While not as active as he had been in the Ratification Election, Drake made many speeches through out the State and threw all his powerful influence on the side of very extreme policies. He openly defied what he called the rebel party. To win victory he said, "stand by your Constitution and enforce disfranchisement of rebels and traitors." See his general letter to the Radicals in Switzler's scrapbook, 387-88.

Brown had announced that failing health and a dislike for office holding would force him to decline reelection.⁵⁵ The Radical Party does not seem to have been greatly cast down by Senator Brown's decision. The Conservatives were convinced that Brown had been forced out, and that Drake was to succeed him.⁵⁶

Throughout the campaign the two parties pursued entirely different courses of action. The Conservatives continually emphasized state issues, and put into the background national Reconstruction.⁵⁷

The Radicals, on the other hand, insisted that the real object of the campaign was to uphold the policy of Congress in its efforts to restore the government. State questions were dismissed, whenever possible, with brief and scanty notice.⁵⁸ The Radicals were only too eager, however, to pledge their support in upholding the provisions of the Registry Act.⁵⁹ It is not

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55. Brown's address is in the Democrat, July 2, 1866. Brown says significantly: "In the transition out of slavery into freedom-----disfranchisements resting on the crime of freedom have been found necessary in the State. They have had thrown around them the formalities of the law and the scrutinies of registration. All this is temporary and only defensible as being temporary." He urges universal suffrage as the solution of the whole problem.
56. "It is a pity that Brown is sick, says the Statesman, July 6, 1866. "Where's Doctor Drake? He won't do. He wants the sick man's senatorial bed."
57. Republican, August 1, 1866.
58. Democrat, July 30, 1866. "No state question", it was said, demands immediate and special attention." The Republican August 1, 1866 quotes the Radical view: "Other questions of wider scope and national importance now demand consideration."
59. See the Address of the Radical Union Executive Committee, in Switzler's scrapbook, *ibid*, 440-443.

too much to say that that party felt secure behind this act. If it were enforced, and "enforcement" meant excluding those who were not willing to vote the Radical ticket, the leaders believed they could easily carry the election.⁶⁰

The campaign had, thus far, been largely one of speech making, letter writing, county and town meetings. No nominations had been made; each party had sought rather to firmly fix in the people's minds the fundamental issues as each saw them. The Conservatives were waiting to see just what the Philadelphia Convention was to accomplish; the Radicals, being in power, quite strengthened their organization, congratulating themselves, the while, that the administration program would remove from their party an undesirable element.⁶¹

On August 14 the National Union Convention assembled at Philadelphia. Among the twelve thousand present were many distinguished and patriotic men both Democrats and Republicans.⁶²

60. "Resort to no unlawful means to keep such names (those disfranchised) off the list, but see that they are kept off" read the instructions. Ibid, 441.

61. "We may hope, therefore, that at Philadelphia the combination of the political harlots and hucksters with the traitors and Tories will be completed. It will leave the Republican Party stronger than before. Unprincipled adventurers curse any party to which they are attached --- -----the issues will be at last sharply defined; 'Shall men or traitors rule the nation?'" Democrat, July 18, 1866.

62. Rhodes, United States, V. 614-615.

The Missouri delegation was among the most prominent of any of the western state representations.⁶³ On its adjournment, the Johnson supporters, enthusiastic and carried away by the loyal assurance of the Convention, actually looked forward to victory in the fall elections.⁶⁴

Late in August the stage was set for the nomination of candidates. With the calling of the County and district conventions, the campaign began in earnest.

As a rule the Conservative nominations were excellent. They nominated for Congress, by the customary district conventions, a strong group of men.⁶⁵ Men like Rollins and Blair, not only consented to become candidates for the Missouri House of Representatives, an office which could hardly be called important, but gave freely of their time and energy to the state wide Conservative cause.⁶⁶

The Radicals, as is usually the case with the party in control, were content to reward many of the faithful with a renomination.⁶⁷ Others, of more or less prominence, were named

63. The delegates at large from Missouri included Broadhead, Rollins, Shields, Hogan, and Noell. Mr. Rollins, who was appointed a member of the Executive Committee, was also named as one of three to confer with the President. He made several speeches in the East. Statesman, August 24, 1866.

64. Rhodes, *ibid*, V. 616.

65. W. F. Switzler, Pres. E. Noell, W. V. N. Bay, J. H. Birch, John Hogan, J. S. Waddell, J. M. Glover, T. L. Price, G. A. Hawley,

66. In addition to the above, James O. Broadhead and Austin A. King were candidates for the General Assembly. Blair made several stumping tours during the campaign, one of which covered almost the entire state.

67. The Radical Congressional candidates were: B.F. Loan, J.W. McClung, G.W. Anderson, W.A. Pile, J.J. Gravelly, R.T. Van Horn, J.F. Benjamin, C.A. Newcombe, and James Jackson. The greatest Radical strength came from the northwestern and southwestern parts of the state.

for state offices. The Radical campaign was ably conducted by an efficient Central committee, under the direction of its chairman, J. H. Lightner.

It was just after the nominations had been made that the first day of registration, September 22, occurred. This added to the campaign a new issue. The time had come for the practical application of the "swear and vote" theory. Many in both parties no doubt anticipated that considerable disturbance would result should the Conservatives and the Radical Registrars become involved in argument. There was, however, little violence in St. Louis, and no evidence whatever of any organized opposition to the enforcement of the law, despite the stand which the Republican had taken during the earlier days of the campaign.⁶⁵ From the interior of the state, however, came bitter and frequent complaint about the course of Radical Registrars. Many were disfranchised, it was claimed, on the most trivial grounds, while in many parts of the state there were rumors and reports concerning various Radical "outrages".⁶⁶

65. Democrat, September 24, 1866. "Our conservative friends are willing on sober second thought to obey the laws, despite inflammatory and radical appeals." Registration continued for stated intervals for over a month.

66. Statesman, November 2, and 9, 1866 gives numerous reports from surrounding counties.

Just how many were disfranchised on unworthy grounds it is impossible to say.⁶⁷

As the Registry Act had provided that the men who were disqualified be permitted to have their names put on a separate list, the Conservatives press urged time and again that all members of their party at least make the attempt to register; and be placed on either the qualified or disqualified list. But, while the Conservatives apparently were deeply interested in the campaign, it is clear that a majority of them were not anxious to resort to violence to secure what they conceived to be their rights. The much discussed and strongly urged plan to swear and vote proved a complete fiasco.

The Conservatives sought to maintain an elaborate party organization, which began with the Johnson township clubs and ended with the State Central Committee. This Committee did

67. There are no figures on the whole number of disqualified voters which either accurate or comprehensive. A comparison of the final list of registered voters of the 9th District in 1866 with the number who voted at the Ratification election of 1865 shows a decrease. In Boone County, 1895 voted in 1865, while in 1866, only 563 were registered as qualified voters. Several counties, however, as Pike and St. Charles, showed a large increase. The figures in full may be found in the Statesman, Nov. 2 and 9, 1866.

Against the Boards of Appeal there was also much criticism; it being claimed they assumed too much the position of a judicial body. Ibid.

its best to interest and arouse the party, but it must have been obvious to Conservative leaders that with such enormous numbers unable to vote, their chances of victory would be very remote.

The Conservative cause was greatly hampered by Johnson's "swing around the circle". Although at St. Louis the President probably received the most cordial treatment rendered him on his entire trip, his coarse and ill timed speech found little favor with thinking men.⁶⁸ Shortly after this, the early election returns from the September and October states showed large Radical majorities.⁶⁹ The November verdict but increased nation wide the Radical majority. In Missouri, the Conservatives were overwhelmed. In both state and congressional constests, the Radicals were victorious. Of the nine Congressmen elected, only two, Thomas E. Noell and W. F. Switzler, were Conservatives, and one of these was later deprived of his seat.⁷⁰ In the Legislature, the Radicals had a majority of over two to one.⁷¹ Once more

68. Democrat, September 10, 1866.

69. Maine, Vermont, Ohio, Indiana, and Pennsylvania were carried by the Radicals. Rhodes, United States, V. 625. Statesman, Oct. 12, 1866.

70. Noell represented the Third District, which comprised the southeastern section of the State. Switzler was elected from the Ninth District, which included the Missouri River counties. Secretary of State Rodman refused to count the vote of Callaway County, claiming that registration there had been illegal. Without the vote of Callaway County, where he had an enormous majority, Switzler was a few votes behind his opponent, George W. Anderson, who was declared by Rodman elected. Switzler contested the election, but lost.

71. Statesman, Nov. 23, 1866. The Senate vote was 24 Radicals and 10 Conservatives, the House 76 Radicals and 30 Conservatives. These returns are not fully complete.

"loyalty" had triumphed, announced the leading Radical organ, and with the victory would come additional prosperity to the state.⁷² Not content with their large majority, they insisted that many Conservatives, especially in the old Whig section, had been elected by fraudulent means.⁷³

The Conservatives, in spite of the large number who could not or did not vote, maintained that the Radical election methods had deprived them of many votes in their stronghold, St. Louis.⁷⁴ But the real reason for the Conservative defeat lay in the wholesale disfranchisement policy. It was claimed that in some counties two-thirds of the voters of former years were disfranchised, while in others that only one man in five

72. Democrat, November 9, 1866.

73. Ibid, November 12, 1866.

74. For example, in the heavy Conservative wards of St. Louis, it was claimed that the Radicals did not have sufficient forces to properly conduct an election. As the voting lists were not arranged alphabetically, many were not able to vote before the polls closed, due to the confusion of locating names, etc. Republican, November 9, 1866.

exercised the right of suffrage..⁷⁵ While such statements may be overdrawn, there can be no doubt that the Conservatives through the rigid and even unfair enforcement of the Registry Act, lost much of their strength.

The Conservative Union Party had failed. It had failed in the nation because the northern Democrats had not supported the movement in a true fashion, but had, instead, through their leaders, played politics and sought to win over Johnson to their party.⁷⁶ But this charge cannot be successfully maintained against the Missouri Democracy. Almost from the first, they had given whole hearted support to the Conservative cause, and they had gone down with the rest of the ship. It is no doubt true that the Radical cause in the State was helped by the fact that the situation at Washington made

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75. Statesman, November 16, 1866. A comparison of the votes of 1860 and 1866 shows a tremendous decrease in some counties. It is significant that the ones which show an increase, St. Charles, and Warren, gave Radical majorities.

County	1860	1866
Audrain	1076	526
Boone	2913	814
Callaway	2632	1626
Lincoln	1980	964
Monroe	2182	399
Montgomery	1398	875
Pike	2852	2228
Ralls	1126	497
St. Charles	2049	2195
Warren	1001	1101

These figures are in the Statesman, November 26, 1866.

76. Schouler, United States, VII. 78-80. Welles, Diary, II 615-618.

larger the issues, and gave an opportunity to cloud, as it were, the local situation. The Conservatives in Missouri fought a remarkable campaign, but even Mr. Blair's dash and vigor could not overcome the Test Oath and the Registry Act.⁷⁷ In Missouri the party had been unsuccessful on account of the disfranchisement of many of its members, some because they could not actually qualify as registered voters and some, doubtless, because of the unfairness and extreme partizanship of the Radical Registrars.

The Conservative cause, then, in the fall of 1866 seemed hopeless. Everywhere the Radicals were in power, and no man could foresee just when or how that power might be overcome. Certainly not by the mere protests of Conservative opponents. The majority of the Radical Party was not yet ready to formulate and put into effect any policy which might endanger their control. From the point of view of practical politics their stand may be defended. But it was inevitable that certain men within the Radical Party, some of whom were important leaders, would come to advocate more of a liberal attitude toward the disfranchised classes. The hope of the Conservative element was to be found in a Radical split, of which, however, there was not, before the election of 1866, the slightest evidence.

Supreme behind the bulwarks of Test Oath and Registry Act, the Radicals gave little heed to Conservative and "rebel" complaints. With a United States Senator to be elected, and with measures of importance, both political and economic, to be pushed through, that party was busy with its own affairs.

77. Annual Cyclopaedia, 1866, 526.

Chapter IV

From 1867 to 1869: the climax of Radicalism.

Chapter IV.

The year 1868 marks the height of Radical power in Missouri. At no other time is seen such party loyalty, such a smooth working of the machine. It looked, indeed, as if the Radicals were to keep perpetual control of the State government. The election of 1866 had seen the triumph of the extremists among them. Throughout 1867 and 1868, this element was to predominate, and to guide the policies and destinies of the entire party. The strict interpretation of the provisions of the Registry Act in 1868, even more rigorous than in 1866, proved almost unbearable to the Conservatives. But the Radical machine was able to keep the organization united and harmonious until after the election of 1868. Opposed to the Radicals in that year was not the old Conservative Union group, but the Democratic Party. It was clear after the disastrous failure of the moderates in 1866, that the Conservative Party, as a party, could never achieve success. To be sure, the change to the name Democrat was more than aught else a change in name, rather than in principle. The rank and file of both parties was identically the same, as was the leadership. It is the purpose, then of this chapter to trace briefly the party history of the Radicals during the climax of their power, to show the reorganization of the Democracy into a definite unit, and to discuss the foundations of discontent which appeared in the Radical Party, and which were to result in its ultimate overthrow.

Hardly had the election returns been counted before the Radicals took up the question of electing a successor to B. Gratz Brown. It was a foregone conclusion that the man who most deserved the Senatorship was none other than the leading Missouri Radical, Charles D. Drake. In every sense the leader since 1862 of Radicalism in Missouri, the framer of the Constitution and the author of the Test Oath and the Registry Act. No one could for a moment doubt that it was due to the indomitable energy of Drake, and the measures for which he was responsible, that the Radicals derived much of their success.¹

Led by the powerful Democrat, the leading Radical papers of the State made haste to earnestly support Drake's candidacy.² In discussing Drake's qualifications for the office, little is said of his personal attributes. To most men, his name was associated with certain measures, it was he who was responsible for "Free Missouri", and for the formation and execution of much of the Radical program.³ Not the least of Mr. Drake's accomplishments had been his enthusiastic leadership in the campaign of 1866. The Radical Party was in an extremely critical position after the reverses in the municipal elections of the spring, and he had rendered very valuable aid by his efforts to keep the party united as well as by his own arduous campaigning. And yet, even after all he had done, it was difficult for anyone to become enthusiastic about Drake. A man of absolute honesty,

1. Republican, Nov. 14, 1866.

2. The Hannibal Courier, St. Joseph Herald, the organ of B. F. Loan, Lagrange American, and St. Louis News were strongly in favor of Drake. Democrat, Nov. 25, 1866.

3. Democrat, Nov. 23, 1866.

with none of the politician's arts and with an extreme dislike for deals or dickers of any kind, Drake made little appeal to the voters of his party, many of whom stood in awe of him.⁴ If he was to be elected, it would be in a very real sense the reward of merit. The only active enemy which Drake had at this time was the German element, which constituted such an important part of the Radical Party. To them, Drake's intollerance and narrow mindedness made him an unacceptable candidate.⁵ There is no evidence, however, that the German's made any special attempt to defeat Mr. Drake, Unless they could bring forward a very strong candidate their chances of success were meagre.

While the Radical press was discussing the Senatorial election, Gov. Fletcher has been quietly surveying the field in an endeavor to find out, if possible, just what his chances were to be elected.⁶ Fletcher, as a politician, was much shrewder than Drake, and possessed the faculty of making conservative speeches before a conservative audience, and radical speeches before radical listeners. The Governor was not as able a man as was Drake. He found his chief support, before the convening of the Legislature, in the southwestern portion of the state.⁷ Among the Germans around St. Louis, the Governor had never been very popular; his candidacy there was probably looked upon as the lesser of two evils. The press was courteous, but firm toward Fletcher. His work as an executive was praised; it would be

4. Republican, Nov. 21, 1866. There is an excellent characterization of Drake in The Reminiscences of Carl Schurz, III, 293-294.

5. Republican, Nov. 14, 1866. Drake had little use for the Germans and never hesitated to express his opinion of them.

6. Republican, Nov. 14, 1866.

7. Democrat, Dec. 3, 1866.

unfortunate, remarked the Democrat, to remove a man, who, elected for four years, was just getting started on a successful career. To put his claims above those of the original Radical, Chas. D. Drake, could not be done.⁸ As the time approached for the convening of the General Assembly, it was evident that Drake would have a large majority.

Late in November, an event occurred in St. Louis which is of great significance. This was the famous Planters House meeting, which, in view of later events, may be said to mark the first signs in Radical ranks of a discontent with the party policy. On November 20, there assembled in St. Louis twenty nine leading Radicals of the state, seventeen of whom were St. Louisans.⁹ The conference had been called to bring together the "leading Radicals of the State, for the purpose of conferring together on the future policy to be adopted by the Radical Party, on questions involving the amendment of the State Constitution, and on such other questions of public and party interest, as may come up for action thereto, and discussion before the Legislature at its next session."¹⁰ Unfortunately, but as to be expected, the proceedings of the meeting were secret. The only evidence obtainable of the spirit of the meeting is found in the resolutions which it adopted, by a vote of sixteen to three. Introduced by Senator Brown, they embody the issues upon which the Radical Party was later to split. In brief, they concern universal

8. Democrat, Dec. 1, 1866.

9. Republican, Dec. 1, 1866. It is erroneously stated by Switzler, History of Missouri, 460, that Carl Schurz was present at this meeting, and that it was held in December. Schurz did not come to Missouri until Jan. 1, 1867. At this time he was in Detroit.

10. Ibid.

suffrage; constitutional amendments which will confer the right of suffrage and equal citizenship upon all; and the abolition especially for teachers and preachers, of the unpopular Test Oath, together with a modification of the stringency of the Registry Act.¹¹

The meeting caused considerable discussion in the press of both parties. The Conservative view was that the whole affair had been got up by Gov. Fletcher, in an attempt to embarrass Drake,

11. Ibid. The resolutions in full are as follows:

"Resolved: That in as much as the Republican Party of Missouri has won an unprecedented triumph in the late election, combating admirably for the supremacy of Free Principles: Therefore, it is now right that the Constitution of this State should be made to conform more nearly to the requirements of a general freedom, by so amending it in its several sections, as that Universal suffrage shall attend upon, and herald in Universal Amnesty.

"Resolved: That the General Assembly of this State, now about to convene, is hereby requested, as embodying the sense of this meeting, to submit to the people of Missouri, to vote upon at the next general election, amendments to the Constitution confirming in the right of suffrage and equal citizenship, all who are prepared to render a true allegiance in the future to the Government of the United States and the State, irrespective of color or race, or previous disqualifications on account of complicity with rebellion.

"Resolved: That in pursuance of such amendments Free Thought, Free Speech, and a Free Ballot to all disqualified citizens as removing such restrictions as have heretofore been placed upon the exercise of certain civil and religious offices, to wit; preachers and teachers, the laws of this State should be revised as to conform thereto, and especially the Registry Law, which, whilst it is essential from fraud, yet should be modified as to conform to the largest liberty". The italics are mine.

The men who voted against these are Drake, Van Horn, the recently elected Congressman, and Hume, a leading Radical of St. Louis who had been secretary of the State Central Committee.

and to force him into an unfavorable position before the Radical voters.¹² Of course, had Drake been more of a politician, he might have excused himself from voting on the Resolutions. Such a course, however, would have been very distasteful to him. He maintained the same position which he had held during the campaign of 1866, and which he had so well voiced in the noted Hillsboro speech.¹³ It was also said that Drake was ^{not} opposed to negro suffrage, but to the effort to combine that issue with the one of "rebel" enfranchisement.¹⁴ In other words, he strongly protested against any "deal" out of which political capital could be made.

The Radical view of the meeting, as expressed by the St. Louis organs, was not at all favorable. The extremists, whose sentiments were expressed by the News, declared bitterly that

12. Republican, Dec. 1, 1866.

13. "Let others do as they will. I will not back down or waver. Regarding the Constitution as in the main one of the very best in the land-----and seeing in it therefore our only sure protection against Rebellion, Copperheadism, and Blairism-----I say, once for all, stand by your Constitution, and don't be backward to let the world know that you do stand by it, just as it is." Republican, Dec. 1, 1866.

14. Ibid.

there had been a bartering of party votes.¹⁵ The real paper of power, the Democrat, took a milder view. No body of men, it declared, has the power to meet and formulate a party program, adding significantly, "We are clear in the conviction that the time has not yet come to make rebel enfranchisement a part of the Radical program in Missouri."¹⁶

The events of the next two years were to show that Mr. Drake, and not the men who voted for Brown's resolutions, had correctly gauged the sentiments of the rank and file of the Radical Party. Before Brown's views were to prevail two years of Radical supremacy were to elapse, years in which the extremists held sway. It was, indeed, not until there had come to be within the Radical Party itself a complete rupture, that the program advocated by the Planter's House meeting was to be put in practise.

The Twenty-fourth General Assembly convened at Jefferson City on January 2, 1867. The Radical majority was even more overwhelming than it had been in 1865.¹⁷ Gov. Fletcher began his annual message with the doubtful assertion that the Legislature had been elected by the people acting in full obedience to the laws. He strongly advocated that the Legislature submit a Constitutional amendment striking out the ninth section of the second article, the so-called preachers and teachers oath.¹⁸

"This is", said the Governor, "one of the many oaths required by our Constitution and laws which are unnecessary." While he

15. See the Democrat, Dec. 1, 1866 for this opinion.

16. Democrat, Dec. 2, 1866. Full accounts of the conference may be found in the Republican, Dec. 1, 1866, and the Statesman, Dec. 7, 1866.

17. The total figures are: in the Senate 26 Radicals and 8 Conservatives. In the House 92 Radicals and 39 Conservatives, Democrat, Jan. 9, 1867.

looked upon the voters oath as an utter failure in really protecting the ballot box, the Governor did not present any plan for its abrogation.¹⁹ Before any measures which embodied the Governor's suggestions were introduced the election of a United States senator was before both Houses.

A surprising and unexpected opposition to Drake had developed, almost overnight, as it were. Two elements in the Radical Party were apparently violently opposed to him; one of them being the Missouri delegation at Washington, the other those who had met at the Planters House conference.²⁰

It was the plan of these men to bring forward, if possible, a moderate upon whom both anti-Drake and Conservative could unite.²¹ Fletcher was, of course, manifestly impossible, as the Conservatives cordially hated him. On January 7, the Radical members of the Legislature met in a bitter four hour caucus. Fletcher's adherents led the attack, and the meeting adjourned without deciding upon an candidate.²² Some well known Radicals deserted Drake, and Representative Finkelnburg, of St. Louis, led twenty representatives from the Hall.²³ Before the Radicals could meet

18. Senate Journal, 24th Assembly, 15-16.

19. Ibid, 19. Switzler, History of Missouri, 460.

20. Statesman, Jan. 11, 1865. No reason is assigned, why the Congressional group was opposed to Drake.

21. Ibid.

22. Statesman, Jan. 18, 1867.

23. Ibid, Jan. 25, 1867. G. W. Anderson, Gen. W. A. Pile, and C. P. Johnson refused to longer support him. Drake himself was present at the caucus.

again, Gov. Fletcher, in an open letter, had withdrawn from the contest. Mr. Fletcher said that he had been elected as governor, and that he, therefore, wished to serve out his term, persuing the while, his "energetic Radical policy."²⁴ The truth is, announced the Conservative organ, that Fletcher has been repudiated by his own party. He had been used by the leaders, but they were now ready to cast him out. No one, outside of the few who made up his political machine, cared to see him in the Senate.²⁵ The withdrawal of Fletcher left his supporters without a candidate, and the opposition to Drake, while in the aggregate it might have been strong, was too scattered to be effective.²⁶ It is very probable that no man could be found who was willing to make the race against Drake.

At the next caucus, seventy seven votes were cast for the Radical leader, and as only sixty were necessary for choice, he was declared the nominee. Mr. Drake had gladly accepted the nomination and said, in his blunt way, that he did not believe his name would hurt the cause, or that his absence in Washington would hurt the Radical cause in the State, a view in which he was destined to be sadly mistaken.²⁷

What transpired in this secret caucus, will, unfortunately, never be known, but the day of the election saw the Radicals, with surface harmony, and apparently well united. On the first ballot,

24. Democrat, Jan. 11, 1867 contains the letter in full.

25. Republican, Jan. 11, 1867. Fletcher had gone as far, politically, as he could. He never held another office, but was a firm supporter in 1870 of the Liberals.

26. Democrat, Jan. 11, 1867.

27. Democrat, Jan. 11, 1867.

Drake secured a large majority of the votes cast, and was declared elected. The forlorn hope was Francis P. Blair, for whom the Conservatives, as a compliment, voted.²⁸ Both Conservatives and Radicals accepted calmly the inevitable result. It was generally admitted that Drake was the ablest man in the party, and, if he would adopt a more liberal attitude, might become a man of consequence in the Senate.²⁹ From the Germans, his old enemies, came the only signs of dissatisfaction. They made no effort to conceal their feelings about the matter, and in the selection of Drake could see nought but a total disregard for German opinion.³⁰

Mr. Drake's speech of acceptance, delivered to the General Assembly, was as narrow and partizan as its author. He gave his full and unqualified approval to the policies of Congress, and very frankly announced himself to be in favor of negro suffrage.³¹ In discussing State issues, Drake was pleased to dwell at considerable length on the past glories of Radicalism, and gave no hint as to what its future policy might be. For the moderates of his party there was little hope that they could look forward to any support for their policies from the "original Radical".

28. The final vote for Drake was 109, for Blair 39. Three Germans voted for B. F. Loan, Finkelnburg, Hubn, and Lederberber. Journal, House 78, and Senate 68 contain the full vote.

29. Republican, Jan. 16, 1867.

30. Ibid, Jan. 21, 1867, contains the German view. "It is dangerous to humiliate people, especially when they have the strength which the Germans have, 23,000 out of 62,000 Radicals."

31. The speech in full may be found in the Democrat, Jan. 17, 1867. this is probably the first time that Drake had given such unqualified approval of negro suffrage..

While the Senatorial struggle was occupying the center of the stage, the first step toward amending the Constitution was made. On January 7, Senator Winters, of Marion, introduced in the Senate "an act to amend the Constitution and secure impartial suffrage."³² Although several other members of the Senate brought forward bills of a similar character, the one fathered by Winters evidently had the approval of the Radical caucus.³³ The amendments which Senator Bruere's bill embodied were of a much more liberal character than those of Mr. Winters. It is significant that one of them provided for the abolition of the Test Oath for lawyers, teachers, and preachers.³⁴ But the majority of the Radicals would have none of Mr. Bruere. At a secret caucus, the members of that party agreed that the question of removing restrictions from the disfranchised classes had nothing whatever to do with negro suffrage.. To avoid the introduction of useless bills, or dangerous one, on this subject, the majority decreed that no bill should be submitted without having first secured the consent and approval of the Radical caucus.³⁵ Thus had party discipline smoothed the way for party measures. On Feb. 25, the bill submitting the amendment was passed by the Senate.³⁶ On its final passage the bill had solid Radical support. The amendment provided that wherever the word "white" occurred in the

32. Winters, A Radical, was chairman of the Senate Committee on Constitutional amendments; the other members were Holland, King, Burnes, and Bonham.

33. The leader of the group which opposed Winters' bill was Theodore Bruere, a native of Prussia, and resident of St. Charles. He was, of course, a Radical.

34. Statesman, Jan. 18, 1867. His amendments also provided for impartial sufferage.

35. Democrat, Feb. 8, 1867.

36. Senate Journal, 280-81. Switzler, History of Missouri, 461. The

eighteenth section of the second article it was to be stricken out. The effect of this act would have been, of course, to introduce negro suffrage in Missouri. The amendment was to be submitted to the voters at the general election of 1868, almost two years after its passage by the Legislature.³⁷ Late in February the House began a consideration of the Senate Bill. Prominent advocates of negro suffrage in the lower body were Geo. Wolbrecht and Frederic T. Lederberger, of St. Louis, the former a native of Germany.³⁸ Representative H. C. Cockerill, of Howard, led the Conservative forces. The struggle over the amendment bill in the House led to prolonged and acrimonious debate. But every effort to postpone, or materially change the original bill, was smothered by the huge Radical majority.³⁹ After many conferences and attempted substitutions the bill, on Friday, March 7, was easily passed.⁴⁰ About half the opposition to the bill came from the extreme Radicals. On March 11, the Governor approved the bill, and two days later the General Assembly adjourned, to meet again in January 1868. While

final vote was for 19, against 7, absent 8. Three absentees later voted aye on the bill.

37. For the bill text of the amendment, see Laws of Missouri, 1867, 11-12. The amendment provided only for the suffrage; it did not relate to office holding.
38. Statesman, March 18, 1867.
39. Rep. Ewing, of Shelby, and Finkelburg, of St. Louis, introduced several proposals but they were defeated, although by close votes. House Journal, 524-26,
40. The House vote was 73 to 48. Journal, 556. An analysis of the vote shows that two Conservatives, Rollins of Boone, and Wilkinson, of Buchanan, supported the measure, while 23 Radicals opposed it. Switzler, History of Missouri, 461-62.
41. Led by Rep. McMurty, of Wayne, who offered to substitute for the title of the bill "An Act to place the Conservative Party in power of the State of Missouri.". Journal, 556-57. Stateman, March 15, 1867.

there was not a great deal of enthusiasm manifested over the work of the 24th Assembly, the passage of the Impartial Suffrage Bill was generally regarded with favor.⁴² There is nowhere evidence that the slightest attempt was made to in any way lessen the burden of disfranchisement for whites. The suggestions of the Planters House conference were apparently ignored by the Radical legislative leaders, while the small minority of Conservatives, hopelessly outnumbered, were doomed to utter failure in any program which they might introduce. The truth is that the Radical organization at Jefferson City was even more united and compact than it had been in 1866.

In January, the United States Supreme Court had delivered the decision in the case of Cummings v. Missouri. Contrary to general opinion, this decision did not declare unconstitutional all sections which relate to the professions. It declared that the conviction of Father Cummings, for preaching and teaching without having first taken the oath, was, in effect, the execution of a bill of attainder. The Court also declared that the provision of the Missouri Constitution which required the oath, being clearly ex post facto, was in violation of the Constitution of the United States, and as such, void.⁴³ This decision abolished the test oath as a qualification for the practice of a profession, but was in no wise connected with the clause relating to voters, the suffrage being exclusively a matter for State jurisdiction.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the decision was a step toward undermining the Radical structure.

42. Democrat, March 14, 1867.

43. For the decision in full see, Statesman, Jan. 18, 1867, gives a synopsis.

44. The case of Blair v. Ridgeley, decided in 1869, brings out this fact.

In the meantime, what of the opposition to the Radical Party? The disastrous failure of the Conservative Unionists in 1866 had convinced everyone that that organization had outlived whatever usefulness it might have had. In many states of the Union, the Democrats were rebuilding their party organization, and taking up once more the newer problems of government. The Missouri Democrats, who, insofar as they were able, had given loyal support to the Conservative cause, felt that the time had come for a real reorganization and upbuilding of the Democracy in the State. If they were forced by Radical measures to live under what they considered to be intolerable conditions, certainly nothing was lost by assuming once more the name of Democrat. The first signs of Democratic activity appeared in St. Louis. There on February 22, the local Democracy convened in an "old fashioned" meeting.⁴⁵ In addition to reviewing the entire history of the Democratic Party, with enthusiastic references to every prominent Democrat, with the single exception of James Buchanan, the inevitable resolutions denounced prevailing Reconstruction policies and the existing government of Missouri.⁴⁶

The results of this meeting do not appear noticeable for several months, but it no doubt marks the beginnings of the new

45. "The old simon pure", said the Democrat, Feb. 22, 1867, "who wish to break away from the old corpse of Conservatism."

46. A detailed account of the meeting may be found in the Democrat, Feb. 23, 1867, and the Annual Cyclopaedia, 1867, 523-24. The 11th resolution struck the keynote: "Resolved: That every white man in Missouri, of lawful age and sound mind, has the right to vote, and should exercise that right at all hazards and subject to all consequences, which an unlawful assumption of power might invoke. That in order to carry out the purposes herein expressed as desirable, we recommend that organization of the Democratic Party in every ward and township in the State be made, and that measures be taken speedily to convoke its representatives in general State Convention, for the promotion of its interests and its thorough re-establishment".

Democratic Party in the State. It looked at first, as if the Democrats had too early come forward, as no response followed the meeting. This was due, no doubt, to two reasons; first, the election of 1868 was too far in the distance to arouse any enthusiasm, and secondly, that part of the old Conservative Party which was non Democratic, had not yet fully decided on its future course of action.

At Washington, the while, Congressional Reconstruction pursued its unrelenting course. During the early months of 1867 the President grew more unpopular. The country had made up its mind to support the Congressional program.⁴⁷ Each day saw increased the bitter feeling of the Radicals toward Johnson; impeachment began to be discussed among the extremists. In Missouri, the Radicals were successful in the spring municipal contests, but issues of a local character predominated.⁴⁸

Although the Radicals little knew it, there arrived in St. Louis in the spring of 1867 a man who was to exert an influence on that party's policies and history which cannot well be overestimated. Dr. Emil Preetorious, the able proprietor of the Westliche Post, had built better than he knew when he persuaded Carl Schurz to leave the editorship of the Detroit Post, and come to St. Louis as one of the editors of his paper.⁴⁹ Within a year he was to replace Drake as the leader of the Radical Party, within two he was to sit in the United States Senate, elected on a liberal platform.

47. Rhodes, United States, VI, 31.

48. Democrat, April 7, 1867.

49. Schurz well describes this in his Reminiscences, III, 256.

The Radicals were not long in discovering that Mr. Schurz was a man with whom they would have to reckon. Far seeing men could not fail to be struck by the new and more tolerant attitude which he held. A single incident, during the campaign of 1867 sufficed to show that Mr. Schurz was no mere partizan, but a man of self will and independence. The Boston Commonwealth had reprinted from the Post an article in which the Germans were advised to bid farewell to the Republican Party, in State and local elections, but to stand firmly by it as the party of liberty and equality in national contests. When asked by a prominent Republican leader of Wisconsin if this was his stand, Schurz frankly replied that he was speaking, in the instance to which the Commonwealth referred, primarily against prohibition.⁵⁰ He further stated, however, that he believed another Republican administration was necessary before there could be ushered in a successful period of actual peace and prosperity. Significant are the words: "The Republican Party has its faults. They may be great. It would be vastly preferable could we organize a new party free of such shortcomings. But to accomplish this previous to the next national election is an utter impossibility. The attempt could only benefit our opponents. In the meantime, it is by no means our duty to submit tamely to attempts to use the Republican organization in local and State elections for illegitimate and obnoxious purposes. We should, in the first place, vigorously oppose such attempts inside the party ----- but if this should prove of no avail we are,

50. The prohibition question played quite an important part in several state elections in 1867. In Maine, Massachusetts, and Iowa strong factions of the Republican party favored it. Democrat, Nov. 2, 1867.

in case of pressing necessity, to try to affect the defeat of the Republican candidates as a remedy for the evil."⁵¹ Schurz was, of course, speaking of the prohibition question which was an issue of importance at this time. The arguments he used, however, could be, and later were applied with equal effect to the political situation in Missouri.

In any event, the more liberal among the Radicals had found an enthusiastic leader. Leadership was the factor of success which they had lacked. Brown's own party had lost faith in him, Henderson was soon to be utterly repudiated. Schurz was fortunate in being a newcomer; he had had no part in past state issues which could rise up to embarrass and defeat him, he well represented a constituency which composed fully thirty-five per cent of Radical strength and voting power. Well might Senator Drake look to his laurels.

The various State elections of the fall of 1867 were not cheering to the Radical Republicans. In Pennsylvania and New York the Democrats easily triumphed, while Ohio, although electing Hayes by a very small majority, chose a Democratic Legislature and defeated negro suffrage by an enormous majority.⁵² The Republicans had met with a severe setback and it looked, for the moment, as if the Democracy might achieve success in 1868.⁵³ Even in Radical Missouri the signs of the times were not wanting. There was no general election in the State, but the death of Rep. Thos. E. Noell, on

51. The italics are mine. For a discussion of the entire affair, see the Democrat, Sept. 21, 1867.

52. Rhodes. United States, VI. 93-95. Statesman, Nov. 8, 1867.

53. The Nation, Nov. 14, 1867.

October 3, at St. Louis, necessitated a special Congressional election in the Third District.⁵⁴ Mr. Noell, an able and popular man, had been the only Conservative Representative from the State. The election occurred in November, and the Democratic candidate, J. R. McCormick, was elected.⁵⁵ It is significant that the despised word "Democrat" was once more coming into use in Missouri.

The Democratic successes in the nation gave the needed impetus to the reorganization of the party in Missouri. Hardly was the election over before an agitation was commenced which had for its object the definite rehabilitation of the Missouri Democracy. The first spokesman of the new movement was S. T. Glover, of St. Louis, who had been one of the most prominent members of the Conservative Party. Mr. Glover, in an open letter, clearly pointed out what everyone already knew, that the Conservative Unionists had outlived their usefulness. In every State but Missouri and Kentucky, there were but two parties, Democratic and Radical Republican. To the non-Democratic element of the old Conservative Party, Mr. Glover was equally frank. He said that if every class which was opposed to Radicalism did not organize into a national party, and forget their old prejudices, all chances of success would be lost. Above all, he advised, do not fear the name "Democrat".⁵⁶ Late in December, the movement was launched.

54. Statesman, Oct. 11, 1867.

55. The Radical nominee was J. H. Chase, McCormick's majority was 500. Statesman, Nov. 22, 1867. The Democrat claimed that the Democratic victory was due to factional fight among the Radicals.

56. This letter is in the Statesman, Nov. 15, 1867.

The Democratic Association, a body new in name but not in principle, in an address to the Democracy of Missouri, urged a Democratic revival, by means of Associations in every township, with headquarters, of course, in St. Louis.⁵⁷ The signers of the address constitute many of the "Old Guard" but a few new names are seen.⁵⁸ The Radicals did not seem to be especially worried over their new rivals. To offset the Democratic activity, it was suggested that similar clubs be formed in that party.⁵⁹

The old Whig section of the State cordially responded to the suggestion from St. Louis. The support of this section was utterly essential to Democratic success and well might the leaders in St. Louis rejoice at the enthusiasm which the former Whig leader, the veteran Switzler, displayed.⁶⁰ His platform for 1868 strikes a keynote for that year.⁶¹ During the early months of

57. Statesman, Dec. 27, 1867. The method of reorganization seems to have been one adopted after the War in New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio.

58. Blair's name is not used; former Whigs like Broadhead, are signers. Among the new men are Chas. A. Mantz, and C. C. Spencer.

59. Democrat, Dec. 21, 1867.

60. Statesman, Dec. 27, 1867. "To meet and overthrow at the ballot box the enemies of liberty, the Democrats, Conservatives, and liberal Republicans must organize. Italics are mine. This is the first evidence of the term "liberal Republicans".

61. "To secure to the white race of every state the possession of their own government, we shall urge a union of all the elements of opposition to Radicalism; Democrat, Conservative, Liberal Republican, not caring a whit as to the party name the organization shall bear." Statesman, January 10, 1868. Obviously, the only name it could bear was Democratic.

1868, the reorganization continued. In Audrain, in Macon, and in Boone, enthusiastic meetings approved the new alignment of forces. The old line Whig and the former Democrat stood shoulder to shoulder.⁶² While the principles which these various gatherings advocated, and the resolutions they adopted were not very different from those of the old Conservative Unionists no doubt the feeling that they were once more the part of a great national organization was stimulating. The history of third parties in this country has shown that the party, as such, does not last, but that its principles and program are carried on. The great fear of the new organization was that the old enemies of the ante-bellum Democracy would never join any party with the name Democrat. While it is no doubt true that the name was odious to many, yet Radical rule and measures were more so, and they but chose the lesser of two evils. As Col. Switzler often remarked: "Names are nothing, principles are everything". The general procedure for reorganizing the Democracy was by the town and county meetings. While these meetings were usually directly in charge of former Democrats, they received support of the Conservative press and leaders.⁶³

While the Democrats were busily organizing and planning how to overthrow their opponents, the Radicals at Jefferson City, where the Adjourned Session of the 24th General Assembly was in session, were fully as interested in making secure their supremacy. This could best be done by a more stringent Registry Law. The first

62. Statesman, Jan. 17, Feb. 14, and 28, contain accounts of the various meetings. At the Audrain meeting "were the leading men of the old Whig and Democratic Parties, who, in olden times waged an honorable and manly warfare against each other."

63. Statesman, April 10, 1868.

one had been fairly successful, but contained a provision which might endanger Radical success. The original act had provided that the Superintendent of Registration in each district be elected.⁶⁴ This would, of course, insure the choice in the Democratic Counties of Superintendents of that political faith, and make much more difficult any "efficient" and uniform administering of the law by the Radical organization. The amendment which was proposed, and hurried through as only party measures can be pushed, provided that all the Superintendents were to be appointed by the Governor, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.⁶⁵ The Radicals who never lacked reasons and explanations for any of their measures, insisted that this amendment had been forced on them by "Conservative threats to defy the law", for which Mr. Blair was mainly responsible.⁶⁶ Other amendments and additions were made to the act which were regarded by every Democrat and Conservative as unwarranted and intolerable.⁶⁷ The passage of the new Registry Act marks the culmination of extreme Radical Legislation. Before the next

64. Laws of Missouri, 1866. The Governor had appointed the first ones, who served during the election of 1866. These men had great powers, not only of an administrative nature, but of a judicial as well.
65. For a synopsis of the bill, see the Statesman, March 13, 1868. It is printed in full in the Laws of Missouri, 1868, 131-141.
66. Democrat, March 20, 1868.
67. Switzler, History of Missouri, 464. For example, the registrars were given absolute power to decide whether or not a man was entitled to register, and no one could vote who was not registered. The applicant, in effect, was considered guilty until he proved his innocence. Nor could any court of Missouri entertain, or allow to be commenced, any action at law against any judge of election for refusing to receive the ballot of any person claiming the right to vote. Laws of Missouri, 1868, 131-141. Especially sections 9, 11, 23, 38, and 41.

Assembly met, events were to take place which made it impossible for such legislation to even be introduced.

In view of the fact that the Legislature was in session, the Radicals State Convention met on February 22, at Jefferson City. The chief business of the meeting was the selection of delegates to the Republican national convention. National issues were reviewed, several resolutions being devoted to a denunciation of "acting" President Johnson. The Convention was largely informal and state affairs were not discussed in an official way. Among the delegates chosen was Carl Schurz.⁶⁸ The Radical leaders, high and low, seemed enthusiastic about the impartial suffrage amendment.⁶⁹

The impeachment and trial of the President was not the occasion of much excitement in Missouri. The greatest interest was aroused over the course of Sen. Henderson. That gentleman, despite an immense amount of pressure which the Missouri delegation brought to bear on him, voted for the acquittal of Johnson.⁷⁰ While there is to-day no doubt that Henderson voted according to his convictions, the Radicals of his own State were bitterly angry. They looked upon his action as a betrayal and misrepresentation of their interests, and no explanation could satisfy them.⁷¹.

68. Statesman, Feb. 28, 1868. Annual Cyclopaedia, 1868, 520.

69. Ibid, March 20, 1868.

70. Rhodes, United States, VI. 148-151 gives a good account of the final vote of the trial.

71. Henderson had said that impeachment was in no sense a party question but this only the more angered his constituents. Democrat, May 18, 1868.
"As for Senator Henderson, Missouri will deal with him as he deserves----- The people have been boldly misrepresented and betrayed."

The real effect of the vote was to remove Henderson as a factor in Missouri politics. With Drake in Washington, Brown in temporary retirement and Henderson read out of the party, there was indeed an opportunity for a man of force to come forward and secure the leadership of the Radicals. More and more were men hopefully turning to Carl Schurz, and they were not to be disappointed.

The Republican National Convention met on May 20, at Chicago. The Missouri delegates before departing, had elected Mr. Schurz, chairman of the State delegation. At Chicago, he was further honored by being selected temporary chairman of the National Convention.⁷² During the sessions of the Convention Schurz had played a prominent part, indicative of his future course in Missouri. When the Committee on Resolutions failed to include in their report any definite words on the subject of amnesty to the participants in the War, it was Schurz who presented to the delegates a resolution on that subject. Adopted without an adverse vote it became a part of the Republican platform.⁷³ The expected nomination of Grant was well received in Missouri. A few Radicals of the sterner type,

72. Schurz, Reminiscences, III. 283-285.

73. The resolution read: "That we highly commend the spirit of magnanimity and forbearance with which the men who have served in the rebellion, but who now frankly and honestly cooperate with us in restoring the peace of the country, and reconstructing the Southern State governments ----- and we favor the removal of the disqualifications and restrictions imposed upon the late rebels as may be consistent with the safety of the loyal people."

who had preferred Wade, were none too enthusiastic for Grant and Colfax.⁷⁴

Shortly after the adjournment of the Republican Convention, the Missouri Democrats met in St. Louis.⁷⁵ Although delegates were chosen to the Democratic Convention, the business of the meeting was concerned chiefly with organization. Men, who before the war had been Democrats, predominated at the meeting, but there were present quite a number of former Whigs. Much in evidence were former Governor Austin A. King, Willard P. Hall, and James B. McFerran, all old Democratic leaders and Union men. The old line Whigs of the most prominence were James O. Broadhead and Charles H. Hardin. Old party names and issues were forgotten or put aside. Every man knew that upon thorough Democratic organization backed by every element of opposition to Radicalism, rested the hope of victory. There was at the Convention a noticeable lack of flowery speeches "followed by tremendous cheers", so prevalent at party gatherings. There seemed to be in the addresses a tone of soberness and resolve to make one final effort for success. To conduct the campaign, a new State Central Committee was chosen and the towns where the district conventions were to be held, were

74. Democrat, May 22 and 26, 1868.

75. This meeting was called by the State Central Committee, which had been appointed in 1864, and had managed to hold together during the years when the Democratic party hardly was in existence. Statesman, June 5, 1868.

named.⁷⁶ By June 1, it was clearly seen that the contest would be waged between the Democrats and Radicals, the great majority of the former Conservatives having willingly cast their allegiance with the Democrats.

As the interest in the campaign daily became stronger, the discussion about the proposed Constitutional amendment relating to impartial suffrage waxed hot. From Washington, late in the Spring, Mr. Drake sent back word, or perhaps a command, that the Radicals quickly organize upon a platform which would advocate negro suffrage.⁷⁷ Party leaders and party press were unanimous in favoring the amendment. And yet there seems to have been little real enthusiasm, save among the Germans, for the proposal. The adoption of negro suffrage could in no way materially aid the Radical Republicans of Missouri. To maintain the status quo, secure behind Test Oath and Registry act, was sufficient to keep them in power. Much of the reasoning of the advocates of universal suffrage savored too much of the 18th century political philosophy, and the election was to show very plainly that the rank and file of the Radicals were none too eager to confer the right of suffrage upon a class with whom they had only a very slight connection. To Democrat and Conservative alike the amendment was one to be opposed with every vote at their command. To enfranchise a large and ignorant group was bad enough, but to do

76. For the full proceedings, see the Statesman, June 5, 1868. A motion to endorse Pendleton for the presidency was refused recognition by the Chairman, who said the Convention was not interested in the subject of candidates. Democrat, May 31, 1868. Throughout the spring of 1868, Blair's name was frequently mentioned for the nomination.

77. Democrat, April 27, 1868.

this while thousands of former voters were prohibited from enjoying what they believed to be their just rights, was indeed intolerable. Practically every county and town meeting before and during the campaign vehemently opposed the amendment.⁷⁸

The Radical State Convention, which assembled at Jefferson City in July, was, in the main, under the control of the older and more unrelenting men of the party. The convention was harmonious, however, and no mention was made even by Schurz, of the questions which were so soon to disrupt the party. Although Drake was absent, the machine was in the hands of St. Louis men who were equal to the occasion.⁷⁹ After a review of the past and present glories of Radical rule and its beneficial result to the State, Mr. Joseph W. McClurg, Congressman from the fifth district was unanimously nominated for Governor. McClurg, a close friend and follower of Drake, though a man of average ability, was one of the most narrow and partizan members in Radical ranks.⁸⁰ The Convention did not even consider Fletcher; in fact, he had long since lost his position

78. For typical resolutions, see the Statesman, Feb. 25, 1868.

79. Among these were Chas. I. Filley, Warren Currier, the temporary chairman, and E. W. Fox, chairman of the State Central Committee. Democrat, July 20, 1868.

80. "There is not a truer representative of Missouri Radicalism than the man who has received the nomination for Governor. McClurg is the embodiment of all that is narrow, bigoted, revengeful, and ignorant in the Radical Party. His election would make Missouri a synonym for political barbarism." Dispatch, July 17, 1868.

in the Radical Party.⁸¹ The other offices on the state ticket went to men of mediocre ability.⁸² Nothing unusual is to be noted about the Radical platform. It declared that disfranchisement was not only necessary but justifiable, adding, however, the words: "-----and we stand ready to restore to them every political privilege, at the earliest moment consistent with the State and National safety."⁸³ The Convention approved the pending Constitutional amendment. Senator Drake, compelled to remain in Washington, early voiced his disapproval of the Convention proceedings. Its moderate tone, its failure to officially read out of the party John B. Henderson were displeasing to the unforgiving Radical leader. Mr. Drake had said, with bitterness, that he feared the intrigues in his own party more than all the Democratic speakers in the State.⁸⁴ While no evidence was shown at the Convention which need alarm the Senator, the forces of discontent

81. Democrat, July 17, 1868. "As for Fletcher, he has shrunk into his native dimensions, and is hardly visible now". Dispatch, June 20, 1868.

82. Rodmon was renominated for Secretary of State. The Democratic press announced that he had forced his renomination by a threat to expose the methods by which the Constitution had been adopted. Dispatch, July 18, 1868. Statesman, July 31, 1868. Vehemently denied by the Radicals, Democrat, July 20, 1868.

83. Article V of the Platform. It is given in full in the Democrat, July 17, 1868.

84. Statesman, July 24, 1868. Quoted from a Washington interview.

were abroad.⁸⁵ But party loyalty and expediency proved strong enough to hold the organization together until after the election in November.

The Democrats had decided to hold their State Convention after the nomination of the presidential candidate. For some months previous to the New York Convention there had been a strong favorite son movement, which centered in St. Louis, for the nomination of General Blair.⁸⁶ The Conservative Republican, the organ of Big Business, and a strong advocate of Blair's candidacy, took its stand upon sound finance, and utterly refused to lend its columns to advance any greenback propoganda.⁸⁷ The extremists, who found their outlet in the radical Times, boldly championed Pendleton and his popular cause.⁸⁸ The nomination of Seymour, however, was well received by the majority of Democrats in the State, and immense popular enthusiasm was manifested at the selection of Blair for the vice-presidency.⁸⁹ The Radicals looked coldly on Democratic enthusiasm. Recent immigration to the State of northern voters, and the new Registry Law, they confidently asserted, would make certain their victory.⁹⁰ The nomination of Blair seemed to them a

85. "Governor Fletcher is perfectly disgusted with the nomination of McClurg, and makes no secret of it." Ibid, July 31, 1868.

86. Statesman, April 17, 1868.

87. Democrat, June 10, 1868. The Dispatch, which posed as an independent Democratic paper, also favored Blair.

88. Ibid.

89. Statesman, July 10, 1868.

90. Democrat, July 18, 1868.

political error, which would lose the Democrats of the State over 5,000 votes.⁹¹

Early in August, the Democrats began to assemble in St. Louis for their State convention. A large and representative body from every part of the State met in the Mercantile Library Hall on August 5, and elected as permanent chairman, Gen. James Shields.⁹² After the usual formalities, John S. Phelps was unanimously nominated for Governor. Mr. Phelps had been for twenty-five years a leader of the State Democracy, and possessed a strong Civil War record. His nomination, fully expected and richly deserved, was undoubtedly the strongest the party could have made.⁹³ He was generally regarded as a man upon whom all the diverse forces of the new Democratic organization could unite.⁹⁴ The rest of the ticket, as is usually the case, was formed to include all factions.⁹⁵

91. Ibid, July 10, 1868.

92. Statesman, August 14, 1868.

93. John S. Phelps had served 18 years in Congress; his district being the southwestern portion of the State, Originally a Benton man, he had abandoned Benton's cause in 1853. President Lincoln in 1862 had named him military governor of Arkansas.

94. "Governor Phelps", said the Dispatch, May 7, 1868, "is as an available man as can be named. He is a War Democrat, but he never abandoned the Democratic organization or refused to support its nominees. His Union antecedents will earn him a large portion of the soldiers vote, and the votes of such men as Rollins of Boone and Green of Macon."

95. Norman J. Colman, a man of great popularity, was nominated for Lieut. Governor, and Bernard Poepping, a St. Louis German, for Secretary of State. Statesman, Aug. 14, 1868.

The platform dealt almost entirely with state issues. A bitter protest was made against negro suffrage, especially while thousands of free and intelligent whites were disfranchised. The usual denunciations of Radical administration and the Registry Act had their accustomed place.⁹⁶ The former Conservatives accepted in entirely good faith the work of the Convention. The campaign was to show that no element gave better support to the cause than the old line Whigs.⁹⁷

The campaign of 1868 was in no way unusual. Throughout the summer, the various counties met, organized, and nominated candidates for the State Assembly and for Congress. The Congressional nominees were usually men of ability, some of whom were former well known Whigs, others former Democrats.⁹⁸ Few new faces appeared in the Radical list of candidates; some of the faithful who had rendered faithful service in the State Legislature were rewarded by a Congressional nomination.⁹⁹ The issues of the State campaign were almost identical with those of 1866. Probably the chief issue was the suffrage amendment. Committed to it, whether by

96. For a synopsis of the platform see, the Annual Cyclopoedia, 1868, 521.

97. "The ticket is an excellent one. If we had a free ballot in Missouri, as in the states of Kentucky, Illinois, or New York, it would be elected by 75,000 majority." Statesman, Aug. 14, 1868.

98. Erastus Wells, J. R. McCormick, C. B. McAfee, J. A. Phillips, James Shields, Mordecai Oliver, J. F. Williams, and W. F. Switzler were the Democratic nominees.

99. G. A. Finlnburg, S. H. Boyd, S. S. Burdette, J. F. Asper, J. G. Benjamin, D. P. Dyer, Robert Van Horn, and W. A. Pile were the Radical candidates.

honest conviction or by party pressure, was every prominent Radical in the State. The Democrats, of course, were opposed to it, many from an inherent dislike of negroes, but probably more on account of the intolerable situation in which they regarded thousands of white men to be.¹⁰⁰ Apparently the State situation was much more important to the people than was the National. Seymour did not arouse much enthusiasm in Missouri, and the burden of the campaign, in the West, rested largely on the shoulders of General Blair. The Radicals regarded Blair with more than their usual dislike; he was looked on as a very dangerous man. In fact, that gentleman's utterances were of rather an inflammatory character.¹⁰¹ Mr. Schurz gave invaluable aid to his party by numerous speeches to the Germans of the middle west, particularly to those in Missouri.¹⁰²

As in 1866, the campaign reached its climax during the days of registration, which occurred early in September. A month previous, the Superintendents of Registration had met in St. Louis, and had drawn up rules governing registration under the provisions of the new Act; provisions which the Democrats regarded as the limit of severity and dishonesty.¹⁰³ In general, it may be said that the Superintendents themselves largely determined upon the course of action for their districts, and the blame for undue severity in interpreting the law, as well as undue leniency, must

100. Dispatch, Oct. 29, 1868.

101. Democrat, Sept. 15, 1868.

102. Reminiscences, III, 286-92.

103. Statesman, Sept. 4, 1868. One of these regulations provided that no man could be registered who swore that he was in any way opposed to war as a means of putting down the rebellion; another, that any doubt, suspicion, or belief that a man was a rebel, traitor, secessionist, or Southern sympathizer would be sufficient to reject him.

be laid at their door. In certain districts, the registration was quiet, well conducted, and satisfactory; in others bribery and intimidation were the order of the day.¹⁰⁴ In St. Louis, for example, there was every evidence that fair methods were applied.¹⁰⁵ Not only were more names placed on the voting lists, but there was less trouble and friction between registrar and applicant.¹⁰⁶ In other sections of the State, however, the methods of the registering officers called forth frequent and bitter denunciation. Especially was this true in the old Whig stronghold, the Missouri River counties, certain ones of which, such as Boone and Callaway were known among the Radicals as "rebel" counties. In Boone, it was claimed that over 3,000 were disfranchised, including many Union men. The Registry Law had become, in short, a machine by whose operation political opponents were easily put out of the way.¹⁰⁷ Every man who came before the registrars was regarded as

104. Statesman, Sept. 25, 1868. Thos. Phelen, Superintendent of the 14th District, said that he had been offered by certain prominent Radicals of Kansas City, \$10,000 if he would guarantee that a great number would be disfranchised. Ibid, Sept. 18, 1868.

105. Democrat, Sept. 4, 1868.

106. Dispatch, Sept. 14, 1868.

107. Statesman, Oct. 31, 1868.

guilty until he proved himself innocent.¹⁰⁸ The Democrats charged that every form of ingenious trickery and dishonesty had been used by the Radical Registrars.¹⁰⁹ While registration methods were no doubt unduly severe in Boone, the evils there were in part duplicated in many sections of the State. It is impossible to ascertain the exact number who were disfranchised. The Democratic press claimed that the registrars refused to register over 20,000, who applied, answered all questions, and took the oath of loyalty, while the total number of those disfranchised was 30,000.¹¹

Thoughtful men, no matter of what party, could not fail to see

108. In Columbia, 165 were examined, 90 were accepted, in Claysville, 20 out of 45, and in Providence 45 out of 90 passed the ordeal. Statesman, September 21, 1868. The superintendent of this district was L. M. Conklin, who was himself a candidate for the office of State Senator.
109. For example, "spotted lists" were kept, which contained the lists of voters in 1866, with cross marks opposite the names of those doomed to rejection before hand. Names were put on lists, then erased in secret meetings. Many were refused the right of even having their names put on the rejected list, although the law provided for this. Statesman, Oct. 31, 1868.
110. Annual Cyclopoedia, 1868, 521.

that conditions were such that a reaction was inevitable. If the sole foundation of Radical success rested on wholesale disfranchisement, made possible by unpopular test oaths and drastic laws, enforced by partizan, and even dishonest officials, that party could not hope for continued victory. The Radicals had come to rely too much upon disfranchisement as a method of maintaining power, and too little upon wise management or personal effort.¹¹¹ During the month previous to the election, the situation in the Radical party was a source of worry to the leaders. Early in September, Senator Drake hurried home from Washington to stump the State for his party. The Radicals feared above all that they might lose control of the Legislature, which would be a serious blow. That they would win the presidency and governorship was almost a foregone conclusion, but in some counties, local differences among the Radicals, which too much power and prosperity had fostered, arose. These might prove dangerous.¹¹² The Democrats naturally were only too eager to help foster these dissensions.¹¹³ Carl Schurz, by his timely and brilliant speeches did much toward the close of the campaign, to solidify the

111. Democrat, September 4, 1868.

112. Democrat, October 14, 1868.

113. The Democratic Central Committee issued a circular which advised that the Democrats support independent Radicals for offices below that of Representative. Ibid.

party.¹¹⁴

The election returns showed, however, that the Radical organization had once more won an easy victory. Gen. Grant's majority over Seymour was about 25,000.¹¹⁵ McClurg and the entire State ticket were victorious, but their majorities were considerably smaller than that of Grant.¹¹⁶ The Radicals maintained their huge majority in the Legislature, which assured them another United States Senator.¹¹⁷ The Congressional results were somewhat more favorable to the Democrats. Four of the nine men elected were of that political faith.¹¹⁸

114. In commenting upon a Radical factional quarrel in Audrain, he said: "It is a well known fact that the Democratic Party of the State, knowing the defeat of their national and state tickets to be inevitable, is now speculating on local dissention in Radical ranks, so as to obtain control of the Legislature ----- Every man ought to be on his guard in this respect". Democrat, October 26, 1868.

115. Grant had 85,671, Seymour 59,768.

116. The figures are McClurg, 82,107, Phelps, 62,780.

117. The Senate was to have 25 Radicals and 9 Democrats, the House 92 Radicals and 35 Democrats, with two Independents. Statesman, Nov. 20, 1868.

118. Wells, McCormick, Shields, and Switzler were successful. The latter two, due to the manipulations of Rodman, never got to Washington.

The defeated party insisted the cause of their defeat was wholesale disfranchisement. The drastic provisions of the Registry Law had deprived the Democrats of thousands of votes.¹¹⁹ To many, doubtless the surprise of the election was the decisive defeat of negro suffrage.¹²⁰ The Democrats had voted solidly against it, and a considerable faction of the Radicals had joined them.¹²¹ The leading Radical organ announced that the Democrats by defeating negro suffrage had but prolonged their own disfranchisement.¹²² By supporting the amendment, the Democrats would have materially hastened the removal of those restrictions which so handicapped them. A new note is struck by the assertion that if the Democrats accept impartial suffrage, the great majority of Radicals will gladly vote for the removal of voting restrictions.¹²³

119.	1868 voters	Number eligible.
Boone	348	3300
Ralls	418	1800
Callaway	535	3000
Audrain	591	2000
<u>From the Statesman, December 10, 1868.</u>		

120. The figures are: for striking out the word "white", 55,236, against it, 74,053.
121. Democrat, Nov. 17, 1868. The Radicals generally excused this setback by saying they had more important issues to think about, which, of course, was a mere subterfuge.
122. Ibid.
123. "We need only in this State a complete and final settlement, and an amendment establishing manhood sufferage," Ibid.

The election of 1868 marks the high tide of Radical success. The party, heeding the pleas of the leaders, had maintained its solidarity, and had won. The Registry act had proved more efficient than ever before. In every branch of government the Radicals were supreme. To superficial observers, it looked as if they had fastened their rule upon the State for years to come. Very probably no man realized just how near demoralization was. Hardly had the election returns been counted before certain influential party leaders, aided by the most powerful press support, began to boldly urge upon their party a new policy, more liberal in character. Ably led, uncompromising in spirit and action, this group, to achieve what it believed to be right, as well as politic, was willing to see, if need be, the complete disruption of the powerful Radical organization.

Chapter V.

The Beginnings of Radical Dissent.

Chapter V.

After their sweeping victory in 1868, it appeared that the Radicals were to enjoy, at least for several more years, a continuation of their power. The Democrats, bound hand and foot in the meshes of disfranchisement, if not actually outnumbered, were hopelessly out-voted. Their chances of success, as long as the Registry Act was administered by officials whose least fault was their violent partizanship, were extremely remote. Nevertheless, the State was prosperous; business enterprise was rapidly pushing forward, immigration was pouring into St. Louis from the East, mining as an industry was assuming prominence. Despite the unpopularity of the new railroad measures, for which Governor Fletcher was primarily responsible, transportation was well under way.¹ The Radicals could well boast that their administration had greatly aided the material prosperity of the entire State.

Beneath the political surface, however, the mutterings of discontent, which had faintly sounded since the Planters House meeting in 1866, were increasing. Shrewd observers, both in and out of the Radical Party, could not fail to notice them. In truth, the franchise question would not down. To be sure, by tacitly ignoring it during the campaign of 1866 the party had maintained their unity and had been successful. As soon as the election was over, however, there were unmistakable signs that the more liberal element among the Radicals was ready to assume an

1. Annual Cyclopoedia, 1868, 519-520. 1869, 463-464.

aggressive position in order to advance their measures, first championed by Schurz and the Democrat. Early in November 1868, it was evident that a marked change had come in the Radical Party. It had separated into two wings, though not necessarily into two organizations. Not that the split was at this time particularly wide. The two elements differed primarily in their view toward the franchise question. One element, which looked to Drake for leadership, had been, from 1865 to 1868 the most influential part of the Radical organization, its leaders in thought and in action. The other, led by Schurz and representing the manhood suffrage and amnesty ideas, was able to rally to its standard the more conservative Radicals such as Gratz Brown.²

In the discussion of the franchise question, which began before the Legislature met, the two sides had, through the press expressed their views. It is significant that the leading newspapers of that party were practically unanimous in advocating the submission of a Constitutional amendment, which, if adopted, would confer the suffrage, first, upon the negro, and second, upon those who were unable to take the Test Oath³. The Radicals were not led by altruistic theories toward these reforms. While many of them doubtless believed that the negro was justly entitled to the suffrage, that fact that, if granted it, the great majority of them would vote the straight Radical ticket was a fact which the members of that party did not forget.⁴ Radical papers, which two/^{years}previous,

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2. For an excellent discussion of the situation in the Radical Party, see the Dispatch, Nov. 14, 1868.
 3. This idea was first advanced early after the election by the Hannibal Courier, one of the strongest Radical papers in Missouri.
 4. Democrat, Nov. 24, 1868.

had been most bitterly opposed to any leniency toward the "rebels", now spoke of the Test Oath as being only temporary.⁵ Not only would it be wise and magnanimous for the Radicals to adopt a more liberal attitude, but an excellent party measure as well.⁶ The other element in the party, however, the Drake adherents did not lack strong support. The border counties, in the southwestern and northwestern portions of the State, where the Radicals had always been strongest, saw no reason for any decided change in the policies of their party. The various shades of Radicalism are well illustrated by the opinions of this powerful group. Their views ranged from a belief that all "rebels" should be perpetually disfranchised to one that held it was as yet too early to begin any unnecessary agitation on the subject.⁷ To this unforgiving faction the opposition replied that a constitutional amendment, which gave manhood suffrage, if passed in 1870, would not be effective until 1872.⁸ By that time there could be no danger that the former "rebels" would menace the state government, even if they managed to secure control of it. Nor did the arguments close without a prophecy of the result to the Radical Party should it fail to keep

5. Ibid, See also the Courier, Nov. 22, 1868.

6. In addition to the papers, above mentioned, the St. Charles Cosmos, the Border Times, and the Bates Record, were advocates of an early removal of all disqualifications for voting. Democrat, Nov. 28, 1868.

7. The strongest press support of the extremists was given by the St. Joseph Union, the Harrisonville Democrat, the Springfield Patriot, and the State Times. Democrat, Dec. 1, 1868.

8. Constitution of 1865, Article II, Section 25.

abreast of the times, and forget the vindictive spirit which war and reconstruction had fostered.⁹

While theoretically the question of the abolition of the Test Oath for voters was not particularly connected with that of negro suffrage, conditions in the state were such that it was almost impossible to separate the two. And yet, complicated as they were when considered together, when judged separately each become doubly hard to solve. There were three aspects of the franchise question. First, the whites might be enfranchised before the negroes. This policy, if adopted, would make it extremely doubtful if the negro would ever be able to secure what many believed to be his just due. The election of 1868 had shown very plainly that there was in the Radical Party a strong element which opposed negro suffrage. To this must be added practically the entire Democratic vote. The negro would thus be barred for years. Second, the negroes might be granted the suffrage before the removal of restrictions from the whites. To do this, however, would be but to increase the bitterness and ill feeling which already prevailed. Such a policy could never be successful. Third, both classes might be enfranchised, at very nearly the same time. This would conciliate all factions, except perhaps the most extreme Radicals, and tend toward the quickest settlement of the troublesome question.¹⁰

9. "Four years hence all the present issues will have passed away or else the defeat of the Radical Party will be inevitable." Democrat, Dec. 1, 1868.

10. Democrat, Dec. 14, 1868. This is one of the solutions which the more liberal Radicals advocated.

The Democrats, meanwhile, were playing the part of interested spectators. Certain observers of that party thought they saw a new combination of political forces, and an adjustment along new lines. No doubt, to most of these the wish was to father the thought, as there is no evidence that the Radicals had reached a place where their differences of opinion over party policy had become irreconcilable. The Democrats, however, were wise enough to see that practical politics, rather than altruism, lay behind the proposals of the more forgiving Radicals.¹¹

While the discussion about the franchise was at its height, the appearance of a new issue forced its temporary abandonment. For the next two months, the election of a successor to John B. Henderson was the all absorbing question in Missouri politics. In addition to being of great interest as a political contest, the election brought out very clearly what was of far greater significance, namely, the sharp division of opinion, which had previously been recognized only in somewhat obscure circles. Mr. Henderson, as a candidate to succeed himself, was, of course, out of the question. The Radical Party was as yet in no mood to honor a man who had voted against the impeachment of Andrew Johnson. It was but natural that the more liberal of the Radicals turned instinctively toward Carl Schurz as their candidate. While Schurz does not seem to have anticipated during the campaign of 1868 a promotion to the United States Senate, he was not the man to refuse it,

11. The Kansas City Times remarked: "It sees that disfranchisement has been worked to the last inch the people will bear. Convinced that nothing can be further gained from pressing a bad law it desires to have the credit for effecting its repeal." Quoted in the Democrat, Dec. 7, 1868.

if offered.¹² The extremists, anxious to follow out the virtual decree of Senator Drake, threw their support to General B. F. Loan, a man of very mediocre talents, who served several terms in Congress and who represented the northwestern portion of the State. Loan had been one of Drake's most active supporters, and he typified perhaps better than anyone the spirit and ideas of the border Radicalism. His candidacy, was not especially well received, but had no other candidate appeared, he would have received the entire support of his party.¹³

To many, however, in the Radical Party, the prospect of seeing Drake's candidate successful was very distasteful. Accordingly, a small group of Radicals in St. Louis insisted that Schurz be a candidate against Loan.¹⁴ He rather reluctantly consented to allow his name to be used and Colonel Grosvenor, the able editor of the Democrat, assumed the leadership of Schurz's cause.¹⁵ Early in December, the Democrat brought forward his name. Mr. Schurz was, it asserted, in every way the leading Republican of the State, and deserved election because of that reason.¹⁶ Several

12. Schurz, Reminiscences, III, 292.

13. The St. Joseph Union was his most active supporter, see the Democrat, Dec. 15, 1868. Schurz, Reminiscences, III. 294 discusses Loan's candidacy.

14. The name of this coterie was the Twentieth Century Club. Its members dined together once a month and discussed contemporary events. Schurz, Reminiscences, III. 294-295.

15. Reminiscences, III. 295. This is, no doubt, the origin of the St. Louis ring. Schurz was often accused of being its candidate and it seems certain that his candidacy was primarily due to the suggestion and influence of these men.

16. Democrat, Dec. 18, 1868. The fact that Schurz was a St. Louisan was lightly brushed aside.

of the Radical papers in Missouri made haste to approve Schurz. His qualifications were heralded far and wide, and the enthusiasm with which the people responded to his candidacy must have surprised many of Schurz's enemies.¹⁷ By the time the Legislature convened, the majority of the Radical newspapers of the State were enlisted in his cause.¹⁸

The Democrats, while not as vitally concerned with the Senatorial election as with the suffrage issue, were none the less deeply interested in the campaign. They knew they had absolutely no chance to elect a candidate, and so gave over their columns to a frank discussion of the Radical canvass. Both Schurz and the measures he advocated were decidedly more popular among the Democrats than anything Loan had to offer, including himself. While some of the Democrats regarded Schurz as a carpet bagger, and office seeker, it was generally admitted that he was far more desirable than the protege of their old enemy Drake. If he was not Loan's superior morally, certainly he was intellectually.¹⁹ Best of all, they said, Schurz was no sham German like B. Gratz Brown, and his election would please the strongest element of the Radical Party, the Germans.²⁰ Nevertheless, it was evident early in the canvass that Schurz would have considerable opposition. Drake had shown a

17. Schurz had made many friends during his active campaigning in 1868, and these now stood him in excellent stead.

18. The number of papers supporting Schurz was 21, as against 20 for all other candidates. Democrat, Dec. 21, 1868.

19. Dispatch, Dec. 8, 1868. The most outrageous charges were brought against Schurz. He was accused of being an atheist, a drunkard, and a professional revolutionist. Reminiscences, III. 296.

20. Dispatch, Dec. 8, 1868.

bitter hostility toward him, and was preparing to come West to personally conduct Loan's campaign. Drake an intensely religious man, was said to be behind the attempts to brand Schurz as an atheist.²¹ Loan who believed he was justly entitled to the election, was not disposed to give up without a strenuous fight.²² There were indications that only by desperate dodging and under certain pledges could the mutterings of the western and southwestern parts of the State be stilled. They were extremely loath to see St. Louis, which as far as actual votes was concerned was not in any way a stronghold of Radicalism, monopolize the most important offices.²³ It was almost certain that if Schurz was elected, Drake could never succeed himself as the border communities could not another time be denied.

Governor Fletcher and Secretary Rodman announced they would support Schurz. The aid of the latter would probably injure Schurz's cause, and there were ugly rumors of a political deal between the forces of each.²⁴ Drake who was a very poor politician, was outguessed and outmanoeuvred at every turn. He did not seem to make use of the forces at his disposal. The incoming State administration might have been utilized, but Drake does not

21. Ibid, Dec. 16, 1868.

22. Statesman, Dec. 18, 1868.

23. Ibid.

24. It was said that Rodman had agreed to throw out the votes of eight counties, unfavorable to Schurz, Dispatch, Dec. 26, 1868. This is extremely doubtful; Rodman, it is true, did throw out the votes of several counties, but for reasons which are in no way connected with the Senatorial election.

seem to/^{have}realized it. The new national administration was likewise apposed to Schurz. Grant, with his usual lack of political foresight, was in favor of the reelection of Henderson, a thing which even the latter's best friends knew was an utter impossibility. The president elect looked upon Schurz as a military humbug and figurehead, and what he was in other respects, Grant did not either know or care.²⁵ At any rate, by January 1, the stage was set for the contest. The leading Radical papers, the large German element, and the entire group who stood for a more lenient policy were ranged on the side of Schurz. Opposed to them was Drake, the majority of the Federal officeholders, and a strong delegation of Radicals from the border counties. The election was to witness the first, but not the last, clash between the two forces.²⁶

The convening of the 25th General Assembly saw the scene of battle transferred to Jefferson City. Senator Drake was early in the field, ready to rally his forces of opposition to Schurz.

25. As the Dispatch, Dec. 31, 1868, jokingly remarked: "The president elect is not profoundly versed in German philosophy. He would probably spell Kant with a C and if asked about Hegel would say he knew a fellow of that name in St. Louis or California, or the army as the case may be."
26. Only a few seem to have looked beneath the surface and to have seen the real significance of the struggle. The Dispatch, Dec. 8, 1868, gave the clearest expression when it said: "Few may see it just now, but the rapid rise of the Schurz star, and the rapid descent of Loans, announce a great change in the Radical Party itself. The day of proscription and persecution is over. The evangel of hate can no longer be preached with success. Drake will be made to understand the paradox that he has outlived his time, though his term has not expired. Schurz's election will be Drake's death sentence as a public man."

Loan's press supporters continued their bitter personal and political attacks on "the infidel".²⁷ Schurz's enemies saw in his candidacy nothing but the effort of a St. Louis clique to control the state; a deep scheme by which the Democrat was to secure power, and the Germans become the supreme political factor in Missouri politics.²⁸ Before the first Radical caucus met, the campaign had attracted so much attention that from every quarter of the State the adherents of each candidate flocked to the capital to witness the contest.²⁹ Col. Grosvenor had charge of the Schurz forces.

At the first caucus of the Radicals Schurz had suggested that he and Loan be present, and express their views on the issues of the campaign. Loan in his reply, implied that Schurz was in favor of immediate enfranchisement of rebels. To this Schurz made a vigorous denial.³⁰ As Loan did not appear at the caucus, Sen. Drake represented him, and in a speech in his customary vein, prejudiced and bitter. Once more Schurz very frankly denied that he was an advocate of

27. See the Democrat, Jan. 4, 1869, for a summary of the Union's attack on Schurz. No sooner had Drake got to Jefferson City than Schurz arrived there.

28. St. Joseph Union, Jan. 2, 1869.

29. Schurz, Reminiscences, III. 297.

30. The correspondence between them may be found in the Democrat, Jan 8, 1869. and in the Writings of Carl Schurz, I. 473-474.

the immediate enfranchisement of "rebels".³¹ He absolutely dis-
countenanced the prevailing rumor that he had instigated the
Planters' House meeting of Dec. 1866, and from the attacks on his
personal morality, defended himself as best he could.³² In the
midst of the bickerings and bitterness, Schurz challenged Loan and
Drake to meet him in public debate on the day before the final
Radical caucus to nominate a United States Senator was held. They
accepted the invitation. Schurz's speech the first evening was
rather tame. He confined himself to a review of the past glories
of the Republican Party and a forecast of the future of the
country.³³ Loan's reply, which was given the next evening was
mediocre in content, but fairly conciliatory in tone. Drake
followed Loan. Before the great crowd in the Assembly Hall, he
spoke in defiant, dogmatic fashion.³⁴ His speech was largely a

31. The Democrat, Jan. 11, 1869, contains a full account of
the proceedings. Of the Missouri situation, Schurz said:
"Negro and rebel sufferage do not, in my opinion, stand on
the same level. First let come, as justice demands,
negro sufferage. The Constitution, indeed, makes easier
the enfranchisement of whites than of colored people,
where not a provision is made. Franchise the rebels first,
and you will see that they once more will secure control,
and will not be in any hurry to give the blacks the fran-
chise." Schurz denied that he was a drunkard, or allied
with any ring.

32. Ibid.

33. Democrat, Jan. 12, 1869.

34. Drake was very confident of success. After Schurz's first
speech, he boasted: "Gentlemen, tomorrow night about this
hour, General Schurz will be as dead as Julius Caesar."
Reminiscences, III. 297.

denunciation, first, of the antecedents and past career of Schurz, second, a tirade against his old enemies, the Germans, whom he stigmatized as ignorant, corrupt, and more of a liability than an asset to the Republican party.³⁵ Schurz rose to reply in a speech which was the feature of the entire contest. With merciless irony, he once more uncovered Drake's war record. He pointed out how German strength and influence from 1861, when they had rallied firmly with Lyon at Camp Jackson, to 1868, when their 25,000 votes had been responsible for the Radical victory, were always for the Union. Amid much disorderly cheering and applause, Mr. Schurz brought his speech to a climax by declaring that during the Constitutional Convention of 1865, Drake had violently opposed negro suffrage.³⁶ However, Schurz's close was conciliatory. If elected, he promised to respect the opinions and wishes of his colleague.³⁷

The next day the Radical caucus unanimously nominated Schurz. It was Loan's motion which made the nomination unanimous.³⁸ The election, which was a mere formality, was held on the next day.

35. For these speeches, see the Democrat, Jan. 16, 1869.
36. Schurz had the manuscript of the minutes of the Convention, and the reporter, Mr. Walbridge, was also present. Drake, in reply to the charge, stated that he feared a negro suffrage provision would have been inexpedient and would have meant for the Constitution certain defeat. Democrat, Jan. 13, 1869
Drake's view was very probably correct. In 1868, it had not been able to carry, with the issues of Reconstruction to aid it. Schurz, however, had ruined any effective retaliation on Drake's part.
37. Schurz tells the story well in his Reminiscences, III, 297-300. Perhaps a more accurate account can be found in the Democrat, Jan. 13 and 16, 1869.
38. Democrat, Jan. 14, 1869. "Neither the fervor of Mr. Loan nor the froth of Mr. Drake could turn the tide. The Radicals preferred Carl Schurz of Detroit to represent them in the United States Senate." Statesman, Jan. 22, 1869.

Schurz received the entire Radical support, the Democrats giving their votes to the defeated candidate for Governor, John S. Phelps.³⁹ The Radicals, in the face of crises, had once more pulled themselves together. Drake, who had hurried back to Washington before the final vote was taken, made the best of the situation.⁴⁰

Schurz's speech of acceptance struck no new note. He reaffirmed his stand on universal suffrage, but maintained a rather vague attitude as to the exact time at which the restrictions for voting should be removed.⁴¹ Despite his assertion that "no political victory was ever more clearly won", the rumors of political manipulations in his behalf would not down. That Schurz owed his new office to the efforts of a combination of shrewd men, disgusted with Drake and all he stood for, was to many men the explanation of his victory.⁴² His nationality and former residences had been kept in the background. Drake and Loan had been forced into the open, where they had been cleverly outguessed and beaten, Schurz was indeed fortunate to have the support of Colonel Grosvenor. The

39. The Senate vote was Schurz 25, Phelps 9, the House vote, Schurz 89, Phelps 35. Democrat, Jan. 20, 1869.

40. See his letter to Schurz and the reply, Writings, I. 480-481.

41. The full text of the speech can be found in his Writings, I, 474-480. In part he said: "My opinion is, the act of justice to loyal men stands first in rank, and that only such acts of grace to our late enemies are in order as will be consistent with the safety of the loyal people; that I will not consent to arm the late rebels with power in a manner which would enable them to deprive loyal men of their rights. By this declaration I mean to stand."

42. Statesman, Feb. 5, 1869.

influence of his powerful paper/^{was} a very vital factor in his success. Even before the election, it was clear that there had been a complete break between Drake and the Democrat. Primarily due to a disagreement over an appointment to office, this feud extended much further.⁴³ After the election, that paper frankly repudiated him.⁴⁴ Disgruntled at Loan's defeat, some of his supporters turned on Drake as its contributing factor, and joined with the Senator's other enemies.⁴⁵

Amidst the bitterness and confusion of the campaign two facts stand out. The first, and most important, is that the Radicals were as yet none too enthusiastic for any liberal policy of enfranchisement of whites, unless the negroes were first admitted to the suffrage. Schurz had made very clear his stand on this question and his supporters stood with him.⁴⁶ Any policy which had for its

43. Geo. W. Fishback, one of the owners of the Democrat, had asked Drake to secure for Constantine Maguire the appointment as Collector of the Internal Revenue for St. Louis. Drake had positively refused to do this, on the ground that Maguire was not a good party man. Democrat, Jan. 15, 1869.
44. "Mr. Drake forced the Radical Party to choose between dictatorship under him, and freedom under Schurz. And throughout the contest, his violence of passion, his narrow vindictiveness, and his utter lack of sense as a party leader were manifest ---- Mr. Drake convinced nobody that his despotism would be either wise or beneficent. The Party chooses freedom.."
"The election means a victory for freedom of thought, progress, good sense, and genuine Radicalism." Democrat, Jan. 20, 1869.
45. The Grand River Republican, a strong Loan supporter, remarked: "We are glad that the self-conceit and demagogueism of Chas. D. Drake has at least been squelched. Had he remained at Washington, it would have been better for Gen. Loan and the people."
46. His speeches, informal and formal, during the campaign show this very plainly.

purpose the enfranchisement of the white man before the negro would certainly be opposed by every element of Radicalism. The second factor of importance is that the election was largely a struggle for the control of the Radical party organization. The two elements in the party were not yet near the breaking point, but each was endeavoring to secure the control of the party machinery, that through it, might be advanced the principles for which each stood. The rank and file would doubtless follow the course which the leaders formulated. In a very real sense, the election had been more than the mere choosing of a United States Senator. While, on the surface, all seemed harmonious, there yet remained to be settled the troublesome franchise question, as well as the final struggle for the leadership and ultimately the control of the party policies. Thus far, the victory lay with the Schurz element. Their advocacy of a more liberal policy in regard to the suffrage, if vague, was apparently a popular one. In the Senatorial contest they had been successful. They could well afford to face the future with confidence.

The election over, the Legislature turned to the consideration of State business. Gov. Fletcher's last and Gov. McClurg's first message to the General Assembly had referred at length to the question of the suffrage. Fletcher strongly recommended that the Legislature submit to the people a Constitutional amendment which would abolish the test oath for voting and for all other purposes for which, it was required.⁴⁷ The day of disfranchisement, he said, was over, "the rebel was disfranchised for safety, not for

47. These were sections 3, 5, and 6 of the second article.

vengeance."⁴⁸ At the same time, he added, it was the duty of the State to widen the suffrage to include all who have been barred from it on account of color. Neither for the consideration of safety nor of vengeance, but on account of prejudice has the negro been disfranchised, prejudice which must fall before an intelligent and just people. And so in the Constitutional amendment which would abolish the Test Oath, let a provision be included which would repeal forever the word "white" from the Constitution.⁴⁹ Reduced to its simplest terms, Mr. Fletcher's idea was to present to the electorate both questions, at the same time, in the hope that each would receive enough votes to carry. His proposition to combine the two issues, which were in no way related to each other, was an excellent political move. Many Democrats would vote for negro sufferage if they could at the same time enfranchise thousands of whites who they hoped, would vote the Democratic ticket.

Entirely different were the ideas which Gov. McClurg's message advocated.⁵⁰ Its tone showed that McClurg was still a Radical of the old unforgiving type. He took a strong position against combining in any form the questions of negro and rebel franchisement. The submission of an amendment which provided for the settlement of both issues at the same time might be very dangerous. The one providing for removal of the disqualifications for whites might be passed, and the other defeated, leaving the negro in a worse position than before.⁵¹ The new governor saw little reason for the agitation

48. See the Senate Journal, 1869, 13-35 for the full text of the message.

49. Senate Journal, 1869, 14-17.

50. Senate Journal, 1869, 45-62 contains the message.

51. Journal, 1869, 60-61. In view of repeated declarations of the Radicals, that negro sufferage must come first, it is hard to see why McClurg took the position that he did.

over the removal of the disqualifications for "rebels". The Constitution had provided that the Legislature might, after 1871, remove all disabilities, and he believed in letting the question rest until that time.⁵²

Of primary importance, he maintained, was the granting of the suffrage to the negroes, which must be done before the abolition of the Test Oath is even considered.⁵³

While the Legislature was discussing the two proposals, as they were embodied in the many bills introduced in both the House and the Senate, came the news from Washington of the passage of the 15th Amendment.⁵⁴ Without waiting for official notification, the relieved Radicals hastened to ratify the amendment.⁵⁵ The passage of the amendment was a blessing to the Radicals. It removed, temporarily, but also quickly and effectively, the discussion about negro suffrage, which was becoming acute. At the same time, all responsibility for it was fixed on the Federal Government. The issue of the removal of restrictions for whites, however, was no nearer solution. The 25th General Assembly gladly dropped the

52. Constitution of 1865, Article II, Section 25.

53. Journal, 61. "The only plan, therefore, safe for the State, if loyalty is to prevail, is to submit the one proposition of negro sufferage, and keep the rebels on probation."

54. Curiously enough, it was Senator Henderson, who, three years before, had suggested an amendment embracing the same provisions as the 15th. Rhodes, United States, VI. 202.

55. The Senate vote was for 23, against, 9. In the House, for, 79, against, 30. Statesman, March 3, 1869. In their haste to ratify the amendment only the first section was read, the second being totally ignored.

entire subject for the remainder of the session, and turned to the more congenial task of discussing the binding of the Agricultural Report.

During the session several attempts were made to amend and otherwise change the Registry Act, but the Radical majority was in no mood to assist in any plan which might endanger their control of elections.⁵⁶ On March 4, the Legislature adjourned, to meet again early in 1870. Hardly had the legislators left Jefferson City before the franchise question became once more the sole topic of discussion.

The year 1869 saw the two elements in the Radical Party grow steadily apart. Unfortunately for the Republicans, the failure of the necessary number of State Legislatures to ratify the 15th Amendment forced back into State politics the negro suffrage question. In general, both groups agreed that this was the issue of paramount importance, and should be settled first.⁵⁷ Some rather cleverly said that negro suffrage was a war question and must be satisfactorily solved before disfranchisement, a reconstruction issue, was considered.⁵⁸ The sharpest divergence of opinion between the two was over the question as to the time of the removal of the disabilities which the Constitution imposed. Even the most extreme agreed that they must some day go.⁵⁹ In short, the more liberal believed that this time had come, the other did

56. Most of the amendments to the bill were to provide for separate judges of election, not the members of the Boards of Registration

57. Democrat, June 5, 1869.

58. Ibid. It is, however, very doubtful that negro suffrage, was a war question, but the Radical arguments were plausible.

59. The Statesman, July 16, 1869 contains this view as expressed by Drake.

not.⁶⁰ Neither side hesitated to express their views. The leader of the new order was, of course, the Democrat, but by June many other papers had joined Colonel Grosvenor.⁶¹ Astute party leaders saw that the change in times and conditions had made necessary a new and broader policy. The Radical Party, as one them aptly remarked, "stands at the parting of the ways."⁶² Policies and measures necessary in 1865 had become obsolete and unpopular. The party must realize that the war was over, and in the future must rely on the principles it advocates, not Test Oaths and other prejudices.⁶³ Not only would the removal of all restrictions after 1870 be a shrewd party measure, but it could not fail to be for the ultimate good of the State.⁶⁴ While discussing

60. If a Constitutional amendment was submitted it would be voted on at the election of 1870, and would not be effective until 1872.

61. Especially the Hannibal Courier, St. Joseph Herald, St. Charles Cosmos, Ironton Enterprise, and the Harrisonville Democrat. The border county journals seemed to be taking more kindly to the liberal ideas.

62. "On the one hand lie the passions and prejudices of the war and all the temporary measures divined to see the State safely through a period of civil strife. On the other side lie the harmony and good will of peace, and the repeal of war measures as fast as they may prove unnecessary-----The public welfare demands peace-----Will the Radical Party move forward to promote the welfare of the State." From the St. Charles Cosmos, reprinted in the Statesman, June 4, 1869.

63. Ibid.

64. The Democrat, July 15, 1869 well sums up the liberal view: "We propose a removal of disfranchisement after 1870 because we believe it to be for the good of the State and the party. We do not care a button whether the Democrats understand our motives or like our course, or the contrary."

the altruistic phases of the removal of all restrictions alike for white and for black, the progressive Radicals did not for a moment lose sight of the practical side of the question. The Supreme Court of the United States had had under consideration the Blair versus Ridgely case, which involved the constitutionality of the Test Oath for voters.⁶⁵ It was generally expected, in view of the past decisions of the court, that the oath would be declared unconstitutional, in which case the Radicals would be left high and dry. By advocating, therefore, the early removal of all restrictions and by actually accomplishing it, the party, even in view of the Court's decision, could secure for itself a good deal of credit. In other words, it would appear as if the Radicals were conferring a favor on the disfranchised classes, when in reality such was not the case.⁶⁶ A voluntary removal of disabilities was strongly urged; such a step, it was claimed, being the wish of a great majority of the party.⁶⁷ Nor were many discussions

65. In November 1865, at a St. Louis election, General Blair had refused to take the oath imposed by the Constitution, but had sworn to one which he himself had composed. Under these conditions, the judges of election had refused to accept his ballot, whereupon he sued them for \$10,000 damages. Both the Circuit Court and the Missouri Supreme Court had decided against Blair, and the case had been appealed to the highest court in the land.
66. It must be borne in mind that 1872 was the earliest time at which any adopted amendment could go into effect.
67. "We believe it a thousand times better for the State that a measure such as this, adopted from conviction of its necessity in a condition of Civil War, should be voluntarily removed when the country has returned to peace, than it should remain a cause of bitter feeling, and to many an indication that it was adopted in a spirit of vindictiveness and not of sincere patriotism.----The great majority of the Radicals of this State have repeatedly declared that when negro suffrage was once established, they would feel that the questions growing out of the war were finally so settled that it would be safe to remove all restrictions. The question of negro suffrage can no longer be called doubtful. To do full justice to themselves and their own history, may not the Radicals of this State now

closed without a threat as to what would occur should the Radicals fail to show a more conciliatory spirit.⁶⁸ During the summer and fall, several counties went on record as favoring a more liberal policy.⁶⁹ By December 1869, then, it appeared as if the rapidly growing liberal faction had the upper hand. It had behind it several necessary elements of success; a strong press support, the activity and enthusiasm of influential leaders, of greater and less degree. Just how the rank and file regarded the new ideas it was as yet difficult to forecast. Without the support of this important factor, the policies could never be put into operation.

The extremists among the Radicals, meanwhile, were not sitting idly by, silently watching the liberal faction gather strength. Senator Drake, although busy with official duties at Washington, managed to present his views by press articles and open letters. The newspaper support of his group, both in numbers and prominence, was much less than that which Schurz commanded, but Drake had the advantage of having with him the State administration.⁷⁰ As usual Drake underestimated the actual strength of his rivals. He failed utterly to realize and appreciate the forces behind the new movement in his own party; but calmly announced that the agitation was only a continuation of the plan conceived at the now famous Planters

resolve upon the removal of disfranchisement as soon as by constitutional change, it can be done." Democrat, Dec. 17, 1869

68. Democrat, June 16, 1869 contains a typical example: "The restrictions otherwise are likely to be swept away in spite of the Radical party."
69. A St. Charles county meeting declared in favor of making the adoption of the 15th Amendment the end of all disfranchisement. Sen. Bruere formerly a strong Drake man, was the leading spirit of the meeting. Statesman, August 20, 1869.
70. The chief supporters were the St. Joseph Union and the State Times.

House Meeting.⁷¹ The Radical organization had squelched the plans of the discontents before, and Drake, showing how utterly he failed to read aright the signs of the times, said that he could see no change in the party sentiment.⁷² While the great mass of the Radical Party admit that some day disfranchisement must close, they are utterly opposed to joining the issue of negro suffrage with that of the removal of restrictions for Whites.⁷³ Drake still regarded the disfranchised whites as "enemies" and traitors", and he looked upon that element in his own party which favored a lightening of the burdens as mere political schemers.⁷⁴ Nor did the extremists gain from Drake's presentation of their case. His utter lack of tact, his assumption that he was the absolute master of the party, and his letters from Washington/^{which} always had about them the unpleasant idea of an implied ultimatum did his cause ^{nought} but harm.⁷⁵

71. Statesman, July 16, 1869. "It is", said he, "the old Planters House Scheme, dressed up a little differently, but easily recognizable and embodying the one idea of enfranchising the negro and the rebel at the same time."

72. Ibid.

73. Drake was in part right. The difference between the two factions was one of degree. Drake's wished to keep the questions entirely separate, and to give the negro sufferage first, then consider, leisurely, the other issue. The other element agreed that the negro deserved first consideration, but maintained the restrictions should be removed from the whites very soon after.

74. Statesman, July 16, 1869.

75. "I demand," said he, in a letter to the Radicals, "for every loyal man in the State, white or black, a voice in deciding the question of rebel enfranchisement. When all such shall have the voice, I shall be prepared to unite with my party in declaring when, how and to what extent the disfranchisement imposed by our Constitution shall be removed." Democrat, June 29, 1869.

The liberals most bitterly resented the attitude of Drake and his followers. His assumption that he, personally, was the leader of the party in the State was very strenuously denied.⁷⁶ Mr. Drake's fight against the new policies was, they said, one which he could never win. The failure of his followers to keep abreast of the times and to successfully judge public opinion would relegate them to the back ground of party activity.⁷⁷ A continuation of the old, restrictive, and vindictive Radical policy would result in evitable defeat.

The Democrats had followed keenly every manifestation of Radical dissent. Their hope of early enfranchisement lay in a Radical division, but this does not seem to have been recognized in Democratic ranks before 1870. They merely seemed to see in the Radical controversy an instance of retribution. It would certainly be a curious thing, some said, should the Radical Party be disintegrated and overthrown by the Test Oath, the very agency by which it had come into power.⁷⁸ The motives of each Radical element were early recognized as being purely political. Their analysis of Drake's position was that he fully realized that the

76. Democrat, June 29, 1869.

77. "Mr. Drake is fighting against the civilization of the age. All the laws of nature combine to overpower him. Business relations, railroad enterprises, mining and manufacturing, or trade combinations all melt away these antipathies which form his only foothold. The policy of disfranchisement must go down never to rise again. Unless the Radical Party proposes a settlement, the people will make one in the election of 1870".-----

78. Statesman, July 16, 1869.

foundation of the Radical power in Missouri was the Test Oath. Drake owed much of his success to it, and was naturally very loath to see it endangered, especially by reforms within his own party.⁷⁹ Schurz who was also deep in debt to his party, was not, in the first place, as vitally interested in Missouri as was Drake, and secondly, he was not the author and sponsor of the oath. The real policy of the unforgiving Radicals, said a shrewd observer, was to first enfranchise the negroes, then force from fifty to seventy five thousand disfranchised whites to ask the negroes and white Radicals for the ballot, a request which might be granted and might not.⁸⁰

As for the plans of the more liberal element it well knew the trend of the Supreme Court, and realized that the oath would very probably be declared unconstitutional. So they were hastening to make a political virtue out of an unavoidable necessity, and range themselves on the side of speedy disfranchisement.⁸¹ When the decision in the Blair case was announced, it was confidently asserted, the last hope of Radicalism in Missouri would be gone.

There was a great deal of truth in the analysis of the Democrats. Undoubtedly, the political factor was the chief one in the plans of both liberals and illiberals. However, other considerations entered into the situation. No one can doubt that both Schurz and Drake were sincere in their motives. Drake actually

79. Ibid.

80. Statesman, July 20, 1869. Switzler's figures on disfranchised Democrats are exaggerated.

81. Statesman, Oct. 10, 1869. "First went the preacher's oath, then the teacher's oath, next the lawyers' oath, and last, but not least will go the voters' oath."

believed a "rebel" to be a dangerous man, who was not deserving of participation in governmental affairs. Schurz, on the other hand, felt that the war was over, and that new issues, chiefly economic, were gradually becoming more important. These would eventually become irresistible, and crowd out all the old war passions. The connection between negro suffrage and the removal of restrictions from whites has been greatly overemphasized. Both elements of Radicalism were strongly in favor of the former, while about the latter each had its own ideas.

At any rate, by the close of 1869, the questions were assuming serious magnitude in the Radical Party, and were beginning to threaten its harmony. Sober men of every group could not fail to see that there was danger of a complete party disintegration. Many anxiously turned toward the Legislature, hoping that in its adjourned session the problem could in some way be solved.⁸²

82. Carl Schurz had given the best expression of the liberal view when he said: "The question of rebel disfranchisement, as the only disturbing political question left by the war, will no longer be tolerated by public opinion. It must be clear to every unprejudiced observer, as it cannot appear desirable to every man of sense, that the enfranchisement of the negro must be the end of rebel disfranchisement. As soon as the other classes of citizens are secured, no argument will be strong enough to prove, and no party organization strong enough to maintain that these rights must be denied to anyone." Statesman, June 16, 1869.

Chapter VI.

The Widening of the Radical Breach.

Chapter VI.

The year 1870 witnessed the defeat and overthrow of the Radical Party. While to many its disintegration was rapid and unexpected, others had not failed to notice the manifestations of discontent among the Radicals themselves, which had been more or less in evidence since the memorable Planters House conference in November 1866. The remarkable economic prosperity of the State continued, in every section business went forward.¹ But the political situation was as much unsettled as ever. There could be in the State no permanent peace until the suffrage question was definitely settled. More and more the liberal Radicals were coming to see that until the restrictions which bound both white and black were removed, Missouri would never be able to properly consider the pressing problems which were in no way connected with the war. Further economic development, the immigration question, and certain national issues, notably the tariff, were being held in abeyance until the final solution of the franchise issue.

It has been shown in previous chapters how a small group of liberals had advocated universal sufferage in 1866, how party pressure had carried the organization intact through the election of 1868, and how, all during the year 1869, the new program had been advocated. When 1870 was ushered in, the liberals had reached a point where they were willing to make a test of their strength. There was, of course, no open threats of a break, but the Democrat, as spokesman of the new ideas, began to assume a more aggressive

1. Democrat, Jan. 1, 1870 reviews the situation.

tone. The final struggle for the control of party machinery was about to begin, and the liberal leaders were apparently confident of their ability to overcome the more extreme members of the party. The adjourned session of the 25th General Assembly became the first field of battle.

Before the Legislature met, a program for the session had been outlined. Owing to a careless oversight, it was necessary to once more ratify the 15th Amendment, which was only a mere formality. This was the first business of the Legislature. More important, however, was the second, which concerned the removal of all disfranchisements for those who had participated in the Rebellion.² As a "temporary war measure", disfranchisement had become obsolete, and unpopular, said the liberals. Even if the Supreme Court should declare constitutional the Test Oath for voters, it was far better for Missouri to voluntarily and in a magnanimous spirit remove it.³

The section of the Governor's message concerning the franchise issue was evasive. While frankly opposing the submission of a Constitutional amendment which would remove disabilities, McClurg, intimated that he wished to throw the entire matter into the hands of the next Legislature.⁴ The Constitution had provided that all restrictions could be removed by a mere majority vote in the General Assembly after January 1, 1871. The Governor advocated that candidates for the next Legislature run on the issue of favoring or

2. Democrat, Jan. 5, 1870.

3. Ibid.

4. For the message, see Senate Journal, 1870, 7-26.

opposing the removal of all disabilities.⁵ "There is", said he, "no necessity for any constitutional amendment on this point." In other words, the chief executive looked upon the removal of disqualifications from the standpoint of its political aspects, rather than in the light of statesmanship or of justice. He wished to shift the burden to the Legislature contests, and thus not bind the party, as a whole, to any policy in regard to irritating suffrage problems. McClurg also strongly urged the submission of an amendment enfranchising the negro, as well as a speedy ratification of the 15th Amendment.⁶ Among the more liberal group, the Governor's recommendations as to the removal of the restrictions on former Confederates, met with instant disapproval. If, as the Democrat clearly pointed out, the negroes have the right of suffrage, there could be no danger in a broader policy in regard to the whites. The Governor's policy could but have one result, namely, a conflict over the suffrage question among the candidates for the next Legislature.⁷ With some favoring an immediate removal of restrictions and some opposing it, two sets of candidates would be in the field, and this condition would assure a Democratic victory. To avoid this, the whole question should be as far as

5. Ibid, 8.

6. At this time, the 15th Amendment had not been ratified by the necessary number of States. But on March 30, 1870 the amendment was declared a part of the Constitution, having been approved by 37 states. Switzler, History of Missouri, 468.

7. Democrat, Jan. 7, 1870.

possible removed from the legislators, and submitted directly to a vote of the people. In short, the Radicals must make their decision before they entered the contest and not after.⁸ However, before attacking the problem, the Legislature ratified once more the 15th Amendment.⁹ The leading Radical organ announced that at last, after fifteen years of fighting Missouri was really "free".¹⁰

For over two months the question of submitting Constitutional amendments was before the Assembly. The leading newspapers and the foremost members of the Legislature were strongly in favor of this form of settling the suffrage issue. It was obvious, even to the most unrelenting, that the question must in some way be solved.¹¹ There were three methods of enfranchising those barred from participation in governmental affairs. The Legislature could have called a Convention to revise and remodel the present Constitution. This would have been a very costly solution and it was strongly opposed.¹² In the second place, the Legislature might have ignored

8. Ibid.

9. Senate Journal, 1870, 35. Ayes 21, Noes 3. House Journal, 57, Ayes 86, Noes 34. The vote was strictly a party one.

10. Democrat, Jan. 10, 1870.

11. "Already we see in the press strong proof that the Radicals in different parts of the State believe that the time has come for a change in the question. Even the Union and the Patriot, the two most bitter have come to advocate the removal of disfranchisement. And others also have changed." Democrat, Jan. 26, 1870.

12. St. Joseph Union, Jan. 26, 1870. In the Senate an attempt was made to call a Constitutional Convention, but the bill was indefinitely postponed. Senate Journal, 1870, 97, 211.

the issue completely, and followed out the suggestions of McClurg. To adopt such a policy would have been very dangerous for party harmony and success.¹³ Finally, the Legislature might submit an amendment which, if adopted, would confer the suffrage on those disfranchised. This, it was argued, was by far the best and the safest. It would avoid discord in the Radical Party, and remove from local contests the danger of a split ticket.¹⁴ The liberals were at all times quite positive that the next Legislature, no matter, what the Radicals might wish, would abolish the Test Oath. Upon this foundation, then they built up their platform that the Radical Party itself had better take the lead and abolish disqualifications at the November elections.¹⁵ And so, all through the early weeks of 1870, the question became more and more pressing on the legislators. Many who in 1869, had violently opposed a lenient policy, now announced that they favored a complete removal of all restrictions.¹⁶ Whether by Constitutional amendment or

13. "It is a fact," remarked the Democrat, Jan. 28, 1870, "which admits of no dispute, that there is in the Republican Party a large element that has heretofore voted with it, which is in favor of a removal of all political disabilities from rebels, at the earliest possible moment. There is another, that even at the next sitting of the Legislature, will be opposed to placing the ballot in the hands of the disfranchised."

14. Democrat, Jan. 28, 1870.

15. Democrat, Jan. 28, 1870. "If Republican candidates in favor of this action are not run by the party, the Democrats, with these Republicans in favor of this action, will nominate, and probably elect enough men to the Legislature to carry out their aim."

16. Democrat, Feb. 1, 1870.

by the vote of the Legislature, 1872 was the earliest time at which the change would be effective. Certain sections of the State where the Radicals were strongest, notably the Southwest and the Northwest, were forced to agree that the party must take some action.¹⁷ In addition to the possible effects on the Radicals which the amendment might bring about, the situation in the Democratic Party was not neglected. The submission of an amendment which embodied both negro and "rebel" suffrage would force the Democrats into a very embarrassing position. They would either have to endorse negro suffrage or oppose the very thing for which they had been fighting ever since 1865.¹⁸ By voting down the amendment they might be voluntarily disfranchising themselves for another period of years. Thus, both elements in the Radical Party spoke very favorably of amendments to the Constitution which would remove the distressing and troublesome question. The liberals insisted it was the duty of their party to pursue a course consistent with their platform of 1868, the extremists saw that the political situation made imperative a change. Both groups regarded the question as one which primarily concerned the Radical Party.

The Radicals at Jefferson City, in the meantime, had not

17. In addition to the Union and the Patriot, the Southeast Enterprise, and the Carthage Banner realized the importance of the issue.

Said the Enterprise: "And it is well known that a very considerable number of persons who have heretofore voted with the Radical Party are so eager for universal suffrage that they would lay aside all party considerations to secure their aims.-----A dangerous division is coming in the Radical Party." Quoted in the Democrat, Jan. 28, 1870.

18. Democrat, Jan. 28, 1870.

failed to heed the signs from their districts. Most of the leaders of the Legislature were advocates of the submission of an amendment at the fall election which would give the suffrage at the same time to both black and white.¹⁹ At a Radical caucus, held early in February, Orrick's resolution to submit an amendment which would enfranchise all classes, was passed 51 to 22.²⁰ It was the culmination of the policy which Schurz had advocated years before, boasted the Democrat. What the liberals desired was to make the sufferage question a party measure, and to secure for the Radical Party all possible credit for its solution.

Before the Radicals could go further in their amendment plans, an event occurred which many believed would change the entire suffrage question. The Supreme Court announced its decision in the Blair v. Ridgely case. To the great surprise of the Radicals and the bitter disappointment of the Democrats, the Court declared constitutional the Test Oath for voters.²¹ For months men of both parties in Missouri had expected the Test Oath would be overthrown.

19. "Most intelligent and influential members of the party have now become convinced that an amendment to the State Constitution to give the sufferage to both at once is the wisest course. Democrat, Jan. 26, 1870. Some of these leaders were Orrick, of St. Charles, Hayward, of Schuyler, Blodgett, of Johnson, Nalle, of Madison, and Mullings of Greene.
20. Democrat, Feb. 4, 1870. There was evidently quite a strong opposition in the caucus to the resolution. Sen. Evans, of Barton County bitterly declared that he would never vote to abolish the Radical Party.
21. The Court was equally divided on the case, 4 being of the opinion that the Oath was unconstitutional and 4 believing it constitutional. Thus, the decision of the Missouri Supreme Court was upheld, Democrat, Feb. 1, 1870.

Many Democrats had sneeringly said that the only reason the liberals had advocated a removal of restrictions was because they felt sure the Court would not uphold the Oath. The decision was a hard blow to the Democrats.²² They had relied too much upon the Court, but, in view of its past decisions on the Reconstruction cases, they were fully warranted in believing that the Judges would not grant the constitutionality of the Test Oath. There was only one other place to which the Democrats could turn. This was to the Radical Party itself, or, as later proved to be the case, to that wing of the Radicals which favored the immediate removal of all restrictions. While it is not commonly regarded as especially important, the decision in the Blair case had a very significant bearing on the future course of both Democrats and liberals.

The Radicals, at first, knew hardly how to take the decision. At Washington, it was the occasion for a jubilant meeting attended by the Missouri delegation, and presided over by Ex.-Governor Fletcher.²³ When the news was announced to the Legislature "a wave of applause swept over the assembly." Sober second thought, however, did not fail to see its significance.²⁴ In every group of Radicals who gathered to discuss the decision, it was held that the complete vindication of their principles had been given,

22. For a good summary of the Democratic view see, the Statesman, Feb. 4, 1870. The St. Louis Democratic papers were very bitter in their criticism of the Court, which was denounced as being corrupt. Democrat, Feb. 3, 1870.

23. Democrat, Feb. 1, 1870.

24. "The political effect of this decision is too vast for even a suggestion----- The opinion and decision will have a powerful, though it may be a secret, effect upon the opinion on the rebel sufferage question. It may change the plans of the party." Ibid.

while at the expense of the Democrats they indulged in a deal of laughter and sarcasm.²⁵ Many men were no doubt greatly astonished when the liberals declared their policy. Let the party which passed and enforced the Test Oath, said they, be also the party to generously remove it. No matter what the Law has said concerning the Oath, the Radical Party should rise above the mere technical features of the situation, and voluntarily give the vote to their former enemies.²⁶ Those who maintained, before the decision was announced, that the liberals' policy was actuated solely by political and selfish motives were put to it to explain why they did not change their position, safe behind the bulwark of the Supreme Court. But thoughtful men could see that the liberal element was actually sincere; that it meant what it said, and that it would be willing, even anxious, to fight for what it believe. The liberals, on the other hand, were fully aware that the Democrats were greatly chagrined by the decision. The foundation upon which they had built all their hopes, the unconstitutionality of the Test Oath, had been wrecked. No longer could the Democrats complain that the Radicals owed their power to illegal measures.²⁷

At all events, the Legislature decided to continue their program as mapped out. In the Senate, on February 18, Senator Bruere, of St. Charles, a liberal, introduced the concurrent resolution submitting to the voters an amendment to the Constitution which

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid, Feb. 2, 1870.

27. Democrat, Feb. 5, 1870.

removed all disqualifications for voting on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude, and on account of former acts of disloyalty.²⁸ Five days later, by a vote of 25 to 5, the resolution was adopted. The negative votes were cast by Radicals who refused to be bound by party discipline.²⁹

In the House, the resolution had the active support of Speaker Orrick. After a two weeks consideration of the resolution, it was passed on March 11, in the same form as the Senate had submitted it.³⁰

After the resolution had passed the Senate and while it was under discussion in the House, Senator Drake, in one of his famous letters, had made known his position on the subject. It differed from that which either the liberals or McClurg had taken.³¹ Drake admitted that to leave the question to the Legislature of 1871 would be very dangerous, and declared that he favored the direct submission of an amendment to the voters. The time had arrived when it would be safe to do so. But, he added, to incorporate into the amendment both questions of negro and rebel suffrage would be foolish and absurd, because the negro has already been enfranchised by the 15th

28. Senate Journal, 1870. 318.

29. Senator Clark and Evans of the southwest, and Filler and Shelton, of the central portion, and Waters, of the southeast were those who voted no. "Five bolters", said the Democrat, "who wish to rule or ruin the Radical Party."

30. House Journal, 1870. 819-820. The final vote was 81 for and 23 against, with 26 absent. The southwest was practically the only section whose opposition was steadfast. Democrat, March 16, 1870.

31. For the letter see the Democrat, Feb. 26, 1870.

Amendment. Drake's letter and position were quickly condemned by the liberals. They bitterly resented his interference in State affairs, especially after they had already been decided.³² His attempt to dominate Missouri questions was very irritating to his own party, just as much so as the efforts of certain Congressmen to do likewise.³³ The latter had been writing letters which advised against any removal of restrictions, and any change in the tariff.³⁴ Neither the liberals nor the extremists were pleased by Drake's course. The former were angry that he should attempt to dictate party policy, the latter disappointed at his moderation.³⁵ The liberals had shown very plainly that they would resist any interference from Senators and Congressmen.

The bitterness died away, however, with the news that both Houses of the Assembly had passed the resolutions.³⁶ The amendments if adopted, would make possible office holding and voting for the heretofore disfranchised classes.³⁷ The Radical Party, exclaimed the Democrat, had taken a definite step forward. It had rejected

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid. March 2, 1870. These were the men, said the Democrat, who put McClurg in office and tried to elect Loan to the Senate. "The State is getting tired of them."

35. Ibid, March 4, 1870.

36. In addition to the above amendments, there was another which abolished the Test Oath for jurors, and three others which concerned the district courts, double liability for stockholders and education.

37. The voting and office holding provisions had been separated into two amendments, making a total of six.

both McClurg's and Drake's plans, in fact, had not even considered them. The end of the memorable struggle to submit both issues at the same time, a struggle which had its beginning in 1866 at the Planters' House meeting, had ended.³⁸ By the submission of the amendments, the Radicals had forced the Democrats into a very embarrassing position, had repudiated malignants like Senator Evans, and had ignored the wishes of the State administration and of Drake.³⁹

The Radicals displayed little interest in the Democratic attitude toward the amendments. They even intimated that they would prefer that the measure did not receive any support from the Democrats.⁴⁰ During the discussion of the amendment the Democratic press had been somewhat divided on the question. The city papers were somewhat undecided; those of the country were practically unanimous in opposing it; while many found it best to maintain "eloquent silence."⁴¹ Some could see no reason for presenting an amendment which involved negro suffrage, a question already settled by the 15th Amendment, while others were suspicious of the motives which lay behind the Radical program.⁴² The Democrats were far

38. Democrat, March 4, 1870.

39. Democrat, March 14, 1870. It is hard to see why the liberals were so insistent upon the question of a negro suffrage amendment with the 15th Amendment in force. They claimed that it was ridiculous to leave the Constitution the word "white", and that to remove it was only an act of justice. Ibid March 16, 1870.

40. Ibid, Feb. 21, 1870.

41. Ibid, The Republican was violently opposed to the form of the amendment, which combined negro and rebel suffrage.

42. Ibid, Feb. 22, 1870, gives the Democratic view.

more interested in securing amendments to the stringent Registry Act. Led by Rep. Caldwell, of Pike, a Democrat, several attempts were made to so alter the law that the registrars would be deprived of a good deal of their arbitrary power.⁴³ For several weeks the Democrats were quite hopeful that the law would materially changed, but the pressure of party expediency once more forced the Radical caucus to declare that only certain changes could be made effective.⁴⁴ The "certain changes" included two provisions; first, that the pay of the superintendents be raised, and second that no official in any way connected with registration could become a candidate for office.⁴⁵

Two days later, the 25th General Assembly adjourned. Its work was regarded very favorably by the liberal element, while the silence of the border counties was generally supposed to indicate their approbation.⁴⁶

As previously pointed out, the Radical program had placed the Democrats in a very awkward predicament. The members of the Assembly were the first to see that the very ground upon which they had stood for five years was being cut away. Both factions of the Radical Party did not lose an opportunity to predict that the days

43. The registrars were to be prohibited from refusing to enter a man's name on the list because of any reason which they themselves might give. Statesman, March 11, 1870.

44. Statesman, March 25, 1870.

45. See Laws of Missouri, 1870, 112.

46. Democrat, March 28, 1870.

of the Democracy were over.⁴⁷ In the absence of any better plan, the Democrats in the Legislature, few and far between, decided to meet in caucus to discuss their party's future. The meeting had been early rumored and commented upon by the Radicals, but it was postponed until after the Democratic gathering in St. Louis on February 22.⁴⁸ This meeting had been a very spiritless affair. Presided over by a member of the State Central Committee, only three of whom were present, it contented itself with the passage of several very non-committal resolutions, none of which in any way referred to the future course which the party should adopt.⁴⁹ Not any of the old leaders were present; the meeting being forced to adjourn without hearing from General Blair.

Accordingly, the week before the Legislature adjourned its Democratic members met at Schmit's Hotel, and adopted the following resolution:

"Whereas, It is understood that the Democratic State Central Committee desire an expression of opinion from the Democratic members of the 25th General Assembly of this State, as to our policy of calling a Democratic Convention; therefore be it

Resolved, That in our opinion it is inexpedient to call a

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47. Democrat, March 19, 1870. Once the amendments were adopted, the only cohesive element which had held together the party, the Test Oath, would be gone, and the Democracy would be badly split up.

48. Democrat, Feb. 7, 1870.

49. Ibid, Feb. 23, 1870.

Democratic State Convention, or to nominate candidates for State offices at the ensuing November election."⁵⁰

The old Whig section of the Democratic Party was at first somewhat dismayed by the policy which the legislators had advocated. They refused to declare themselves for or against the resolution, but concluded that "future developments" would decide their course.⁵¹ In many ways, the abandonment of the Democratic organization smacked of a temporary surrender to the enemy, who already in power in the State, would now consider themselves absolutely supreme.⁵² It is significant that the Democrats were urged to put a candidate in the field in every Congressional district, and for the Legislature. To do this, of course, the party must remain united and intact.⁵³ In St. Louis, there was considerable discussion on the subject. The Times, the staunchest Democratic organ of the city, declared that no steps should be taken without the sanction of a State Convention.⁵⁴ Why, said some, should we go over to the Radicals when it is apparent that the Radicals are about ready to come to us.⁵⁵ The Democrats, in truth, were in danger of splitting over

50. Switzler, History of Missouri, 470.

51. Statesman, March 25, 1870 gives a good account of the Whig attitude.

52. Ibid. Col. Switzler contemplated a much more liberal registration than formerly, and said that the election of 1870 would be the last one in which the Test Oath would be effective

53. Ibid. "This organization we ought to perfect even if not supported by a state ticket."

54. Statesman, April 22, 1870. Congressman McCormich was opposed to the plan of the Legislative plan.

55. Ibid.

the question of nominating a state ticket. While there were evidences that the Radicals might break over the amendments, it was not wise for the Democracy to count too strongly on this event.

Early in May, the State Central Committee met in St. Louis to decide whether they should recommend a State Convention. The meeting was discouraging. Only two members were present, five more had sent proxies.⁵⁶ The two unanimously agreed that it would be unwise to call a State Convention. The committee did not even present any resolutions to their party, but promised a later address.⁵⁷ But there was no unanimity of opinion among the Democrats. A few advocated a Convention and a complete ticket, others denounced such a program.⁵⁸ The Republican, which liked to consider itself as the guide of the Missouri Democracy, was in favor of the plan for removal of disqualifications which Governor McClurg had recommended, namely, to let the Legislature of 1871 solve the problem. To the liberals, this advocacy was positive proof that the ugly rumors of a "deal" between the Democrats and McClurg were true.⁵⁹ Defeat the amendments, urged certain Democrats, but carry the Legislature, where the disabilities will be removed and the obnoxious registry

56. Democrat, May 10, 1870.

57. Ibid, May 10, 1870.
Statesman, May 25, 1870.

58. The Times wished the party to put a full ticket in the race, while the Republican did not.

59. Democrat, May 19, 1870. It was said that the Governor had, in return for Democratic support for his renomination, signed the bill locating the Agricultural College at Columbia, although he was bitterly opposed to placing it there.

law stricken from the statutes.⁶⁰ From Saline County came reports that the Democracy there, realizing the hopelessness of a Democratic victory, had declared for a policy of passive resistance. Any candidate who favored the enfranchisement of all the white male citizens of Missouri was perfectly acceptable to them.⁶¹

In their anxiety the Democrats turned for advice to their leaders. Mr. Phelps very frankly made known his position. He strongly urged that the Democrats nominate no state ticket, but support the candidates whom they thought would best serve their interests. Should the Democrats endeavor to maintain a separate organization, the Radicals would quickly make party harmony a feature of their campaign, would abandon everything to defeat the Democrats, and the amendments as well.⁶² There is, said Mr. Phelps, a large portion of the Radicals who favor universal suffrage, and while he did not explicitly state that the Democracy had best join this group, the inference is clear.⁶³

His final plea was to support no man who did not favor an immediate revision of the tariff. A week later appeared the long expected Address of the Central Committee. This able document showed only too plainly that even the thorough going politicians of the Democratic Party realized how hopeless for them the

60. Democrat, July 1, 1870.

61. Statesman, July 18, 1870. This policy was commonly spoken of as the "possum policy".

62. For the full text of this letter see, Statesman, August 12, 1870

63. "The Radical Party in this State, and in other states, is undergoing a process of disintegration. Nothing but the spoils of office have held the party together to this date." Ibid.

situation was.⁶⁴ In 1868, with a good organization, much interest, and splendid speakers, their defeat had been overwhelming. Since that year the Radicals had been made their grip on state affairs the more firm, aided by the 15th Amendment and the Supreme Court.⁶⁵ The refusal of the Legislature to in any way amend the Registry Act, and the attitude of the Governor in reappointing several of the Superintendents who had proved so unpopular, indicated very plainly that 1870 would see a Democratic defeat, even more disastrous than that in 1868. The Committee did not advocate an alliance of the Democracy with either branch of the Republican Party.⁶⁶ The best plan would be for the Democrats to pursue the course which the Legislative caucus had suggested. Let each Democrat vote for the man who is pledged to an immediate abrogation of the Test Oath and a complete revision of the hated Registry Act. The strong statement convinced many of its wisdom and fairness in analyzing conditions. Some who had been doubtful now announced that they favored a "watchful waiting" policy.⁶⁷ The rest resolved to wait until the Republican Convention met. Then it would be possible to see just how deep was the much heralded division in Radical ranks.

The Radicals had been following with cynical interest the

64. Statesman, August 19, 1870, contains this address.

65. The bases of Radical supremacy lay in, Test Oath, Registry Act, and the 15th Amendment.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid, August 19, 1870.

~~the~~ discussion in the Democratic Party. They consistently maintained that certain leaders and several power^{ful} newspapers would oppose the amendments and endeavor to force into the foreground the legislative campaign.⁶⁸ The truth is, a removal of the suffrage issue would kill the Democratic Party, because its only reason for existing would be removed. But it is significant that despite the plans of the Democratic leaders, the rank and file did not share their views. No party scheme to them was more important than the immediate abrogation of the Test Oath.⁶⁹ The Radicals confidently asserted that a "great many" Democrats, no matter what the leaders said, would vote for the amendments. Do not be deceived, warned the liberal organ, by the fact that the Democrats will not nominate a separate ticket. They hoped by this policy to force the Radicals to blunder by splitting over the amendment question while the democracy stood ready to rush in and snatch the spoils of victory.⁷⁰

Thus on the eve of the Republican Convention, the Democrats had decided that it would be unwise for them to name a State ticket. The majority, although it cannot be proved, seemed inclined, despite the schemes of the leaders, to support the amendments, rather than prolong the issue until 1871. In the local and legislative contests no plans had as yet been formulated.

The five months from the adjournment of the Legislature until

68. Democrat, July 7, 1870.

69. Ibid, July 11, 1870.

70. Ibid, August 15, 1870.

the Republican State Convention witnessed the widening of the breach in the Radical Party. When the Legislature had adjourned late in March, it appeared as if the party was once more united and harmonious. Under the pressure of newspapers and public opinion, the majority had passed the resolutions submitting to the State the Constitutional amendments. Every manifestation of discontent had been sharply rebuked. The liberal program had been easily passed; the suggestions of Drake and McClurg ignored. Even the border counties had declared in favor of the early removal of disabilities, while the cities of the State seemed almost unanimously in favor of the new policies. The liberal element could well boast that the adoption of its plans would bring to Missouri that permanent peace and prosperity about which men had dreamed since the close of the Civil War.

But the harmony was only on the surface. Under the stress of party loyalty the Radicals had passed measures which many deemed unwise. From May until September, when the final break came, the discussion raged. There were at least three and possibly four, elements, into which the Radicals were divided on the question of making immediate enfranchisement and the adoption of the amendments a party issue. First signs of opposition to this policy came from the Federal and State officeholders, who, it was claimed, had met in St. Louis to formulate a plan for defeating the amendments.⁷¹ Such a course as this, warned the liberals, would result in dangerous division and defeat for the party.⁷² Another element

71. Democrat, May 10, 1870. It was said these men had enlisted Senator Drake in their cause.

72. Ibid, May 12, 1870. "We do not wish to break up the party, It is a caution, not a threat."

maintained that the party should remain neutral on the suffrage question. Why, naively said they, should we destroy our party harmony and our chances of victory by a useless discussion about such issues as the new amendments and the Tariff?⁷³ But this policy could never have been followed to a successful ending. It was impossible to keep the question out of the party counsels, in fact, hardly a political conference was held at which it did not predominate.⁷⁴ The issue had passed the stage where it could be checked by state officials and politicians. A neutral attitude had become manifestly impossible. The wish of the "neutrals" was father to their most illogical reasoning. The liberal element would not for a moment have consented to stifle the franchise question. To have done so would have been not only a rank repudiation of what the liberals believed their party had promised, but very poor politics as well.

It was, indeed easier to deal with another group, less evasive, if more frank. This included those who did not hesitate to openly oppose the amendments.⁷⁵ Many who held this opinion contended that they were not yet sure whether it would be safe to abandon the policies which had proved in the past so successful, or in

73. The chief advocates of neutrality were the Kansas City Bulletin and the Hannibal Courier.

74. Democrat, June 16, 1870.

75. This opposition seems to have had its origin in Southwestern Missouri. It was led by the Springfield Patriot. The Lebanon Chronicle took the same stand.

other words, had assured Radical supremacy. At best, they said the amendments were an uncertain proposition, adding that very probably the majority of the Radicals in Missouri were of the same opinion as they.⁷⁶ With this group, the liberals were very impatient. They dropped, for the moment, their conciliatory tone and arguments, and spoke out in no uncertain tone.⁷⁷

Finally, there were the liberals, who demanded that the question of the adoption of the amendments be made a party issue. They believe that the Radical Party was definitely committed to a policy which favored the immediate removal of all restrictions for voting and for office holding. The spokesman of this element was the Democrat, beyond doubt the strongest Radical paper in Missouri. All through the summer of 1870, its editor, Col. Grosvenor, endeavored by argument, by persuasion, and even by threat to commit his party to the liberal program. Nor was he unaided in the contest. The pre-convention campaign marked the reappearance in politics of B. Gratz Brown, who, since 1867, had been in retirement, whether voluntarily or forced it matters little. What perhaps might be called the keynote speech of the campaign was delivered by ex-Senator Brown on June 1. It was largely a discussion of the proposed amendments, whose adoption he strongly urged.⁷⁸ The time had come to take up the newer problems, to abolish forever that "disgraceful text", the Test Oath. On the platform upon which Brown has placed

76. Democrat, June 22, 1870.

77. "We are weary of reasoning with such men; who know the truth perfectly well; who see the danger close before us; yet are willing to lead the party on to ruin." Ibid.

78. This speech was delivered in St. Louis. For the text see the Democrat, June 1, 1870.

himself, said the liberals, are to be found a majority of the last Legislature, Carl Schurz, seven of Missouri's nine Congressmen, and a strong array of newspapers.⁷⁹ Ex-Governor Fletcher, who after his stormy four years in Missouri, had moved to Washington, declared that he was strongly in favor of the amendments.⁸⁰

More than ought else, the liberals opposed leaving the franchise question as an issue of the Legislative campaign. Time after time the utter folly of such a course was the theme of numerous editorials in the liberal press.⁸¹ There could be one result to such a policy, a split in the Radical Party, and the triumph of the Democracy. The liberals had recognized what the extremists had failed utterly to notice; that there was to the franchise issue two features, the political and the non-political. The liberals emphasized the latter, the extremists the former. In a non-political way, disfranchisement reached every corner of the State, and, in a measure, was even more irritating than was the political. In Missouri, where both North and South had claimed so many sympathizers during the war, it was but natural that after the struggle differences of opinion and bitter feeling should for a while predominate, even in families. By 1870, however, this bitterness had largely worn away, and war measures, of which the Test Oath was a splendid example, were becoming decidedly unpopular. Disfranchisement had even worked its way into family life. Many who in 1870

79. Ibid, June 2, 1870.

80. Ibid, July 2, 1870.

81. For a typical example, see the Democrat, June 4, 1870.

were law abiding citizens, were prohibited from a voice in public affairs because of mistaken zeal in behalf of the lost cause. Others had relations by marriage whom an obsolete law forced into the political background. In the Churches, on committees and vestries, as well as in worship, men met on every basis of equality but political. The field of private and public business was seriously interfered with by the disfranchisement law, which hindered economic development and progress. Even the secret societies of the state, where the closest personal ties were found, could not be satisfied as long as the pall of inequality hung over their rolls.⁸² There could be no lasting peace in Missouri until this issue was removed permanently from the field of political and civil life.

The Liberals, then, did not wish to break up their party.⁸³ They desired rather to commit the Radicals to the policy which they considered essential to further party success and advancement. Although the extremists seemed loath to accept the accomplished facts the liberals saw that the amendments could be carried in two ways, by the Radical Party, as such, or by a division in the party.⁸⁴

Several weeks before the Convention met, it looked as if the liberal element was going to carry with it the rest of the party. Rumors predicted that Governor McClurg, anxious for office, was shortly to announce that he favored the amendments.⁸⁵ The Jefferson City

82. Democrat, July 4, 1870.

83. "We are endeavoring to the best of our ability to prevent a disorganization of the Radical Party. Neutrality will break the party more surely than anything else." Ibid, July 13, 1870.

84. Ibid.

85. Ibid, July 23, 1870.

Times, long regarded as the personal organ of McClurg and Drake, which had bitterly opposed the amendments, declared in favor of their adoption. To the liberals and the Democrats this was an indication that the "old guard" realized the inevitable.⁸⁶ Some said that even Senator Drake would take the stump in advocacy of the liberal program. The liberal press more cheerful in tone, sweepingly asserted that the Convention would see a complete unanimity of opinion among the Radical leaders and masses.⁸⁷

Despite the confidence of the liberals, thoughtful observers could not fail to notice that the party organization was still under the control of the extremists. The friends of Mr. McClurg, who were also the bitter opponents of the enfranchisement amendments, commanded a majority of the State Central Committee. Through almost every scheme known to practical politicians this committee made desperate efforts to swing the State and local organization to McClurg. The first of these efforts was seen in their plan for the basis of representation at the State Convention. Under ordinary conditions, the number of votes cast at the preceding election is the basis of representation for delegates. The committee, however, at its meeting at St. Louis in June, determined to include in the number of voters in the state about 15,000 colored men, who had never cast a vote. It was taken for granted that every negro would vote the Radical ticket. The committee made no allowance for any increase in the white vote since 1868, the delegates being apportioned

86. Ibid, July 26, 1870. "The Radical masses are deserting the standards of C. D. Drake and are taking higher and more liberal ground." Statesman, August 12, 1870.

87. "The tide sets powerfully toward the triumph of liberal measures and men." Democrat, August 1, 1870.

according to the number of votes cast in that year for Grant. Nor was this all. The colored citizens were not added to the aggregate number of voters in each county, but were given a separate representation and basis of apportionment.⁸⁸ As finally arranged for every 150 white voters there was one delegate, any fraction over 50 being considered equivalent to an additional delegate. For the negroes, however, an entirely different arrangement was made. While 150 was used as the basis, the Committee decreed that there should also be an additional delegate for every fraction, no matter how small, below that number.⁸⁹

The result was that, considering the State as a whole, every 140 white voters were represented by a delegate, while every 90 negroes, who had never before voted, were likewise represented.⁹⁰ The 50 largest counties of the state had 360 delegates, while the 50 smallest had 420, over 60 more.⁹¹ The result of the Committee's

88. Schurz, Writings, II. 13-15. The Democrat said: "The object of this manouvre is plain. It is on purpose to give at least one hundred additional votes in the Convention to counties where there were very few Radical voters in 1868, and which, it was supposed, could be carried by the faction that is attempting to defeat the amendments and force protective candidates on the Convention----one hundred delegates to overpower the majority who favor the amendments. Negroes will really rule the party."

89. Democrat, August 3, 1870.

90. Thus, the Convention would have 605 delegates who represented the 85,000 votes cast for Grant, and 180 delegates who represented 15,000 colored men. "The Committee, therefore, deliberately and intentionally decided that 90 colored men who never voted should count as much in the Convention as 140 who voted for Grant." Democrat, August 4, 1870.

91. For example, Texas County with 202 whites and 8 blacks would have 3 delegates, which is equal to 450 in a large county or in St. Louis, *Ibid*.

action would be that the border counties, aided by the negro delegates, could control the Convention. The liberals early recognized this, but their bitter complaints made little impression on the politicians who controlled the party machinery.⁹² The great part of liberal strength lay in St. Louis and the more populous counties of the State. Negro agitators were sent all over the State, in an attempt to enlist the ignorant and unsuspecting on the side which opposed the amendments.⁹³

Not content with their plan to control the State Convention, the Committee attempted to dictate to and interfere with the choice of the district and Congressional Committees. Through Chairman Fox, an edict was issued which instructed the local and county Radical organization to meet and choose their committees two months before the State and Congressional Conventions.⁹⁴ Such a policy was unheard of in party organization. The committees are never appointed until after the candidates have been nominated and the platforms adopted. What if the candidate and committee, asked the liberals, are not agreed upon policy? A split could very easily result. But the State manipulators went further. They said that any committees, candidates, or delegates by any other plan selected would not be recognized as "regular".⁹⁵ But Fox had overstepped the bounds. From both liberal and illiberal came

92. Ibid. August 4, 1870. The committee was dominated by E. W. Fox, the chairman, and George Hilton.

93. Schurz, Writings, II. 14. They were uniformly successful in their efforts.

94. Democrat, June 17, 1870.

95. Ibid. Of course, a Convention is always the judge of its own members.

bitter protests of the attempted dictation of the Central Committee in local affairs. Every class regarded with suspicion the edict of the Central Committee, saw in it merely an effort to secure control of the local machinery.⁹⁶ And the State Committee was uniformly unsuccessful in its plan. The county meetings were not held until after the State Convention, at which time the party was hopelessly split.

Before the bitter feeling which the State Central Committee had stirred up could subside, the first break had come among the Radicals. The Congressional Convention of the Fourth District had split asunder into two wings over the resolutions adopted on the amendment issue. Upon the adoption of the non-committal set of resolutions, Col. J. J. Gravelly had led from the Convention Hall a large liberal element.⁹⁷ These men later met, and, after declaring that they would support no candidate who did not favor the amendments and a low tariff, decided to hold later a Convention of their own. It appeared that in many local districts the petty politicians and county leaders opposed the amendments, probably because they feared a loss of power should the Democrats be admitted to the franchise. The men, however, controlled the party machinery and thus were able to dominate meetings by packing the Halls and manipulating their cohorts, so that the will of the majority was stifled.⁹⁸ But the masses are not to be bound down

96. For the views of both elements see the Democrat, June 17, 1870.

97. This district comprised Southwestern Missouri. The extremists did not go on record as opposing the amendments, they merely refused to take a positive stand. Democrat, Aug. 1, 1870.

98. Ibid, August 5, 1870.

in such a manner, declared the liberals.⁹⁹ The month of August when the county meetings were held to select delegates to Jefferson City and to declare their principles, witnessed the utmost confusion. Some counties favored the amendments and certain candidates, others opposed them, and still others tried to dodge the issue by remaining non-committal. It is impossible to tell the exact number of delegates who were definitely committed to any platform. The liberals, two weeks before the Convention, claimed that three fourths of the delegates favored their policy, but this estimate proved to be too high.¹⁰⁰ The sentiment of the majority of the Radicals was no doubt opposed to a definite break. The county meetings much preferred to evade the issue if possible, and leave to the councils of the Convention the difficult task of smoothing away almost hopeless disagreements.

It was but natural that during the months before the Convention, the question of candidates for the office of governor should be thoroughly discussed. Gov. McClurg, it was generally expected would be a strong candidate for renomination. His strength lay in what he had not done rather than what he had done. He had, too, the advantage of all the forces of party machinery and the influence of the administration to aid him. To the liberals, however, the candidacy of McClurg was extremely distasteful. His career as

99. Saline, Macon, Pettis, Carroll and Ray declared in favor of the immediate adoption of the amendments. Lafayette, Holt, Gentry, and Grundy, did not commit themselves. Ibid. August 18, and 23, 1870.

100. Ibid, August 17, 1870.

Governor had been to them very unsatisfactory; he was not the man to lead his party aright according to the new ideas.¹⁰¹ The selection of a candidate upon whom the liberals could concentrate was no easy matter. Most of the State and Congressional leaders were out of the question. Not only was the great majority of these men out of sympathy with the liberal movement, they represented at best but a narrow constituency, and were in no sense real leaders. And so, in casting about for a candidate the eyes of the liberals fell, perhaps by chance, perhaps by the suggestion of Col. Grosvenor, upon "that oldest and original Radical", Mr. Benjamin Gratz Brown.

The launching of Brown's campaign was the result of several months of careful preparation, in which his career was reviewed from 1852, when, as a free soiler, he had entered the Missouri legislature, until 1867, when Drake's hostility had driven him from Missouri politics.¹⁰² Mr. Brown, in truth, made an excellent martyr. According to the liberal view, he had retired from the active field of affairs, broken in health, a victim of Drake, and misjudged by his own party.¹⁰³ While Brown's name was not once mentioned in any specific office, he was implored to once more come to the "front rank" of his party. This suggestion met with the cordial response among the country press.¹⁰⁴ Thus encouraged

101. "The selection of a man like Gov. McClurg would be absurd because he is not competent to advocate the liberal policy and could only make it ridiculous." Democrat, April 13, 1870.

102. Democrat, June 15, 1870.

103. Ibid.

104. Savannah New Era, Shillicotho Journal, West Times, and the St. Joseph Herald were enthusiastic about Brown.

the Democrat, late in June, announced that the liberals were solidly behind Brown for Governor. The weak, narrow, and vacillating McClurg had proved to be a decided failure, and had no chance whatever of reelection.¹⁰⁵ The other candidates were passed over with scant consideration, R. T. Van Horn, the popular Congressman, had numerous admirers, but he was not very popular among the liberals. Lieut.-Gov. E. O. Stanard might possibly make a good compromise candidate, but at best he could arouse little enthusiasm.¹⁰⁶

The only two objections which could be urged against Brown were, first, he had alienated many by his position on universal suffrage, which he had first advocated in 1866, far in advance of his party; second, that he lived in St. Louis, which already dominated the State.¹⁰⁷ On the other hand, Brown had several important elements of strength. The solid German support was his; the influence of the liberals; the negroes favored him; and finally, he was less unpopular than any other Radical with the Democrats.¹⁰⁸ In fact, the Democratic attitude toward Brown was one which could not for a moment be ignored. If a split should come in the Radical Party their support was essential to liberal success. Brown's tolerant

105. Democrat, June 27, 1870.

106. Ibid.

107. Ibid, Just at this time, however, Brown moved to Iron County where he had acquired extensive mining interests.

108. Ibid, July 7.

view toward immediate enfranchisement was popular with the Democracy.¹⁰⁹

All during the summer his candidacy gathered strength, Each week saw more and more newspapers devoted to his cause. Even in Jefferson City he had a strong advocate.¹¹⁰ Several county meetings declared for him, and instructed their delegates to aid in the nomination.¹¹¹

Gov. McClurg drew most of his strength from the border counties. He maintained a discreet silence as to his position on the amendments and no one knew just what his position was.¹¹² On the eve of the Convention the liberals estimated that Brown and McClurg each had the same number of delegates.¹¹³ Thus a lively struggle was in anticipation between the forces of the two men. Unfortunately for the Radicals, it failed to materialize.

As the day approached for the final test at Jefferson City,

109. Ibid, June 28. "Brown", said a Democratic paper, "is at least honest and a gentleman. 75000 Democratic votes would be cast for him on the platform of immediate enfranchisement."

110. The Times had firmly repudiated McClurg, and come out for Brown, on the ground that he was the ablest Radical in the State.

111. Notably, Macon, Jefferson, and St. Louis Counties, the latter with 130 delegates, Democrat, July 8, 1870.

112. The Patriot and the Bethany Tribune were his strongest supporters.

113. The estimates were:

Brown 300
McClurg 300
Stanard 100
Van Horn 100
Benjamin 100

Democrat, August 27, 1870.

the Radicals were divided into three groups. There were the liberals, those who insisted that the proposed Constitutional amendments be approved and recommended in the Radical platform. There was an element which favored neutrality, some of whom actually favored the amendments but hesitated to make their adoption a party measure.¹¹⁴ Finally, the group which bitterly opposed any endorsement had its place.¹¹⁵ Well did the Democrat analyze the situation when it said: "The question for the Convention is: Shall enfranchisement come by the Radical Party or in spite of it: Shall it come by the whole party moving forward manfully to keep its pledge, or after a wrangle in the local elections, and by Democratic votes? Unite the Convention for it, and we go through the campaign victorious, carry the State, preserve local power, and maintain Radical rule with enfranchisement. Reject it in the Convention, and throw the contest in local elections, divide hopelessly there, get beaten, lose the Legislature, see rebels enfranchised by Democratic votes, and so get Democratic rule with enfranchisement and see a break up of the Radical Party."¹¹⁶

114. It was this element which the liberals regarded as more dangerous than those who actually opposed them.

115. Democrat, August 29, 1870.

116. Ibid.

Chapter VII.

The Jefferson City Convention
and
The Election of 1870.

Chapter VII

On the eve of the assembling of the State Convention, Jefferson City was the scene of the wildest confusion. The capitol was crowded with delegates, office seekers of every description, as well as the usual array which gather at all political meetings. The air was full of vague rumors of bickerings and "deals" among candidates and factions.¹ Bogus delegations, double delegations, and representatives of counties with no delegation whatever bustled about, whispering their claims into the ears of all who would listen.²

In every group which gathered to discuss party politics, differences of opinion prevailed about the issues with which the Radicals were confronted. There were differences of a personal nature, between rival candidates and their supporters. The basis of representation was among many very unpopular; acres rather than men, it was claimed, being the real basis. But it was over the suffrage question that the widest divergence appeared. All those who, for various reasons, opposed the approval of the amendments by official action of the Radical Party, were supporters of McClurg. The rest were committed to Brown's candidacy, and no man could accurately forecast the numerical strength of either candidate.³ Senator Schurz and Ex-Governor Fletcher had come from Washington

1. Democrat, August 31, 1870.

2. Ibid, There were double delegations from St. Louis, Macon, Green, Cass, and Johnson Counties.

3. Ibid.

to be present at the Convention.

On August 1, the Convention met in the Hall of the House of Representatives. The proceedings of the first day were, for the most part, of a formal character, and without any special significance. The temporary chairman, Congressman Benjamin, in his opening address, indicated the issues before the party. These were, he said, the readjustment of the tariff, and the question of reenfranchisement of participants in the rebellion.⁴ The tone of Mr. Benjamin's speech was conciliatory and politic; he told the delegates what they already knew. Speaker Orrick also tried to pour oil on the troubled waters. He depreciated any discord in Radical ranks, but failed to indicate how it could be successfully avoided. After a long argument, the Committee on Credentials was named. It consisted of one delegate from each Congressional district.⁵

The second day of the Convention saw the fight was hotter. The morning session was largely spent in a discussion over the system of representation of delegates. Twice did the Brown adherents attempt to force the Convention to change the representation scheme, and twice they failed and were outvoted.⁶ The acrimonious debate concerning what the liberals believed to be an over-representation of the negroes and the border counties brought into the foreground

4. In the election for temporary chairman, friction was avoided by allowing every set of contested delegates to vote. Thus, Jasper County, with 8 delegates, had 16 votes, Democrat, Sept. 1, 1870

5. Ibid.

6. Schurz, Writings, II. 15.

all the latent bitterness between town and country. The charge of the McClurg faction, that St. Louis and a few of the large counties were endeavoring to dominate the State brought forth from the liberals a vehement denial.⁷

While the delegates were impatiently awaiting the final report of the distracted Committee on Credentials, the Convention was thrown into great confusion by the resolutions of Delegate Hickox, of Pettis. These embodied two ideas; first, that the Convention pledge its support to the amendments, and second, that the apportionment of delegates to the Convention be denounced as "fraudulent and atrocious."⁸

During the uproar which followed Mr. Hickox's statements, Gov. Fletcher declared that the Convention would do well to adopt the resolutions, as the question which they involved must very soon be determined.⁹ The McClurg element, however, kept the hall in such a commotion that it was impossible to put the question. Nor did the liberals seem particularly desirous of actually expressing themselves on the subject. When order was restored, Hickox rather ungraciously consented to refer the matter to the Committee

7. Democrat, September 2, 1870. Daniel Jewett, of St. Louis, was the floor leader of the McClurg forces, while Gen. McNiel led the Liberals.

8. The resolutions in full are: Resolved,
1. That we recognize the Constitutional amendments submitted by the Legislature, in regard to the suffrage, as embodying principles essential to the vitality of the Republican Party. And that we, as a Convention, are in favor of their adoption, and that we pledge to the heartfelt support of these resolutions our nominees.
2. That we denounce as fraudulent and atrocious the action of the State Central Committee, which established that the colored man, who has never voted with us, is entitled to a larger representation than a Republican who is on record as voting for Grant." Democrat, Sept. 2, 1870.

9. Democrat, Sept. 2, 1870.

on Resolutions.¹⁰ The tone of the speeches on the question show just how near the breaking point the situation was. It was not until the evening of the second day that the permanent chairman, Mr. Benjamin, was chosen. The meeting was forced to adjourn without hearing from the Committee on Resolutions. The feature of the evening session was a wrangle among the negro delegates over the amendments.¹¹

The morning of the third day saw the Convention split completely asunder. The Liberals had reached a position where, although they might have been willing to agree to a compromise candidate, they would never have consented to abandon their platform.¹² The other faction evidently felt secure in their majority, and either did not believe that the liberals, if defeated, would bolt, or did not fear the result of their withdrawal. Before the Committee appeared, there was a final effort to harmonize the factions. This was Rep. Harlin's motion which would force the nominee of the Convention to stand on the platform as adopted.¹³ His proposition,

10. Ibid. While the Committee on Resolutions was in session, Sen. Henderson telegraphed to Brown: "The negroes of this State are free, white men only are now enslaved. The people look to you and your friends to deliver them from this wrong. Shall they look in vain?" To which Brown replied: "The confidence of the people of this State shall not be disappointed. I will carry out this canvass to its ultimate consequence, so that no free man not convicted of crime, shall henceforth be deprived of an equal voice in our government." Statesman, Sept. 16, 1870.
11. The McClurg forces had gained their influence over the negroes largely through the vigorous labors of J. M. Turner, a negro politician of St. Louis. Ibid.
12. Schurz, Writings, II. 19.
13. Democrat, September 3, 1870.

however, was temporarily tabled, to allow to be read the long expected report of the Resolutions Committee. This committee had disagreed upon one essential issue, the franchise, and this necessitated two reports.¹⁴ The majority report was submitted by Gen. Schurz, and the third section contained the liberal provision regarding the suffrage.. It was: "That the Republican Party stands pledged to remove all disqualifications and restrictions imposed upon the late rebels in the same measure as the spirit of disloyalty may die out, and as may be consistent with the safety of the loyal people; that we consider the time to have come, and that we cordially endorse the action of the Legislature of Missouri in submitting to the qualified voters of the State the amendments removing all disqualifications from the disfranchised people of Missouri and conferring equal political rights and privileges on all classes, and we earnestly recommend them to the people for their approval and adoption."

The liberal position, then, as shown by this resolution, was that the Radical Party, as a party should go on record as favoring immediate enfranchisement, and pledging the members to redeem the promises made by the Republican Platform of 1868, both in State and in nation.¹⁵ In behalf of the majority of his committee, Mr. Schurz further added that the time had arrived for the Radicals to

14. With this exception, the two reports were identical. Schurz Writings, II. 15. The tariff was not mentioned in either report. Democrat, September 3, 1870.

15. Schurz, Writings, II. 16.

give to the disfranchised those rights to which they had been fully entitled for over two years.¹⁶

The three gentlemen who made up the minority of the Committee, led by Col. Havens, the veteran editor of Southwest Missouri, thereupon submitted to the convention their report. The resolution which related to the suffrage read: "That we are in favor of reenfranchising those justly disfranchised for participating in the late rebellion, as soon as it can be done with safety to the State; and that we concur in the propriety of the Legislature having submitted to the whole people of the State the question whether such time has now arrived, upon which question we recognize the right of any member of the party to vote his honest conviction."

The resolution, to a superficial observer, might appear in essentials to be the same as the one which the majority advocated. A close examination of its content, however, shows very plainly the difference between them. While not openly opposing the amendments, the minority report evaded the issue by virtually repeating the promise of enfranchisement at some later time. The act of the legislature was approved, but the party was not called upon to concur in such action. On the contrary, the individual voter was requested to express his honest conviction on the amendments, the party standing aloof, in a neutral attitude. The old Shibboleth "safety to the State" was employed as a screen behind which all those who

16. Democrat, September 3, 1870, gives a brief synopsis of the proceedings.

were hostile to the enfranchisement at any time could hide.¹⁷ The minority report, in brief, maintained that vague attitude which many of the counties had held before the convention had met.¹⁸ To the liberals the declaration was neutral only in appearance, because the forces behind it were diametrically opposed to the proposed amendments, and later frankly admitted their hostility.¹⁹

Col. Havens, in defending his views before the Convention denied absolutely that the time had come to enfranchise the former rebels. He insisted that thousands of Radicals all over the State as well as three fourths of the voters of his Congressional district were already pledged to vote against them.²⁰ In bitter terms, he spoke of the attempt of the majority to force their opinions on the delegates.²¹

When the two reports had been read, the Convention, after much disorder, agreed to allow twelve speakers five minutes each in which to present the two sides of the question. For the liberals, Gen. Schurz spoke first; and so plainly in fact, that no man could mistake his meaning. His final sentences summed up the

17. Schurz, Writings, II, 16-18. The minority members were T. E. Havens, editor of the Patriot, J. J. Haines, and M. L. Harrington. Of Havens, Schurz said: "the bitterest and most openly avowed opponent of the enfranchising amendment."

18. See Chapter VI.

19. Writings, II. 17-18.

20. Ibid. See also Democrat, September 3, 1870.

21. Ibid, September 5, 1870.

liberal attitude, and must have convinced friend and foe alike of his sincerity. "We are resolved", said he, "and I think I may declare it in the name of a considerable portion of this convention, we are resolved to maintain the plighted faith of the Republican Party. We are resolved to have that which is declared in this platform, and nothing less. We are resolved not to equivocate about it. Upon this question as honest men and faithful Republicans we cannot yield. I therefore declare in my own name, and in the name of my friends, that this is our platform. Some such platform will go before the people of this state at the next election, and a candidate will go before the people for their suffrage who does not by his known opinions, by his associations, and by his record, give the lie to what is declared in the platform upon which he is nominated!"²²

The speakers who followed ^{Schurz} Schwartz added little to the opinions and beliefs already expressed. The leader of McClurg's forces, Jewett, openly defied Schurz to bolt and leave the Radical organization, while others insinuated that "rebel" suffrage" was to Schurz a new idea, by which he hoped to advance his own interests.²³ With ill concealed impatience, the delegates listened to the speakers, and demanded a vote, which was finally taken. The motion to accept the first minority report was adopted.²⁴ As soon as the result was announced, Gen. McNeil arose and said: I desire to say to the friends of the majority as reported by the committee of liberal

22. Democrat, September 5, 1870. "I thought," said Schurz, later, "it due even our opponents that I should let them know what the consequences would be if they persisted in the iniquity." Writings, II. 21.

23. Democrat, September 5, 1870.

24. The final vote was 439 2/3 to 342 5/6. Democrat, September 3, 1870. Switzler, History of Missouri, 471, gives the figures as 349 to 342.

Republicans, and to the friends of enfranchisement of the white man that they will withdraw from this Convention to the Senate Chamber."²⁵ Whereupon, between 250 and 300 delegates left the Convention Hall, amid a turmoil probably unparalleled in Missouri politics.

The rocks upon which the party had finally split was the enfranchisement question. It is erroneous to hold that all the extremists were opposed to perpetual enfranchisement. The liberals, it is true, insisted that the leaders of this group were actually opposed to enfranchisement at any time.²⁶ This may be correct but there was in Missouri a large element which was very loath to remove the restrictions; men, for example, like Senator Drake, honest but narrow, sincere, but vindictive. It was fortunate for the manipulators that they were able to secure the support of the element, for whom Drake spoke.

The Liberals had reached the conclusion that further compromise was impossible. It was apparent to the majority members of the Resolutions Committee that the minority could not be convinced by either facts or argument, and were pledged to support not certain principles, but certain men,²⁷ In the view of the liberals, their action in leaving the Convention in such a dramatic manner was in no way a "bolt", but a protest by the staunch and true Radicals against a machine controlled faction.²⁸

25. Democrat, September 3, 1870.

26. Schurz, Writings, II, 17-18.

27. Democrat, September 3, 1870.

28. Ibid.

Immediately upon leaving the Convention Hall, the liberals met in the Senate Chamber, and elected as temporary chairman, Gen. McNeil. Upon reassembling in the afternoon, the liberal convention unanimously adopted the resolutions which Col. Grosvenor's committee had submitted.²⁹ While the delegates were awaiting the report of the Committee on nominations, Mr. Stanard led into the Hall about 50 of his supporters and informed President Schurz that they had severed their connection with the first assemblage. After this delegation had been welcomed and before any nominations were received, it was moved, seconded and carried that B. Gratz Brown be nominated for Governor. Mr. Brown's speech of acceptance was largely a review of the conditions which had made possible and necessary the action of the liberals. He denounced unsparingly the manipulations of the State Central Committee. He frankly pledged his best efforts in putting into effect the provisions of the platform.³⁰ The nomination of the remainder of the State ticket was achieved without great difficulty. It included a group of able men, who each represented a different section of the State.³¹ After planning a complete State organization and selecting a State Executive Committee, the liberals adjourned.

29. Ibid. "We have worked", said Stanard, "with a determination to create harmony, but we have failed-----men had such a greed for office they would not listen to reason." Writings, I, 515.
30. For the speech in full, see Ibid.
31. J. J. Gravelly, of Polk, was nominated for Lieut.-Governor, E. F. Weigel, of Cole, for Secretary of State, S. Hays, of Buchanan, for Treasurer, and D. M. Draper, of St. Louis for Auditor, Ibid.

The McClurg element had, in the meantime, proceeded to select a state ticket and write a platform. Mr. Hiller, of St. Louis County, made a final appeal for conciliation with the liberals, but his motion for a conference committee was howled down by cries of "No!" and "We will not cringe to bolters."³² Mr. Harrington nominated McClurg for another term, and he was likewise unanimously selected. The next day the news of the split was chronicled in almost every important daily in the country.

Within a week the campaign was well under way. Each element in the Republican Party sought to explain its action; each claimed to represent the regular organization. The Liberals insisted that the party machinery had fallen under the control of a few spoils-men, who desirous of securing local office, had so manipulated and packed the Convention that the will of the real majority had been stifled.³³ The Brown adherents had come to the conclusion that a certain policy was necessary, and even the acid test that of party loyalty had failed to influence them. To the Liberals, the continuation of disfranchisement in Missouri was a political blunder as well as a moral wrong.³⁴

The early comments of the so called regulars on the split show that they saw in the movement only a bold attempt by Brown to secure

32. Ibid.

33. For the best view of the liberal idea, see Writings, I. 510-518, entitled An Address to the People of Missouri. Also the Democrat, Sept. 6, 1870. The delegates who voted to sustain the minority report represented 49,999 voters, the liberals 51,781.

34. Democrat, September 8, 1870.

control of the Radical machinery and dominate the party.³⁵ The bolt, it was claimed, had been planned months before the Convention met, under the direction of Schurz and Grosvenor. The Democratic leaders had agreed to put no candidate in the field, but to support Brown.³⁶ Both factions were prone to constantly overemphasize as the underlying cause of the whole movement, the desire for the spoils of office. While undoubtedly this idea played an important part in the calculations of the petty politicians of both liberals and regulars, to maintain that this was the only, or even the most important phase, of the break, is to entirely misinterpret the situation.

A week after the Jefferson City climax, the Liberals opened their campaign with a great open meeting in St. Louis. Brown, Stanard, and Schurz addressed the citizens on the campaign, and explained the significance of the new party.³⁷ The next day, Brown departed for the southwest, and Schurz for the north central portions of the State, to begin that wonderful speaking tour, which was, in a way, the feature of the campaign. By mid September, it was possible for the Liberals to take an inventory of their strength. From the southwest, came reports of a lukewarm attitude toward the bolt. This was, however, to be expected, and caused no surprise at the headquarters of either party. Although the southeast had

35. Statesman, Sept. 16, 1870.

36. Ibid. These arguments seemed plausible, but there is nothing to substantiate them. It was the masses of the Democrats, not the leaders, who determined the party policy as was shown in the campaign.

37. The proceedings in full may be found in the Democrat, Sept. 10, 1870.

been represented at Jefferson City by men who were under the dominance of the McClurg machine, the rank and file were reported as enthusiastically championing the cause of their new neighbor, Gratz Brown.³⁸ In the northwest and the northeast, the prospects, although considered encouraging, were at best doubtful. It was in the central portion of the State and in St. Louis that the Liberals found their greatest strength.³⁹ In St. Louis, the popularity of the new party made certain for Brown an overwhelming majority.

The press of the State kept about the same position it had assumed before the Convention. In general the Liberals were supported by the leading newspapers of Missouri.⁴⁰ Every German organ in Missouri gave enthusiastic support to their old favorite.⁴¹ The extremists boast that the Liberals numbered only 15,000 was a political prediction worthy of Senator Drake. From St. Louis, where the Liberal Headquarters were, scores of speakers were sent out and the first weeks of September saw built up a splendid organization.⁴² The Liberals made little effort to openly secure the Democratic votes. Their plan was to allow the members of that party to make the proper decision.⁴³ In fact, at no time during the campaign

38. These reports were from time to time published in the Democrat, for the above see *ibid*, September 13, 1870.

39. *Ibid*.

40. *Ibid*.

41. *Ibid*. September 23, 1870. Many "original" Radicals like J. R. Whitters, enlisted for Brown.

42. *Ibid*, Sept. 14, 1870.

43. *Ibid*.

did the Liberals lose faith in the masses of the Democracy, whatever they might have thought of the plans of the leaders. As September died away, the Liberals felt confident enough to warn against overconfidence.⁴⁴

The campaign of the regulars, or as they were invariably called by their apponents, the "hateists", falls into three divisions. The first of these was the attempt to secure for McClurg Democratic support. It happened many times during the month of September, that the Democratic State Committee met in the same place as the McClurg committee. This led, of course to many rumors of "deals" between the two groups, which included numerous far fetched schemes.⁴⁵ But the attempts to even reach an agreement were fruitless. The truth is, the Democratic organization had lost control of the voters of their own party, who had concluded to support Brown. Not even could the promise of a Constitutional Convention, or the uncertain attitude with which the leaders viewed the Liberal cause, move the masses.⁴⁶

The regulars were in a very peculiar situation. Without professing support of the amendments they would lose the great part of the Democratic vote, if even an arrangement was made between the leaders. On the other hand, to support the amendments would

44. Ibid, September 30, 1870.

45. For a discussion of these plans, see the Democrat, Sept. 24, 1870. The most important one was to have the extremists support for the Legislature the Democratic candidates in return for Democratic votes for McClurg.

46. Democrat, September 24, 1870.

be to lose for McClurg the confidence of the real and sincere apponents of enfranchisement in his own party.⁴⁷ Very probably the sincere men in the regular organization would repudiate any political trickery; if enfranchisement must come, they would prefer to have it come as a result of Brown's triumph. And so, the "hateists" did their best to evade the questions of the day. They were moderate in tone in St. Louis and St. Charles, radical in Harrison and Jasper.⁴⁸ But by October, it must have been evident to the leaders that any attempt to swing into line the Democrats of Missouri, as a unit, was impossible. Only in certain local elections, where issues of a narrow character predominated, was there any chance for a successful dicker.

The last months of the campaign saw the regulars center their attacks on the "bolters" of their party. This was the second phase of their program. The leader in this attack was Senator Drake, who had heeded once more the call of his party and returned to Missouri. Mr. Drake saw in the Liberal program nothing but an attempt to break up the Radical Party, and a direct attack upon the Grant administration.⁴⁹ There can be no doubt, said he, that the whole movement was planned months before the Convention assembled, but he offered no evidence to prove this assertion.⁵⁰ The Liberals

47. Ibid, Sept. 26, 1870.

48. Ibid.

49. In a letter to Schurz, he said: "It is a bolting movement, which in my view, is not only without excuse and destitute of any just principles, but directly hostile to Gen. Grant's administration, and to the ascending of the great Republican Party of the country." Democrat, Sept. 22, 1870.

50. Drake's speeches are all about alike. For a typical example, see the one delivered at Carrollton, reprinted in the Democrat, October 4, 1870.

because they could not control the party, were seeking to destroy it. Drake never lost an opportunity to review the careers of Brown and Schurz. An old letter which Brown in 1865 had written favoring disfranchisement, and a strict registration law was brought to light, and received wide publicity in the press of the regulars.⁵¹ Against Schurz, and the Germans generally, Drake was very bitter. He regarded the work of Schurz as a well laid plot, whereby the latter was attempting to undermine the entire Republican organization.⁵² Drake refused to meet Schurz in public debate, and this undoubtedly weakened his position.

In presenting their own case, the extremists were weakest. Their ideas concerning the franchise question were not definite. Some, like Drake, advised leaving the issue to the next Legislature, in the belief that that body would remove the disqualifications.⁵³ Others expressed their approval at the submission of the amendments, adding, in a vague way, that "whenever returning loyalty becomes so general as to make it safe to remove such restrictions" it would be well to restore forfeited privileges.⁵⁴

51. This letter can be found in Switzler Collections for 1870, 8. The extremists seemed to forget that changing conditions brought new opinions.
52. Schurz, Writings, II 35-42. "I believe," declared Drake, "that General Schurz has nurtured the more daring thought of marching the entire German mass of the Republican Germans of the United States over to the Democracy, to secure the election of a Democratic President in 1872." Ibid, 39.
53. Democrat, Oct. 4, 1870.
54. The above is a typical country meeting resolution, passed at the Marion County Radical assemblage. Switzler, Collections for 1870, 18.

The efforts of several campaigners, notably Drake, to convince the Democrats that they should vote for McClurg, are amusing. It was claimed that the amendments were obnoxious to the Democrats, because of the negro suffrage provision. The ratification of the 15th Amendment however, made useless further opposition to negro voting, and it mattered little what the Democratic attitude on that question might be. Indeed, some of the attempts of Drake to secure for his cause Democratic support are highly ludicrous and illogical. One of his favorite arguments was that the Liberal movement was essentially a scheme whereby the control of the State was to be handed over to the Democrats. On these grounds, Senator Drake pleaded for Democratic support, for his own cause. In other words, he asked the Democrats to prevent the control of the State government being given to themselves!⁵⁵ In fact, throughout the campaign the regulars seemed to have had entirely misunderstood the attitude of the Democracy. Men like Drake could make little appeal to the members of an organization who considered that they had been for five years, wilfully deprived of just rights and privileges. The masses of the Democratic Party had no sympathy with the McClurg cause. They were vitally interested in any program or candidate who promised actual relief and a removal of restrictions. Their hearty support of Brown was only to be expected.

One of the first questions, which men asked, after the breach at Jefferson City, was what will the Democrats do? Hardly had the Liberal Convention adjourned before a Democratic leader had

55. Democrat, September 29, 1870.

expressed his views. Mr. James S. Rollins who happened to be at the capitol, in a speech before the Liberals pledged to Brown his own support, as well as that of all those who looked to him for leadership.⁵⁶ The early Liberal attitude was that while Democratic support would be welcomed, the party, to secure it, could abandon no principle.⁵⁷ By the close of September, after the complete failure of any arrangements between the McClurg faction and the Democratic leaders, it was generally agreed that the Democracy, almost to a man, would support Senator Brown.⁵⁸ The powerful St. Louis Republican, which had not taken a positive stand for any candidate, announced that it would aid the Liberal cause.⁵⁹ With this strong ally enlisted in his behalf, Brown's strength among the Democrats was greatly increased. Evidently Editor Knapp had read aright the sentiment in his party.⁶⁰ There was a curious

56. Ibid, September 5, 1870. Mr. Rollins said: "I am a supporter of that State ticket headed by B. Gratz Brown, whom I know to be a man of elegant culture, and a statesman of broad and liberal training, and under whose administration, with equal rights to all, the people will be encouraged in a spirit of harmony and fraternity." Statesman, September 16, 1870.

57. Democrat, September 5, 1870.
Schurz, Writings, I. 516.
The Liberals, no doubt, realized that they would have the backing of the majority of Democrats. Several influential Democratic papers, like the Statesman, and the St. Joseph Gazette, early announced they favored Brown.

58. Statesman, September 30, 1870.

59. "Accepting the present position of Mr. Brown and his colleagues on the Liberal Republican ticket as sincere, and giving them our warmest sympathy in their separation from a majority of their party, we shall labor as faithfully for their election as we once opposed every man of them." Republican, September 29, 1870.

60. Democrat, September 30, 1870.

difference of opinion among the Democrats as to the real significance of the whole Liberal protest. Some believed that it was only a question of time until the Liberals would join the Democracy, others saw in the movement no cause for such an action.⁶¹

Thus the Democratic problem was not concerned with the gubernatorial struggle, but with the legislative and congressional campaigns. The Democrats were not long in doubt upon the proper policy to pursue. Their support of the Liberal cause, as far as candidates were concerned, terminated with the Liberal State ticket. For Congress and for the Legislature the Democrats nominated practically a full ticket in every district in the State. Two reasons accounted for this policy. In the first place, the Democracy was loath to entirely give up their separate entity. In 1866, when the Democrats had supported as best they could, the forlorn hope Conservative Union Party, the situation was vastly different than in 1870. The Radicals were probably at the height of their power in the former year, while in 1870 they were hopelessly split. But in 1870, the Democrats could see no reason why they should abandon their organization and come under the control of the Brown element.⁶² The veteran campaigner, James O. Broadhead,

61. The Republican and the Statesman maintained that the Democracy could soon enroll among their members, Brown and his supporters. The Gazette denied this, believing that the coalition was only temporary. These attitudes are discussed in the Democrat, October 3, 1870, which strongly denied that the Liberals would merge with the Democracy.

62. "The Democratic Party does not think at all of abdicating. It hopes, on the contrary, to welcome the Liberal Republicans into its own camp in 1872. The Liberal Republicans form a transitory party---from this it follows that in the present election the Democracy cannot think of abandoning their organization entirely, and putting themselves under the command of the Brown faction." Statesman, Sept. 30, 1870. The Democrats appear to have looked upon Liberals as a minority of the Radicals.

strongly urged his party not to surrender its individuality in the Legislative campaign, but to nominate a full ticket and demand a new Constitution.⁶³

From the point of view of practical and common sense politics the Democrats would have been very foolish not to have entered the race. With the Radicals split asunder, their own chances of success, even with the Registry Law in operation, were doubly certain. The control of the Legislature would enable them to amend the Registry Act, and other obnoxious laws. The closing weeks in September saw many county meetings at which the Democracy nominated its candidates for the Legislature and chose delegates to the Congressional District Conventions.⁶⁴

The Liberals were frankly pleased at the course of the Democrats. They well knew that it practically assured the success of Brown and the passage of the amendments; it being doubtful that any Democrat would support one and not the other.⁶⁵ Even should

63. Ibid.

64. For typical examples of meetings in Boone and Audrain Counties see Switzler Collections for 1870, 20-24. The resolutions do not mention the Liberal ticket. The Boone meeting adopted the following: "Resolved, that all citizens under political disabilities should be immediately relieved."

"Resolved, That it is with feelings of unmixed pleasure that we chronicle the recent disorganization of the Radical Party of Missouri, and that in its summary dissolution we behold the ascendancy of the Democratic Party."

65. Democrat, October 1, 1870. Schurz said later that he willingly asked for Democratic votes, and was glad that the Liberal policy pleased them. Writings, II, 51-53.

McClurg be elected, the adoption of the amendments would render him powerless, while the chance of his election and the defeat of the amendments was hardly possible.⁶⁶ Once certain of Democratic support, the Liberals became more confident, and their predictions and utterances the final month of the campaign showed that they were almost certain of success.⁶⁷ In the Fourth and Seventh Districts, which embraced the southwestern and northwestern portions of the State, the Liberal cause was gaining; one of its chief assets, said a prominent Liberal, being Senator Drake.⁶⁸ Schurz and Brown, who had had scarcely a moments rest since September, were hurried to the border Counties in a final attempt to achieve there success for their cause.⁶⁹ After his return to St. Louis in October, Brown ventured the prediction that his election was assured by a majority of 30,000.⁷⁰ Mr. Brown's prediction proved

66. Ibid.

67. The Liberal managers estimated that Brown would receive at least one half of the Radical vote of 1868, or 40,000, as well as a majority of the Democratic votes. Democrat, Oct. 5, 1870.

68. Democrat, October 20, 1870.

69. Ibid, Nov. 3, 1870.

70. To Senator Doolittle, of Wisconsin, Brown wrote on Oct. 17: "This, of course, you will understand, is a bitter fight in Missouri, first because it is death to the rings, and second, because it has an ulterior significance. There will be nothing left undone on either side to decide the issue. I can only say to you in a few hurried words that I will win it by no less than 30,000 majority, the President and his influence to the contrary notwithstanding. Perhaps I am not the right man to have taken the lead in such a conflict, but there was no other that would do it, and the thing had to be done. So you see despite all my wishes and designs, I am involved in politics." From the Blair MSS. now in possession of the Missouri Historical Society.

to be remarkably accurate.

The process of Registration, which occurred during the early weeks of October, occasioned much less excitement and bitterness than had been the case in 1866 and 1868. As usual, there was little difficulty in and about St. Louis, both registrars and applicants seemed anxious to comply with the provisions of the law.⁷¹ Gov. McClurg endeavored to have a fair Registration. In his letters of instructions to the Superintendents, he directed them to use their great powers with caution and moderation.⁷² In fact, throughout the old Whig section, there was little dissatisfaction with the actions of the Registrars. The officials did their work well, according to the provisions of the law.⁷³ The result was that the number of registered voters in these sections was enormously increased.⁷⁴ Some saw in McClurg's efforts for a more fair

71. Democrat, Oct. 20, 1870.

72. His instructions to L. M. Conklin may be found in the Statesman, Sept. 30, 1870. McClurg warned against disfranchisement on the insufficient evidence, requested fair and impartial judgement, and said that all hearings must be open, with deliberate and judicious opinions.

73. Ibid, Nov. 4, 1870.

74. For example, the figures of the two years show a total increase in three counties of 4175, of which 1200 were colored.

	1868	1870
Audrain....	586	1663
Boone.....	411	2168
Callaway...	584	1825

These figures are from the Statesman, Nov. 14, 1870, and the Democrat, Nov. 8, 1870.

registration a clever attempt to curry favor with the Democrats by a lenient interpretation and enforcement of the Registry Law, in hope of obtaining Democratic votes.⁷⁵

From other portions of the State, however, came rumors of the high handed methods of the registrars. The Liberal press was filled with bitter denunciations of both the Registrars and the Boards of Review, outbursts which sounded remarkably similar to those of the Democrats two years previous.⁷⁶ The forces behind McClurg, said the Liberals, knowing his chances of success to be desperately small, called into play every influence, legal or illegal, to secure his election.⁷⁷ A feature of the Registration was the small number of negroes who registered. Although it might be expected, there was no trouble between whites and blacks, even in the heavily Democratic districts. The failure of the negro to place his name on the voting list was due to indifference.⁷⁸

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75. Statesman, Oct. 25, 1870. There is little justification for such a view, but the Liberals claimed that the great increase was due to desire of the McClurg officials to defeat Dyer, the former Radical, by being "liberal" in their registration of Democrats. Schurz, Writings, II, 28.
76. Democrat, Oct. 27, 1870. In Jackson County the Board removed for the most trivial reasons, over 700 names in one day. In Buchanan, Chariton, Randolph, and Howard, conditions were almost as bad.
77. Ibid.
78. Ibid, October 5, 1870. The colored vote was estimated at from 18 to 20 thousand.

The total number of registered voters was, however, much larger than it had been in 1868, and the Liberals began to claim a majority for Brown of 40,000 despite the alleged fraud in north-western Missouri.⁷⁹

The split in the Radical Party extended to the Congressional districts, and nowhere was the factional fight more bitter than in several of the campaigns for Congressional nomination and election. There was a much greater tendency for the Liberals and Democrats to combine in these contests than was the case in the Legislative struggle. In the Third, Fifth, Eighth, and Ninth Congressional Conventions, the Radical Party was split by the same issue which had rent in twain the State Convention. In these four districts, the Liberals, outvoted and defeated, though largely because the McClurg faction controlled the party machinery, withdrew and nominated separate candidates. In three Districts, the Democracy did not nominate candidates, but threw their strength to the Liberal cause.⁸¹ The Liberals, in ~~three~~^{two} others, reciprocated by supporting the Democratic candidates.⁸²

State issues dominated a majority of these campaigns for Congress, but the tariff and civil service usually found a place in the platforms of each party. Both the Liberals and the

79. The total number registered in 1870 was 199,297. Democrat, Nov. 8, 1870. In 1868, the vote cast was 145,000.

80. For accounts of these conventions, see the Democrat, Sept. 14, Oct. 14, 15, 1870 and the Statesman, Sept. 23, Oct. 27, 1870.

81. These were the ~~Second~~, Fourth, and Fifth Districts.

82. This was the case in the Sixth, Seventh, and ~~Eighth~~ Districts.

Democrats were unsparing in their criticism of the tariff of the time, while the corrupt condition into which governmental affairs had fallen could, they said, be remedied in only one way, namely a thorough reform of the civil service.⁸³ The Regulars were more interested in denouncing the Liberal bolt, than in discussing national affairs, but political expediency demanded that they too touch upon national questions, if only in a perfunctory way.⁸⁴ The State situation, however, overshadowed the national issues. Whether or not this is justifiable under ordinary conditions, the people of Missouri were too much interested in the problems which were peculiarly their own, to be vitally concerned with issues which seemed to them less pressing.

The struggle of 1870 in Missouri was not confined to the borders of the State. As the weeks went by, and as the campaign became more and more bitter, the country at large began to manifest great interest in the campaign. The split in the Radical Party, and its significance, furnished the material for hundreds of editorials in almost every influential newspaper in the land. In discussing the "bolt" as seen by outsiders, two new phases, in addition to the real cause of the Liberal action, the franchise issue, are to be noted. The first of these is the importance and influence which the tariff exercised in the Liberal program; the

83. For examples of platforms, see the Statesman, Oct. 7, 1870 for the Democratic declaration of the Ninth District, and the Democrat, Sept. 14, 1870 for the Liberal Platform of the Second District.

84. Statesman, Oct. 14, 1870. Gives the Radical ideas on the tariff and civil service.

second is the attempt of the national administration to interfere in the State campaign.

Those who believed that the tariff was the underlying cause of the Liberal Republicans movement were numerous and powerful, especially in the East.⁸⁵ To these men, the campaign in Missouri was but the culmination of Western discontent with the tariff.⁸⁶ They even maintained that a conspiracy of revenue reformers at Washington had originated the movement, during the winter of 1870.⁸⁷ It is perhaps but natural that this interpretation should gain wide credence. The West had been extremely dissatisfied with the Tariff of 1870. Led by Rep. Allison, of Iowa, the western members of Congress had voted solidly against any increase of duties.⁸⁸ Several of the leading newspapers of the West had taken up the vexing question of tariff reform, and none more fully and vigorously than the Missouri Democrat.⁸⁹ And so, many believed that the tariff was the chief source of discontent in Missouri, a belief fostered by stories of secret meetings of reformers of the revenue system at Washington and elsewhere.⁹⁰

85. The outstanding figure in this group is Horace Greely, who time and again advanced the belief through the columns of his New York Tribune. See the Democrat, Sept. 24 and 28, 1870 for reprinted editorials.

86. Democrat, Sept. 24, 1870.

87. Schurz, Writings, II. 32.

88. The tariff of 1870 is discussed in Stanwood, Tariff Controversies II. 170-178, and Rhodes, United States, VI. 278-282.

89. All during the winter and spring of 1870, the Democrat advocated a reduction of duties, and showed how the existing tariff hindered the West.

90. Schurz, Writings, II. 32.

But any view which holds that the Liberal Republican movement in Missouri was caused by the tariff question is absolutely erroneous, and shows an utter failure to properly interpret the situation in Missouri from 1865 to 1870, either in its political or economic aspects. The tariff issue was at all times of secondary importance, and while it was the cause of a great deal of discussion, especially in the Congressional campaign, it was subordinate even there to the purely State questions.⁹¹

The platforms of both Liberals and Regulars had contained a clause in regard to tariff reduction, while the one in the original set of resolutions, which Schurz reported, was practically the same as the later provision in the Liberal platform. Not a word was said by either faction, before or after the split, which remotely concerned the tariff.⁹² The McClurg platform embodied two resolutions one favoring protection and one demanding revenue reform, a somewhat anomolous situation,⁹³ One of the Liberal leaders, after the election, declared that had the campaign been waged on the issue of protection versus anti-protection, the majority for the latter would have been one hundred thousand.⁹⁴ Thus, it may be safely said that while the tariff was certainly an issue of the campaign of 1870, it was not the chief issue, nor was it in any way the cause of the Radical division in the State.

The second phase of the election which attracted wide attention

91. Democrat, Sept. 28, 1870. "I know," said Schurz, "that the tariff question was not the one which produced the division in the Republican Party in my State." Writings, II. 32.

92. Schurz Writings, II. 33. The Liberal plank in regard to the tariff read: "It opposes every form of taxation, which deprives a man of any share of his earnings for the benefit of others, and it is therefore unequivocally opposed to any tariff which fosters one industry or interest at the expense of others." Quoted in the Statesman, Sept. 16, 1870.

93. Ibid. 94. Schurz, Writings, II. 33

was the attempt of President Grant, through a use of the Federal patronage, to aid the Regulars and secure the election of McClurg. The Liberals maintained that the president had been unduly influenced by Senator Drake, whom they claimed misrepresented the facts of the situation, and convinced the president that the Liberal movement was primarily a war on his administration.⁹⁵ The reports from Washington which intimated that Grant looked askance upon the Liberals, caused at first surprise rather than indignation. The leaders in St. Louis felt that the unsuspecting Grant had been imposed upon by Drake and other extremists, and gave a half friendly warning to the president that his meddling in State politics could do him no good.⁹⁶

Several days later the letter of Grant to C. W. Ford, the Collector of Internal Revenue at St. Louis, was made public.⁹⁷ It aroused instantly a storm of protest against Executive interference which did not terminate until the close of the campaign. The Liberal press, both in and out of the State, took bitter exception to Grant's course. The chief executive was very frankly told that his interference in the internal affairs of Missouri was highly resented.⁹⁸ His unwarranted invasion of the field of

95. Ibid. 42.

96. Democrat, Sept. 22, 1870.

97. "I regard the movement headed by Carl Schurz, Gratz Brown, etc." declared Grant "as similar to the Tennessee and Virginia movements, intended to carry a portion of the Republican Party over to the Democracy, and thus give them control. I hope you will see your way clear to give the Regular ticket your support. Show this to Eaton, Smith, and Newcomb." Quoted in the Democrat, Sept. 24, 1870.

98. Ibid, Sept. 27, 1870.

State politics was a serious mistake, which became only more apparent as the weeks passed. Not content with letters to Federal officials, the President began to remove officeholders whom he knew were supporting the Liberal ticket.⁹⁹

Some of the Federal officials of the State, probably feeling the pressure of party politics, demanded the resignations of lesser employees, whose political views were regarded as detrimental to the true interest of the Republican Party.¹⁰⁰ Still others requested that the Federal office holders of the State contribute to the Regular campaign fund one per cent of their salary. This request, which was virtually a demand, was made "after a conference with our friends at Washington."¹⁰¹ Whether or not this request had the sanction of the Administration it but increased the anger of the Liberals, who regarded the request as a form of blackmail.¹⁰²

There could be but one result to the President's policy. The American people have always been very intolerant of Executive interference in State affairs, and Grant's actions were no exception to this almost general rule.¹⁰³ The Liberal cause was

99. Among those in prominent civil officials whose resignations Grant asked were, Bennett Pike, the United States District Attorney of St. Joseph, Felix Coste, Surveyor of Customs at St. Louis, and William Wilst, the Land Agent at Boonville. Democrat, Oct. 10 and 14, 1870.

100. For an example see Writings, II. 50.

101. This letter was signed by Isaac Sheppard, the Chairman of the State Committee. It may be found in the Democrat, Oct. 28, 1870. "Delay and neglect will rightfully be construed as unfriendliness to the Administration."

102. Ibid.

103. Writings, II. 48.

greatly aided, while the president lost in the esteem of many men. Liberal speakers began to criticise not only the chief executive's course in regard to Missouri, but the whole policy of the National Government.¹⁰⁴ Men who sincerely admired Grant as a soldier spoke in scathing terms of his record as President, and lamented the influence of Cameron and Schenck on the Administration policy.¹⁰⁵ The spirit of independence of executive domination which the president's policy brought into being in Missouri was a great boon to Liberal cause.

As the campaign drew to a close, shrewd observers saw that the election of Brown was a foregone conclusion. Democratic support had made inevitable his success. It was much more difficult, however, to predict the outcome of the Legislative campaign. In some districts local issues were of primary importance, in others, fusion tickets were found.¹⁰⁶ Certain liberals feared that the Democrats would secure control of the Legislature, and advised a truce between the factions after the election.¹⁰⁷ Concerning the Congressional results, it was evident that the Radical break would insure in the Third and Ninth districts a Democratic victory. In the seven other districts no accurate forecast could be made. Outside of St. Louis, the Liberals insisted that the Tariff issue was not of great importance, and was being used merely for political purposes.¹⁰⁸ It appeared that only overconfidence could defeat

104. Democrat, Oct. 15, 1870.

105. Ibid. The resignation of Secretary Cox was regarded the result of Grant's foolish heed to poor advisers.

106. I have no figures as to the exact number of districts in which fusion tickets were used.

107. Democrat, Oct. 6, 1870.

108. Ibid. There were in St. Louis, extensive iron industries which were vitally concerned with the protective tariff.

Brown and the amendments.¹⁰⁹

The early returns announced the complete defeat of McClurg, and an overwhelming majority for the adoption of the amendments. Brown and the entire Liberal State ticket were swept into office by majorities of over 40,000.¹¹⁰ In the lower House of the General Assembly, the Democrats were to have a safe majority, while in the Senate no party was to have absolute control.¹¹¹ The men elected on the Fusion ticket represented, in the main, the same ideas as did the Democrats, and were pledged to a call for a Constitutional Convention.¹¹² Of the nine Missouri Congressmen chosen, five were Democrats, the Liberals and Regulars having two each.¹¹³

In its more narrow sense, the Liberal triumph represented a victory of principle in the removal of disqualifications of over fifty thousand citizens. "Free Missouri", after 1870 was indeed

109. It was said that Schurz's canvass of the State was the greatest since Benton's memorable trip in 1849. Statesman, Nov. 4, 1870.

110. The final figures were Brown, 104,374, McClurg, 63,336. By a vote of 127,643 to 16,283 the Test Oath was abolished, while the oath of loyalty for jurors, and the disqualifications to hold office on account of color or previous disloyalty were abolished by 122,883 and 105,413. The official returns are in Switzler Collections, for 1870. 43-46.

111. In the House, the Democrats had 77 members, the Regulars 24, the Liberals 20, and the Fusionists 12. In the Senate, there were 13 Democrats, 12 Regulars, 6 Liberals, and 3 Fusionists. Switzler, History of Missouri. 471.

112. Ibid. The Fusion representation in the House came from Greene, Chariton, Buchanan, and Carroll Counties.

113. Switzler, Collections for 1870. 46-47.

was indeed a reality, The fetters which Drake had forged in 1865 said the jubilant Democrats, are broken and abandoned.¹¹⁴ At the risk of their political futures, the Liberals had repudiated their former party. The part the Democrats played in the campaign was not lost upon the Liberal element, which was quick to praise the Democratic position and its important bearing on the result.¹¹⁵ To a large crowd of St. Louis Democrats, Mr. Brown frankly acknowledged the debt of the Liberals to the Democrats, without whose assistance his election would have been impossible.¹¹⁶ This "Serenade Speech" was regarded as an indication that Brown had abandoned the Republican Party, and was rather annoying to Schurz.¹¹⁷

Aside from the purely local character of the campaign of 1870, it had a broader significance. The Liberals saw in their sweeping

114. Statesman, Nov. 18, 1870. The Democrats believed that fully 75,000 men had been enfranchised.
115. "The Democrats merit a word of commendation. The masses of them have in good faith supported a political opponent for a specific, beneficent object----The Democratic voters resisted many ingenious partizan appeals to surface principle to partizan malice, and they deserve credit for having thus resisted." Democrat, Nov. 11, 1870.
116. In his speech to them Brown said: "I recognize that my obligations are in the largest measure due to the Democratic Party in the last election of the State of Missouri----- I recognize that the Democratic Party of the State of Missouri has done this thing. It has elevated itself upon a higher plane than it has ever occupied before." Quoted in the Democrat, Nov. 16, 1870.
117. Schurz, who was in Washington, requested that Brown, to strengthen his position, make another speech addressed more especially to our Republican friends." Brown cheerfully agreed to do this, said that the issues had been primarily Republican, and denied that he was "to abandon the principles of my lifetime for 1872, or any other glittering prize." Writings, I. 521-522. II 2-3.

success, a rebuke to the monopoly of a high tariff, to the practice of Federal interference in State elections, and a victory for the reform of the civil service.¹¹⁸ The attempt of the president to use his power of removal to defeat the Liberal cause had been sharply rebuked. When considered from this point of view, the Liberal Republican movement was a protest against existing ills in the National Administration and a demand that Grant take up within his party the issues of reform and reorganization.¹¹⁹ The election of 1870 in Missouri was a warning to the Administration, as well as the final blow to the old time Radicals of the State.

The campaign was hardly over before vague rumors began to be heard which concerned the organization of a new party. The name of Schurz was most prominently connected with this movement, but he had denied the necessity for such an action.¹²⁰ In a noted address before the Senate, Schurz maintained that although large elements in both the Republican and Democratic organizations were dissatisfied with their party, he saw no reason for the formation of a new organization, if the Republican Party forgot the bitter issues of the war, and took up the pressing questions of recent date.¹²¹ It is extremely doubtful that there was in 1870 any

118. Democrat, Nov. 9, 1870.

119. Ibid, Nov. 10, 1870.

120. Concerning his position the Washington Republican quoted Schurz: "There is no necessity of starting a new party. Let the present one undergo a little overhauling and it will be good enough to run for many years yet. Why can't we go in earnestly and as one man for a total reform in the civil service and the revenue, and a total wiping out of disabilities for complicity in the Rebellion. From the Statesman, Nov. 25, 1870.

121. Schurz, Writings, II 59-67.

definite, organized plans for a "bolt" in 1872.¹²²

Shortly after the disastrous defeat of his party, Mr. Drake resigned from the Senate to become Chief Justice of the Court of Claims. Both Liberals and Democrats commented bitterly on his removal from Missouri politics.¹²³ It is doubtful if a political leader ever left Missouri as unpopular as was Charles D. Drake in 1870. The departure of Mr. Drake is coincident with the end of an era. An era of eight years in which the Republican Party had been in control. Under its rule, the State had seen the war brought to a successful conclusion, the system of slavery forever abolished, and the new economic and social problems dealt with. There is no question that Missouri, from 1865 to 1870, grew and prospered.

But Radical rule, perhaps beneficial in the beginning, had become reactionary and unpopular. Reputed corruption in high places, a failure to keep abreast of the times, and a tendency to depend too much upon mere political machinery had alienated finally a considerable portion of the Republican organization. The Radicals had failed to recognize that the war was over, and the new issues were forging to the front. Their failure and final defeat was to be expected, and was in every sense justified.

122. Many Democratic newspapers in Missouri resented any rumor that the Democracy of Missouri was to merge into a new party. Statesman, Dec. 2, 1870 gives many quotations from other papers in the State.

123. Statesman, Dec. 16, 1870. The Liberals were furious because they knew a Democrat would be elected in Drake's place. Democrat, Dec. 7, 1870.

The Liberal movement, first actually seen in Missouri in 1870, by 1872 had become nationwide. The ill success of Grant's first term, the failure of the tariff and the civil service reformers to achieve their objects within the Republican Party, led to a revolt in the campaign of 1872. From the beginning of this struggle until its tragic end, Missouri was to play no small share.

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2. Pamphlets and Addresses.

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The F. A. Sampson Collection. In the State Historical Society of Missouri. Especially good for the years 1865-66.

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