

**ALL THE REPUBLICAN  
NATIONAL CONVENTIONS  
FROM PHILADELPHIA,  
JUNE 17, 1856**

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All the Republican National Conventions from Philadelphia, June 17, 1856 by Henry H. Smith

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**HENRY H. SMITH**

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# REPUBLICAN National Conventions

FROM

PHILADELPHIA, JUNE 17, 1856.

Proceedings, Platforms, and Candidates,

WITH

TABLES SHOWING CONVENTION, POPULAR,  
AND ELECTORAL VOTES.

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

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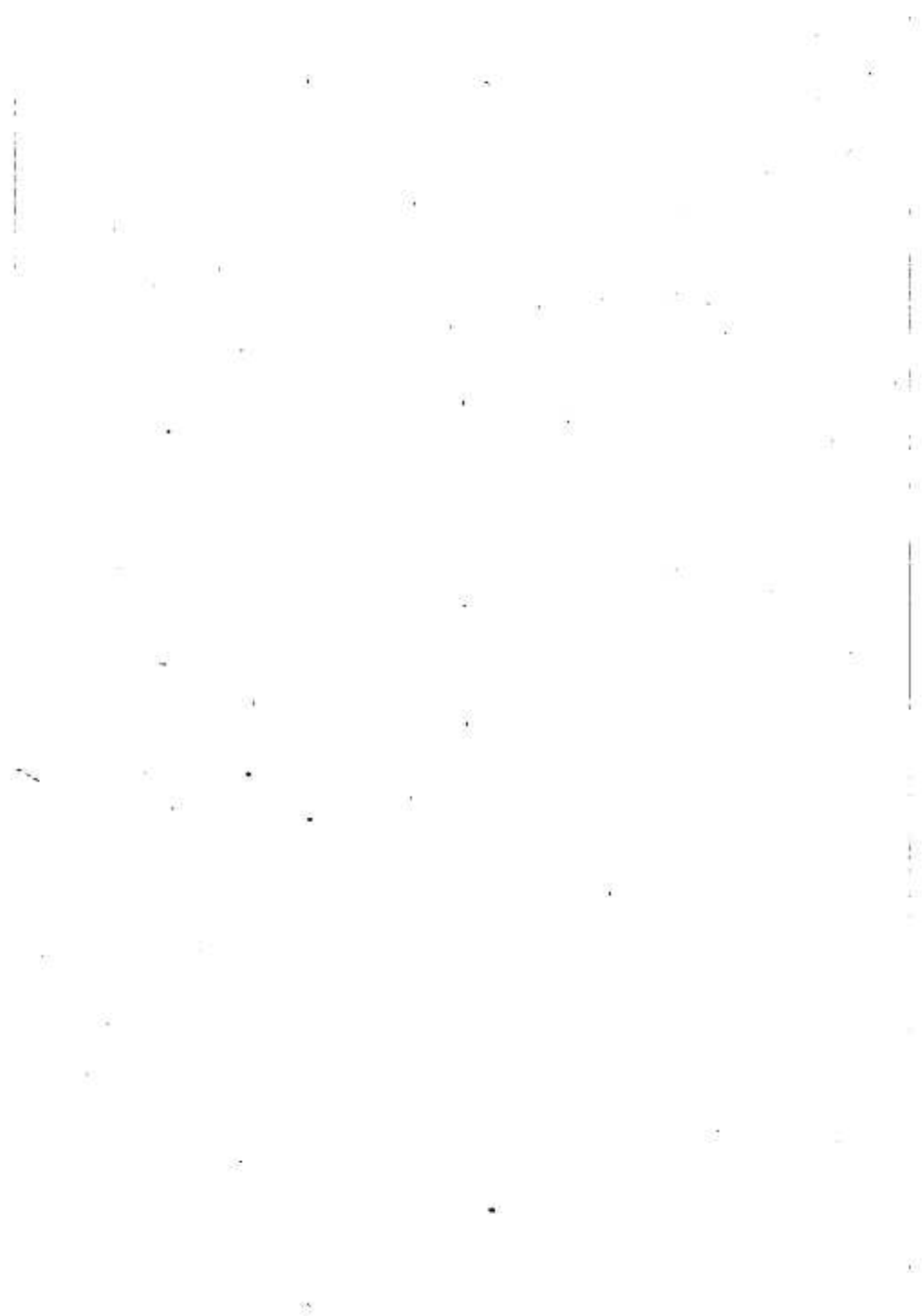
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## PREFACE.

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The purpose of this work is to give in as brief and compact form as possible, the important or leading events of the ten National Conventions of the Republican party.

The publication in the *Minneapolis Tribune* of June 5, 1892, of a history of the nine preceding Republican National Conventions, and in the *Chicago Tribune* of June 14, 1892, of a history of the fifteen preceding Democratic National Conventions, prepared by the writer, which histories were subsequently put in pamphlet form and had an extensive circulation, justifies the belief that their republication in a separate and enlarged form would meet with greater favor.

In accordance with that belief, based, it may be said, on numerous requests from prominent members of both these parties, the writer has revised that publication, adding details and proceedings of an important character, especially relating to cases of contested seats, important rulings by such distinguished parliamentarians as Senator Hoar and the late Edward McPherson, and like matters, omitted in the hurried preparation of the articles named. Several corrections, typographical and otherwise, have been made, and a full and comprehensive index, individual and subject, prepared; special attention being given to the several platforms adopted by all the National Conventions of the Republican party, so as to bring out every subject or topic on which the party has declared its views. Great pains have been taken to verify these details, especially the platforms, by comparison with the official publications—in which, however, several errors were found—and it is confidently believed the substantial accuracy of this publication can be relied on. Some miscellaneous data, such as tables of convention, popular and electoral votes, officers of the various campaign committees, &c., has been added, and though it is not claimed that this little publication includes *all* of the interesting convention events, it is given to the public with the confident assertion that it contains most of the important or essential details and proceedings of the "Ten National Conventions of the Republican Party." This will be followed by a similar publication giving the convention history of the Democratic party.

HENRY H. SMITH.

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 15, 1896.





## INTRODUCTORY.

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It has been well said that "all political parties that have exerted marked influence upon their times, have had their beginnings far back of the period of their organization," and in continuation of this thought the same writer (E. V. Smalley) says: "The Republican party was the child of the conscience of the North, aroused at length to assertion by the growth of the institution of slavery. In its embryonic forms it existed almost from the beginning of the Government. It did not gain strength and individuality, however, until more than half a century after the adoption of the federal constitution."

No history of the conventions of the Republican party would be complete without at least a brief reference to the conventions of the "National Republicans of 1831," the "Abolition party of 1839," the "Liberty party of 1843," the "Free-soil party of 1848"—its legitimate successor—both of which met in Buffalo, N. Y., and the "Free-soil Democracy" which met at Pittsburgh, Pa., August 11, 1852.

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The "National Republicans" met in convention at Baltimore on December 12, 1831. All the Northern states save Illinois were represented, with Delaware, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia, having in all 157 delegates. It was a gathering of all the opposition to Jackson, though composed chiefly of the followers of Adams and Clay. It nominated Henry Clay of Kentucky for President, and John Sergeant of Pennsylvania for Vice-President, and in lieu of a platform issued an address severely criticising the administration for its corruption, partisanship, and abuse of power; its hostility to internal improvements; its treachery on the tariff question; its war on the national bank, and for its humiliating surrender to Georgia in the matter of the Cherokee Indians.

This was the *avant courier* of the present convention system of nominations and "platforms," and was imitated by the Democratic party in the succeeding campaign. Although Mr. Clay received but 49 electoral votes, viz: Massachusetts 14, Rhode Island 4, Connecticut 8, Delaware 3, Maryland 5, and Kentucky 15, he received a pop-

ular vote of 530,189 (including that cast for Mr. Wirt, anti-Mason, who carried Vermont), to 687,502 for President Jackson. The greater portion of this vote was merged in the Whig party organized in 1834, and in 1856 in the Republican party.

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The "Abolition party" first met in convention at Warsaw, N. Y., November 13, 1839, and subsequently at Albany, April 1, 1840. It adopted a resolution at Warsaw, proposing the organization of a distinct and independent Abolition party, and nominated James G. Birney of New York for President, and Francis Lemoyne of Pennsylvania for Vice-President. Among its prominent members were Samuel Fessenden of Maine and the Rev. John Pierpont of Massachusetts.

Its candidates received 7,069 votes, cast in all the Northern states (thirteen) except Indiana.

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The "Liberty party" met August 30, 1843, at Buffalo, N. Y., and was composed of 148 delegates from twelve states. Leicester King of Ohio was chosen as chairman, and after a spirited debate, a " portentously long platform " was adopted, devoted principally to the slavery question, James G. Birney of New York was nominated for President, and Thomas Morris of Ohio for Vice-President. The results of this convention and organization were very remarkable—probably without a parallel in the history of parties in this country—and were as unexpected by its most sanguine friends and supporters, as by its enemies. From an examination of the table of returns of that election, it appears that although the same number of States voted as in the preceding election, yet under the new apportionment, by which the number of Representatives was reduced from 242 to 223, the number of electors was reduced to 275. Of this number Mr. Polk received 170, and Mr. Clay 105. Though Mr. Polk received a majority of sixty-five in the votes of electors, he had a majority of the popular vote of but 38,181 over Mr. Clay. Had the Liberal party—or "Abolitionists," as they were called—voted for Mr. Clay, he would have received the electoral votes of the states of Michigan (5) and New York (36), and would have been elected by 146 electoral votes, against 129 for Mr. Polk. In New York 237,588 votes were cast for James K. Polk (Democrat), 232,482 for Henry Clay (Whig), and 15,812 for Mr. Birney, while in Michigan Mr. Polk received 27,759, Mr. Clay 24,337, and Mr. Birney 3,632. The most important incident in the election was the celebrated