

TURNER CONVENTION AT BUFFALO, N. Y.

SEPTEMBER 24 TO 27 - 1855

MINUTES PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICE

THE FOLLOWING TURNER SOCIETIES WERE REPRESENTED:

Baltimore	Louis Gondina	Poughkeepsie	Peterson
Boston	Huth	Richmond	Jos. Sichel
Bridgeport	P. M. Peterson	Rochester	Fr. Buchheke
Brooklyn	F. Weis	Savannah	Jos. Sichel
Buffalo	H. Allgewaehr	Stapleton, St. J.	Fr. Weis
Buffalo	Meier	Syracuse	Baumgras
Buffalo	Wertsch	Washington	Fr. Braun
Charesten	Fetzer	Waterbury	F. Tresch
Wedham	Huth	Wheeling	Rich. Fischer
Erie	Fr. Messmer	Williamsburgh	Aug. Irmscher
Harlem	F. Fauerbach	Cincinnati	F. Bertsch
Hartford	F. Tresch	Cincinnati	G. Tafel
Marisiana	Ed. Mueller	Cincinnati	W. Pfaender
Newark	Fr. Weis	Cincinnati	M. Jacobi
New Britain	F. Tresch	Cleveland	J. Nix
New Haven	F. Tresch	Columbus	J. Haisch
New York	Fauerbach	Dayton	Allgewaehr
New York	Peterson	Detroit	A. Loeser
New York	Fr. Sigel	Evansville	G. Tafel
Paterson	Ed. Mueller	Hamilton & Rossville	Steffens
Philadelphia	R. Schulz	Indianapolis	G. Tafel
Pittsburgh	Bauer	Louisville	F. Steffens
Pottsville	Allgewaehr	Newport	W. Pfaender

Portsmouth	Fr. Bertsch	Chicago	Wiesing
Sidney, O.	M. Jacobi	Milwaukee	Wertsch
Toledo	Ad. Steil	St. Louis	Otto Stickel
Mobile	Jos. Sichel		

THE "VORORT" IS REPRESENTED BY W. RAPP, PRESIDENT AND

C. BECKER, 1ST SECRETARY

SESSION OF SEPTEMBER 24TH A.M.

After the opening of the Convention by the President of the "Vorort" the following officers were elected:

1. Speaker Bauer            2. Speaker Ed. Mueller
1. Secretary F. Fauerbach   2. Secretary R. Schultz
3. Secretary G. Tafel

The Committee on Credentials; delegates Jacobi, Sigel and Weis reported that all mandates were in order. However, Schulz from Philadelphia and Wiesig from Chicago had no mandates.

Schulz and Sichel made a statement that they, one from Lancaster, the other from New Orleans, had a verbal authority.

Turner Nix made this motion: delegates not possessing a mandate can represent only the society in which they hold membership. Carried.

The following letters addressed to the Convention were read, following a motion made by Schulz and Nix to that effect and then laid on the table for later consideration: letters from Augusta, Ga.; Trenton, N. J.; Burlington, Iowa; New Bedford, Mass.; Worcester, Mass.; Springfield, Mass.; Troy, N. Y. and Providence R. I. All of these letters were confidence letters for the editor of the turnerpaper.

A motion by Peterson provided for the appointment of a Grievance Committee consisting of Turners Nix, Mueller, Sigel, Allgewaehr and Haisch.



A motion by Pfaender proposed a committee to set up the order of business. Turners Haisch, Peterson and Pfaender were appointed.

Turners Peterson and Bertsch were elected to the Committee for the Revision of the Books.

The Committee for setting up the Order of Business made its report and the following suggestions were adopted:

1. All committee members shall be nominated by the convention and a majority vote will be necessary to elect committee members.

2. The voting on national affairs shall be done by societies according to the alphabet.

3. All delegates are restricted to 10 minute speeches and must not speak twice on the same subject. However, the speaker making the motion has the last word in addition.

4. In a general session the voting will be done by acclamation. However, if doubtful a rising vote shall be taken.

An additional motion by the Committee for the Revision of the Statute stated that a special committee should function. This was rejected by a motion made by Rapp and in its place a committee was elected whose duty it was to meet with the delegate from Cincinnati to deliberate the question of establishing a turner colony. The committee consists of Turners Steffens, Nix, Wiesing, Fischer and Peterson.

#### ANNUAL REPORT OF PRESIDENT RAPP

The Bund has increased its membership by 15 societies. The total number of societies belonging to the National Turnerbund is now 77. The following new societies were not enrolled in districts: Erie, Pa.; Lancaster, Pa.; Morisiana, N. Y.; Trenton, N. J.; Dedham and Worcester, Mass. and Waterbury, Conn. The

District Office in Cincinnati enrolled the following new societies: Cannelton, Ind.; Sidney, O.; Lawrenceburgh, Ind.; Lafayette, Ind. and Tiffin, O. The New Albany Turner Society in this district was disbanded. The Evansville society appears to be on the way up again. Madison seems to have folded up. The New Orleans district received the following new societies: Natchez, Miss. and Galveston, Texas. Houston resigned from the Bund because of the abolitionist attitude of the turnerpaper. The Chicago district added Burlington and Dubuque in Iowa. The San Francisco district added Sacramento. In addition there are twelve societies who have applied to join our national organization: 3 in Pa.; 2 in O.; 1 in Mass.; 2 in Ill.; 3 in Wis. and 1 in Iowa. Turner societies are also forming in Canada and Berlin. (C. W.)

President Rapp made a lengthy speech on the difficulties with which the turnerpaper had to cope. Due to the hard times many societies were not able to pay for their subscriptions for the paper. The editors found it necessary to ask for credit from the printer, King and Baird. The manager of this firm; Mr. Schwacke, was here in Buffalo to make some arrangement with the convention regarding this debt. The attitude of the majority of the members of the Philadelphia Germans, whose sympathy was more for the so called Democratic Party than for the progressive movement was an additional obstacle.

In closing, Rapp recommended an unbiased study of the turner colony project. He also mentioned that in the past year 32 discharges and 55 challenges for a dutybound policy were published in the turnerpaper.

Turner Nix made motion to accept the President's report. Carried.

Peterson asked for the treasurer's report.



Becker stated: the treasurer, Dotter was not present because of business obligations, a report would be received in a short time.

P. M. SESSION

A motion from Turner Nix requested that criticisms be taken up first. Carried.

The criticisms of 3 expelled members of the Washington society were rejected because the previous convention had already decided the matter.

On Hamilton's behalf, Rapp's motion stated that the Bureau write to both parties to bring about a reunion. This was thus settled.

Newark criticized the Vorort because a protest made by this society against the weekly publication of the turnerpaper was not published.

Turner Tafel made a motion that the Vorort should be reprimanded because it neglected to issue prizes for the literary works, according to paragraph 12 of the By-Laws.

Rapp excused the Vorort because of lack of funds. This motion by Tafel was carried.

A further criticism by Tafel, that of not publishing Beck's name as a suspended turner, was dropped.

Braun and Tafel criticized the National Treasurer because he did not remit the societies monthly bills. For this reason the convention voted to reprimand the treasurer.

Turner Jacob's criticism of the Vorort for the district officers of Cincinnati was rejected by a small majority. Their criticisms were for not answering letters, regarding publishing reports, and for not publishing the name of a turner expelled from the Cannelton society.

SESSION OF SEPTEMBER 25 - A.M.

A motion by Turner Bertsch made the following additions:  
only one motion for improvement and one for no improvement will  
be voted upon and first a vote will be cast for no improvement  
etc.

A letter from Dubuque containing a vote of confidence for  
the editor and National Committee was read and filed.

Fischer from Wheeling criticized the Vorort for not sending  
a receipt for \$5.10. Becker remarked that the 10¢ was recorded  
but the \$5.00, being a false banknote was returned. He, therefore,  
rejected the criticism.

Weis from Brooklyn made a triple criticism of the Vorort for  
careless management.

After a short debate this procedure was discontinued because  
of a motion made by Pfaender that all criticisms of the Vorort be  
tabled until the financial report was audited. Carried.

Peterson read the financial report:

Total Property	\$7,794.29
Total Income	3,161.94
Total Amount Outstanding	4,632.35
Total amount Outstanding according to the books	4,648.53
Mistake of Outstanding	16.18
Cash Receipts - Total income	3,382.48
Cash Receipts - Total expense	<u>3,211.29</u>
Cash on Hand	\$ 171.19

There should be no difference between the two income figures,  
but it exists because of the muddled and mixed up bookkeeping. In



one place of an account a definite sum was recorded. This sum was omitted in a second place where it should have been recorded. Even then the difference was not found and it was not possible to make a balanced account. The books were not kept in a business-like way and it was a difficult proposition to make head or tail of the books. However, the difference in the amount was to the advantage of the national treasury.

The amount due to King and Baird for printing the turner-paper is:

	\$2,409.09
According to the Books	<u>2,239.35</u>
Difference	\$ 169.74

After deducting this expense, the total property of the treasury is \$2,223.26.

As a report of how much the turnerpaper earned during the business year the following is recorded:

For the paper a credit for income and due bills	\$6,710.23
For ads deducting 25%	<u>235.87</u>
Total	\$6,946.10

Expenses for the paper were as follows:

For type setting, printing, paper	\$3,613.94
Editorial and office expenses	1,106.00
Miscellaneous expenses	<u>50.00</u>
	\$4,769.94

The total income amounted to:	\$2,176.16
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It was not possible to make a correct revision of the books because there were no receipts for disbursements. The manager of King and Baird, Mr. Schwacke, showed in his notebook that the amount due was about the same as shown by our books. It wasn't possible to close the revisions of the books until all receipts were received.

Becker excused the treasurer for not submitting the receipts. He stated that nowhere in the report were there any irregularities.

Rapp made a motion to submit all the books to Turner Peterson, the delegate from New York, for revision.

The treasurer's report was adopted.

Turner Sigel requested that the convention discuss ways and means of paying the debt to King and Baird in Philadelphia.

Turner Braun made a motion that this bill be read in all societies and each delegate made a statement as to when and if his society could pay toward the bill. Motion carried.

It was decided to make the reading in the afternoon session since the books were not on hand at this time.

Peterson criticized the Vorort for sending a circular to all societies offending the New York society. He read a half-yearly report of the New York society and proceeded to show that the words, "verleumderiche machwerke" - slanderous, clumsy work, in the circular referred to this report. He found it very distasteful that the Vorort used parts of this report instead of printing the entire report. He thought it a cowardly act.

Rapp denied the accusation stating that the use of the words was aimed only at the enemy party press.

Turner Sigel spoke along the same lines as Peterson.

Turner Nix stated that the Vorort was within its rights.

Bertsch believed that the New York society had been insulted.

Fauerbach showed that the Vorort was the troublemaker in this situation.

In a lengthy speech, Rapp stated that the Vorort was not guilty and had no intention of insulting the New York society. The Vorort



received the report that it could clearly be seen that secret agitation against the editor and the policy of the paper was stirred up in several prominent societies. It was also evident that the defamatory article in the New York papers gave the impression of agitation against an individual rather than a society. The circular was intended to stop these and to preserve the honor of the editor and the Vorort.

Haisch stated: he was informed that, in reality, New York turners did plot with some of the opposition newspapers. He believed the Vorort was within its rights.

Peterson remarked that another member of the Vorort, Turner Schulz from Philadelphia was present as a delegate. Peterson wanted to know how the circular was produced.

Schulz stated that he was not present in the sessions in which the circular was discussed. He signed the circular without examining specific points in the content thinking it was a joint action of the entire Vorort.

Turner Pfaender read an additional article from the New York Staatszeitung showing clearly that turners plotted with some of the disreputable newspapers. According to this he stated that the Vorort acted entirely within its rights.

Mueller, however, vigorously objected to the fact that anyone could accuse the New York Turnverein of such actions. It was cheating and deception on the part of the "Staatszeitung" itself.

Turner Buchheber believed that the New York Turnverein could be sure that the Vorort had no intention of insulting it.

Peterson made an amendment to the motion - in reference to the report of the New York society the Vorort should be reprimanded

because a passage printed in the circular was not made public before it was printed.

Bertsch requested a verbal vote.

Nix protested this.

Bertsch proved that he had a right to his demand.

The order of business was interrupted because two new mandates, one from Indianapolis for the Cincinnati delegate, Tafel and one from Pottsville for Allgewaehr of Buffalo were presented. Both mandates were pronounced legal.

The motion by Peterson was carried. 56 votes in favor of it and 10 against it.

#### P. M. SESSION

A report of societies in arrears financially was read. Delegates explained their financial shortcomings.

Haisch from Columbus stated his society had many mishaps in their financial matters in the past, as was known to many. His motion was rejected.

Turner Schulz took the stand for Philadelphia and explained the financial condition of his society as deplorable. The main reason for this situation was the failure of the Bundesturnfest, National Gymnastic Meet. In addition the treatment of an injured turner caused considerable added expense. He appealed to the convention delegates to be fair and relieve the Philadelphia society of part of this cost.

Bertsch, Nix, Rapp and Pfaender remarked that the treatment of the wounded turner should be considered a national obligation and they were in favor of remitting the cost of it to the Philadelphia society.



Braun and Sichel did not ask for financial relief but needed more time to make payment.

Turner Weiss made the motion that the Philadelphia society should be relieved of the cost of treating the wounded turner by the National Organization. Carried.

Turner Meier from Buffalo reclaimed the sum of \$9.10 which was sent to the Vorort in December, 1853 and was never receipted nor billed. After a short discussion the convention voted to credit the Buffalo society with this amount.

Gondino stated that a similar situation occurred in Baltimore. Last year \$20.00 was mailed to the Vorort which claimed no money was found in the envelope.

Becker stated that at that time it was customary to open the letters at a meeting of the Vorort so that there was a check on money received. It was proven that the money was not in the letter when it was opened at the Vorort meeting. After several remarks it was decided that the societies are held responsible for money remitted. It should be sent by express only.

The Secretary reported that the total amount of money outstanding was \$3,130.02.

According to Tafel's request representative Schwacke from King and Baird in Philadelphia asked for a written statement of the bill and for a statement of future payments.

Rapp made the motion that Peterson be instructed to write to King and Baird explaining the situation and assuring them that the largest portion of the amount due would be paid by November 1st. Carried.

A motion made by Rapp made the amendment that in his letter Peterson should also include the thanks of the Convention to King

and Baird and their German manager, Schwacke, for their care of and trust in the turnerbund. Carried as amended.

Rapp now requested that all remaining criticisms of the Vorort should be brought before the convention.

Milwaukee wanted an answer to two letters. The delegates from the Vorort had no knowledge of these letters.

Pottsville made the criticism that an objection to the weekly edition of the Turnzeitung was not published. This was laid on the table as was the Newark objection.

Sichel made the criticism that a thank-you message to societies who rendered assistance submitted by the Savannah society was not published.

Rapp reported it was purely an oversight.

Sichel accepted the explanation.

Now that all criticisms were received, Rapp, in the name of the Vorort, remarked that many societies were justified in making their criticisms and that the business management of the Vorort was at fault. It was not neglect of duty that was the cause but rather the poor organization of the management. Too much work was required of individuals. For instance, the editors also served as management officers. He made a motion that the Vorort should be reprimanded for neglect of duty.

Braun objected to Rapp's motion. He saw only irony in it.

Jacobi objected because he didn't want the accused to mete out its own punishment.

Rapp canceled his motion.

Braun then made the same motion. Motion carried.



Here followed the reading of the report of the Committee on the Turner Settlement Project. A motion was made by Tafel to accept the report as read. Carried. The report was as follows:

According to the Cincinnati Turngemeinde plan for the Settlement Project we believe that it is workable if the leadership is placed in the hands of an energetic manager. Furthermore, we feel that the participation of the national committee in the plan is not to be feared. To the contrary, we are firmly convinced that participating in the establishment of the project would place the national organization in the position of having a very strong hold in many ways.

We believe that the national committee should adopt this settlement project and that the Vorort should have the control and supervision of it. They should, however, have no part in a pecuniary way (aid, profit, etc.).

Turner Meier was in favor of the project but was opposed to the adoption of it by the national committee.

Steffen requested the reading of the proposal of the Cincinnati delegation.

Pfaender requested that the convention first clear up the question as to whether the national turners should have anything to do with the project. In a lengthy speech he explained the benefits of the project and recommended that the convention consider it a national obligation.

The plan was read by the Cincinnati delegate.

SESSION AT 8:00 P.M.

Debate about the Turner Settlement Project.

Nix was in favor of supervising the project. He stated that much power now lost would be retained if this project were under the authority of the National Turnerbund.

Baumgras stated that the Bund should act only in an advisory capacity for this project. If this was made a national function the non-participating members would also be held responsible.

Jacobi stated that Cincinnati does not expect financial help from the Bund, only moral support and some supervision.

Loeser stated that the participation of the Bund would be of little value if it did not accept the responsibility of the project.

Sichel thought the project was a good one but thought it was unwise to burden the Vorort with more obligations. It was already overburdened with work.

Sigel stated that the New York society was opposed to the participation of the Bund in this project. Our first duty was to strengthen our organization and educate our youth and this would take all the time available. There would be little time left to work for a wonderful colonization plan, which would create a revolutionary tendency in every society.

Braun was opposed to the participation of the Bund and also opposed to allowing non-turners to join because he feared that our turner principles would thus be endangered.

Pfaender stated that this fear could be eliminated by admitting only non-turners who were recommended by turners. There are still many good, honest, thinking people besides turners.

Haisch stated that participation of the Bund could result in unfriendly attitudes. If we permitted non-turners to join we would soon have all kinds of religious groups with which to deal.

Fischer stated that it was out of the question to give this project a material guarantee from the Bund. The committee wants the convention to consider the Settlement Project in the same way



it would consider a newly organized turner society which would enjoy the support of the Bund. Many turners who were now lost to the National Turnerbund would be regained if this were done. Also, the free and thorough education of youth could be better served in this way than in the crowded cities.

Peterson stated that history has revealed that many colonies which were begun failed and such undertakings clothed in romance gave little for which to hope. There were still many other ways whereby German custom and knowledge could be served. Those interested in this project should assist in its promotion but should not ask the Bund to participate.

Allgewaehr stated that this project should be handled as a private measure, the Bund has enough to do without it.

Irmscher was in favor of the participation of the Bund.

Pfaender stated: this project would be strengthened in principle through the participation of the Bund. He thought that German culture and humanity could thus be better advanced. This project would be far enough away that we would be in a position to develop real Americans, especially first class republicans, without interfering. The failure of previous colonizations could prove nothing against this project. Those that failed, failed because of speculation and selfish interests.

Buchhecker and Meier were opposed to the participation of the Bund.

Stickel stated: the St. Louis society which was familiar with the difficulties encountered in establishing such a colonization and knew the danger of it for our Bund instructed him to vote in opposition to the project.

Tresch was in favor of the project.

Sigel recommended that this question should be cleared up through the Turzeitung because every phase of the project had not as yet been fully discussed.

Pfaender stated that this project provides for better security than the cities where workers are without security most of the time. Cheap and good land is still available.

The motion from Cincinnati as amended by Turner Rapp was carried in the following form: The Turnerbund authorizes the Cincinnati Turnverein with the supervision and control of the Turner Settlement Project.

SESSION OF SEPTEMBER 26TH, A.M.

The delegate from Boston and Dedham, David Huth, took his place.

Peterson read the explanation of the convention for King and Baird in the English language. Accepted as read.

Then followed a discussion of the Introduction to the National Convention.

Rapp: the introduction was much too general for the present time especially regarding the political situation. The editor of the Turnzeitung stated that in every respect the effort was made to cultivate free progressive ideas. He requested the delegates to discuss this matter freely.

Nix: the editor of the paper deserves a vote of confidence for he has supported all free progressive principles.

Haisch and Bertsch were in favor of retaining the present introduction.

Baumgras: the editors understood fully the word radical and acted accordingly.



Pfaender: It is necessary to establish a definite norm because today there are several different political parties represented in the Turnerbund.

Jacobi requested that turners openly proclaim their principles.

Sigel stated that most turners are in accord with the fundamental principles but at the same time we should openly take a definite stand on each individual major fundamental rule.

Rapp: Politically, we should take a negative stand on slavery, nativity, and temperance. He recommended to the convention the short but important program of the liberal Germans in Minnesota.

Bertsch: As soon as we set up a platform we show party preference which would be harmful to the Bund.

Sigel: In the first place we should make the addition to the introduction that all turners should be ready and willing to defend their rights and fundamental laws at all times. He, therefore, made this amendment to the present introduction: "We should be able and determined to participate in the above mentioned reforms, either as an individual or as a Turnerbund in order to defend the organization and practical exercise of our rights and fundamental principles."

Bertsch was also in accord with Sigel's motion. Motion carried.

Rapp and Becker made a motion regarding the second section of the introduction to have a specific clarification of the political stand of the Turnerbund.

Nix seconded this motion. He stated that the Bund, as the child of the European Revolution, was forced to carry this motion. Freedom of work was impaired by the slave situation.

"Death and destruction to slavery and its partisans!"

Weiss was also in favor of the motion. It would bring us honor to adopt this motion. For the present it was impractical to join a definite party.

Baumgras stated: slavery is a political lie, the entire compromise policy is an injustice against an injustice. Nativism has its start in slavery, also. The Temperance Law is contrary to the individual freedom of the people.

Huth expressed himself very firmly in opposition to slavery.

Allgewaehr and Tresch were in favor of the motion.

Fischer coming from a slave state spoke from the heart of his organization saying they believe that slavery is the shame of the Union. However, he stated that the turners in the south will be forced to vote the slave group because it is not possible to organize a free party at this time.

Wiesing was opposed to the slave movement.

Sichel openly stated that he favored the Democratic Party which was supported to a large extent by slaveholders. Especially since the slaveholders were the vigorous opponents of the Know-nothings. The cradle of Nativism was in the North. The Germans in the South would be ruined if they took an open stand against slavery. We should not take sides against the rights of the South and should remain quiet about the slave question so we do not create hard feelings.



Stichel: The St. Louis Turnverein was opposed to slavery in principle, however, felt it unwise and impractical to discuss this question at this convention.

Rapp: It seems that most delegates, except for Sichel, consider this motion fair, in principle. The opponents are opposed to it only because of their suitable and fitting purposes. Fischer has stated that the southern societies could declare themselves in favor of the motion. The worried thoughts Turner Bertsch expressed should be dismissed in favor of the great liberal movement of the day. This makes it mandatory that all turners should declare that they are in favor of its fundamental laws.

The Rapp-Becker Motion was adopted - 63 in favor and 9 opposed.

Turner Rapp: Now, since we have declared ourselves on the principle standpoint it will be necessary for this convention to give to the editorial staff of the Turnzeitung a vote of confidence either in favor of or opposed to this policy. The shameful attack from the reactionary press made this request necessary.

Sigel: The New York Turnverein was satisfied with the editorial work of the Turnzeitung, in principle. However, he stated that the paper was too literary and not practical enough. In addition the editor did not give sufficient attention to the turner field (the inner efforts of turner societies).

Allgewaehr, Huth and Braun were in favor of giving a confidence vote.

Bertsche and Jacobi also favored giving a confidence vote but stated that small societies were not given any help in their struggle for existence.

Pfaender: As he understood it the editor wants a vote of confidence only in principle.

Nix: Just the opposite, the circular requested an expression from the Turnerbund regarding the entire policy of the editorial work.

Fischer was in favor of an unqualified vote of confidence, although the points mentioned by Sigel may or may not be correct.

Rapp stated: A mere vote of confidence was not sufficient at this time when the political views of the editor were clarified by an affirmative vote on the conventions principles. The editorial staff should receive an unqualified vote of confidence. They were not responsible for the action reported by Sigel and Jacobi. How could the inner happenings of societies be discussed in the paper when almost no reports were forthcoming. The reports printed in the turnerpaper about turner societies were largely obtained from articles in exchange papers. Later he would present a motion revising the constitution which would eliminate further misunderstanding regarding these reports.

The motion to give the editorial staff of the Turnzeitung a vote of confidence was carried.

#### P. M. SESSION

Rapp made a motion stating that Mr. Schwacke be requested to submit the cost of a larger turnerpaper.

Jacobi wished to have Mr. Schwacke estimate the cost of larger type, of a paper twice the present size and a definite cost of ads.

Nix wished to retain the present size of the paper and have no ads.

Pfaender made a motion stating that Mr. Schwacke submit a report on the following costs: twice its size with ads and same size without ads.



Peterson stated: a larger turnerpaper was absolutely essential. After the estimate is given it may be possible to reduce the costs by 33% due to the net gain of \$2,000 last year. If an enlargement of 1/3 is made, the paper would still show a net gain of \$1,300. It is, therefore, clear that a settlement regarding the printing of a larger paper could easily be made.

Motion by Pfaender was carried.

Mr. Schwacke stated he could give his estimate in a half an hour.

Rapp, in the name of the National Executive Committee, made a motion that from now on the editors of the Turnzeitung should be elected by the Convention.

Jacobi seconded this motion and requested an early discussion of it. This request was confirmed by the convention.

Rapp substantiated this motion of the Vorort by stating that the turnerpaper in its present form is just as important to our National Turnerbund as the National Executive Committee. Therefore, the editor should also be selected by the convention. Smaller societies will have a part in choosing the editor if he is selected by the convention.

The motion made by Rapp and seconded by Jacobi that the editor of the Turnerpaper should be elected by the convention was carried. (Bertsch, Sichel and Fauerbach did not vote.)

Sigel made a motion to provide the rules for the method of election. Carried.

Fischer made a motion to vote on all paragraphs for which no changes were requested. Carried.

Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 were carried. Paragraph 4 was tabled until the report on the District System was heard. Paragraphs 5, 6, 7 and 8 were carried.

A lively discussion developed over paragraph 9 and lasted about two hours. The subject was the "Bundeskrankenkasse", National Sick Benefit Organization.

Huth was very much in favor of it.

All the other delegates took part stating the views held by their respective societies. Some were in favor of the project and some opposed to it. Finally, the convention voted for a change. Instead of the word Unterstuetzungskassen (Charitable Institution) the word Krankenkasse (Sick Benefit Fund) should be substituted.

Mr. Schwacke's estimate was read and a motion was made and carried to enlarge the Turnzeitung from 4 columns to 5 columns and three more inches in length. The last page was to be reserved for ads. (in Nonpareil) The first three columns should be set in Long Primer. If the ads were placed on the third page then the reading material should be printed in smaller type. Using this plan the cost would be \$97.00 per 5000 copies.

Pfaender proposed the hiring of two editors and requested that someone should suggest the salary for them.

Huth suggested the sum of \$1,300 for the two editors. He recommended that an additional compensation should be made at the end of the year if the business succeeds well enough to permit it.

Peterson made the motion that every member of the Turnerbund pay the sum of \$30 for editorial work and expedition.



Buchhecker wished to pay the amount of \$200 in addition for German correspondence.

Peterson stated that the mental effort should be paid according to its worth. It would be a shame for the Turnerbund to pay these workers who are making such mental contribution such small wages that they would be compelled to look elsewhere for an additional income.

Peterson's motion was carried.

Nix made the motion to engage Turners Rapp and Becker as editors of the turnerpaper according to the rules laid down by the convention this day. Carried.

Rapp thanked the convention in his and Becker's name for the confidence it has shown in spite of the attacks and slanderous remarks of some of the delegates.

SESSION OF SEPTEMBER 27TH, A.M.

The convention continued with the revision of the constitution. Paragraph 10 was tabled until the paragraphs on the district division were settled. In paragraph 11 the number indicating the year was changed. Paragraphs 12 and 13 remained unchanged.

Jacobi made a motion to change from the discussion of the Bundesvorort and Tagsatung to the discussion of the By-Laws.

Braun made a motion regarding paragraph 1 that a turner who receives a travel turnpass and presents it to a new organization should have his pass returned for reuse in order to save the Turnerbund the cost of many new turnpasses.

Bertsch, Allgewaehr, Gondina and Baumgras were opposed to this motion.

Braun rescinded his motion.

Gondina wished to change paragraph 1 as follows: that turners with passes from Germany had to wait four weeks as a test period and then without initiation fees would be admitted as a new member. This motion after a lengthy discussion was rejected.

Weising made the following motion: a Bundesturner who did not submit his pass after remaining four weeks in a city where a turner society was established should not be accepted as a turner unless he was able to give a worthy excuse for this delay. Motion carried.

Tresch made a motion that it should be stated on every pass whether the owner was a member of any sick benefit organization and if so, met all of its financial obligations.

Huth, Steffens and Allgewaehr were in favor of it.

Bertsch, Pfaender and Wiesing were opposed to it.

The motion was lost.

Irmscher requested a motion which would make a ruling that a turner could request a turnpass later on if he cancels his membership. The request was not endorsed.

At last, paragraph 1 was adopted with the addition of Wiesing's motion.

Paragraph 2 was changed by a motion by Weis who stated that a list recording the names of turners who resigned from turner societies should be printed yearly.

Many amendments were proposed and after a long discussion the convention voted to postpone action until the paragraphs regarding the Turnzeitung could be settled.

However, a vote was taken to omit "and if the same is a necessity it could be published in the national paper", from the closing of the paragraph.



Bertsch made a motion to add paragraph 3 to paragraph 1. It was rejected.

Gondina's motion changed paragraph 3 to paragraph 2 and paragraph 2 to paragraph 3.

In regard to paragraph 4, Allgewaehr raised the question as to whether it was a good policy to exclude the so-called passive member from all important business transactions. This policy was questioned by many Buffalo turners who were listed as passive members. Allgewaehr made a motion to give passive members the right to vote but no right to hold any office.

Jacobi, Bertsch and Huth were opposed to this motion and were in favor of not interfering with the national ruling in this situation.

Baumgras pointed up by example that we would get into the difficulty of being snowed under by philistine movements.

Meier and Wiesing were of the same opinion.

Rapp favored Allgewaehr's statements. He made a motion to extend to passive members the same privileges as held by the active members. This convention has shown by previous decisions that physical turning is not the sole aim but instead is only one of many body turning efforts of our turner members. Many outstanding and educated men would have joined long ago if it had not been for the ruling that they would not have the privilege of voting. This would prevent them giving clear expression to their beliefs and ideas.

Paragraph 9 was eliminated.

Regarding paragraph 10 on mental training, the report of the committee consisting of Rapp, Bertsch and Baumgras was accepted as read.

P. M. SESSION

The discussion of the constitution continued.

After a short debate the old paragraph 10 was changed to the fourth part of the new paragraph 9 by a motion by Bertsch as follows: the turner organizations should have libraries though in the beginning they may not have many books. Each turner should help in this undertaking.

Irmscher made a motion that the National Headquarters should purchase the books wholesale and then sell them to the societies at cost in order to financially facilitate the start of the libraries. This was rejected as impractical.

Regarding paragraph 11, Huth requested this change. That every year two turnfests be held; one in the east and the other in the west. He remarked that the Turnfests would bring about unity and better brotherhood relationships and these could not be obtained by the present ruling because of the great distance involved. Motion was lost.

Jacobi made a motion that next year a National Turnfest should be held in the east and at the same time a District Turnfest should be held in the west. After a short discussion he rescinded his motion.

Weis made a motion that the convention be held in the same city as the National Turnfest, with the convention convening five days before the turnfest. This would make it possible for almost every society to have representation at both events.

Braun believed the convention would have a small attendance because it would be difficult to decide on a centrally located city.

Gondina stated it was unwise to overburden one society.

Steffen believed that it would save money.

Baumgras was opposed to this motion.



Huth thought that too much time would be lost.

The motion by Wiess was lost.

Rapp amended paragraph 12: that no poetic prize contest should be sponsored. Of the two popular types of literary works prose work should be requested. He hoped that we could obtain better results by treating technical or manual objects instead.

Baumgras did not wish to eliminate poetry altogether so made a motion to change the wording to "literary work" instead of "prose literary work".

Bertsch wished to have a technical or more philosophical subject.

Rapp was opposed to Bertsch's statement but accepted Baumgras' modification. Motion carried.

Regarding paragraph 13, Steffens had instructions to propose Boston as the city for the next turnfest.

Huth stated that the Boston Turnverein was too weak to accept the Turnfest but suggested that Boston could accept the convention.

Bauer had instructions to propose Pittsburgh as the city for the turnfest.

Huth was opposed to Pittsburgh because it was too far west.

Gondina stated that Baltimore would accept if it were offered to them.

After a short discussion Pittsburgh was chosen as the city for the next turnfest.

Regarding paragraph 14, Boston, Washington and Columbus were under consideration as cities for the next convention.

Washington was chosen for the city where the next convention would be held.

Paragraph 14 was changed by a motion by Fauerbach. The turnfest should be held the latter part of August and the convention in the beginning of September. The specific time to be set by the Vorort.

Irmscher stated that a convention should be held only every second year but if the Vorort decided that a convention was necessary the first year a vote should be taken by the societies to this effect. Motion was lost.

Paragraph 16 - Cincinnati was unanimously chosen as the Vorort (National Turnerbund Headquarters).

Paragraph 17 - was changed by Baumgras' motion. A summary of the minutes of the National Turnerbund Convention should be printed and mailed to each turner society.

Weiss called attention to the fact that all present points should be recorded.

The next discussion was regarding the paragraphs dealing with the turnerpaper.

Paragraph 1 was changed as follows: The Vorort alone instead of with the management should have the supervision of the National Turnzeitung.

Paragraph 2 - Allgewaehr stated that he was instructed by the Dayton society to state they were opposed to the proposition that each turner was required to subscribe to the turnerpaper.

Huth wanted to base the number of subscriptions of each society on the number of active members.

Weis expressed the thought it might ruin our society if we required every turner to subscribe to the turnerpaper. We should permit small societies to subscribe for about 2/3 of their membership.



Rapp was opposed to this idea stating that this would serve only the members with German background and the paper would always be in some danger.

The following statement was retained in this paragraph: the turner societies are requested to take as many subscriptions as they have memberships. Subscriptions are to be sent in by the intellectual group of the societies.

The sentence dealing with the editor and expedition was omitted.

Rapp's motion added the following statement: the societies are requested to inform the editor of the turner paper of all events in their societies.

Regarding paragraph 3, the convention voted to retain the present price of the turnerpaper - 3¢ for turners, 5¢ for non-turners.

Paragraph 4 remained unchanged.

Regarding paragraph 2 of the By-Laws which had been tabled the following motion was carried: articles dealing only with turner or society problems should be printed only monthly in the turnerpaper.

In paragraph 14 the following rule was made: that from now on only 1 treasurer and 1 secretary instead of a first and second.

Paragraphs 15 and 16 remained unchanged.

A new paragraph 17 was adopted.

The second part of paragraph 18 was tabled until the paragraphs regarding the District Executives were settled. The first part remained the same. The second was changed as follows: "two members of the Vorort and one editor of the turnerpaper must be present at the National Turnerbund Convention".

Paragraph 19 and paragraph 20 remained unchanged.

Paragraph 21 had this addition: "elect the Vorort and decide the editorial."

Paragraph 22 remained unchanged.

After a short debate the convention voted to retain the present district organization.

Paragraph 23, this addition was made: the present District Executive in Cincinnati should remain there for the year.

SESSION AT 8:00 P.M.

Rapp still had one instruction from New York. There should be an article about our turner efforts printed in our turner paper. This article should be printed in pamphlet form and distributed to the public. Motion was lost.

Fauerbach stated that the New York society contends that the Mueller Turnbook is impractical. He requested the Vorort to have some turner experts compile the important turner rules and have them printed. However, this should be done without incurring a large expense. The motion was carried.

Fauerbach criticized the editor for accepting some of the doctor's ads and also the theatre criticisms.

Rapp stated the reason and his explanations were accepted.

A motion by Loeser expressed gratitude to the Buffalo Turnverein and the Germans of Buffalo for their friendly reception and entertainment of the delegates. Sincere thanks were given by a unanimous vote.

The temporary Speaker Jacobi, after a short speech referring to the importance of the negotiations of this convention, looked back with satisfaction and accomplishment and closed the convention.



CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIALIST TURNER-BUND  
OF NORTH AMERICA

The aim of the members of the Turnerbund (Turner Alliance) is the building of men strong in body and understanding in unprejudiced free thought. It shall be the duty of its members to bring to their society members an understanding of radical procedures in thought regarding the social, political and religious reforms, using all available means and in this way, to enable him to take an active part in the above reforms, either personally or through the Turnerbund and to defend and preserve the organization and practical exercise of his rights and fundamental laws.

In connection with American politics, the representation of the principle of the Turnerbund can best be preserved through the battle against their misuse, due to the present party system. The Turnerbund recognizes the following abuses as burning issues: Slavery, Nativity and the Temperance Force. It sets up the following principles:

1. The turners will not support any candidate belonging to the Knownothings Party for any office; nor anyone who is Nativistic minded or affiliated with such a group, corporation or party; nor support anyone who does not openly declare himself opposed to these three issues.

2. Turners are opposed to slavery, especially its spread to the free territory. Turners believe this is definitely opposed to the principle of a republic and consider it extremely unworthy of Americans.

3. Turners are opposed to every Temperance Law because they consider it undemocratic in principle, unjust and impractical to administer.

#### CONSTITUTION OF THE TURNERBUND

- P. 1      The Turnerbund consists of united turner societies of North America.
- P. 2      Every society of the Bund must consist of at least 10 members. If the membership is below 100 the organization has one vote; over 100, two votes and for each 50 additional members, one more vote.
- P. 3      Every turner society which joins the Bund is responsible only to the Bund in matters pertaining to national relations.
- P. 4      Turner societies wishing to join will be announced in the turnerpaper. If the society is located in the west it will be assigned to its respective turner district.
- P. 5      Each society joining the Bund is asked to forward a report of its membership and information regarding its activities to the Bundesvorort. It is necessary to remit the application dues in order to be accepted.
- P. 6      Only one society belonging to the National Bund can exist in one place. However, it is permissible to organize branch societies if local conditions prevent the union of groups.
- P. 7      If a turner society requests the removal of another society from national membership, the former society is required to submit the reason for the dismissal to the Vorort. The Vorort must present this statement at the next national convention for a decision in the matter.



- P. 8 The decision to resign from the National Turnerbund rests with the individual society. However, a notification of it must be submitted to the Vorort and the latter loses all claims to the "Bund" property. If a society, which resigns from the National Turnerbund, reapplies for membership, it will be considered as a new organization.
- P. 9 The officers of a turner society affiliated with the National Turnerbund are requested to aid and assist every turner belonging to a turner society in the same way they would help a member of their own society. Recommendations are made that every society establish a Sick-Benefit Organization.
- P. 10 Every society of the National Turnerbund is requested to submit a half-yearly report of its society and its activities. District members will submit their report to the district, others will submit theirs to the Vorort.
- P. 11 Every society is requested to help support the financial obligations of the National Executive Committee.
1. A fee of \$3 for one vote in the Bund.
  2. An additional fee of \$3 for each additional vote. The quarterly assessment for each society will be decided at the convention. The amount due this year up to October 1, 1856 will be \$1.50.
- P. 12 The quarterly dues are to be remitted to the Vorort on January 1st, April 1st, July 1st and October 1st. The half-yearly report is to be submitted on April 1st and October 1st.
- P. 13 If a society remains in arrears with its national dues after a notice regarding it is printed twice in the turnerpaper and does not present a reasonable excuse, this society is then

suspended from membership. It also loses all rights and privileges of membership in the National Turnerbund.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND CONVENTION

- P. 14 The Executive Committee of nine members is charged with the management of the National Office and the execution of the Convention's decisions. These nine members are:
- |                     |                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. First Speaker    | 6. Treasurer             |
| 2. Second Speaker   | 7. Bookkeeper            |
| 3. First Secretary  | 8. First Turn-counselor  |
| 4. Second Secretary | 9. Second Turn-counselor |
| 5. Third Secretary  |                          |
- P. 15 The Vorort will be elected from the membership of the society chosen by the convention.
- P. 16 The Vorort is custodian of the treasury and has the authority to pay all bills for regular expenses.
- P. 17 The Vorort is charged with the duty of keeping the following books: Treasury book, Mainbook, Minutebook and Copybook. It is requested to present all books for a yearly examination with receipts.
- P. 18 The Vorort collects the votes cast through a general election by all societies and reports the results to the societies. Absolute majority vote will decide. In the case of a plurality vote, the decision of the vote remains with the Vorort. A vote of 2/3 of the total vote cast decides a motion for changing the National Constitution.
- P. 19 The Vorort is responsible to the National Turner Association for all management and decisions. Every officer of the Vorort is requested to give a satisfactory report of his activities



to the convention before the termination of his office. The Vorort makes a report of its actions and the conditions of the societies and publishes a statistical report in the turnerpaper every 6 months. Special action which concerns only turners or turner societies shall be printed on an extra sheet and inserted in the turnerpaper as a special notice to societies. In addition, the Vorort is requested to submit a quarterly financial report to the society from which they were chosen and to present their books to it for inspection. This society is responsible for accurately kept books and treasurer's accounts.

The Vorort also is charged with the duty of collecting and publishing the half yearly reports of all turner societies not in the district organization together with the report from the district organization in the turnerpaper.

Only two members of the Vorort (Speaker and Bookkeeper) and the editor of the turnerpaper are delegated to attend the convention and entitled to compensation for traveling expenses.

P. 20 Voting in the convention regarding a decision is as follows: All the votes of a society are counted regardless of the number of delegates present from that society.

In all balloting a majority vote decides.

No delegate can have more than 5 votes even if his society is entitled to a larger vote.

The delegates of the Vorort have no vote at the convention and cannot represent individual turner societies.

P. 21 If important business necessitates, the Vorort can call a special convention and, if the majority of the societies request it, then the Vorort is obligated to comply.

- P. 22 The convention receives the report of the retiring Executive officers and reviews all transactions. It elects the place of the Vorort with an absolute majority vote. It decides policies for the editorial staff of the turnerpaper. It settles all disputes. It has the final authority of admitting a society to the National Turnerbund. It also passes on binding transactions.

The Vorort cannot remain in the same society for more than two consecutive years.

- P. 23 The Bund (National Turner Association) cannot be disbanded as long as there are two societies, each having five votes, remaining as members.

#### DISTRICT-EXECUTIVES

The societies in the west are organized into 5 districts in order to ease the traveling situation.

The district centers are: Cincinnati, St. Louis, New Orleans, Chicago and San Francisco.

1. The Cincinnati district consists of Cleveland, O.; Columbus, O.; Dayton, O.; Hamilton and Rossville, O.; Portsmouth, O.; Sidney, O.; Tiffin, O.; Toledo, O.; Detroit, Mich.; Camelton, Ind.; Evansville, Ind.; Indianapolis, Ind.; Lawrenceburgh, Ind.; Lafayette, Ind.; Madison, Ind.; Shelbyville, Ind.; Terra Haute, Ind.; Louisville, Ky.; Newport, Ky. and Nashville, Tenn.

The district executive is suspended as long as the Vorort is located in Cincinnati.



2. The St. Louis district consists of Memphis, Tenn.; Peoria, Ill. and all societies in the state of Iowa and in the territory of Nebraska and Kansas.

3. The New Orleans district consists of Mobile, Ala.; Natchez, Miss. and Galveston, Texas.

4. The Chicago district consists of Aurora, Ill. and all societies in the State of Wisconsin and in the territory of Minnesota.

5. The San Francisco district consists of all societies in the state of California and in the territory of Oregon.

P. 25 The society where the district is centered elects a district executive committee which transacts all district business. The district executive committee is composed of any number of officers according to its needs. It is responsible to the societies in the district and is requested to present quarterly reports to them.

P. 26 The duties of the district executive committee are:  
It will encourage and support small societies, settle all disputes, compile and distribute the results of elections to the societies in the district, and inform the National Executive Committee by a general vote. It will make a collective report of all societies of the district and submit it along with the original reports to the National Executive Committee.

P. 27 The district executive committee can request from the National Executive Committee, reimbursements for expenses made in behalf of small societies. However, the total amount cannot exceed  $2/3$  of the quarterly dues of the district.

EY-LAWS

P. 1 Every turner who possesses a turnpass issued either by our National Society or a turner society of Germany should be admitted as a member at once without waiting for the usual test period and without paying initiation dues. He is requested to abide by the constitution of the society.

A turner who remains longer than 4 weeks in a place where a turner society exists without handing in his turnpass is considered a non member unless a special report is made.

No turner society is permitted to admit any turner who does not possess a turnpass. The turnpass of a turner will be filed by the society he joins and a new pass will be issued in case of another transfer.

Every turner who leaves his society without meeting all his obligations will not be permitted to join another turner society until he meets all the obligations of the first society to which he belonged so demands.

P. 2 A waiting period of 4 weeks will be maintained before action is taken on membership in order to protect the organization from admitting undesirable groups.

P. 3 A report of members who are dismissed from a society because of dishonorable conduct should be submitted to the Vorort and should be made public in the monthly supplementary paper if the Vorort deems it necessary.

P. 4 Every society is requested to remit their fees through safe channels only (i.e. Express). If money is sent in another way and is not received the society sending it will be held responsible for the loss.



- P. 5 Every turner society should conduct exercises of military arms and marching tactics according to the translation of American Military Rules made by Turner Sigel. At the same time it was suggested that the societies cooperate in the purchase of guns in order to achieve uniformity of arms.
- P. 6 Within a period of a half year, the Vorort should send printed drawings of pyramids and sketches of apparatus used by turners **through** the turnerpaper as supplementary literature.
- P. 7 The smaller turner societies are requested to consult larger societies regarding turnteachers.
- P. 8 Every member of the National Turnerbund who is not a citizen of the United States is requested to take immediate steps to become one.
- P. 9 It is recommended that technical schools be established in order to achieve a more general education for all turners. If possible the following subjects should be considered: English, Mathematics, Nature Study, Practical Chemistry, History, Geography and Bookkeeping. Societies who are not able to organize such classes should at least arrange for a course in the English language.

It should be possible for each society to have a day school for juniors for the purpose of training them not only physically but also mentally.

The Vorort is instructed to establish scientific and practical reading classes through the medium of the turnerpaper in order to further the mental advancement of all societies. It should also give them strong support and guidance.

The turner societies should have libraries even if only a few books are available in the beginning. Every turner should help to contribute to it to the best of his ability.

- P. 10 A National Turnfest should be held every year alternating with the east and the west. The location will be decided by the Convention.
- P. 11 Prizes at the Turnfest will be awarded for turning, literary work, singing, shooting and fencing. The prizes will be determined by the Vorort and the expense will be met by the National Treasury.

Six months before a Turnfest the Vorort will submit 2 popular subjects of literary work to all societies.

- P. 12 The next Turnfest will be held in Pittsburgh.
- P. 13 The next convention will be held in Washington.
- P. 14 The Turnfest will be held the latter part of August and the convention in the beginning of September. The exact time will be decided by the Vorort.
- P. 15 For the coming year the Vorort will be in Cincinnati.
- P. 16 The national rules and part of the minutes of the convention are to be printed and copies sent to all turner societies.

#### THE NATIONAL TURNERPAPER (BUNDESORGAN)

- P. 1 The turnerpaper is the organ of the national turners. Every turner society in the national organization is obligated to help enlarge its circulation. The Vorort controls the paper, pays its bills and receives the income from it for the National Treasury.
- P. 2 Every turner society is requested to subscribe to as many papers as they have members.

Literary contributions by gifted members should be submitted to the paper.

Societies are requested to report on outstanding events in their organizations to the paper.

P. 3 The turnerpaper is published weekly at the seat of the National Executive Office.

Societies are asked to take an agency, for the paper in order to extend the circulation outside of the turner organization. This agency will collect money and ads and forward them to the Vorort.

The price shall be 3¢ per paper for members and 5¢ for non-members.

P. 4 The turnerpaper must be edited with the exact beliefs embodied in the introduction to the National Constitution.

P. 5 Turners Wilhelm Rapp and Godfried Becker are engaged as editors and publishers of the turnerpaper.

The sum of \$30 is provided for each edition.

P. 6 A change in the editorial staff can be made at the National Convention. If, in the time intervening conventions, the Vorort deems it necessary to make such a change it can be done by a vote taken in all societies belonging to the National Turnerbund.

The Vorort must conduct a national vote if requested by 1/3 of the organization.