

MINUTES OF THE NATIONAL TURNER CONVENTION IN PITTSBURGH, PA. 1854

RECORDED BY THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

THE FOLLOWING TURNER SOCIETIES WERE REPRESENTED:

Bloomington	E. Mueller	Pottsville	Felger
Boston	Weiss	Washington	Boernstein
Bridgeport	Sauerwein	Cincinnati	Bertsch
Brooklyn	Weiss	Cincinnati	Hofmann
Buffalo	Allgewaehr	Cincinnati	Werner
Hartford	Sauerwein	Cincinnati	Wiest
New Britain	Sauerwein	Cleveland	Heine
New Haven	Sauerwein	Dayton	Vom Hofe
New York	Kaufman	Hamilton Rossville	Hoffmann
New York	Jegel	Indianapolis	Krebs
New York	E. Mueller	Louisville	Frey
Rochester	Schultz	New York	Bertsch
Stapelton	Weiss	Portsmouth	Wiest
Williamsburgh	Weiss	Terre Haute	Krebs
Baltimore	Finkeldey	Toledo	Boebel
Elizabethtown	Felger	Wheeling	Fischer
Newark	Felger	Chicago	Boebel
Philadelphia	Frey	Milwaukee	Boebel
Philadelphia	Schultz	St. Louis	Stiefel
Pittsburgh	Vom Hofe	Savannah	Sichel

Philadelphia Social Turnverein (not belonging to the National Turnerbund) was represented by Voight.

The National Turner Executive Committee was represented by the 1st Speaker, W. Rapp and the Secretary, W. Bach.

CONVENTION SESSION OF SEPTEMBER 11th - A.M.

Welcome address was given by 1st Speaker, Turner Rapp.

The following officers were elected:

1st Speaker	-	Kaufman
2nd Speaker	-	Sauerwein
1st Secretary	-	Bertsch
2nd Secretary	-	Schultz
3rd Secretary	-	Bach

The Credential Committee appointed by the First Speaker consisted of: Turners Jegel, Schultz and Wiest. They reported that all credentials were in order.

1st Speaker Rapp gave his yearly report as follows:

He started with the unpleasant part - finances. The National Executive Committee was very disturbed about the careless book-keeping of the National Treasurer, Pohlig, which made it impossible to give a correct report of the treasury. Then, too, the societies were slow in remitting national dues. This left our National Treasury without funds.

In addition, the cost of the drill regulation books amounted to \$237.53. However, he hoped that the cost would be met through the sale of this work. He urged this convention to make an effort to encourage the use of the drill regulation book by all societies to develop outstanding military personnel.

The official organ of the Turners, Turnzeitung, increased its circulation from 2000 last year to 3,500 this year. Poor transportation facilities always hindered the publishing office. The editor had to refrain from printing anything that would involve turners in the political situation due to recent developments in party politics.

It was of first order that this convention take steps to look into this political development.

The Circuit System's attempt to ease up business transactions and to gain closer relations with one another was not a success, as far as we can observe. However, it may not be the fault of the system but more because of the impractical organization of states instead of cities and the neglected payment of society dues. Most likely, it will be necessary to make many changes in the Circuit System.

The national officers had many unpleasant situations. It was proposed that the only solution was to make a ruling that only one society of the National Turnverein could exist in one place. It was suggested that if local arrangement does not permit a unification, a turner branch be organized as a solution.

As our statistical record will show we have admitted 18 societies to our National Turnerbund within ten months. There are now 62 turner societies and we are certain that there will be a large increase in the near future.

Turner Kaufman requested that all business transactions, especially the business of our National Turnerbund and the revision of the Constitution except for the revision of the books be discussed first. Motion carried.

The Auditing Committee appointed by the 1st Speaker consisted of Turners Jegel and Wiest.

Turner Voight stated that he was instructed to ask that the Social-Turngemeinde of Philadelphia be admitted to the National Turnerbund. He asked permission to have his request acted upon at once.

Speaker Rapp reported on the effort made by the National Committee to settle the dispute in Philadelphia. As was known, the previous turner convention rejected the request of the Social-Turngemeinde for membership in the National Turnerbund. For this reason, this society could not become a member unless it was able to settle its differences with the Philadelphia turner societies. The national committee made every effort to effect this. The main obstacle was the attitude of Louis Winters, a member of the Social-Turngemeinde, toward other societies. However, his society stood behind him because he was obtaining great results as their turn-teacher. Turner Schultz, a neutral turner to the above dispute having moved from New Haven to Philadelphia, was able to effect a peaceful understanding and with the aid of the national committee effect a unification.

Turner Schultz, chairman of the joint committee, reported as follows: The Social Demokrat Turgemeinde requested that: it retain its name and its constitution, its possessions which were taken from it at the time of its separation be returned, Turner Theodore Schmitt be expelled from the Social Turngemeinde for embezzlement, Turner Winter join the new society, and permission be granted to amend its constitution.

Turner Voight reported that the main points to be considered for the Social-Turngemeinde were to: 1) dissolve both societies, organize a new name, and set up a new constitution, 2) admit Turner Winters to the new society as an honorary member.

Turner Schultz defended the requests of the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde. It was deemed unwise to admit Winters as an honorary member because the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde did not trust him. Winters was to be admitted as an honorary member because he was previously an honorary member of the Social Turngemeinde.

Turner Frey stated that the name, Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde could not be changed without changing its constitution. The charter members of the Social Turngemeinde owed money to the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde for dues and ball tickets.

Turner Voight stated that a request for payment of such debt could not be made because most of these members no longer resided in Philadelphia.

Turner Frey remarked that the charter members of the Social-Turngemeinde were expelled from the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde for non-payment of dues.

Turner Schultz stated that two members of the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde were suspended for a period of six months because of underhanded actions in the society. Because of this 17 others also left the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde without paying their dues. This made it necessary to expel all of them according to constitutional proceedings.

Turner Rapp stated the crux of the whole situation were the questions of society names and Turner Winter's actions. The national

committee had to favor the request of the Social-Demokrat Turn-gemeinde because this society was incorporated. This was a valuable asset for them.

Turner Voigt stated: the members of the Social-Turngemeinde requested that they have as before equal rights in the new society. Winters was willing to reject the honorary membership. High acclaim was given to the national committee for their untiring efforts to effect a peaceful solution.

It is a pity that the efforts were unsuccessful for the national committee did not accept the request of the Social-Turngemeinde for membership in the National Turnverein.

Turner Rapp stated: while the Social-Turngemeinde broke down the bridge to unite they also retarded the possibility of creating mutual understanding. The national committee could do nothing but refuse their request because the Cleveland convention decided that the Social-Turngemeinde could not be admitted as a member of the National Turnverein unless there were a mutual understanding with the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde.

Turner Jegel made this motion: The action of the National Executive Committee in the above situation earns a vote of approval by the convention. Motion carried.

Turner Heine asked if both societies would unite according to the rules laid down by the National Executive Committee.

Turner Schultz stated that he was not definitely instructed by his society but believed that a consolidation was possible due to certain rules.

Turner Voigt was also without authority from his society because he had been asked to come only to assist in adding the admittance of the Social-Turngemeinde as a member of the National Turnerbund.

Turner Kaufmann remarked that it was regrettable that the Social-Turngemeinde did not accept the offer of the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde. The latter was absolutely within its rights. After receiving their charter the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde persisted in the stand on the present situation because of the existence of the Knownothing evil. At this time the incorporation of a radical foreign society would be unwise. What the result would be was clearly shown by the situation of the New York Turners efforts to incorporate. The speaker asked Turner Voigt for a clear-cut statement as to whether a consolidation of the two societies were possible under the rules laid down by the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde.

Later a motion was made and carried that only one society of the National Turnerbund could exist where the National Headquarters was situated. All societies were requested to work toward amalgamation of the two societies.

Turner Voigt stated: this plan would cause many difficulties for the Social-Turngemeinde. It was possible that some members would not cooperate to effect a unity and would not release some of their possessions even though the majority were in favor of the union.

Turner Kaufmann stated: Members who do not comply with the majority rule have no claim on the society property.

Turner Fischer stated: the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde was within its rights but insistence on back dues should not be allowed.

Turner Sauerwein showed the importance of possessing a charter by an example from Connecticut. If a society changed its name it would lose its charter and its existence would be impaired.

Speaker Rapp asked Turner Voigt if Turner Theodore Schmidt were still a member of his society.

Turner Voigt answered that he believed that he would be expelled in the next meeting. He also remarked that it might have already been done.

Turner Wiest made this motion: The convention requests that the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde in Philadelphia effect an amalgamation of both societies. Motion carried.

The National Turner Convention informed Turner Kaufmann that he was delegated with the duty of effecting the amalgamation of the Social-Turngemeinde and the Social-Democrat Turngemeinde.

Speaker Rapp permitted Turner Voigt to take part in the discussion but denied him the privilege of voting. Motion carried.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION

Turner Boerstein reported that a controversy existed between his society, the National Executive Committee and the district officer of Baltimore. Three members of the Washington society were suspended. They appealed to the national committee and district officers stating that their constitutional rights were not observed because a 2/3 majority was needed to suspend them from membership. Boernstein stated that their statement was correct in part but that it could be proven that a 2/3 vote was made for their suspension.

Speaker Rapp made it clear that according to 83 of the Constitution societies were under the jurisdiction of the national committee only in questions relating to national affairs. The national committee has no right to interfere if a society expels any member according to its own rules and regulations. However, the national committee has the right to step in if a member is expelled by sidestepping the constitution, in order to uphold the republic principles embodied in the national and society constitutions. For this reason it was the duty of the national and district officers to confirm the action of this society.

Turner Boernstein presented a document which stated that at least 2/3 of the membership of the Washington society voted for the suspension of the three turners.

The convention and national speaker were satisfied with the report.

Speaker Rapp stated: a similiar controversy existed between the national committee and the turner society in Savannah. Two suspended turners appealed to the national committee because the reason for their suspension was that they did not recognize their newly elected board. They claimed the board was elected irregularly. The National Executive Committee instructed the district officers in Charleston to investigate. The district officers reported that the election of board members was not held according to the rules. Therefore, there was no justification for the suspension of the two members. The Turnverein in Savannah appealed this decision to the National Executive Committee. This group was willing to investigate the situation again from the beginning. It requested the society to submit the minutes of the meeting in which this election was recorded.

The district office would not allow a copy, made by a member of this board, to be mailed to the national committee. The society in Savannah rejected this request and stated they would sever all relations with the district office. The society took this standpoint without the district office and outside the National Executive Committee. The national committee wanted to know if a society belonging to the National Turnerbund has a rights to break the rules of the national constitution.

Turner Sichel stated that the ruling made by the district office was unfair. The new board was within its rights in spite of the belated protest of the two members. One of the two suspended members acknowledged that he, as secretary, recorded the election of the new board in the Secretary's Book for the society and in addition he recorded a good wish for all the new board members. (Sichel showed the Secretary's Book to the convention).

It was decided that the district officers had no right to sanction the suspension of the two members because no injustice was done. 83 of the National Constitution states, a society is only responsible to the national committee if the controversy regards national affairs. This was true in the case of the Savannah society. No one can blame this society for not wanting to have anything to do with the Charleston District Office which was so unjust. It was recorded that the Savannah society has always cooperated with the National Executive Committee.

The Savannah representative also stated that they disapproved of the action of the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde of Philadelphia in reinstating one of their suspended members.

Turner Heine also stated his surprise at such action.

Speaker Rapp stated: the turner society in Philadelphia was within its rights because Sprenger was cleared through the district officers

of Charleston. He also stated that Sprenger always acted like a gentleman during his stay in Philadelphia.

Turners Frey and Schultz stated: the Philadelphia society admitted Sprenger after a probation period and with the recommendation of the district officers. Sprenger earned his welcome because of his personal cooperation and action. As the situation now stands Philadelphia was ready and willing to reach an understanding in Sprenger's case.

Turner Jegel made this motion: the convention requests the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde in Philadelphia to effect an agreement in Turner Sprenger's case. Motion carried.

Turner Sichel was willing to clear up the situation in the name of his society in Philadelphia.

Speaker Rapp was satisfied that the district systems in the south were not practical after he listened to Sichel's explanation and examined the secretary's book. He also stated that Savannah followed poor practices when at various times it made insulting remarks to the national committee.

Turner Kaufmann remarked that societies making unpleasant and nasty remarks about their national officers showed very poor taste.

Turner Wiest reported on behalf of the Cincinnati Turnverein that Louis Schneider, a member of the Chillicothe Turnverein also showed poor taste by sending letters to the Cincinnati Turnverein containing insulting remarks. He also wrote an article for the Ohio Correspondent in which he ridiculed these turners.

Turner Krebs confirmed these statements.

Turner Werner stated: the article was only signed as S., but it was established that the writer was Schneider through a reliable

source, a member of the Chillicothe society.

Speaker Rapp recalled that this scandal was printed in many Western papers and in the end led to an attack on the whole National Turnerbund.

Turner Kaufmann stated: the Chillicothe Turnverein was responsible for the unturner-like behavior of one of its members. It was an act unbecoming to a turner. If a society or a member of a society has criticisms to make, it is his privilege to refer them to the national committee instead of making an issue of it in public papers.

Kaufmann made this motion: this convention goes on record as disapproving the actions of the Chillicothe Turnverein if they do not at once stop Louis Schneider's actions and require him to give an account of his unturner-like actions. Carried.

Turner Wiest criticized the carelessness in the publishing office of the turner paper.

Turner Bach made a plea for justice in this case. We must remember that the publisher must fold, cut and mail papers not only to 62 turner societies but also to societies which do not belong to the National Turnerbund and many exchange papers. This takes time. As is also known, the postal service is slow.

Turner Sauerwein praised the publishing office.

Turner Kaufmann stated that he knew the shortcomings of the American Post from his own experience and promised to give detailed suggestions regarding quicker deliveries to our national committee.

Turner Boebel hoped that the editor of the turnerpaper would publish more political articles.

Speaker Rapp answered Boebel's remark with the statement that proper explanation was made in the yearly report.

Turners Wiest, Werner and Hofmann wanted to know whether a turner could become a member of more than one turner society.

Turner Werner made this motion: a turner can only be a member of one Turnverein. Motion carried.

Turner Kaufmann introduced Turner Warmkessel from New York to the convention. Warmkessel, who recently returned from the West, gave a promising report on the growth of new turner societies in the West to the convention. He specifically named Dubuque, Iowa, where he found new turner societies which were willing to join the National Turnerbund.

The national committee was requested to send the necessary forms for joining to these societies.

At this time the convention took up the revision of the Constitution.

Turner Werner made a motion to strike out the phrase in the introduction "for oneself or through the Turnerbund." This motion was lost.

Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 5 were left the same. The discussion of paragraphs 4 and 10 was tabled. Later the question relating to the western district was discussed. Necessary changes had to be made.

Speaker Rapp made a motion to strike out paragraph 6 because it was impractical and injurious. It was necessary to stop all the squabbling and disputes in certain places, once and for all. This can only be accomplished if we permit only one turner society belonging to the National Turnerbund to exist in one city. If there were more than one turner society not belonging to the National Turnerbund in one city it is possible that the better turners would unite with the National Turnverein. The national society can easily do without those turners who place personal interest above national interest.

Turners Jegel and Mueller seconded the motion.

It was mentioned that this motion should not have the power to rule for present societies as the New York Bloomingdale Turnverein which was on friendly terms with its neighbor, the New York Turnverein. This ruling would force one of these societies to resign from the National Turnerbund.

Turner Kaufmann amended Rapp's motion as follows: the turner societies, belonging to the National Turnerbund, in large cities may form branch societies. The motion with this amendment was carried.

Paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 of the new constitution remained unchanged.

Regarding paragraph 9, Turner Finkeldey requested that the decision made at the Cleveland Convention recommending the establishment of sick benefit branches be definitely acted upon by the national convention. Motion carried.

Paragraph 11 remained unchanged.

Regarding paragraph 12, Turner Bertsch made a motion making the following changes: societies are instructed to submit their reports to National Headquarters half-yearly instead of quarterly. He stated that the quarterly reports were drawn out repetitions and consumed valuable space in our National turnerpaper. Motion carried.

Paragraph 13 remained unchanged.

CONVENTION MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 12TH, A.M.

The report of the Auditing Committee (Jegel and Wiest) was received. They reported that the treasurer's books were in very poor condition. The former treasurer, Pohlig, had no knowledge of bookkeeping. Everything was mixed up and no one could make

head or tails of his entries. The payments for the turnerpaper, turnbooks, drill books, signal horns, etc., were not classified. It would take days not hours to interpret his books. At present it was not possible to tell what amount we had in our treasury so it could not now be stated, due to his carelessness, whether or not the treasury had a deficit. The committee recommended that the National Committee hire a good bookkeeper to organize a good bookkeeping system. In addition it recommended that Pohlig be firmly reprimanded.

Turner Wiest, at this time, made a motion that all national officers be reproved. It is their responsibility to check the actions and duties of the treasurer. Therefore, they have been lax in their duties.

Speaker Rapp stated that Pohlig was elected treasurer by the Philadelphia society because his actions as a business man seemed to indicate his ability to fill the office of treasurer in a businesslike manner. He also stated that Pohlig fulfilled his duties as treasurer of his own Turnverein honestly. It was only within the last two months that they were chagrined to discover Pohlig could not be trusted. Pohlig resigned as treasurer in the latter part of July probably because of his discovery and his guilt. The Philadelphia society appointed Turner Edward Herrlein as the new treasurer. He made every effort to straighten the books. However, it was not possible for him to make a yearly report at this time due to the disorder of the books and his own business obligations.

The Auditing Committee also stated it would take a long time to reorganize the books due to the difficulties involved. Unfortunately Herrlein was ill and couldn't personally defend himself.

He cannot be held responsible for the mistakes of his predecessor nor should the national offices be criticized. The individual members are not jointly guilty. This was shown at the last convention when they praised treasurer Peterson alone and reprimanded the secretary of the New York Executive Board.

The fact is not established that the national treasury suffered a loss through Pohlrig's mismanagement. If a deficit is discovered there are ways to make Pohlrig reimburse the treasury. In conclusion the Speaker protested in earnest against the Wiest motion. The convention should be just. Men who have served faithfully and have never done anything that would cast the shadow of a doubt on their character should not be held responsible for the dishonest act of one person.

Turner Jegel stated that he was opposed to the motion that the national committee be reprimanded. The society where the national committee is situated should be held responsible not the national committee.

Turner Kaufman stated that legally we could prove that the individual members of the national committee could be held responsible for one another as stated in paragraph 18 of the constitution, but we should consider the whole situation and try to be fair. Nowhere was it stated that all members of the national committee should have business training. This was required only in the office of the treasurer. There was no proof of neglect of duty by our national committee as such, therefore, we should not be too free to pass judgment on their guilt. The major blame rests with Pohlrig. The Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde in Philadelphia should take proper steps in this matter. This society was lax in

auditing the treasurer's books. These rules are established in paragraph 18 of the constitution.

Turner Frey made a plea to be fair in judging the Speaker as he should not be held responsible for the action of each individual officer.

Turner Sichel stated: it was out of the question to censor the national committee. If anyone other than Pohlig was reprimanded it should be the Auditing Committee appointed by the Philadelphia society to audit the treasurer's books quarterly. We were very unlucky in the choice of the Auditing Committee. Had they been efficient they would have detected earlier the mistakes in the books. No one could foresee that this honorable and proficient organization would make an unwise choice.

Turner Schultz stated: the Philadelphia society sent him here to defend his society but not to whitewash its mistakes. The previous speaker had made it clear that his society was questioned because of the appointment of an incapable Auditing Committee. He, the delegate from the society in question, made a motion that the convention send a reprove to the Social-Demokrat Turngemeinde in Philadelphia. He stated that it is better to recognize our own mistakes than to have others point them out to us. Without a doubt it would be well for this convention to see the mistakes made by his society in a milder light. He was also positive that the members who gave him the mandate to appear here would sanction his actions with a large majority.

Turner Heine seconded his motion.

Turner Kaufmann stated: the proposal of the convention Auditing Committee to submit the treasurer's books to a bookkeeper

who is an expert in his field is very good. He asked for permission to locate a suitable person for this task in Philadelphia where he is acquainted. As a last resort the books could be submitted to the former treasurer, Peterson, in New York.

Turners Hoffmann, Werner and Wiest were in favor of having the books audited in Philadelphia. The revision of the books in New York would be too troublesome because whenever an explanation was needed letters would have to be exchanged between Philadelphia and New York.

Turner Schultz believed that Philadelphia had many good bookkeepers. If Kaufmann could not find one the local society would surely make every effort to secure a good man who could correct the mistakes.

Turner Boebel was also in favor of having the revision done in Philadelphia.

Turner Wienst asked to have his motion censoring the national committee cancelled.

The motion made by the Auditing Committee of the convention to reprimand Pohlrig was unanimously adopted in the following form:

The convention should inform the previous National Executive Treasurer, Pohlrig, that he is severely reprimanded for carelessly and unfaithfully keeping the National Executive Treasury Books. At the same time the convention requested the Philadelphia society to have Pohlrig punished for the inaccuracy in the books.

Turner Schultz motion: the convention reprimands the Social-Democrat Turngemeinde in Philadelphia for their careless choice of an Auditing Committee. Carried.

Turner Kaufmann was instructed to submit the treasury books

Turner Frey stated: he was instructed by his Louisville society to criticize the National Executive Committee because after several requests they neglected publishing the name of a turner suspended from the organization. He, Frey, presented this request against his own decision because he knew the national committee was blameless in this situation.

Speaker Rapp stated: in answer, that the suspension was not published because the committee could not publish this suspension in the turner paper without first investigating it according to section 2 of the By-Laws. This request was received for the first time in the latter part of August and the suspension was then published in the September issue of the turner paper. The motion from Louisville was lost.

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The convention continued its session with the revision of the constitution. The discussion of Executive and Convention was tabled until a settlement was reached concerning the District System.

Turner Shultz stated: the results of the District System did not meet expectations. He did not recall that it effected any closer relationships between societies. Also, it necessitated more work for the national committee because of the added amount of business and letter writing. He believed it would be more efficient if the national committee took care of all the business transactions. Furthermore, the large societies did not need a commission to assist the smaller societies. They were morally bound and by the national constitution mandate to do so. For the above reasons he made a motion to eliminate the District System.

Turner Edward Mueller was also opposed to the District System. It was unnecessary for the large societies to support the small societies, they could be assisted by the larger societies without a District System. He supported this with the example of the New York society which greatly assisted many of the small societies which asked for help. It was not necessary to have an authorization for this help. In this respect the district division was more of a hindrance than a help. Some societies such as Unionville and Newark were in the Baltimore District which was too distant.

Turners Wiest, Bertsch, Werner and Höffmann objected to the abolishment of the District System. In the west it was very satisfactory. All these societies transacted their business through the District Office in Cincinnati and thus were able to relieve the national committee of much detail. It was also possible to recruit many new societies to the national turner movement through the aid of the District Office. Contact with the national committee was very difficult due to the geographical situation and transportation facilities. The present poorly organized District System could be easily changed for the better. The west should and must have a District System.

Turner Sichel stated: the District System was of no use to the south. The Savannah society preferred to deal with the national committee wherever it was situated.

Turner Jegel stated: in principle, the District System was good and worked very well in the east. The only mistake was in the impractical organization. The districts should be organized as cities not as states. In this way traveling expenses could be reduced.

Turner Bach stated that he could see no advantage in having the District System.

Turner Steifel stated: In the west the District System was an advantage and many societies were urged to join by the district.

Turner Frey stated that the Louisville society, although in the west, instructed him to vote in opposition to the District System.

Turner Boebel made an urgent request to retain the District System.

Turner Finkeldey stated: if the District System did not meet expectations it was the fault of the many societies which did not cooperate with the district officers.

Turner Rapp stated: In his yearly report he may have been too harsh on the District System. He had had no opportunity to evaluate the districts' efforts in the west. Through the statements of the delegates from the west he was convinced that the District System was of great importance to them. In the east, however, the system was unnecessary. The majority of delegates from the west were in favor of the District System and those from the east opposed to it, as instructed by their societies. He mentioned this only to discover whether this convention could reach an understanding to retain the District System in the west and abolish it in the east. If we entirely abolished the District System we would do an injustice to the west, on the other hand retaining it would be harmful to the east. His motion considered the interests of both sides and worked for the unity of the national organization.

Turner Kaufmann stated that the only solution was to differentiate between the interests of the west and east. For this

reason he made a motion to continue the discussion with the object of abolishing the District System in the east and reorganizing the District System in the west according to cities not states because of the difficulty in transportation.

Turner Schultz recinded his motion in favor of Kaufmann's. This motion was carried.

The following societies were voted to the District Board of Directors - Cincinnati, St. Louis, New Orleans, Chicago and San Francisco.

Kaufmann appointed a committee consisting of Turners Bertsch, Boebel, Jegel, Werner and Wiest who would make suggestions in the formation of the District System in the west taking into consideration railroad and postal transportation.

#### P. M. SESSION

The committee appointed at the closing of the morning session made its report regarding the District System in the west. This was adopted and made paragraph 23 of the new National Constitution.

Besides the societies of the east and west the following societies were now outside the District System and were required to negotiate directly with the national committee: Augusta, Georgia; Charleston, S. C.; Richmond, Va.; Savannah, Ga.; and Wheeling, Va.

The convention continued with the revision of the National Constitution regarding paragraph 14.

Turner Rapp made a motion to increase the number of executive officers to nine so that a third Secretary and a second Treasurer could be added. Because of the rapid growth of the National Turnerbund and its rapidly increasing business it was essential that such action be taken. Motion carried.

Paragraph 14 was thus amended.

Paragraph 15 was changed from "this society or these societies" to "this society" because in the future there would be only one turner society of the National Turnerbund in one city.

Paragraphs 16 and 17 remained unchanged.

Paragraph 18 was clarified. The national committee as to paragraph 10, the societies would submit only half yearly reports to the turnerpaper.

Turner Wiest made a motion that the turner society which houses the national committee be held responsible for the proper recording of national turner books and for the national treasury. Wiest hoped that in this way all irregularities, as in the case in Philadelphia, would be forever eliminated.

Paragraph 19 was changed by Wiest's motion as follows: The voting of the convention will be done in this manner: the total vote of every organization will not be required in every case but only on request.

Wiest considers this method of voting troublesome and time consuming when considering minor questions.

In addition regarding Kaufmann's motion to change the rules making a 2/3 majority vote necessary, it was decided that all voting in the convention would be by a majority vote.

Paragraph 20 was changed by a motion by Turner Rapp. Hereafter the word, convention, should be used instead of the word, meeting.

Paragraph 21 remained unchanged.

Paragraph 22 was eliminated by a motion by Kaufmann because it is a repetition of paragraph 16.

Paragraph 23 was changed to paragraph 22.

Paragraph 24 was changed to paragraph 23.

Paragraph 25 was changed to paragraph 24. Jegel made a motion to add to paragraph 24: societies are at liberty to establish the number of district officers, if necessary, and the district officers will submit a quarterly report to their turner societies.

Paragraph 26 was changed to paragraph 25. Rapp made the motion that all dues be remitted directly to the National Treasurer instead of the District Office receiving the quarterly dues of the societies. Motion carried.

Paragraph 27, now paragraph 26, was changed by a motion by Kaufmann: the district should be re-imbursed for the expenses of small societies by the national treasury and that they should not be permitted to collect the quarterly dues and retain 2/3 of this fund, as the previous Circuit Office rules allowed. He, also, made an additional motion providing that the compensation bill presented to the national committee by the district could not exceed 2/3 of the quarterly dues received by the national treasurer in order to prevent a district having too great expenses.

Paragraph 28 and paragraph 29 were unnecessary due to previous action.

#### REVISION OF THE BY-LAWS

To paragraph 1, paragraphs 2 and 4 were added by a motion from Finkeldey.

Paragraphs 2 and 3 remained unchanged.

To paragraph 4 it was added by a motion by Kaufmann and Rapp that the societies should remit their money to the national committee only through safe channels (per Express). Those making the motion

objected to the carelessness of some societies in sending large sums of money in a regular envelope with no insurance. It was shown that the national treasury lost considerable sums of money in this way.

Turner Heine and Weiss stated that they knew this was true.

Turner Wiest made an additional motion that societies which remitted their money through unsafe methods so that it was not received by the national treasury are held responsible for the loss. The national treasury should not suffer by such action. Motion carried.

Regarding paragraph 5 which deals with military rules, Boernstein made this statement; societies who are not financially able to purchase weapons should organize as militia companies.

Sichel warned the societies against such a move. He stated that in the southern states every citizen is requested to be a member of the militia and he knows the "sweetness" that comes from such an experience.

Turner Jegel also warned them against such a move because of the necessity to abandon free business, and because in many states the Knownothings are gaining strength.

Boernstein asked the question whether the Washington society could have the privilege of organizing as a militia company.

The question was answered in the affirmative by the convention.

Sauerwein was instructed to work toward getting military equipment for turners.

Turner Frey made a motion to instruct turner societies to have military exercises, shooting practice and weapons instruction according to Sigel's military rules. It would be out of the question to arm all members of the national Turnerbund at this time. First it

was necessary for each turner to learn military tactics and discipline. It would not be possible to have well trained soldiers without having preparatory exercises. However, shooting practice could be organized. Societies could purchase guns in Philadelphia for \$15.00 each.

Turner Edward Mueller seconded Frey's motion, but also emphasized the importance of fencing. He recommended that larger societies engage Turner Sigel from New York as their fencing instructor.

Turners Schultz and Rapp seconded this motion but expressed regret that at this time the National Turnerbund could not give real support to this undertaking.

Turner Hoffmann stated: at this time it wasn't necessary to hire an instructor because every large society had trained soldiers who could give a preparatory course in military training.

Turner Boebel stated: we should not forget that turning is of first importance. At this time the smaller societies who are as yet not far advanced in training could not do much with military training.

The motions of Turners Frey and Edward Mueller were adopted and paragraph 5 accordingly framed.

Turner Bertsch made a motion that once a year the turnerpaper should have a supplementary sheet giving pyramid drawings. Carried as of paragraph 6.

Turner Sauerwein stated that the smaller societies in the west receive excellent assistance through the District System but we should also consider societies in the east which are in need of good instructors.

Turner Jegel stated that help could be found easily. In many of the larger societies there were good turners who could be used to help small societies, for a small fee. In a short time these leaders would develop good turners. He made a motion that small societies be instructed to ask the larger societies for leaders. Carried as of paragraph 7.

Turner Finkeldey made a motion that all turners should become citizens of the United States as soon as possible.

Turners Kaufmann, Sauerwein and Edward Mueller seconded this motion.

Turners Jegel and Werner were opposed to this motion. They believed that such a request would act as a guide for their political beliefs.

Turner Rapp stated: the request should be made because many people must be urged to take steps to become citizens because of their lethargic attitude. The introductory paragraph of the National Constitution requests that the National Executive Committee effect the participation of all members in political reforms. This, however, was not possible unless they are citizens and have the right to vote.

The motion made by Finkeldey was carried as of paragraph 8.

Turner Rapp: As was known, Turner Schnauffer's prize song was set to music by Mr. Leuschow in Baltimore. He was willing to submit his composition to the National Executive Committee. These could be obtained easily from the Baltimore society. He suggested that turner singing sections be requested to practice this song.

Turner Finkeldey stated: the Baltimore society was willing to do its part and would assist the national committee, if necessary.

Turner Rapp's motion was carried as paragraph 9.

Turner Kaufmann made a motion that not only the National Headquarters but also each turner society should establish a library. Especially, books on welfare, outstanding classical German works and standard authors should be obtained. Carried as paragraph 10.

Turner Rapp made a motion amending the rule that every year a Turnfest should be held thus: that a Turnfest should be held one year in the east and the next year in the west. Carried as paragraph 11.

The decision of the Cleveland Convention regarding the distribution of prizes at the Turnfest was retained as paragraph 12.

Paragraph 13 - Cincinnati was chosen for the next Turnfest.

Paragraph 14 - Turners Wiest, Bertsch, Werner and Hoffmann proposed Cincinnati for the next national convention. However, Turner Allgewaehr made a motion to hold it in Buffalo, New York. The latter received a majority of 3 votes. Buffalo was chosen.

Paragraph 15 - The old regulations were kept intact as to the time for the Turnfest and Convention.

#### REVISION OF THE RULES OF THE NATIONAL TURNER PAPER

Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the present fixed rule remained as paragraph 2. However, the decision that the paper be printed twice a month was omitted.

Turners Kaufmann and Finkeldey made this motion: from November 1st the turnerpaper should be larger in size, should have smaller type and should appear every week. Kaufmann explained the motion in the following way. The national paper

must keep step with the national growth of the turner movement and must be a source of outgoing propaganda. A discussion of daily political questions would be almost entirely out of the question in a bi-monthly publication. This was considered of utmost importance. The turnerpaper already has 3,500 subscribers and these could easily be increased through the action of good agents. Ads should be obtained to reduce the cost. This could be the means of collecting large sums of money.

Turner Allgewaehr stated: this plan was very good but either the cost for a single copy should be reduced or the decision made that societies should not be required to subscribe to it according to their membership. It is too much of a burden on small societies. He made a motion to reduce the cost of an issue to 2 cents.

Turner Heine also objected to the decision that subscriptions be made according to the membership of societies.

Turner Kaufmann stated: turners who have the welfare of our Turnerbund at heart will gladly pay this small amount. Everyone could pay the total cost of 12¢ a month. If it is too much of a burden, he could drink 2 or 3 glasses of beer less a month. He was opposed to the motion made by Turner Allgewaehr and made this motion that a reduction in the price of the paper be made if it was done by obtaining more ads. This should be determined by the national committee.

The motion made by Allgewaehr was rejected. Kaufmann's motion was carried as paragraph 3.

Turners Wiest and Werner believed that the convention should discuss the political policy of the paper.

Turner Jegel stated: in the first place it was important for the turnerpaper to remain neutral.

Turner Rapp was in accord with this statement but mentioned that Jegel did not mean indifference. He meant that we should not join a definite political party instead we should discuss the pros and cons of all political questions. In this way every turner could be guided in deciding which political group to join when he was ready.

Jegel was satisfied with the above explanation.

Kaufmann was also satisfied with the above statement. We should remain neutral until the next convention, at which time the agitation for a new President of the United States would have started. By then the political situation should be more clear and firm so the turner organization could take an active part in this election.

Rapp's interpretation of our political policy was in accord with our introduction to the National Turnerbund Constitution so our stand as to the political party of our paper should be neutral. He made a motion for a special paragraph whereby the turnerpaper must be edited according to the rule of the introduction to our Constitution. Carried paragraph 4.

#### SESSION OF SEPTEMBER 13TH

The convention Secretaries, Bertsch and Bach, read the minutes of the convention. A vote was made to print the minutes of the convention and the National Turnerbund Constitution. This was made a constitutional rule - By-Law - paragraph 17.

Turner Wiest stated: the Dayton society had instructed him to ask the convention for the sum of \$75.00 in order to purchase

a turner hall. If it was granted the money would be taken from the treasury of the Cincinnati Circuit Office.

A motion from Kaufmann rejected this request as impractical.

Turner Rapp reported to the convention on the situation in Philadelphia regarding many of the home and outside turners. These were the events that took place before the fourth Turnfest. Without question, it was the police officers who were responsible for the riot. Because there was definite proof it was recommended that the turners start criminal proceedings in Hoboken, Baltimore, Centrestreet and Philadelphia in order to get satisfaction. If the proceedings against the police were started, the Social-Democrat Turngemeinde of Philadelphia should receive financial support and should be informed that this was a national function not merely a society function.

The convention now voted for its National Executive Committee. Philadelphia was again elected. By-Law - paragraph 16.

Speaker Kaufmann expressed his sincere thanks to the Pittsburgh societies for the friendly visit of all delegates.

Turner Vom Hofe expressed his regret that the Pittsburgh societies were not able to do more. Many turners stated it was not necessary to make such remarks because they felt that the Pittsburgh societies had done much to make things pleasant for the delegates.

Secretary Bach was given instructions to thank the Germans in Pittsburgh through the German papers.

Speaker Kaufmann then thanked the delegates for their fine turnerlike attitude and wished them a safe journey. He then adjourned the convention.