

Destiny, or some higher power, here got very industrious, however, in stimulating a furious Senatorial fight in Illinois, where a small handful of Independents was holding the balance of power in the Legislature. General John A. Logan, Republican, was fighting desperately for re-election, and General John M. Palmer was the Democratic candidate. After the Commission was created, the Republicans suddenly withdrew Logan, and David Davis was elected to the Senate of the United States. He resigned from the Bench, which removed him from the Commission as well, and in the latter capacity was succeeded by Mr. Justice Bradley, a Republican. This gave the Commission a personnel of eight Republicans and seven Democrats. Naturally, the votes of Florida, Louisiana and South Carolina were counted for Hayes, giving him the majority by one vote of the Electors and enabling him to occupy the White House for four years.

By this narrow margin — and despite the fact that he received the greater popular vote — Tilden failed of the Presidency, the goal to which, curiously enough, he aspired no more earnestly and hopefully than did David Davis, whose life-long and absorbing ambition was to fill the position once occupied by his fellow Illinoisian — Abraham Lincoln. It is likely that Davis threw away his only chance of the Presidency by accepting the Senatorship, which he fondly hoped would lead to the White House. He is the only man who ever resigned from the United States Supreme Court to take an elective office, and his fate will not be apt to encourage others to follow his example.

Reverting a moment to Blaine and coming down to 1884 when he won the Republican nomination over Chester A. Arthur, the curious movements of destiny, or chance, again come into evidence. Blaine actually received 4,855,911 popular votes as against the 4,854,986 votes for Cleveland, and but for the fact that Cleveland carried New York by the sea margin of 1,149, Blaine would have been the twenty-third President of the United States. In the Electoral College, however, Blaine received but 182 votes, the other 219 sending Cleveland to the White House. Again, in 1888 everybody expected Blaine to receive the Republican nomination, which went to Benjamin Harrison, and it is generally conceded that he could and would have been nominated had he said the word. Instead of saying it, he wrote his famous letter from Florence, Italy, putting himself frankly on the fence — a performance which, considering his great heart-hunger for the Presidency, stamped the Florence letter as a unique literary puzzle.

Harrison, who received the nomination and the Presidency, was entered in that campaign as hardly more than a dark horse, the chief factor in his nomination being the protracted deadlock in the Republican Convention when the leading candidates spent six days in involuntarily killing each other off. The number of candidates in that Convention was the largest on record.

Four hundred and sixteen were required to nominate. John Sherman, who was a chronic candidate and always impossible, held his own up to and including the seventh and next to the final ballot. On that ballot, Harrison, who had been gaining steadily, had 278 votes. On the following ballot he was nominated with 514 votes.

Harking back to Lincoln, 1860 was a field year for lawyers as Presidential candidates. Lincoln, Douglas, Breckenridge and Bell — what a quartet! — were all able, if not eminent, members of the Bar. Though Lincoln entered the Legislature almost as soon as his beard had sprouted and was an eager candidate for office all his days, being first an Old Line Whig, or as he loved to put it, a Henry Clay Whig, and then a Republican in a State which until 1860 was Democratic

— so Democratic, in fact, that it stood firm even in the rout of 1840 — Lincoln, for a man of such consummate ability, was singularly unsuccessful prior to his election to the Presidency. With the exception of a few terms in the Illinois Legislature and one term in Congress, he was compelled to remain a private citizen until 1860, though longing always for public station. He wanted more of Congress, but couldn't get it. He desired to be Register of the Land Office, but couldn't obtain the office. He coveted the United States Senatorship in 1854, but Lyman Trumbull made away with the prize. He was a candidate for the Vice-Presidential nomination in 1856; but, though he stood second with 110 votes in the balloting, Dayton was chosen. In 1858 he fought his far-reaching battle with Judge Douglas for the Senatorship, but the Little Giant won. In those debates, Lincoln gave a half-sad, half-humorous account of his lack of success as an office-seeker.

Notwithstanding these successive disappointments, his various canvasses for himself and others, together with the large acquaintance formed on the circuit as a lawyer, made him easily the foremost of contemporary Illinois Democrats, as he had been furnished with ample opportunity for exercising that terse and luminous style of speaking of which he was master.

It was, however, the famous Lincoln-Douglas series of debates that, more than anything else, gave him the nomination. Though most Presidents had been, as they still are, nominated because of their official records, the fact that Lincoln's official record was practically *nil*, paradoxical as it may appear, was of amazing advantage to him. The leading candidate was William Henry Seward, of New York; but he was considered too radical to be available. In the Senate he had been too garrulous about the Irrepressible Conflict and the Higher Law, Indiana and Pennsylvania were then both October States, so

called; that is, they elected their State tickets in October. The Republicans had to have both to elect a President. If they went Democratic in October, they would go that way in November, and *vice versa*. The moral effect of winning both in October would have an important influence a month later. But both were considered doubtful.

Henry S. Lane, of Indiana, and Andrew G. Curtin, of Pennsylvania, Republican gubernatorial nominees, journeyed to the Chicago Convention to convince the delegates that if Seward were nominated both States would be lost to the Republicans, while if a less radical candidate were put up, the Republicans would carry both — a persuasive argument to which many yielded. Furthermore, Horace Greeley — another intense White House aspirant of defeated ambition — was there for revenge. He was far and away the most influential Republican editor in America and was a power to be conciliated. Some time previously, he had written to Seward an epistolary classic, one of the most caustic, pathetic and amusing letters in the language, dissolving the political firm of Seward, Weed and Greeley by the withdrawal of the junior partner. The trouble with the irate Horace was, that

Seward and Weed had played the game of *We take turkey and you take buzzard*, and he had a keen appetite for turkey.

Greeley could not be elected a delegate from New York; but he sat in the Convention with his pocket full of far-western proxies, and in his shrill falsetto he everywhere and incessantly cried that Seward would prove a Jonah. Thereby, he remorselessly evened up the score by defeating Seward and nearly breaking Weed's heart. Atop of this, the Lincoln managers — as shrewd a set of manipulators as ever ruled or ruined in a Convention — packed the wigwam with indefatigable Lincoln rooters. Of the electoral vote, Lincoln had 180 as compared with 72 for Breckenridge, 39 for Bell and 12 for Douglas — a big majority — but he was very much of a minority President, so far as the popular vote was concerned. The latter stood 1,866,352 for Lincoln; 1,375,157 for Douglas; 847,514 for Breckenridge, and 587,830 for Bell. Thus, at the close of a lifelong rivalry between Lincoln and Douglas, with Douglas always in the lead, the great Civil War President came into his own.

Four years later came his renomination, and Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, was nominated for Vice-President, because it was deemed advisable to strengthen the ticket by giving second place to a war Democrat or a Unionist from the South. At the beginning of the War, Johnson had been a prominent Democratic Senator, and during the first years of the Struggle he was Military Governor of Tennessee. His staunch Unionism and his geographical location made him Vice-President, while the death of Lincoln put him in the White House. Of all the Presidents Andrew Johnson, only, was neither a lawyer nor a soldier. Of the twenty-six Chief Executives he alone, by the way, was impeached; though articles of impeachment were prepared against John Tyler, but never introduced. Josiah Quincy, as may not be generally known, introduced impeachment articles against Thomas Jefferson, which, however, only received the one vote of their author.

John Tyler, incidentally, does not get a square deal in history, even by Colonel Roosevelt who prates much of the square deal; for in his *Life of Benton*, Colonel Roosevelt says that it is flattery to call Tyler a mediocre man — a statement so extravagant as to be preposterous. He was one of the very few United States Senators, furthermore, who have possessed conscience enough to resign and to go home when instructed by the Legislature to vote in a way that they considered wrong.

Sadly enough for them, it is usually the fortune of near Presidents to be forgotten. Such once-luminous possibilities, for instance, as William H. Crawford, DeWitt Clinton, Lewis Cass, Butler, David Davis, Breckenridge and Bell, are hardly more than names in the current mind. On the other hand, there are a few historical figures who were prominent candidates for President, but who are entirely forgotten as such. General Winfield Scott falls in this category, though he should be remembered as a monumental hoodoo, his candidacy having proven to be just that to the Whigs in 1852. Everything the Mexican War hero did or said during the campaign hurt him and the cause for which he stood. His unfortunate remark about having "eaten a hasty plate of soup," set all the wits of the period to poking fun at him; and his habit of rigging himself in gorgeous uniforms in a time of profound peace tended to convince the people of his vanity rather than of his statesmanship.

Riding in a car with the General on one occasion, a strange lady sitting near by politely offered him a copy of *The New York Herald*, which he declined, saying pompously: "I never read *The New York Herald*." The lady happened to be the wife of the elder James Gordon Bennett, editor and proprietor of the newspaper in question, and capable of being one of the most implacable of enemies. He at once

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Attained the White House through sheer persistency



It was Roosevelt's rough riding that contributed most toward putting him in the White House