



LYNDE HARRISON

LYNDE HARRISON of New Haven was born in that city on December 15, 1837, where he was reared and educated. His father, James Harrison, went to Augusta, Georgia, at the age of eighteen years, and remained there until past middle life, engaged in business as a merchant and banker. Thomas Harrison, one of his paternal ancestors, was one of the first settlers in the New Haven Colony, representing Branford in the Colonial Assembly after Branford had recognized the Connecticut charter which united the Hartford and New Haven colonies. His paternal grandmother, Sarah Wolcott, was descended from Governor Roger Wolcott, Colonial Governor of Connecticut, and from Dr. Alexander Wolcott, a prominent patriot leader during the Revolution, and she was a niece of Oliver Wolcott, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. His mother's father, John Hart Lynde, was born in Saybrook, but, after graduation from Yale College, settled in New Haven as a practising lawyer, where he died in 1817. He was a descendant of Judge Nathaniel Lynde of Saybrook, and of Judge Simon Lynde, one of the first settlers of Boston. The mother of John Hart Lynde, Rebecca Hart, was descended from Thomas Hart of Farmington, who was for many years Speaker of the Colonial Assembly. The ancestors of Mr. Harrison were all of English blood. He was educated in the public schools of New Haven, the grammar school, and Russell's Military Institute. Subsequently he taught school for two or three years, and then entered the Yale Law School, from which he was graduated in 1860. He was admitted to the bar in 1861, and soon afterward opened a law office in New Haven.

Early in his life he became interested, as a Republican, in



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politics, and he was elected clerk of the House of Representatives in 1862-63, and clerk of the Senate in 1864. In 1865 he was elected to the State Senate, and was reëlected in 1866. From 1871 to 1874 he served as judge of the City Court of New Haven, to which position he was elected by the Legislature. He has had, for nearly thirty years, a summer home and legal residence in the town of Guilford, and he represented that town in the House of Representatives in 1874-77 and in 1881. He was Speaker of the House in 1877, and chairman of the Judiciary Committee in 1881, being by virtue of that position leader of the majority party. He served on the Republican State Central Committee for several years, and was chairman of that committee in 1875-76. In 1877 he was elected by the Legislature judge of the Court of Common Pleas for the County of New Haven, and he held that office until 1881, when he declined re-election, and since that time he has devoted himself closely and continuously to the practice of his profession, except that in 1884 he accepted the office of chairman of the Republican State Central Committee.

While he was in the General Assembly he served several times on the Judiciary Committee and took part in much important legislation. He was chairman during three years of the Committee on Constitutional Amendments, and as such secured the adoption of the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, Nineteenth, Twentieth, Twenty-first, Twenty-second, Twenty-third, Twenty-fourth, and Twenty-fifth amendments to the Constitution of the State. He also drafted and advocated the adoption of the Twenty-seventh Amendment in 1883. These amendments change the time of elections from April to November; fix the length of terms of executive, legislative, and judicial officers; modify the method of representation in the lower house to the extent that no new town is entitled to representation in the Legislature unless it has at least twenty-five hundred inhabitants; forbid the payment of extra compensation to public officers during their term of office; and prohibit public funds being devoted to the construction of railroads. While Speaker in 1877 he left the chair and made an earnest speech in favor of the statute of that year putting married women upon an equality with their husbands in relation to the ownership and control of

their own property. Under this law married women in Connecticut control absolutely their own property during coverture. At the decease of either, the law provides that neither the husband can be deprived by the wife, nor the wife be deprived by the husband, of the life use of at least one third of the entire estate. At the time the law was passed there was much serious opposition to it, but no attempt has been made since 1877 to repeal it.

Mr. Harrison was a member of the Republican National Conventions of 1876 and 1880, and as such he warmly supported in the conventions the nominations of Mr. Hayes at Cincinnati, and General Garfield at Chicago. He has voted for every Republican candidate for President since his first vote for Abraham Lincoln in 1860 down to and including 1900, except that he voted for Grover Cleveland in 1892, because he objected to the tariff and financial policy of the Republican party in 1890, especially the Sherman Silver Act, and the provision in the tariff act of 1890 putting sugar on the free list. Mr. Harrison believes that upon the issues of sound currency and other issues before the country at the opening of the twentieth century the Republican party is the party which should receive the support of men who desire the best interests of their country; but, with the exception of his work during the campaign of 1884 for Blaine, Mr. Harrison has taken no active part in politics, nor held any office since 1881.

For the past twenty years he has been engaged principally in corporation and estate affairs. He is counsel for and director in several corporations at the present time; he is an executor and trustee of the H. B. Plant estate, and general counsel of the Henry Bradley Plant Company, the Plant Investment Company, the Southern Express Company, and the Consolidated Lake Superior Company. The Plant Investment Company controls and operates the Plant system of railroads and the steamship lines connected therewith. The Consolidated Lake Superior Company is the corporation which controls the development of the water-power of Lake Superior at Sault Ste. Marie, and the various manufacturing industries connected therewith. His time is mainly occupied with work for the Plant estate and the four last-named corporations, and he has offices in the Exchange

Building, Church Street, New Haven, and at No. 12 West Twenty-third Street, New York city.

Mr. Harrison's first wife was Miss Sara Plant of Branford, a niece of Henry B. Plant. She died in 1879, and he married in 1886 Miss Harriet S. White of Waterbury. His children are William Lynde, Paul Wolcott, Gertrude Plant, and Katherine White Harrison. His New Haven house is on Hillhouse Avenue, and he has a beautiful summer residence known as "Bayhurst" in the town of Guilford on the shore of Long Island Sound.

Mr. Harrison is a member of the Union League Club, the Graduate Club, the Young Men's Republican Club, and the Country Club of New Haven; the Hartford Club, the Sachem's Head Yacht Club; and the Reform Club, the Republican Club, and the Yale Club of New York. During the last fifteen years he has made frequent trips to Europe with his family.

Upright and honorable in all transactions, public and private, an open foe to knavery, whatever its guise, and wholly indifferent to hostile criticism when serving the public weal or private duty, Judge Harrison is a man held in high esteem even by those who are for the time being opposed to him. He is a gentleman of varied and substantial attainments as a scholar, possesses warm social instincts and a kindly nature, is a true friend, and devoid of ostentation either in public or private life.

