

Journal Divided – “Republicans Gather at Chicago”
Excerpt from Chapter 15 of Michael Burlingame’s *Abraham Lincoln: A Life* (pgs 1671-73)

Link to full Chapter Fifteen:

<http://www.knox.edu/documents/pdfs/LincolnStudies/Burlingame,%20Vol%201,%20Chap%2015.pdf>

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An “overflowing heartiness and deep feeling pervaded the whole house,” John G. Nicolay remembered. “No need of a claque, no room for sham demonstration here! The galleries were as watchful and earnest as the platform. There was something genuine, elemental, uncontrollable in the moods and manifestations of the vast audience.”¹ The city was awash with visitors, some of whom wound up sleeping on tables at billiard parlors.² The first two days were devoted to routine business and to adopting a platform that criticized attempts to limit the rights of immigrants; endorsed the sentiments of the Declaration of Independence; condemned disunionism, the popular sovereignty doctrine, and threats to reopen the African slave trade; upheld the right of states to regulate their own institutions; denounced the Buchanan administration’s extravagance, corruption, abuse of power, and support of the Lecompton Constitution; maintained that the normal condition of the territories was freedom; called for the immediate admission of Kansas as a free state; and endorsed protective tariffs, internal improvements (including a Pacific railroad), and homestead legislation.

¹ John G. Nicolay and John Hay, *Abraham Lincoln: A History* (10 vols.; New York: Century 1890), 2:266. Nicolay’s report on the convention, dated Chicago, 18 May, ran in the *Missouri Democrat* (St. Louis), 23 May 1860 under the pen name Pike.

² *Chicago Press and Tribune*, 17 May 1860.