

Let's Hope the Stilts Don't Break

# Television Requires Changes In Political Conventions

Television has presented to the American people more intimate revelations of the operation of political conventions than ever before possible. Indeed, it is admitted that those who viewed the recent Republican and Democratic conventions in Chicago saw and heard more about it than those who were in personal attendance.

Exactly how the American people will react to what they saw and heard is, at this date, not known. But, from available comment thus far heard, it would seem to follow that professional politicians will have to operate more honestly to retain public confidence in political conventions, or they will have to prevent TV from conveying "what goes on".

OR, PERHAPS, it may become necessary to eliminate the convention system in nominating candidates for President and Vice-President, and resort to a direct primary election.

Personally, we do not believe that, if the convention system is retained, it can be leavened with more ethics and honesty. The very nature of politics—even in its best concept—is such that the selfishness and double-crossing, latent in human nature, cannot be outlawed.

To accomplish this kind of improvement, the nature of men and women in politics itself will have to be improved; in other words, if you would have political conventions operate within the meaning of the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule you will have to have people at conventions who have progressed to those heights of decency.

ALSO, HOW CAN you shorten traditional parliamentary procedures, anyway? Maybe the TV folks will cut out some of the slow routine, and dull portions of a convention, inter-lacing them with more interesting features and entertainment.

## Give 'Em Everything!

Those who advocate the extension of voting to all youth when 18 years of age also ought to grant this same youth many other rights now reserved only to people over 21. The right to vote implies that voters know enough about affairs of life to vote intelligently; or at least the 21-year-old limit implies that by that time normal people should know how to vote (though we all know many of them don't).

If 13-year-olds are allowed to vote, why

To eliminate the convention system, as many propose, and resort to a direct primary election would, in our opinion, be less free and democratic than the convention system. While the primary may work reasonably well within a state, to place it on a national level will be to put a great price on it. . . . for the cost of conducting a national primary automatically will eliminate potential candidates of modest means; it will tend to confine the list of candidates to those who can muster the wealth necessary to carry on such political action.

FOR EXAMPLE, in Michigan, to be a candidate for Governor one must file petitions containing a certain percentage of the number of votes cast at the last election for Secretary of State; within a state that chore is not impossible for candidates of modest means.

But to require candidates for President and Vice-President to file petitions containing a comparable percentage of the total votes cast for the last President, for example, would be a major task—with plenty of money needed to do it. That means, of course, that many otherwise potential candidates would be without opportunity of getting on the ballot.

IT IS AXIOMATIC of course, that the condition of a nation is no better, no worse, than the character, the will, and the actions of the people who constitute its population. The mere changing of the devices of nominating and electing men and women does not guarantee improvement in men and women.

Anyway, TV has performed a splendid job in acquainting voters with "what goes on in a convention"—at least most of it; though still remains the obscurity of "the smoke-filled rooms" . . . and that obscurity probably will remain so long as politicians smoke and sit around in rooms.

not let them marry at that age . . . let them legally sign contracts . . . let them buy intoxicating beverages, etc., etc.

After all, what is more important, more capable of affecting the life of a whole nation, than the ballot? Yes, Sir, those who advocate the right of 13-year-olds to vote (and we are not one of them yet) ought to consider them as adults, and grant them all the rights and privileges of adults.

## From The Eccentric's Point of View . . .

Gov. Adlai Stevenson, in his recent acceptance speech, uttered some good thoughts, excellently phrased. If his English is symptomatic of his character, he appears to be traveling in the wrong political company.

• A German hotel keeper (from which sector we do not know) loosed bedbugs in several rival hotels, was detected, arrested and fined. What a lousy thing to do!

• Can it be possible that only the eyes of mature Americans have seen the glory of this nation? Have the eyes of the youth seen only the words and actions of New-Fair Dealers who are presumed to be leading as away from the American way of life? Only history can tell that—and perhaps only youth can provide the final answer: for it is today's youth who will determine tomorrow's pattern of social, economic and political life.

• It is not the policy of people in general to shout at their customers, or find fault too often. Politicians are no different.

way. Both are after good will: the merchant sells them articles and calls them customers; the politician tries to "sell them promises", and calls them voters. The moral to this is this: if you, as a voter, are as careful in choosing a public official as you are in buying much of your merchandise, you'll probably get better government. But not until then!

Strange, indeed, are the current American Presidential political scenes. Both major parties have selected men in a manner unlike the traditional pattern. Gov. Stevenson didn't want the nomination . . . admitted this even after he was selected. Gen. Eisenhower, too, was nominated before his views on all subjects were known. Now both men will slug it out with speeches until the general election in November.

With so many unsolved domestic and world problems upon their collective desks, why—or why!—should the Truman administration be given the extra task of identifying those flying saucers.

## So They Say . . .

DR. H. PELLAR-STRECKER, Superintendent, British mental hospital: "She (woman) may have less need to fly to alcohol since she is the stronger sex."

Rheinischer Merkur, Coblenz (German) newspaper: "After a whole year of the American election campaign, the only thing clear to us is—that nothing is."



## Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned from Old Bits of The Eccentric—The Items That Make Up The Historical Background of The Birmingham Of Today.

**50 YEARS AGO**  
August 8, 1902  
The report of County Clerk George Brown shows a total population for Bloomfield township (of which the Village of Birmingham is a large part, 1,170) to be 2,296. The total valuation of the township is \$2,043,750.

Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Watkins are comfortably settled on their farm for the summer and are enjoying the cool breezes, the healthful air and the perfect bliss that comes to all good farmers.

There is no reason why we should not have a band in our town. There will be plenty of campaign music in demand this fall and if the boys will hustle the instruments in well will soon be in it.

On Monday afternoon there was lost between the Stanley farm and the postoffice, or between the postoffice and Gro Ferguson's a lady's blue Etan jacket and a child's long red coat with white collar. Please leave with the postmaster and receive a reward.

C. Judson Cummings, cashier of the new Citizens Savings bank at Holly, near Birmingham, high school boy and is well known in this vicinity. He has many best wishes for a successful career in the field of banking.

**20 YEARS AGO**  
August 11, 1932  
Genuine bromine and sulphur awast the streets in Birmingham. The firehouse treatment in the Knox-Poppleton area did little more than lick the birds' heads, so now more severe methods are planned. Fire Chief V. W. Griffin has revealed an excellent plan than the materials to be used.

Thursday will be children's day at the Oakland county fair which opened at Midford yesterday. All school children will be admitted free and several special attractions for their entertainment.

A Pontiac man has been arrested and fined \$25 for obtaining goods under false pretenses. The

## HORSE SENSE AND NONSENSE

BY ALICE E. MORGAN

Cliches. Much as I hate to say it, today's conversation has lost a great deal of its sparkle, gaiety and originality. You know what I mean—we're not creating new phrases of our own but using cliches which once were clever but now are really and truly worn pretty thin.

It goes without saying that the constant use of cliches, in the last analysis, does make the conversation of some of us pretty dull.

Each odd-idea one is guilty. Why? Who knows? Perhaps this vicious circle has come about through lack in our speakership. In this country, if teachers stressed more interest and study in words we might develop a more type of conversational vocabulary.

Be that as it may, there is also a certain responsibility on the speaker himself. In this country we are prone to idolize the man of the moment. Take my word for it, or check it yourself, let a famous person utter a new phrase, and within a week it has gone around the country by word of mouth.

WE MIGHT add insult to injury, so to speak, and say most of us are too lazy to think up new, sparkling combinations. So, when one comes along we grab it and use it, right up to the hilt.

Now this statement may be far from accurate and the cause of this mental laziness few and far between. If the truth were known, tonight may hold some people back.

They're scared to death at the attention they might attract if they accidentally gave birth to a new catch phrase. With this in mind they stumble through a maze of cliches, going from here to

## ONE THING OR ANOTHER

By George Wm. Averill

A visiting University of Michigan faculty member, who teaches regularly at a Philadelphia school, says Latin instructors should adopt a completely new method of teaching this ancient subject. He says the best approach to studying and learning Latin is to compare it with English, note the differences and emphasize the contrast between the two, not the similarities.

Professor, your approach is much easier than you may think. Just ask any 9th grader what the difference is—he can give you the contrast between the two in the first breath.

I've just finished reading "The Eisenhower Story." Now I'm in "The REAL Eisenhower." When I finish that, I'll be eagerly awaiting "The REAL, TRUE Eisenhower Story" as well as Pontiac Stanley轆轳.

How can an editor get across to his public, regular readers and occasional, his philosophy of handling news stories?

How to put it across in a manner which all possible antagonists would understand and accept in a temperate spirit?

Those questions I have sought to answer for some ages, yet had been unable to find a satisfactory presentation until this week.

Then I came across a booklet subtitled, "You and the Press," put out by the Railway Express Agency for its employees.

The booklet gives sound advice on dealing with the press, lists some "Don'ts" that a non-publicly-minded person, group or business organization

might keep in mind, too.)

THESE "DON'TS" are not exclusive with Railway Express, for a good number of other firms and groups have used them for some while—and have discovered the relations between the newspapers and company or group have improved materially. It is as if should be, for the benefits are mutual.

So if the reading public would accept this booklet, perhaps it will be accepted by and for the fellows who are not newspapermen.

Here is what Railway Express cautions: "Never try to get a news story published by going through the advertising manager, or through the business office.

"THE FACT that we advertise in a publication is no reason to expect it to publish our news stories.

"The fact that we do advertise will not be detrimental to the reception of our material but the editor is the judge of news and reprints any undue pressure.

"NEVER ASK a reporter or editor for a 'break' on a story. It will be published if it is interesting.

"Don't ask 'When will this appear?' 'Will you send me a clipping?' When it does appear?

"In other words don't ask for favors. Present news stories of public interest as an opportunity for the newspaper and the company.

"While reporters do not show copies of their story to anyone

but the editor before it is published, they will often call back to verify the accuracy of certain facts or statements. We should confine ourselves to verifications or correction of the facts.

"IN SPITE of every precaution taken by newspaper, mistakes do happen sometimes. If a mistake is important enough to warrant correction it is perfectly all right, courteously, to call the reporter's or editor's attention to the error.

"Don't blank a reporter or editor for printing a story. Their reaction is that the story was printed solely because it was interesting and not to make one person or company happy.

"However, if you are well acquainted with a reporter or writer, there is no harm in presenting him your best work, particularly well-written or prepared, there is no harm in presenting his expert workmanship."

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