

Charles Evans Hughes, Nominee of the Republican Party, in Limelight Ten Years

Charles Evans Hughes was born in Glenn Falls, N. Y., April 11, 1862. He obtained his education at Colgate university, not far from his home, and at Brown university, where he also studied law. He received the degree of LL.D. from Columbia, Knox and Lafayette.

Aside from his career in the practice of law, Judge Hughes did not become a national figure until about ten years ago, when he became the attorney for the Armstrong committee of the New York legislature, then investigating the relations of corporations, insurance companies in particular, to the law-making powers of the state. Previous to that time New York had been governed politically, it had been said, by a group of "grand dukes," who ruled their various provinces and the state with satisfaction to themselves and devotion to the great interests that considered practical attention to political matters essential to their continued success. These interests were, more than any others, the transportation and insurance companies. The public was being exploited by these corporations, and these corporations were, in turn, being exploited by the few individuals who held strategic corporate positions. They regarded the public only as a gold mine to be worked; the legislature as a convenient source of increasing rights, and administrative and executive officers only as servants to do their bidding.

Big Interests Exposed.

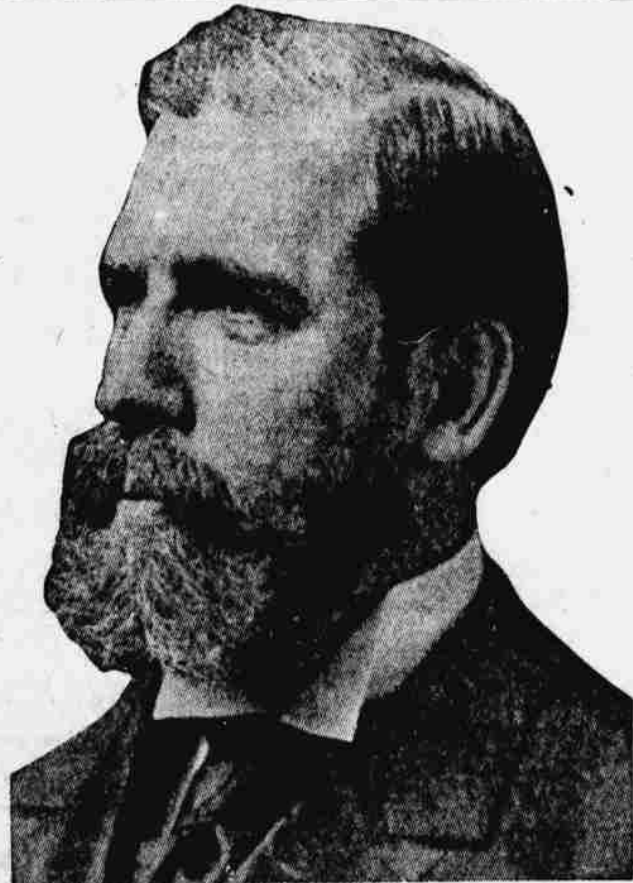
But they could not still the dissatisfaction of the public. Each of the three great interests was in turn subjected to the proper exposure, chastisement and curb that an aroused public can and will administer. Charles E. Hughes was the instrument that fittingly did the work of the public.

His investigations and his gubernatorial administrations put an end alike to the combined corporate and political monarchy that ruled the state for its own benefit. The people came back to their own, both in the control of the corporations, to which they had given life, and in the political control of the state. He was denounced by leaders of that day of even his own party, but subsequent realization of his worth and work made his official record the standard and light house. Politically, it is sufficient to point out that Governor Whitman and other republican party leaders are now his warmest advocates.

It was in 1905 that the legislature appointed a joint committee to investigate the price charged for gas and electricity in New York City, controlled by the great Consolidated Gas company. This committee, after careful thought, chose as its counsel Mr. Hughes. Under his lead the committee made a painstaking study of the conditions controlling the lighting industry. The results of the committee's work were expressed in bills reducing the prices for gas and electricity, specifically the "80-cent" gas bill. In 1905 this bill failed under circumstances that so aroused public indignation that its passage the following year was made inevitable.

Investigate Insurance Companies.
In 1905 the legislature also appointed a joint committee to investigate life insurance companies. Chosen by this second committee as its counsel, Mr. Hughes brought to bear all of his great devotion, concentration, training and experience. He plunged into the work, mastering details of accounting and insurance problems, and revealed the entire exploitation of insurance. The disclosures startled the community and the country and resulted in the passage by the legislature, without amendment, of the remedial bills drawn by Mr. Hughes. The gas and insurance investigations stand as striking examples of the value of speedy and thorough legislative inquiries.

During the course of the investigations Mr. Hughes was offered the



CHARLES EVANS HUGHES.

republican nomination for mayor of New York City. This he declined, saying:

"In my judgment I have no right to accept the nomination. A paramount public duty forbids it. It is not necessary to enlarge upon the importance of the insurance investigation. That is undisputed. It is dealing with questions vital to the interests of millions of our fellow citizens throughout the land. It presents an opportunity for public service second to none, and involves a correlative responsibility. I have devoted myself unreservedly to this work. It commands all my energies. It is imperative that I continue it."

In the following summer in 1906, the republican convention nominated Mr. Hughes for governor by acclamation. His work in the insurance matters was at that time at an end, and he accepted. He made an effective campaign, covering the whole state. He was elected in November, running against William Randolph Hearst although the rest of the republican ticket went down to defeat. The legislature, however, was republican.

The acceptance and inaugural speeches of Mr. Hughes and his talks in the campaign expressed promises with respect to reforms in law and administration which were unique in meaning, though not in form. Such promises had been made before by candidates for public office, but they differed in this: Mr. Hughes not only meant the promises when he voluntarily made them, but he carried them out, after the election was over, in letter and in spirit. In this respect it may be said that his promise and performance uniquely coincided. As a New Yorker said: "We know Mr. Hughes has his convictions and does not hesitate to express them and carry them out. Therefore we commend to the country the expressions of belief and conviction found in the speeches and papers of Governor Hughes."

In his first legislative session he

recommended a law creating a commission to regulate public service corporations, because he believed that such corporations existed, not for exploitation by a few, but to render safe adequate service at just and reasonable rates, with proper equipment, capitalized under proper regulations, and with accounts uniformly kept and accessible.

War Against Interests.

This, in New York, was a declaration of war on the control by vested interests over legislative and administrative action. The legislature had passed the Hughes bills on gas and electricity and insurance, but here was a proposal that fixed restrictions and regulations on all great utilities. It meant the end of "strike" legislation. It even prohibited passes. Legislators began discussing the principles involved in a struggle between the executive and the legislative, and denounced the efforts of the governor to "impose" legislation on the law-making body. It looked like real trouble, but Governor Hughes settled it in a characteristic way.

The governor appealed to the "people," setting forth in plain, vigorous English his understanding of the law needed to protect the public interests. The people responded and their representatives in the legislature were glad to pass a public service commission law, which has since come to be a model for enactment by other states. To an observer of the day it was interesting to see the anger of the legislators and politicians, because the governor did not attempt to gain the legislation he wished by the accepted methods, namely log rolling and patronage. They objected to this new-fangled idea of bringing the people in. Hughes was breaking up the game and introducing new and untried rules, the workings of which they could not foresee.

Gains Radical Reforms.

Hughes had thus, in less than three years, gained for the public as the result of his work as counsel and

governor, radical reforms in insurance and utility management and control, and specific laws so reducing lighting rates as to save millions of dollars to consumers in New York City. Policy holders knew they had security, and utility patrons knew they were to have more immediate avenues of relief than by laborious efforts to gain legislative action on local or specific evils. The influence of these reforms was nation-wide. They have been the outposts of sound standards for constructive reforms and legislation throughout the country.

In spite of the wishes of the party bosses, Governor Hughes was renominated and re-elected in 1908. In that campaign it was felt, by his supporters that while republican organization would devote itself to the usual campaign work of a combined state and national election, additional emphasis should be placed on the reelection of Governor Hughes. Consequently the "Hughes alliance" was formed, made up largely of men from professional and business life who had not formerly been interested in politics. That organization was a most striking illustration of a fact which was not realized and which seems not enough to have been realized at the present crisis. This was the extraordinary appeal Hughes had to that great mass of voters, who for some reason the political leaders are not able to appreciate. They are the ones who read and think, and vote as they think. They are not reached by party machinery, and their views are in consequence, not obtainable by party captains and leaders. They were and are for Hughes. From every quarter the Hughes alliance received aid. Eager to do its work were men who had never before thought about campaign. Money came in until there was more than sufficient. Everywhere among the thinking voters existed then and now an abiding faith in Hughes.

Refused Patronage Offers.

The governor had not used patronage for his own or anyone else's benefit, and he refused the benefits of patronage distributable by others. The appeal rested upon a deep-seated belief that he was thoroughly trained, thoroughly honest and sincere, and completely devoted to the interests of his great client—the public.

His methods of campaigning were most effective. It has been said that no other man is his equal. One of the strong speeches of that campaign was that of Governor Hughes in Youngstown, O., where the eloquence and cogent arguments of the great New Yorker did much to turn the tide in the middle western states away from Bryan. This speech fixed in the mind of the public the fact that a statesman had arrived.

Thousands of votes for the ticket were made in his own state by the governor's clever answers to queries propounded to him by his democratic opponent, L. S. Chanler. They were

upon special and local issues of such a nature that they might have embarrassed a less able or honest campaigner. The result stamped his methods of high strategic quality. The governor had no fear of any questioner, and it may be added they differed but little from those that now confront the country.

Believes in Preparedness.

Governor Hughes believed in preparedness and was an earnest advocate of an adequate army and navy. No man has a higher conception of true Americanism. In one of his speeches he said:

"We are devoted to the interests of peace and we cherish no policy of aggression. The maintenance of our ideals is our greatest protection. It is our constant aim to live in friendship with all nations, and to realize the aims of a free government, secure from the interruptions of strife and the wastes of war. It is entirely consistent with these aims, and it is our duty to make adequate provision for our defense and to maintain the efficiency of our army and navy. This I favor."

At Youngstown Governor Hughes declared that in the absence of formal written platforms the antecedents of candidates became their platforms.

In 1881, when he was graduated from Brown university, he was assigned one of two prizes annually awarded to the two members of the graduating class, who shall in the judgment of the faculty unite in the degree ability, character and attainment. As a practicing lawyer, as he has always earned confidence and loyalty. His engaging personality, his great ability as a cogent speaker,

belief in the people, all aided him in attaining the mark reached before the present conflict. He has had varied and exacting experience in the drafting of legislation, in the administration and execution of laws, and also in their interpretation.

Never Committed Himself.

It was in the early administration of President Taft that Mr. Hughes was named for the supreme bench. Since that time he has had a large part in the deciding of many important questions. He refused throughout the long preliminary contest to commit himself in any way. And he took care, too, not to say that if the burdens of party leadership were laid upon him, without the slightest effort on his part, he would decline to take the honor.

Some forget the human side of Judge Hughes. He has been described as a political iceberg. Nothing could be more untrue. His public achievements have obscured the personal side of his character, but it is sufficient to say he has intense human nature, keen love for his fellows, consideration for the rights of others, and all those other attributes that go to make the great man. To him public office is a public trust, and those chosen to be the servants of the people are not mere tools of political bosses. They are public trustees, charged with the high duty of administering their offices to the best interests of all classes of the people.

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Answer Given to Anti-Saloonists On Bond Question


Mayor Dahlman and the Omaha city council have responded to the petition of F. A. High, superintendent of the Anti-Saloon league, who asked that the bonds furnished to saloon keepers be declared void and that the licenses be revoked. The reply states that at the time the licenses were granted there was nothing against the Illinois Surety company; that there should be no necessity of getting new bonds and that the licenses ought not to be revoked. It was also stated that, in the belief of the respondents, although the company is in the hands of a receiver, it is solvent.

Wide Fluctuation In Prices on Corn

While wheat on the Omaha market touched \$1.02 for the best grades, generally prices were 1 to 2 cents lower than Friday. There were sixty-seven carloads on the market and prices ruled from 87 cents to \$1.02 per bushel.

There was wide fluctuation in the price of corn, ranging from 65 to 71 cents per bushel. The cereal sold 1/4 up to 2 cents below the prices of Friday. There were six, five cars on the market. Oats were 1/4 cent off, selling at 37 1/2 @ 38 1/2 cents per bushel. Receipts were sixteen carloads.

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