

OFFICIAL REPORT

TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

—OF THE—

National Brick Manufacturers'
Association

—HELD AT—

NEW ORLEANS, LA.

MARCH 2 to 7, 1914.



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TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

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National Brick Manufacturers' Ass'n

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

HAPPY DAYS were all the days spent in New Orleans by those who attended the twenty-eighth annual convention of the National Brick Manufacturers' Association. The very atmosphere of the Crescent City is redolent of hospitality and good cheer, and while our national conventions have always been noted for good fellowship, that spirit was particularly felt and enjoyed during the recent convention.

There were more early arrivals than at any previous convention. President W. H. H. Rogers and Vice-President C. P. Mayer were contestants for first honor in that respect, both having gone to New Orleans ten days in advance, in order to witness the Mardi Gras festivities, and a number of others were close on their heels. Monday, the 2d, found the lobby of the Grunewald Hotel thronged with friends of years gone by. A. R. Root and Theo. A. Randall, who have never missed a single one of the twenty-eight conventions, were greeted with unusual warmth by the old-time members, as were also the trio of veterans, D. V. Purington, J. A. Blaffer and W. D. Gates, charter members, who have never wavered in their allegiance to the organization, though they have not been able to attend some of the conventions of late years. The affections of a lifetime found expression in the strong hand clasps, and close observers noted a hazy dimness

FIRST SESSION.

Wednesday, 10:00 a. m., March 4, 1914.

President W. H. H. Rogers: The convention will come to order, and the Rev. McF. Alexander, of New Orleans, will open the session with prayer.

The Opening Prayer.

Rev. McF. Alexander: Let us rise in prayer. Our Father, we as business men, and before we begin the work of the day, desire to acknowledge Thy goodness and Thy hand in all we have done, and to ask Thy blessing upon each one of us and upon the work of this Association. We bless Thee that we live in the land of freedom and that we can come from the four corners of this great country of ours and gather together men of one purpose and in one trade. Thou hast given us peace and Thou hast given us prosperity, and we look to Thee, O Father, for great blessings upon our country and upon the special business that we represent. We are here strangers in a strange land; may it not be so long, our Father, and may our stay here be a stay that shall be a blessing to us and to this Association. Take care of the families we have left behind, the loved ones at home, and watch over us, and may we go back safely to those homes. Hear us now, be with us throughout the whole meeting of this Association, and the glory shall be Thine, through Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

President Rogers: Those of us who have been in New Orleans for the past week or two weeks, or several days, do not really think we need a welcome to New Orleans, and yet to make us all feel still more welcome, I have the pleasure of introducing the Honorable Martin Behrman, Mayor of New Orleans, who will give you welcome. (Applause.)

Mayor Behrman's Welcome Address.

Hon. Martin Behrman: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen of the National Brick Manufacturers' Association—Your

on the sidewalk, mopped his brow and said: "What is it, mon?" And the neighbor said: "Sandy, I advise you to buy a silver watch." Mr. McLoughlin wants to know what that has to do with the next toast. The name of the man who is going to respond to the next toast is William McFaddin Alexander, one of the leading and most respected divines of the city of New Orleans.

OUR HOBBIES.

DR. WILLIAM MCF. ALEXANDER.

"A little hobble, now and then,
Is needed by our busy men—
To rest 'em."

Mr. Toastmaster, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I, too, remember a story about oatmeal—I suppose oatmeal must be a hobby of the Scotchman. There was an Englishman and Scotchman dining together, and the Scotchman said to the Englishman, "If you would eat oatmeal, you would live to be a hundred." And the Englishman said, "Who would want to live to be a hundred if he had to eat oatmeal." (Laughter.) That is on the other side. I desire to say that the hobby in New Orleans is hospitality. It is so much a hobby that we have almost made a business of it. Every business man ought to have a hobby of some kind, something that he can put his heart in, something that will rest his mind. You who are busy day after day with cares and burdens that tire you, need a hobby of some kind that you can lose yourself, that you can lose your business in. New Orleans is a busy city, but its hobby is hospitality. In some respects it is the most hospitable city we have. We have had a mayor to open to you the doors of the city. We have also had a toastmaster to open it to you. I would like to talk to you of our city standing here at the mouth of the greatest river that drains the greatest valley in the world, the valley where many of you are making your living in your ordinary business. You heard Mr. Gates the other day say that the waters of heaven, no matter where they fell in this valley, whether on the slopes of the Rocky Mountains or the slopes of the Alleghenies, or away up on the Canadian border, immediately every drop started toward New Orleans; and you, following in the wake of the waters, are here. We tell you there are reasons why our city in the past has not been able to do what it is going to do. Now you have heard some of these reasons, and I am going to take your time in telling them again. I think perhaps an incident that happened to me while aboard ship once will explain to you some of the things concerning the first speakers have been saying about New Orleans. We ran into a school of whale on the way over. We had been bragging a good deal about America, and the captain was an Englishman and he got a little tired because of it. Finally we saw these whales, and someone said, "The whales are blowing." And the captain looked out and said, "Those are American whales." I said, "How do you

know they are American whales; we are pretty close to England?" And the captain answered, "They are American whales, because they are blowing." (Laughter.) Well, you heard the mayor blow, you have heard Mr. Bentley blow; if I had time I would like to blow, and later on you are going to hear Mr. McLoughlin blow. I have to stop to shy a brick at him, because a little while ago he looked at this program and said, "The printer made another mistake; he ought to have made it 'hoboes' instead of 'hobbies.'" (Laughter.) I want to tell you a story about two men who quarreled. I am not sure whether one of them meant Mr. McLoughlin or not, but I know how persevering he is. They had a law case in court, and they were both very determined. I think both had some Scotch blood in them. One said, "I'll law ye to the circuit court." And the other one said, "I'll be thar." "I'll law ye to the supreme court." "Well, I'll be thar." "I'll law ye to the United States court." "I'll be thar." "I'll law ye to the supreme court of the United States." "I'll be thar." "I'll law ye to hades." "My lawyer will be thar." (Laughter.)

I have a friend who is a banker, and his hobby is golf. He works all morning and then in the afternoon he goes out and forgets everything else but golf. He has been after me to learn golf, too, but I am afraid to, for I know of a case of an old Scotch minister, who had been working overtime, and his session came to him, "Dector, you have been working too hard; go and play golf." He said, "I haven't time." But they insisted that he take some time for himself and learn to play golf. About three months afterward he called his session together and said, "Brethren, I am sorry to tell you, but I will have to quit it." And they said, "Why do you have to quit golf; doesn't it agree with you?" He said, "I don't mean golf, I mean the ministry." (Laughter.) So I have been afraid to play golf for fear I might have to quit the ministry.

I know there are others who have to speak, but I want to tell you of the hobby of the colored brother. We have seventy-five thousand of them down here, and one of the hobbies of our colored brother is a great big, juicy watermelon. Do you know what a great big juicy watermelon in the summer time tastes like. One day two "nigger" women were going down the back road, and as they passed a "nigger" cabin there was a child on the floor, and he had been eating watermelon and was crying and rolling around on the floor, and one of the women said, "What's the matter with that child?" The mother said, "I don't know what's the matter with that child; he has got such a powerful misery." And the child continued to roll; and the other woman said, "I guess it is too much watermelon." And the mother said, "Go way 'nigger! Why, that can't be. I 'spect what you mean is too little 'nigger.'" (Laughter and applause.) That is the way I feel toward watermelon. I hope your hobby when you go back home will be New Orleans. Before I met the members of this association, the National Brick Manufacturers Association was not my hobby. It is now. I pity any man who has not made some good woman his hobby—someone to take care of him—someone to love him. Words fall me when I talk about the women. (Applause.)

Toastmaster Bentley—We are all in the same boat with Brother Alexander on that topic, I hope. For personal reasons we will have to make a little change in the order of the toasts. I am going to call on a gentleman next who will have to leave very shortly, whose subject is the last on the printed program. Mark Twain, in response to a toast at a London banquet one time, said among other good things about women, that "as a wife, a grandmother, or a mother-in-law she has no equal among men." I do not believe and I hope none of you do that Bartholdi got his inspiration for the Statue of Liberty from being met by his wife or mother-in-law standing on the stair with a lamp in her hand, when he came in the house near midnight. Rudyard Kipling, I believe, said: "The female of the species is more deadly than the male." As a matter of fact, the female is the better of the species, and I am reminded of that fact by a poem from the celebrated American poet, whose name I am glad to have forgotten, who said:

"The eagle is the bird to soar,
The hawk is being of the woods,
The mockingbird can sing the score,
But the hen delivers the goods."

(Laughter.)

Ladies and gentlemen, the next sentiment, the peculiar appropriateness of which you may divine, is "Shock Absorbers," which will be responded to by our eloquent friend, Mr. Herbert Casson of New York City. (Applause.)

SHOCK ABSORBERS.

HERBERT N. CASSON, NEW YORK CITY.

"Through highways and through byways,
We may wend our way serene,
Till the fateful banner, 'Votes for Women,'
Dawns upon the scene—
Then, monters l'arbe!"

Mr. Toastmaster, Ladies and Fellow Brickmakers:

I may say that since I heard, this afternoon, about that floating brick, I am going into the business myself, and I don't mind telling you what my scheme is. I am going to build a floating brick plant and make brick with yeast. I am going to build it at Cairo, where, if I don't like the help, I can kill them, then raft the brick down to New Orleans and make brick warships and load them up with New Orleans gin fizzes and capture the world. (Applause.) I am here to say something for the first time this evening of a little interest to the ladies. There were two fellows in the bar—in the writing room—this morning, and I heard one say to the

other, "Joe, would you trade your wife for a horse?" "No," says Joe, "but I would hate to have someone tempt me with a Ford." (Laughter.) I don't agree with that. One thing I am very sure of is, that I have never spoken before ladies in my life that I have not said something the wrong way; and the only consolation I have this evening is that my wife is not present to tell me what I should have said. A little while ago I was speaking before a thousand ladies who had raised money for a hospital, and I said, like the chump that I was, "I would suggest, ladies, that you place over the door of this grand building, in letters of brass, these words, 'God Bless Our Hospital and Keep It Empty.'" They did not like that; they wanted it full. Now, I did not know why they wanted it full, and so you see a man never knows what a woman wants him to think. Just think of raising one hundred thousand dollars for a hospital and then have it empty! They wanted their hospital filled with bleeding, suffering humanity, so they could walk up and down the halls and gloat over their fine hospital. My idea of an efficient hospital was to have a hospital that nobody needed; they wanted their hospital full, and their husbands not. (Laughter.) And you never can make them out at all.

I am not going to speak on the wife cost of living, for if the chairman keeps on making speeches as he has, it will be 4 o'clock before we are through. (Laughter and applause.) I am not going to speak of the wife as an expense or trouble, but as an asset. She is not an expense, and the husband makes a mistake when he talks about it. You know the clam is a fish built like a nut. (Laughter.) The wife looks like an expense, but she is not. (Laughter.) Don't you see there may be some old bachelors here? An old bachelor is a blind man in an art gallery; an old bachelor is a cripple in life's marathon; he is a man with nothing on the top of his neck; no one to pet him; none to caress; no one to brag to. Think of that, a man with no one to brag to! No one to forgive him; no one to understand him—and I never knew a man who was not misunderstood. Why, what our wives have been to us! My wife made me rich and sensible, and when I was married I was neither—and I am speaking for all you men.

We have to appreciate marriage. I am speaking seriously when I say that, and I am going to give you some good advice. I am not going to speak to you about finance; I have spoken to you twice, and there is nothing to you. Appreciate your wife's brains; she has more than you have. Votes for women! Why not? We men don't know what to do with votes. I don't know why women should not run the country. They run us individually; why not collectively? What's the difference? There is no man so silly as the man who despises his wife's advice. Have you read a work on "Bees 150 Years Old"? They talk about king bees. We know better; the one they used to think was the king bee is the queen. Do you know that the so-called supremacy of man is a matter of vocal cords. Man's vocal cords are long, and he roars; and a woman's is short, and she squeaks. So man goes through the world with a roar, and woman goes through the world with a squeak; and instead of a roar she has a reason. So while men roar, women reason, and while they develop the brain, we develop the lungs.

Women created industries. They were the first, and we find they were the first to make the home. Long ago, in the early days, men went off and fished and hunted, while the women stayed at home and decorated the cave with flowers and ground the wheat—which she was first to plant—between two stones. There came a morning away back in the early days, one sad morning for men, when the man stayed home and saw his wife grinding the wheat; and he said in his big voice, "Man do it." And he ground it, and that was the end of man's fun. (Laughter.) The woman sat back and said, "How strong you are." And the man, the poor boob, has been grinding ever since. (Laughter.) No more hunting, no more fishing, no more roaming in the forest. Man goes out to work, earns money, hands it to his wife. She decides what to buy, and he goes on working because she said, "Isn't he a dear! How strong you are!" Flatters him and jollies him little by little, changing business all over. They haven't got in the brick business yet; when they do, there will be something doing. Woman wanted safety first. Wherever was there a man who wanted safety? They wanted danger. Women wanted safety, and they have their way, and they voted in their clubs that business was too dangerous; and men go up and down crying, "Safety first." Whenever I hear a man with a loud voice roaring up and down the streets, I know he is telling what his wife told him. Almost all of us are what our wives made us and as useful.

Women have ambition. We devil-may-care men have no ambition. We are after the price. We have no conception of saving, have no conception of progress. Our wives save our money for us. Notice when a woman buys and when a man buys. A man goes into a store, shuts his eye at the door of the store and says, "Give me a tie." And if he wants a black tie, he comes out with a blue one; but he doesn't know it until he gets home and his wife tells him. (Laughter.) But a woman goes into a department store, which is woman's heaven. She has her eyes open and she floats from counter to counter; she is making up her mind; she loves to make up her mind, and she floats from counter to counter, and she says, "I will take mauve, or crepe de chine," or this or this. She is in woman's heaven. That is why women, when they die, don't have to go to heaven; they have their department stores here; and they make up their minds, because they started making up their minds, and they have been making up the men's minds for them ever since. An automobile salesman told me that Jim Corbett came into the store to buy an automobile. He spent two days picking out what he wanted. The third day in came Mrs. Corbett, and she changed everything but the tires. (Laughter.) So I leave it to you, if Jim Corbett, with knockout fists, can't do anything with his wife, what can you and I do? (Laughter.) Our fathers could not, and their fathers could not, and neither could their fathers. We have to like it today, we have to surrender and be patient and consider that our halter is a very pleasant halter and our obedience a very pleasant obedience. The man who listens to his wife will get the very highest price for his brick. (Loud applause.)

Toastmaster Bentley: After the very well merited re-proof that Mr. Casson has administered, I am going to reform and quit making speeches and introduce the speakers and incidentally stop taking up all the time. The next sentiment is "The Road to Happiness," and I don't need to tell you that this applies to brick, because the road to the other place is paved with good intentions. It will be responded to by Mr. John C. Boss, of Elkhart, Ind.

THE ROAD TO HAPPINESS.

JOHN C. BOSS, ELKHART, IND.

"The modern road is a different thing,
A worthy theme for the bard to sing."

Mr. Toastmaster, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am not going to tell you that I have stage fright; I know better. That is not my business. Every brickmaker here knows that when he gets his brickyard in order and wants to make brick, the first thing he does is to get a boss. I am the boss so long as the lady of the house is not around. (Laughter.) I am reminded this evening of our old, genial friend here, "Button-Hole" Gates, of a story he told away back yonder (my wife says, "Don't begin to tell how old you are!"), but away back yonder on a similar occasion as we are having here, when "Button-Hole" Gates was trying to tell how good he felt, and it applies to myself now. He used the old story about the school boy. You have probably, most of you, heard it; but the story is that the boy was very sick, and they sent for a doctor. After the doctor had taken his pulse, he said, "My lad, let me see your tongue." The boy shook his head, and said, "No tongue can tell how bad I feel." Brother Gates used that story by contrast to say, no tongue can tell how good I feel; but I am feeling very bad, and I am very serious about it; ladies and gentlemen, I am feeling extremely bad. It is a worse case than that of a little boy; but I hope the ladies and gentlemen in the rear of the house can hear me, for I have a few sentiments I want to give you tonight. This is an era of great happiness, and I am called on to respond to the toast, "The Road to Happiness," and I think if I am "boss" I ought to be permitted to place my own construction on the meaning. Brother Randall came around to talk to me about responding to this toast, and I have no doubt he meant well when he said, "That's all right Boss, one or two minutes will do," but now I am "boss" and Mr. Randall is not going to tell me how long I can talk. I will listen to the toastmaster, if he calls me down I will quit, but I won't listen to Randall, for this time I am "boss."

I want to tell you ladies and gentlemen why I am feeling so bad tonight. It is because we brickmakers are very modest, so modest as to work the ruination of our happiness. I believe in modesty, modesty is a great attribute, but not so modest that we have had one put over on us by these cement men. Our genial toastmaster told us that the road to happiness was paved with