

# THE RICHMOND PALLADIUM

AND SUN-TELEGRAM.

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## GRIM DEATH REAPS AWFUL HARVEST IN HORRIBLE HOLOCAUST WHERE 160 PEOPLE GAVE UP THEIR LIVES

WHILE WOMEN AND CHILDREN WERE IN THEATRE AT  
BOYERTOWN, PA., FIRE DEMON DESCENDED AND  
WROUGHT SCENES INDESCRIBABLE.

### CHILDREN DIED UNDER THE FEET OF THEIR ELDERS

The Five Hundred People in  
Theatre Went Mad With  
Fright When Flames Ap-  
peared.

### WEAK AND UNPROTECTED WENT DOWN TO DEATH.

Oil Saturated the Clothes of  
Many and Nothing But the  
Charred Remains Were Left  
For Their Loved Ones.

### DID NOT HEED WARNING.

HAD THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN  
REMAINED COOL AT THE EN-  
TREATIES OF ACTORS, LOSS OF  
LIFE WOULD HAVE BEEN LESS.

### A NIGHT OF ANGUISH.

The Shrieks of the Mothers Who  
Rushed to the Scene to Find Loved  
Ones Was Pitiful—The Cause of  
The Fire.

Boyetown, Pa., Jan. 14.—One hundred and sixty persons, mostly women and children, were trampled and burned to death, and two hundred were injured, many fatally, in a fire which destroyed the Rhoades opera house last night. The opera house, which has been declared a fire trap, went up in fire and smoke in fifteen minutes. The greatest loss of life was at the double doors at the end of the long hall, the only exit when the crowd trampled on each other and where the flames overtook them. The explosion of a gasoline tank connected with a moving picture machine, caused the fire. Scenes following the outbreak of the flames were indescribable. Thirty or forty school children taking a part in the entertainment, were among those who perished. Officials declare that the number of dead cannot be possibly less than estimated—one hundred and sixty.

The opera house was crowded with the members of the St. John Lutheran Sunday school, who were attending a benefit given for that church. While the show was in progress a tank exploded. The actors endeavored to quiet the audience, but in their anxiety to make themselves heard and avoid the awful stampede of the women and children, the coal oil lamps which were used at the footlights, were overturned, setting the place on fire. The flames, fed by the oil, shot almost to the ceiling, and there was a wild rush of the 700 persons to escape from the burning building. Scores of women and children were trampled upon and several who escaped being burned to death, died after being dragged from the opera house. In many cases, it is said, entire families have been wiped out. The scene which followed the explosion is indescribable. Scores of persons who were in the balcony at the time of the explosion were killed or injured.

### Penned in Roaring Furnace.

To add to the terrible disaster the fire apparatus became disabled and the structure was left entirely to the mercy of the seething flames. It is almost certain not a vestige of the bodies of the unfortunates who were overcome by the smoke and perished will ever be found. Assistance was asked from Pittsburg, but before the fire apparatus from that city reached this place the entire center of the structure was a roaring furnace.

Had the women and children heeded the warning of cooler heads in the audience the horrible loss of life might have been averted, but there was the usual panic and stampede which invariably follow at such a catastrophe. The flames spread rapidly and communicated to other parts of the theatre. Men, women and children rushed for the many exits, and the weaker sex and the children were trampled

and maimed in the mad rush to gain the street.

### Homes Turned Into Hospitals.

Assistance was at once asked of both Reading and Pottstown and special trains carrying nurses and doctors were rushed to the scene of the disaster. Every home within a radius of half a dozen blocks from the opera house was made a temporary hospital, where the wounded were rushed by carriages and other means of conveyance.

Boyetown is a borough with a population of about 2,500, and is located about midway between Pottstown and Reading.

### A Night of Anguish.

The night was one of wailing and anguish. The shrieks of mothers who had rushed to the scene as soon as they learned of the fire were pitiful. As the night wore on the crowds surrounding the building grew to such proportions, that it was almost impossible for the police force, which had been augmented by a score of men from Pottstown and Reading, to keep the people back. One woman who said she had lost her entire family in the theatre, was with difficulty restrained from throwing herself into the roaring flames.

At 1 o'clock a special train from Reading, bearing physicians and nurses reached here but there was little for them to do, as the injured who had dashed themselves to the pavement had been cared for by local physicians, assisted by the Pottstown relief corps. A few minutes after midnight the rear wall of the theatre collapsed, and those who had vainly hoped to be able to find the remains of some of their loved ones turned in despair from the scene of the awful catastrophe.

### Many Fatally Crushed.

It is estimated that at least 75 persons were injured by being trampled upon either in the stairway or by jumping from the windows of the burning structure. Of this number at least a score were fatally injured and at least a half dozen succumbed to their injuries after being hurried to one of the temporary hospitals. Three children, ranging in age from 8 to 12 years, and one woman who was dragged from the building by persons who had rushed to the rescue, had been trampled almost to a pulp. The skull of one of the unfortunate children had been crushed as though an eggshell.

It is doubtful if the remains of the victims can be distinguished from the debris, as many persons in the audience were covered with burning oil as the lamps exploded.

### RICHMOND MEN ASKED TO AID SEARCH

Letter Carriers Instructed to  
Look for Johnson.

Postmaster Spokenbier has received cards from Muncie soliciting his assistance in locating Charles E. Johnson of that city, who disappeared January 8. A reward of \$100 is offered for a clue as to his whereabouts. The attention of the entire state has been attracted to the case. The identification card says the man was 60 years of age, stooped and feeble, about 5 feet eleven inches tall, dark hair, brown mustache, two or three lower front teeth out, wears full upper plate false teeth. Wore dark sack suit, blue tie, G. A. R. button on coat, K. O. T. M. ring on finger. Mr. Spokenbier has turned the identification cards over to the carriers.

### ACCOMPLICES WERE CONVICTED TODAY

Tools of Clark, King of Chick-  
en Thieves.

Henry Droskey and Thomas Brokamp, accomplices of Albert Clark, reputed king of the chicken thieves, entered pleas of guilty this morning in the city court to charges of stealing four chickens from Isaac Dougan. Both men have hitherto borne good reputations and Prosecutor Jessup stated that he believed that they were only tools of Clark. The prosecutor recommended leniency in each case. Judge Converse imposed a sentence of ten days with a fine of \$10 and costs in each case.

### INSANITY OF THAW FAMILY IS SHOWN BY THE DEFENSE

Defendant Writhes Under the  
Fire Which Is Unearthing  
Family Skeleton and Plac-  
ing It Before Public Gaze.

### WITNESSES EXAMINED TELL WHAT THEY KNOW.

Relatives of the Defendant on  
Several Instances Were Ad-  
mitted to Mad Houses—Lit-  
tleton Makes Strong Speech

New York, Jan. 14.—The first witness in the Thaw case this morning was Dr. T. J. Deemer of Pittsburg, the Thaw family physician. He testified that Thaw was unusually nervous as a boy. He said Henry W. Copley, brother of Mrs. Thaw, was of unsound mind, and Copley's father was an imbecile. The second witness was Dr. W. S. Butler, of Roanoke, Va., who said he was connected with an insane asylum in 1882, when Horace Thaw was admitted. He was insane. He was a cousin of the defendant's mother.

The trial yesterday afternoon was full of interesting developments. Attorney Garvan made a strong and pointed speech for the people.

Afterward Mr. Littleton in his opening address, brought out the statement that, in Paris, in 1903, when Evelyn Nesbit had confessed to her husband her relations with White, Thaw had tried to kill himself by taking poison. It required the constant efforts of two physicians for 12 hours to save him.

After the four witnesses of the prosecution had been brushed aside, and a 10 minutes' recess granted by Justice Dowling, had passed, Mr. Littleton, dressed all in black like an undertaker, walked out before the jury and tore aside the somber veil which has hitherto hidden the lives of the Thaw family from the eyes of the world.

With ruthless hand he stirred up the lees of the muddy vessel filled with filthy waters. And Thaw writhed at the recital. He twisted and turned in his chair. He kept his eyes anywhere but on the source of the roaring flame in which his family was being cremated. He tried to talk to Peabody, to O'Reilly, to anybody around him who would listen. But they, like the rest of those in the courtroom, were listening to Littleton.

### Every Blow a Torture.

There were no great oratorical flights. It was the dull driving of the hammers of the crucifixion. Every blow was a torture, and Thaw felt them with savage resentment. He has never been quite able to reconcile himself to the defense of insanity. The high and mighty ground assumed by Delmas suits him better. But Littleton ended all this, and at the close of the day Thaw found himself with broken wings, and with his soul on the ground. Yet a man never sees so much at a glance as when he is in extreme peril. He had accepted this defense as a man would lay his hand upon the smaller of two deadly serpents.

### Mother to Testify.

It was learned definitely that Mrs. William Thaw will arrive from Pittsburg toward the latter part of the week and will give her testimony from the stand.

District Attorney Garvan said that the prosecution had ransacked Europe for witnesses in rebuttal and that the trial would probably last several weeks. "It did not cost the people anything, either," he said. "I went over and paid every cent of my own expenses too." District Attorney Garvan spoke but twenty minutes.

The abrupt conclusion of the prosecution took Mr. Littleton somewhat by surprise. From Justice Dowling he asked a few minutes' courtesy that he might arrange the notes for his open-

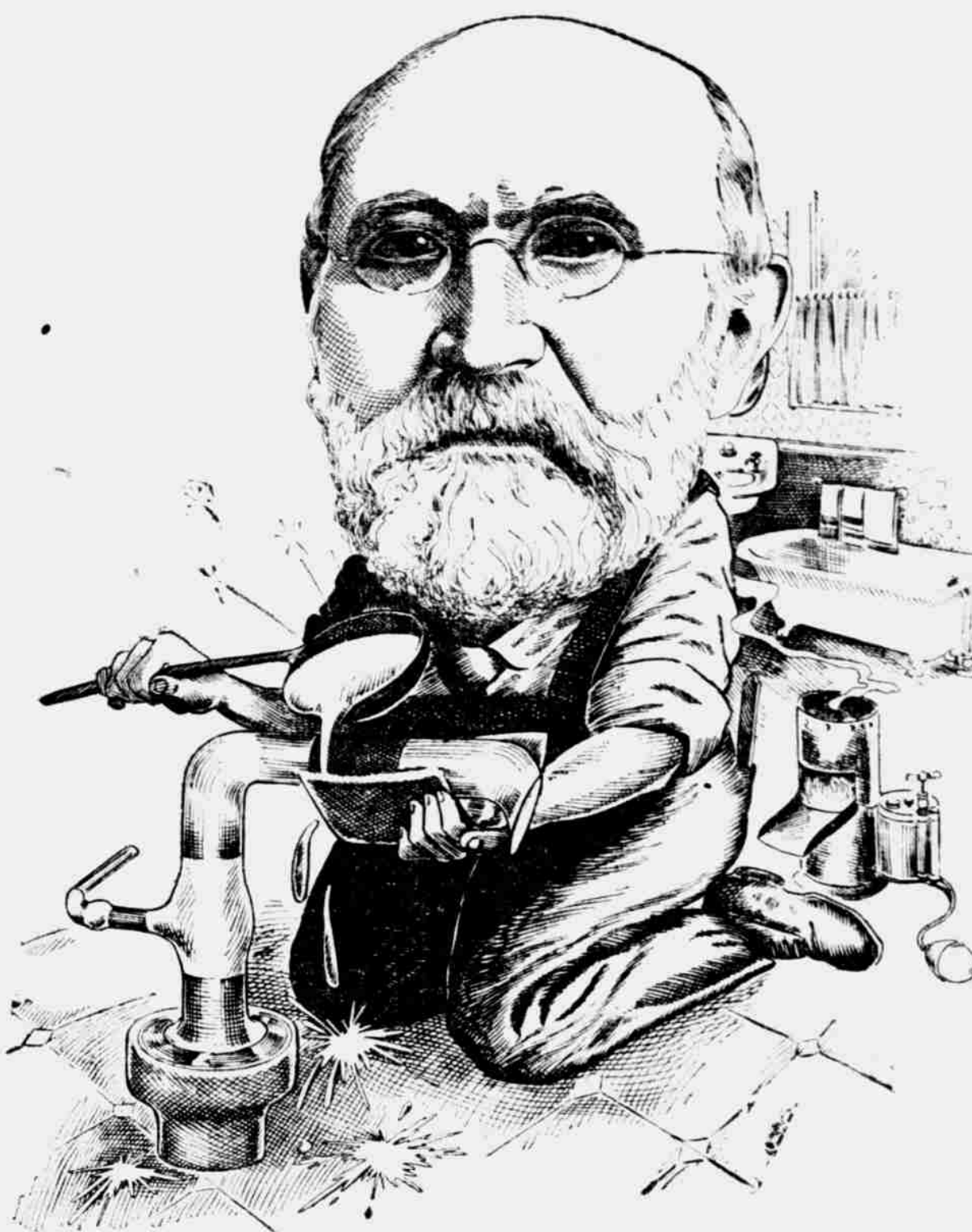
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### THE WEATHER PROPHECY

INDIANA—Rain or snow Wednesday.

OHIO—Fair Wednesday, warmer.

## MEN OF AFFAIRS IN RICHMOND



HERMAN H. MEERHOFF.  
Plumbing, Heating & Electrical Contractor.

### PRESIDENT HELPS TAFT BY CALLING OFF DETECTIVES

Investigation of Land Frauds  
In the West Will Be Discon-  
tinued for Some Time It Is  
Reported.

### WOULD HURT THE TAFT CANDIDACY IT IS THOUGHT

Some of Western Politicians  
Have Been Inclined to "Kick  
Over the Traces" Because  
Of Investigations.

Washington, Jan. 14.—Certain western senators and representatives who have visited the white house during the last few days are plainly pleased with the announcement that the administration will suspend the investigation of public land frauds for the present. According to a story told by one of the Western men, the administration has been made to realize that the continued activity of the small army of special agents who are trying to discover land frauds in the West is having a serious political effect. Within the next few months, conventions will be held in several Western states to elect delegates to the republican national convention.

There is a lot of dissatisfaction with the public land investigations, which have been carried on in the west, without cessation for the last half dozen years. It is represented that the people generally approve the effort to expose and punish fraud, but there have been many complaints that the special agents sent out by the department have in numberless instances exhibited an utter lack of tact and have through injudicious proceedings needlessly sullied private characters.

### Kick Over the Traces.

Some of the leading politicians in the Western states have recently manifested an inclination to "kick over the traces." They are tired of the hunt for the land thieves for the reason that many innocent persons have been involved in the investigation and have suffered in consequence. The decision to suspend public land investigation for the present rests ostensibly on the fact that Judge Lewis, of Colorado recently handed down a decision adverse to some of the main points raised by the government in its prosecution of land cases.

There will be a meeting of the Steward of the Fifth Street M. E. church on Wednesday at the close of the prayer meeting. Special business. All stewards are requested to be present.

### ANDERSON LIKES RICHMOND SPEAKERS

Two Prominent Local Men Ad-  
dressed Union.

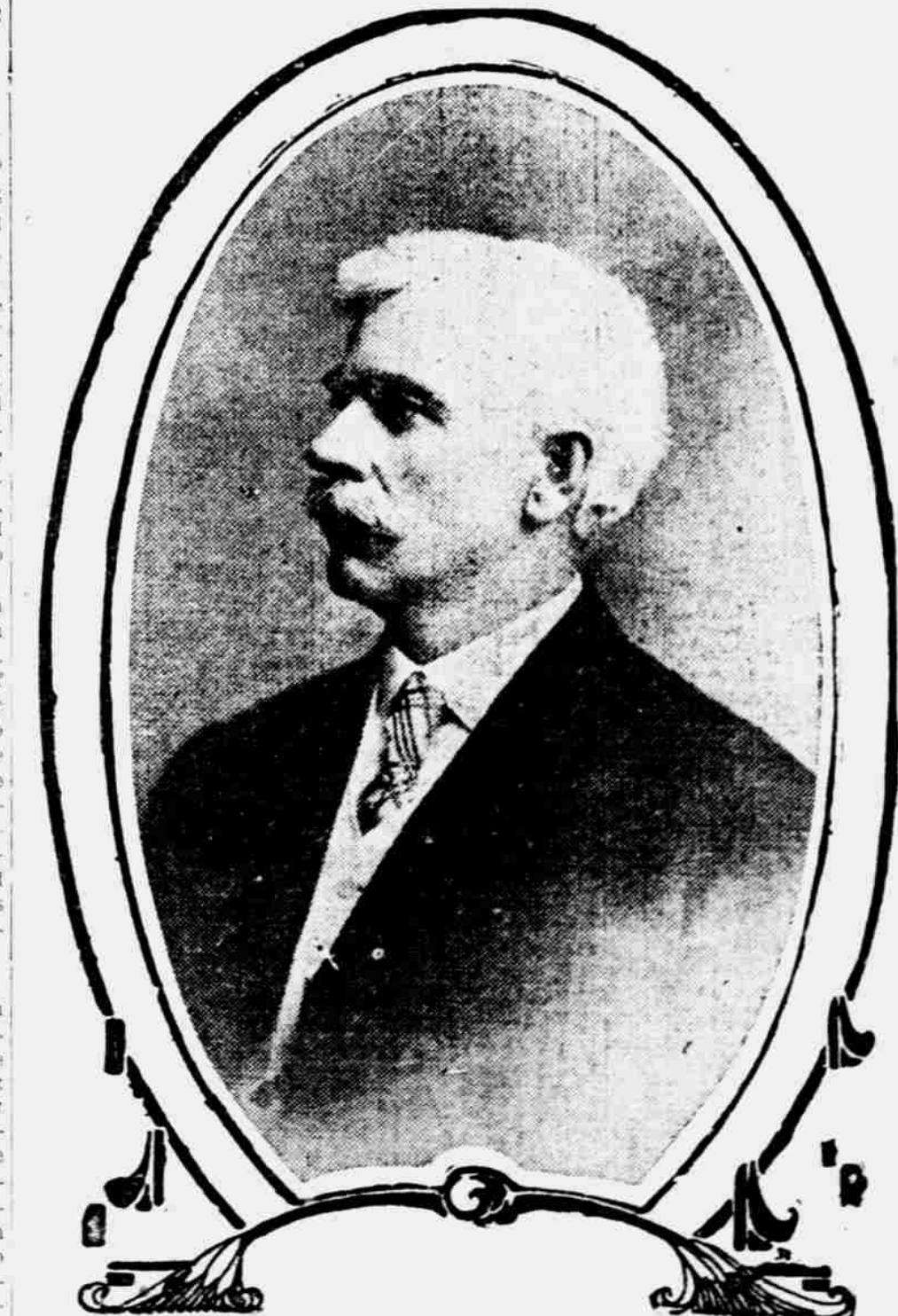
At the meeting of the Men's Christian Union in Anderson, the speaker was President Kelly, of Earlham College, Richmond. The union is an undenominational organization of men of all churches of this city. George Hallis, a township constable, is the president. The Rev. T. H. Kuhn of this city spoke before the organization two weeks ago.

### COLORED LOVERS GIVEN A FINE

Drunk and Disorderly Con-  
duct Charged.

Henry Miller and Ethel Augustus, both colored, were each fined \$5 and costs this morning in the city court for drunk and disorderly conduct. Both defendants entered pleas of not guilty. After consuming a pint of whiskey Saturday, Henry and Ethel went on the warpath until finally rounded up by Sergeant McManus.

### Richmond Man Elected Chairman of Sixth District Organization



E. M. HAAS.

When the republican convention in session today at Cambridge City, resumed its business after the noon recess, Edgar M. Haas, secretary of the local commercial club, was chosen to lead the G. O. P. during the coming campaign. Haas' selection was unanimous. He is considered one of the strongest men in the district and a good general.

## POLITICIANS OVERRUNNING CAMBRIDGE

Sixth District Republican Con-  
vention Being Held There  
Today and Seekers After  
Office Are Prominent.

### WAYNE COUNTY MEN ARE IN ON EVERY HAND.

Harmony Is Manifest and Men  
Are Cheering Themselves  
Hoarse for Fairbanks and  
Watson.

### HAAS ELECTED CHAIRMAN.

WENT IN BY ACCLAMATION THIS  
AFTERNOON WHEN THE CON-  
VENTION REASSEMBLED AFTER  
NOON RECESS.

### SHORT SPEECHES MADE.

Wayne and Other County Men Seek-  
ing Watson's Place, Are Each Giv-  
ing Five Minutes to Voice Their  
Pet Hobbies.

(By C. S. Neal.)

Cambridge City, Ind., Jan. 14.—The largest and most enthusiastic convention the republicans of the sixth congressional district ever held, is in full blast here today. Last evening delegates from the remote parts of the district began to arrive in Cambridge City and by 10 o'clock this morning the town was filled with visiting politicians. At the morning session, which was presided over by the retiring district chairman, Owen L. Carr, of Rushville, party harmony was evidenced on every hand. Every mention of Vice President Charles W. Fairbanks, Congressman James E. Watson and President Theodore Roosevelt was a signal for outbursts of enthusiasm.

The convention is being held at the Masonic opera house and when the chairman called the delegates to order this morning the huge room was filled to capacity. Committees were first appointed, then the eight congressional candidates were called to the stage and informed that they would each have five minutes to address the convention. These candidates were the Rev. J. O. Campbell, Wilfred Jessup and Dr. M. L. Yencer of Wayne; Will Hough of Hancock; Thomas Davidson of Decatur; Judge W. O. Barnard of Henry; Senator E. E. Moore of Fayette and Charles Stivers of Union. As each prospective successor to Representative Watson stepped to the front of the stage to address the delegates, he was given a most cordial reception. In this respect the motto of the delegates appeared to be—"The congressional race is an open one with no favorites. Let the best man win."

A. M. Gardner was appointed chairman of the Wayne county delegation. C. W. Jordan was appointed vice chairman of the convention. C. S. Neal was appointed assistant secretary of the convention. John H. Nicholson was appointed a member of the committee on organization. John L. Rupe was appointed on the rules committee and John H. Russell was appointed to the committee on resolutions. These committees will all report this afternoon.

At the afternoon session the convention will meet and effect a permanent organization. E. M. Haas of Richmond will be unanimously elected district chairman to succeed Owen L. Carr, then the resolutions will be reported and enthusiastically endorsed. These resolutions after touching upon currency legislation, the tariff and other subjects of national importance will endorse Vice President Fairbanks for the presidential nomination and James E. Watson's candidacy for governor. J. H. Tomlin will be endorsed for state school superintendent and Judge David Myers' candidacy for judge of the appellate court will also be sanctioned. Nearly all the prominent republicans of Wayne county are here today.

Cambridge City, Ind., Jan. 14.—(2 p. m.)—This afternoon amid much enthusiasm, Edgar M. Haas was elected district chairman by acclamation. His name was placed in nomination by Charles Stivers of Liberty, and the nomination was seconded by the chairman of every county delegation in the district. Mr. Haas, after his election made a short address.

John L. Rupe of Richmond, was elected permanent chairman of the convention. In a short address Mr. Rupe thanked the delegates for the

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