Harmon of Ohio

Distinguished Jurist, Candidate of Conservative Democrats For the Presidency, Is a Fighter of Political Bosses—Six Foot Optimist Who Is the Soul of Good Nature.

By JAMES A. EDGERTON.

It is seldom that one city can boast three presidential possibilities at one time, a distinction that belongs to Cincinnati this year. The fact that Cincinnati is in Ohio accounts for it. Ohio is almost as prolific of possible presidents as it is of buckeyes. It not only has a crop of its own, but when other states want to support the luxury of a favorite son they are often compelled to fall back on a citizen transplanted from Ohio. There are Buckeyes who have come to regard the White House as a state institution.

Taft, Foraker and Judson Harmon are the three candidates who are now making Cincinnati about the warmest spot on the political map. The careers of the three men are closely intermingled. All three are natives of Ohio. Taft and Harmon were born in the same county, Hamilton, and Foraker and Harmon were born in the same year, 1846. All three are lawyers, and all three sat on the bench of the superior court of Cincinnati. Foraker and Harmon served in this capacity at the same time. Then Foraker was elected governor, and when Harmon resigned from the bench to resume the practice of law in 1887 Foraker appointed Taft to the vacancy. The parallel does not end even here. All three are college graduates, Taft from Yale, Foraker from Cornell and Harmon from Denison. All have lived in Washington, two as cabinet officers and one as senator. All three were originally Republicans, Harmon breaking away in the Greeley campaign of 1872. Despite present political differences, the three have been warm personal friends.

What fate is it that twists the threads of destiny in such strange ways? Even now this truly remarkable parallel is not at an end. It is absolutely certain that at least two of these men and possibly all three are to be disappointed in their presidential aspirations.

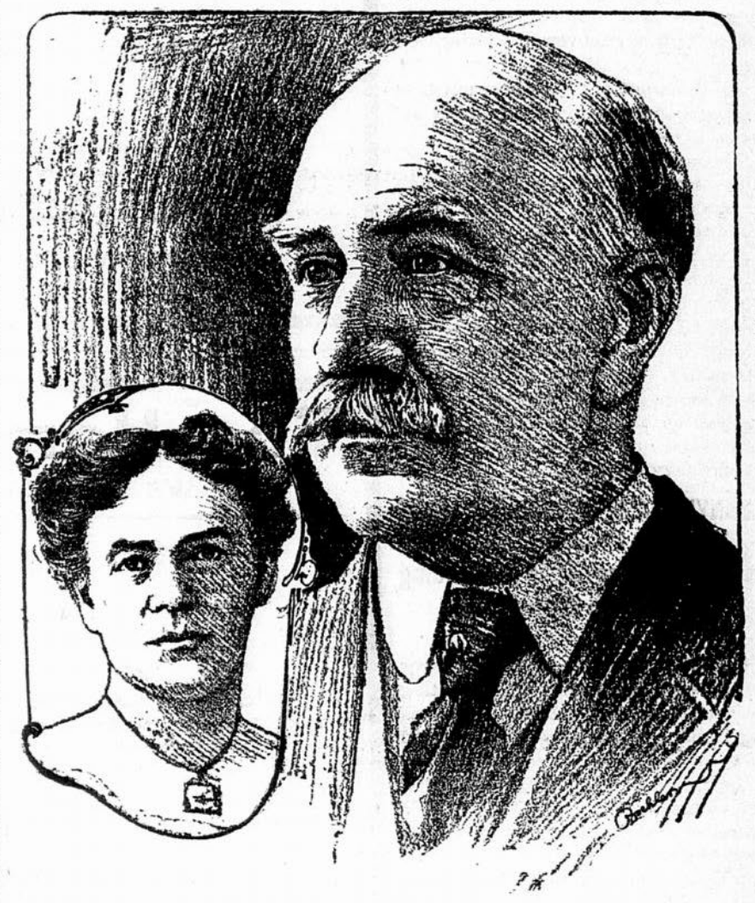
Since leaving the bench of the superior court of Cincinnati, Harmon has been attorney general of the United States, Foraker has been governor and senator, and Taft has been solicitor general of the United States, United States circuit judge, governor of the Philippines and secretary of war. If there is anything else that Cincinnati would like, now is the time to speak. No wonder she figures on being the home of the next president.

A "People's Party" Organizer.

Although Judge Harmon is being urged as a candidate of the conservative Democrats, he was not always classed on that side of the house. There was a time when he was a radical of radicals, not only acting as secretary of the Liberal Republicans in the ill starred Greeley campaign, but the next year helping to organize a People's party, which nominated a state ticket, advised everybody to cut out both old parties and wound up by polling not quite so many votes as the Prohibitionists. After that he went out of politics and remained out till 1876, when he became a Tilden Democrat. In that year he was elected a judge of the common pleas court, but served only four months, when he was unseated on a contest.

The radical of today is the conservative of tomorrow. This fact may be due either to the progression of the mass or the retrogression of the individual. Age may have something to do with it. In the days of his Greeley and People's party enthusiasms Harmon was in his twenties. Now he is past sixty. In the meantime the world has moved its tents considerably farther up the trail. All that makes a difference in relative attitudes. There are people who call Mr. Bryan a conservative today, Bryan himself being among the number. It is all in the point of view; also in the exigencies of politics. There is one thing certain—the American people have moved forward and are still moving. If they have come abreast of the Bryan position, it follows as a matter of course that they are in advance of that of Judge Harmon. That is a story, however, which can only be told by the result of the convention and the election.

Whatever may be Judson Harmon's attitude now compared to that of thirty-five years ago, no one can charge that he has deserted his principles. On the contrary, he was opposed to the greenback propaganda in 1876, just as he was to free silver in 1896. He has fought consistently against local rings and bosses in his own party, and one of the fiercest of these fights occurred but a few years prior to his appointment as attorney general. It is likewise true that while he was a railroad attorney for many years his action as one of the special counsel appointed to investigate rebating on the Santa Fe was more drastic than the administration would uphold. He, with the associate counsel, found that the official chiefly at fault was Paul Morton, who had been one of the vice presidents of the road and was then a member of President Roosevelt's cabinet. Mr. Roosevelt would not have Morton prosecuted, and Judge Harmon resigned. Some of his prestige today is due to the deep impression created by that case. Presidential booms have sprung from less causes.



JUDGE JUDSON HARMON AND MRS. HARMON.

At the time of Judson Harmon's birth his father was a superintendent of schools in a small Ohio town and afterward became a Baptist preacher. The young man said it was hard to live up to the reputation of a minister's son, but did not explain in what sense he meant it. Others will interpret it according to their ideas of what the reputation of a minister's son really is, provided he has any. Some of them have only the reputation of their fathers.

An "Idol" In College.

In college Jud Harmon is described as an "idol." Most men who become presidential candidates are discovered to have been "idols" in college. It is at least polite to say so. Besides, time mellows all differences, and success conceals all defects. So it happens that when a man has become big enough to be mentioned for the presidency his classmates are in a state of enthusiasm which makes them forget his bad points and magnify his good ones.

It can readily be credited, however, that Harmon was a little tin joss among the "rah-rah" boys. For one thing he was and is a six footer, athletic and full of animal spirits. For another he was and is the soul of good nature. For a third he was a leader in all school pranks. These are qualities that insure a man's popularity in college—or out of college, for the matter of that.

Young Harmon did not graduate with his class, but was given a day all of his own on which he graduated in state—not solemn state, by the way, but brass band, "rah-rah" state. One of his classmates tells the story, and it is exciting enough for the prelude to a presidential campaign. All college students are alike, except that some are more depraved than others, and among these was Jud Harmon. All students want to do things to the faculty, and some do them. Among these again was Harmon. That is why he did not graduate till a day late and but for a small French revolution in that particular college would not have graduated at all.

Selected as a Burnt Offering.

Most colleges have fake commencement programmes that roast the dignified professors, trustees, students and everybody worth roasting. The one of June, 1866, at Denison was especially notable. It changed the junior class exercises into a howling farce and made the stately trustees so chokingly wrathy that there had to be a victim. Harmon's earmarks were all over the fake programme, so he was selected as the burnt offering to appease the anger of the powers that were.

The fact that Harmon had been left off and was not to receive his sheepskin did not dawn on the audience till near the close of the exercises. It was a mean and small way of getting even and created an uproar of protest. "Harmon, Harmon!" went up the shouts from all sides, and in the midst of the turmoil the faculty completed the ceremony and filed out through a side door. Thereupon the student body and alumni hastily convened and passed resolutions after the good old American way. Whenever two or three Americans get a grievance there is the resolution in the midst of them. They as naturally run to "whereases" and oratory as an Italian vendetta does to stilettos or an Irish fair to shillalahs.

The Dension students and alumni resolved that Jud Harmon should be graduated without waiting for the aid or consent of any other nation on earth. The faculty refused. The students thereupon resolved to strike, boycott the institution and to do all the dire things that could suggest themselves to an excited body of young men. This made a dent in the faculty, and after some further "whereasing" and "resolving" consent was given that Harmon might graduate.

The next day when the ceremony was to take place the student body got out a brass band, formed a procession, escorted Harmon to the hall like a conquering hero and after he received the coveted sheepskin "rah-rahed" all the rest of the day and into the beginning of the next. The spirit of the Declaration of Independence got in its work on that student body in fine style.

What chance had a mere board of college trustees before a force that had walked all over kings and thrones? With such a start in life there is no wonder that Jud Harmon's friends think he is endowed with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness and the right to run for president.

One of the Home Guard.

It was shortly before this stirring revolt against the tyrant that young Harmon had his war experiences. Having martial ardor and being a preacher's son do not go together. Young Harmon found it so, and when he would a soldier be he discovered that the first enemy he would have to whip was his father. Not caring to gain military renown in such a hard way, he relinquished his dreams. He did run away from home, however, to join the home guard, that gallant body which went to repel Generals Kirby Smith and John Morgan. Like the king of France, the home guard marched up the hill and then marched down again. Unlike Caesar, it came, it saw, it scampered.

After participating in this valiant feat at arms young Harmon had an actual warlike bout with his father. In this celebrated battle the weapons were shingles, and only one side was armed. The late member of the home guard was totally and disastrously defeated, after which he was bundled off to school. The warlike spark was not entirely quenched, but it had to blaze into eloquence rather than into valor. Young Harmon made one speech on the college campus which was so filled with fiery patriotism it is remembered to this day. Bryan is not the only boy orator.

Like all Ohio men and some others, Mr. Harmon is an optimist. It is harder to be an optimist now than it was six months ago, but so far as heard from Judge Harmon is still sticking. That eminent but intermittent Cincinnatian, William Howard Taft, is likewise as optimist. All men are who weigh over 300 pounds.

One thing in Judge Harmon's favor is his name—it is so much like harmony. If there is one thing the Democratic party "long has sought and mourned because" it "found it not," that one thing is harmony. If a radical is nominated, the conservatives knife him; if a conservative is nominated, the radicals knife him, and if a betwixt and between man is nominated they jump on him both ways from the middle.

Judge Harmon is even more of an athlete than President Roosevelt. He has a hand and foot as big as Jeffries and hits almost as hard. He is also a good shot and, while he does not hunt bears with a brass band, is not without fame as a Nimrod. That is one of the things that recommended him to President Cleveland.

Mrs. Harmon was a Miss Scobey, daughter of a prominent physician of Hamilton, O. She is as large and fine looking for a woman as Judge Harmon is as a man and has the same conservative ideals and tastes. They have three daughters, all of whom are popular in Cincinnati and Washington.

Personally Judge Harmon is not worried about his prospects of becoming president. He is convinced, as are some others, that this is not a good year for conservatives, but he is ready, as he ever has been, to stand up for his principles.

SURGEONS' CHARGES.

Method by Which, It Is Said, the Fees Are Regulated.

Frequently laymen who have had occasion to settle the bills of surgeons upon whom they have called in extremities to use the knife are heard to complain against what they call "the exorbitant charges of surgeons."

A skilled surgeon may charge $250 for a simple appendicitis operation. The patient, who never thinks of complaining until he is convalescent, objects oftentimes to paying the bill. He says, "It is outrageous for a surgeon to charge $250 for half an hour's work."

The question of surgeons' fees often puzzles a patient. He knows of one man upon whom a surgeon of wide reputation has operated and charged only $75. He may know of another who has paid $1,000 for the same operation. He cannot figure it out.

Yet surgeons of known ability and national, perhaps international, fame have a general plan in charging for operations. Their prices range from nothing to $5,000. They will operate without any question of willingness or ability to pay in any case where the situation is imperative. Afterward they will present the bill. The general public does not understand how a surgeon will charge one man $50, another $250 and another $5,000.

Surgeons have a fixed price scheme. They aim to charge the patient about one month's income. They figure that any person who is in such bad condition as to be forced to submit to a surgical operation surely can afford to give one month's income. They ascertain roughly what a man makes per month and send in a bill for that amount. The man whose income is but $50 a month pays $50. The man who gets $5,000 is asked to pay $5,000—and generally objects, even though he should know that his life is worth as much proportionately as that of his poorer fellow.—Chicago Tribune.

THE SHIPS OF TYRE.

Types of These Vessels Still In Use In the Far East.

Away back, even when Solomon was king in Israel, the ships of Tyre, manned by brave Phoenician sailors, went through the prehistoric canal where the Suez channel is now and navigated from China clear around to England.

Their ships were the models for Greece and Rome and later for Venice, the Spaniards and the Portuguese. Only the Englishman improved on shipbuilding, and from him all modern models have dated.

In the old Trye models the waist of the ship was low, so the oars could get good play on the surface of the ocean, and the sterns were lofty, so as to give room for stowing cargoes and to provide dry quarters for the upper mariners.

As wind power came into use the waist grew higher and the poop deck disappeared. Step by step from galley to caravel, from caravel to frigate, the British shipwrights improved on the ships of Tyre.

But in the far east the models have remained much the same, and the ship makers of Persia and India have stuck to the old Tyrian models to the present day.

Today their high square sterns recall the ships of Columbus. The mariners still have to get out of sight of land and steer by stars and the feel of the wind on cloudy nights. They sail around Trinidad and carry pilgrims to Mecca.

These vessels, on which the queen of Sheba might have traveled to visit Solomon, are used by native Hindoos, Arabs and by the peoples of Indo-China.

On board the captain, his men, the cargoes, pilgrims and sheep, asses and other live stock live in a proximity that would stir an American's stomach to immediate rebellion.—Nashville American.

A Metaphor With a History.

To "know a hawk from a hernshaw" is a metaphor with a curious history. It is a comparison drawn from falconry. "Hernshaw" is a corruption of "heronshaw," or young heron, a bird which was a common prey of the falcons. To know a hawk from a hernshaw is therefore to be able to distinguish the falcon from its prey. A further colloquial corruption crept into the phrase, "to know a hawk from a handsaw," a form used by Hamlet in one place. Possibly the distinction between a hawk and a hernshaw was found not to be strong enough for the purposes of the proverb.—Manchester Guardian.

No Death Penalty.

European countries which inflict no death penalty, however brutal or premeditated the crime, are Italy, Holland, Norway, Switzerland, Portugal and Russia, save where the lives of the emperor, the empress or the heir to the throne are concerned. The canton of Zug, in Switzerland, imposes the lowest minimum penalty in the world—three years' imprisonment for willful homicide, the maximum punishment being imprisonment for life.—London Chronicle.

An Inconsiderate System.

"Why don't we take an express train?" asked the sweet young thing of her escort at a subway station.

"This isn't an express station," explained her escort kindly.

"How tiresome!" exclaimed the s. y. t. "They ought to have express trains at every station!"—New York Press.

For himself doth a man work evil in working evil for another.—Hesiod.

DID LEE EXPECT DEFEAT?

The General's Significant Statement After Sailors Creek.

My last official intercourse with General Lee was on the retreat. I was sent to him with dispatches from President Davis and reached him near midnight of April 6 near Rice's station. I approached without being challenged by a single sentinel and found him standing near a smoldering fire with one of his hands resting on an ambulance wheel. He was dictating some order to Colonel Marshall, who sat in the ambulance with a lap desk receiving his dictation. As General Lee spoke he gazed into the bed of coals as if weighing every word. There was no staff or escort about, so far as I could see. Touching Sailors Creek, he spoke bitterly and said in answer to Mr. Davis' desire to know his proposed line of retreat that it was beyond his control; that he had intended to retreat by the line of the Danville road, but had been forced off that route by the arrival of Sheridan ahead of him at Burkville; that he was then following the line of the Southside road to Lynchburg, but the enemy was outmarching him and might force him off; that his movements were dependent on the developments of each hour, and then he added: "How can I tell? A few more Sailors Creeks and it will all be over—just where I thought it would end from the beginning." When I first published this statement its truthfulness was questioned. Fortunately I afterward saw two of his staff, both of whom said they had heard him express himself in the same way. There may have been times when General Lee, elated by some of his surprising successes, felt hopeful about the triumph of our cause. From the probabilities based on numbers and resources his judgment may have been warped away now and then by the feeling he expressed when, after Second Manassas, Sharpsburg, Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, he said, "No general ever commanded such troops as those under me." But his mind was too mathematical in its workings, and all its calculations were too habitually based upon what could be done with a given number of men and a certain amount of material to make him forget the vast disparity between the contestants or hope for ultimate triumph.—John S. Wise in Circle Magazine.

A WITTY JUDGE.

His Conclusions on the Evidence of Ditto and True.

The late Hon. Noah Davis, well known throughout the country as the judge who tried and sentenced Boss Tweed, was justly celebrated in many ways. He was of that type of jurist for which western New York was famed during the half century following 1850. Orleans county is proud of him as one of her noblest and most distinguished sons. He was slightly above medium height, full habited, large head, fine, clean cut face—indeed, a striking figure in any community. He was a well read lawyer, an honest, fair minded judge, with a keen sense of humor and withal something of a writer and poet. The following lines from his pen, written on the spur of the moment and in the midst of a trial, illustrate the alertness and quality of his mind. They are perhaps the best play upon words of which we have any record in the English language.

It was at the Niagara circuit in the early seventies. Judge Davis presided. An action in ejectment was called. The dispute was over a party wall or a division line. It was purely a question for the civil engineer. The division line established and the case was won. The defendant's attorney, realizing this, called as expert witnesses the Hon. John A. Ditto, city engineer of Buffalo, and the Hon. A. R. True, the engineer who constructed the cantalever bridge over Niagara river at the falls. They were two of the most eminent civil engineers in the state. They made a survey of the premises and established the division line as contended for by the defendant and when called to the witness stand so testified, giving monuments, courses and distances with such minute exactness that they could not be successfully controverted. The moment True, who followed Ditto as a witness, left the stand, Judge Davis wrote these lines and passed them to the clerk to hand to plaintiff's counsel:

Since True swears ditto to Ditto,
And Ditto swears ditto to True,
If True be true and Ditto be ditto,
I think they're too many for you.

—Daniel H. McMillan in Buffalo Truth.

Man and His Sweet Tooth.

"If you want to have that tradition upset about women only having a sweet tooth," remarked the stenographer who works downtown, "just go into a quick lunch room occasionally and watch the men who drink coffee or chocolate with their midday meals. I give you my word I have seen not one, but many men, put six lumps of sugar into their one cup of coffee or chocolate and then eat apple pie that is fairly covered with powdered sugar."—New York Press.

Makes a Difference.

A girl who used to make all sorts of fun of those who were poor spellers is now receiving three fat letters a week from a man who can't spell correctly more than forty words altogether. But he has a big, nice house and money in the bank—and that spells something to her.—Howard (Kan.) Courant.

Perhaps She Did.

"Did your daughter inherit her talent for drawing?"

"Well, I never thought of it before, but it may be that she did. One of my brothers is a dentist."—Chicago Record-Herald.