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LANCASTER'S MAN FOR GOVERNOR

Being a Brief Sketch of Henry H. Wilson, Educator, Lawyer,
and Publicist, whose Name will
be Submitted to the Coming Republican State Convention

To be the governor of the great state of Nebraska is a worthy ambition, fit and proper lodgment in the bosom of any man. No other position within the gift of the people of the commonwealth, not even that of United States senator or congressman, offers so many and such great opportunities for the exercise of executive ability, talent, good, hard sense and tact—for the employment of those qualities which distinguish the man of brains and character from the common run of humanity, which go for leadership in the affairs of a community.

The governor is a czar in his domain. In him is vested a vast power. He may rule with a rod of iron, he may use his great office to build up a personal political machine, he may bend its power and influence to the promotion of his selfish schemes of preferment and aggrandizement. On the other hand he may be a man keenly alive to the fact that the power placed in his hands is a trust to be used, not for the working out of his private ends, but for the good of the people generally. With man constituted as he is, the personal equation cannot be eliminated. The element of self-interest that enters into the law of self-preservation is too vital a part.

There is an intoxication accompanying the possession of power that sets reeling the head of the weak, but gives poise to the strong. Vanity is a saving grace bestowed on man that he may the better avoid the pit of self-abasement. It is not in itself a fault, but too long worship at its shrine unfits the devotee for the more serious duties of life. That man is the better ruler, be he king, president or governor, who preserves with the dignity of his position, the calm, judicial frame of mind necessary to fairness and impartiality of administration.

Nebraska has had both kinds of governors. It has had men in the executive chair who might well have been spared from the call to duty. It has had there men who combined with the sense of personal obligation the higher instinct of the debt owing the public. The ideal governor, however, has not yet taken the oath of office. He may not, in fact, be ever found.

It is one of the weaknesses of our political system that the strongest men are rarely found in public positions. This is due to three causes, the distastefulness of engaging in a strife for office with all that candidacy therefor entails; the unattractiveness of it in a financial sense, and the fact that with two strong men and one weak man in a convention contest the odds of victory rest with the latter because of the prevalence of the spirit of compromise.

Strong men, men of character and standing, have quite often sought, but seldom won the prize of a gubernatorial nomination. This year, if public sentiment is to be read aright, only men who fulfill these requirements need apply to the republican convention. Recognizing this fact the re-

publicans of Lancaster county have undertaken to present as a man for the occasion Henry H. Wilson, an attorney of Lincoln.

A man so widely known as Mr. Wilson scarcely needs an introduction to the people of Nebraska. Yet there are some things about his personality that many may be interested in reading because they have not known him as one must to appreciate one's fellows. The ordinary man finds biography dry reading. This is not a biography.

Mr. Wilson has lived in Lincoln for twenty-nine years. With its social and professional life he has been thoroughly identified. With the political side of affairs he has not been in such close touch. He is an ardent republican, staunch in the faith, and while

adverse fate, a reliance entirely upon his own efforts to maintain himself while at school. He graduated in 1878 with the degree of Ph. B., and eight years later his alma mater made him an A. M. Two years as principal of the high school of Seward ended his career as an educator.

At odd moments he had been mastering the rudiments of law, and in 1880 he entered the office of Lamb, Billingsley & Lambertson. For a number of years he was the junior member of the firm of Lamb, Ricketts & Wilson, later Ricketts & Wilson, a connection lasting the unusual period of seventeen and one-half years, and is now the head of the partnership of Wilson & Brown. This brief history of his rise from a boy on the farm to leadership

university, and this intimate association with young men has been the fount from which he has renewed his youth. As an instructor he is very popular.

In all the years of his activity in Lincoln Mr. Wilson has invariably stood for that which is soundest morally and best for man. He is an independent thinker, firm in his convictions, with the ability to expound his beliefs and defend his principles. Some of these qualities bar men from hopes of political preferment, and the possession of them has heretofore shut the door of political ambition to H. H. Wilson. That it pays even in politics to be honest, sturdy and unflinching is proven by the fact that in the present crisis of the party many have turned to Mr. Wilson and asked him to stand for governor.

Like all men who have the gift of oratory Mr. Wilson has a dramatic quality of utterance and a poise that have been mistaken by many indifferent observers for austerity. Professional life, with a man of studious habits, has a tendency to enwrap one in a mantle of self-concentration that can easily be mistaken for aloofness. While in fact Mr. Wilson is a man of keen interest in his fellows and an active concern in affairs, he has had the misfortune to be misunderstood by some in matters which a closer personal friendship soon dispels. That this is true is proven by the high esteem and wide popularity he has achieved in those fraternal, professional and social organizations in which he has been most active.

The duties of a governor are manifold. He must not only be able to intelligently and tactfully guide the ship of state in matters of pure administration, but he must hold himself in readiness to make speeches on any occasion. The better speech a governor can make on great occasions the better he serves his state in the social aspect. Mr. Wilson can not only make a speech, but he can make an exceedingly good one. He has been prolific as a writer and adds to the grace of oratory the gift of expression. This is not so necessary in a chief executive as honesty, fearlessness, ability and character—all of which Mr. Wilson possesses—but it is a quality not to be despised.

It would be a financial sacrifice for Mr. Wilson to accept the office of governor, but he has attained that position in life where honor beckons more alluringly than money entices. He very frankly says that he would like to be chief executive. He believes that he could serve his fellow-citizens acceptably and honorably, and he would gratefully accept the trust. Beyond the twinge of disappointment that ineffective effort brings, he would not repine in defeat.

His candidacy rests in the hands of the republicans of the state. If they desire a man of his character and standing, if they wish a man not marked with the brand of any faction, one who has kept himself aloof from the disturbing influences of recent years, here is the man. This is not a plea for Mr. Wilson's nomination, but the recital of some facts about the man that may lead to a better understanding of him and a clearer conception of his availability. H. T. DOBBINS.



HENRY H. WILSON.

his voice has been often heard in the political forum, his energies have been devoted to the achievement of success in his professional career.

It has been a long and toilsome journey to the eminence Mr. Wilson now occupies. He was a product of the soil. At the age of thirteen the burden of work and management of his father's farm fell upon his shoulders. The meagre advantages of a country school in the earlier days of Nebraska were all that fell to his lot. His desire for betterment led to two terms in normal schools, and then he became a school teacher. His first venture as the trainer of youthful minds was in an Irish settlement in the Platte bottoms in Sarpy county. In 1873, when a boy of nineteen, he registered as a student at the state university, in the preparatory department. The next five years were busy ones for the eager young student. It was a struggle with

at the bar is eloquent of the sturdiness and determination of the man.

Many of Mr. Wilson's friends are inclined to pin their faith to his nomination because of the fact that he is a native of Ohio and heir to all the political luck that tradition has affixed to nativity in the Buckeye state. He was born near Fremont, Sandusky county, January 1, 1854, and is the seventh child of a family of nine, an additional indication of coming success. His parentage is composite as regards nationality, but in him the Scot, with all his strength of character, pertinacity and robust manhood, predominates.

In all his instincts and feelings Mr. Wilson is still a young man. This is traceable to the inborn enthusiasm that is so marked a characteristic. For a number of years he has been an instructor of the law class of the state