

The voice of the Major was not heard, a profound silence ensued, when the telephone gave forth, "the Alabama vote sustained." The Major smiled, and then, as the votes for him swelled into hundreds, he kept the count without a change of countenance—not even when the Ohio man next to him said: "The Ohio vote, now to be thrown in two or three minutes, will nominate you with a margin of a dozen, and that will please Ohio."

The recording angel, in the guise of a beautiful young lady in the hall, claimed that the Major's vote was more than it had been represented, and he quickly responded: "Be careful what you claim. We must have a fair count."

One of the veterans asked, repeatedly: "Where is Idaho?" and there were inquiries for other States.

The Major explained that some of the States had gone out, and there might be cases not covered by alternates.

"Possibly, Sam," said the Major to the telephonist, "Idaho went out," and so on to the last, the Major was clear-headed, composed, cool, and decided. Not a tremor in hand or voice, the figures his pencil traced were well formed, his voice low and even, but his pale, strong face seemed to grow in grandeur and to take on an august expression of conscious, lofty fortune, and fearful responsibility.

With firm fingers the Major wrote on his tab the fateful ballots, and the mighty vote of Ohio, 46 strong, rolled in. The Major put that down, too,

and did not look up or seem to be aware of all it exactly and conclusively meant.

The Ohio man next him threw down his pencil, saying: "There, that settles it, no more figures for me."

The Major looked up with an air of curiosity, saying: "Why are you no longer interested?"

The reply was: "Because the thing is done; let the boys cipher. The majority will be big enough. Major, I congratulate you. God bless you and give you all good gifts; and now you have just a quarter of a minute, before you are mobbed, to greet your wife and mother."

He quickly crossed the hall to the parlor, crowded with ladies, and, as his wife and mother were seated side by side, stooped low to kiss them and clasp their eager hands, the wife responding with a bright smile and a sweet exaltation in her eyes, as he told her that the vote of Ohio had given him the nomination, and the grand old mother, placing a trembling hand on her son's neck, and her eyes streaming with tears, brighter even than smiles, whispered to her illustrious boy some holy words for him alone.

At this moment the bells rang, the whistles blew, the cannon thundered, and beautiful Canton went stark, gloriously mad. The city, under a strong pressure, had kept quiet. There was a determination that there would be nothing done prematurely. Now the city blazed with bunting. There were

whirring carriages, galloping horses, wheel men and women swift as the wind! There seemed to have been an organization, including all the men, women, and children, to demonstrate instantly the moment the momentous signal was given.

As I hastened to the telegraph office there was a vast multitude precipitating themselves in a gigantic, ungovernable procession upon Governor McKinley's house, and there, with wife and mother at the window with him, he acknowledged his gratitude to his neighbors first of all, and to his countrymen for their personal kindness, and his voice had the fine tone of resolution and sincerity that all who know him know, and that they hear with joyful confidence that heaven has sent a man of such manliness to serve his country in her great office, and help her upward and forward to her incomparable destiny.



CHAPTER XVIII.

MAJOR MCKINLEY ACKNOWLEDGES AND ACCEPTS HIS
NOMINATION.

THE letter of Major McKinley, accepting his nomination for the Presidency by the National Republican Convention, was delivered by him to the press for publication on the evening of August 26. It read as follows:

Canton, O., August 26, 1896.

Hon. John M. Thurston and others, members of the Notification Committee of the Republican National Convention:

Gentlemen:—In pursuance of the promise made to your committee when notified of my nomination as the Republican candidate for President, I beg to submit this formal acceptance of that high honor and to consider in detail questions at issue in the pending campaign.

Perhaps this might be considered unnecessary in view of my remarks on that occasion and those I have made to delegations that have visited me since the St. Louis Convention, but in view of the momentous importance of the proper settlement of the issues