

CHICAGO'S BEST MAYOR.

CARTER HARRISON AMONG THE ANARCHISTS AND STRIKERS.

A Mare-Mounted Man Whose Face Was Familiar During the Great Riots—Famous Because He is a Personification of Chicago's Peculiar Characteristics.

[Special Correspondent.]

CHICAGO, June 3.—This breezy town has just passed through a world of troubles and tribulations. What with the struggles between ambitious labor and zealous capital, wild-eyed dynamiters and brave police, the times have been full of turmoil and the air overcharged with reverberations and rumors of war. But throughout all the commotion there has been one conspicuous figure toward whom all eyes have turned, one representative of law, one commander of forces, one universal arbitrator, one giver of advice, dictator, referee and spokesman, who has never lost faith in himself, in the police, in Chicago, the constitution, the law or the American eagle. His name is Harrison—Carter Henry Harrison—by his 500,000 subjects called simply "our Carter," or "Carter" for short. Wherever crowds gathered and trouble brewed there this mayor of Chicago was to be found, with a loose coat about his tired body, a rakish slouch hat on his head, and the broad back of his high-bred Kentucky mare between his legs. "Carter and the mare—there go the mayor and the mare!" has been the cry a score of times a day, first among the strikers at McCormick's great reaper factory, then in the Bohemian district, where you may travel a mile and see no American name on a sign board or American face among the throngs on the sidewalks, and again patrolling that wilderness of huge heaps and noisy planing mills known as the lumber district. Everybody in Chicago, even the dirty-faced child playing in the alley, knows Carter, and everybody knows the mare. And so as the noble matched and matchless pair moved from crowd to crowd and through street after street shouts of recognition greeted them on all sides. Some called him "Carter," a few ward workers addressed him as "the old man," the women bowed low and exclaimed "Yer honor," while one bold small boy immortalized himself by crying "rats." Use of this epithet is an offense well nigh capital in Chicago, and the bystanders expected to see the young criminal arrested and confined in a dungeon cell without delay, but instead the paternal mayor read the offender a lecture which will doubtless ring in his ears till Gabriel's trumpet sounds.

To strikers and assembled crowds the mayor made many speeches. To employers he gave much good advice. In the midst of rioters he was as fearless as a cavalryman in a charge, and in the control of the police he was all vigilance and energy. He was not in the Haymarket when that awful bomb exploded, but he was soon thereafter among the wounded and dying policemen at the station house. Daily the gray mare has since stood for a half hour before the city hospital, while her rider sat inside cheering the sufferers whose limbs and bodies had been torn by Anarchist bombs and bullets.

It is easy to see that this equestrian publicist is not a man of commonplace. He is altogether extraordinary. He is picturesque. Not a very great man, nor an exceptionally good man, nor a notoriously bad man, he has nevertheless built his fame as wide as that of the town he rules. There are an hundred congressmen and a score of senators in Washington less known throughout the country's length and breadth than he. He was in congress once himself—and now has an ambition to return after sitting eight years in the mayor's chair of America's interior metropolis—but it was not in Washington that his fame was wrought. It was here, and if we look for the whyfore we find it in the fact that he has not only been Chicago's chief magistrate, but her impersonator. He has been a reflex of many of Chicago's most marked characteristics. He has been, and is, Chicago personified.

Like Chicago, he is bold, buoyant, undaunted, self-complacent, self-confident, prosperous, rich, generous, pew-holding, but not pious; ambitious, approachable, self-loving, easy-going on the Sabbath day, tolerant of saloons, gamblers and run-arounds, but the soul of honor when money is involved, full of vim, business, brains, breeze and conceit.

In conversation, crowd, convention, or at the meetings, he is a veritable reservoir of well-mixed humor, eloquence, sarcasm and anecdote, which needs only to be tapped to run forth a torrent. There have been few campaigns more brilliant than the one he made for governor of Illinois. He spoke twice or three times a day for six weeks. Nearly everybody in the state heard him. His usual and favorite beginning of a speech was like this:

FELLOW CITIZENS: Some of you know me, and some of you do not. I will introduce myself. My name is Harrison, and I am the next governor of Illinois. Uncle Dick Oglesby thinks he is going to be elected, but he isn't. I am the man.



THE MAYOR AND THE MARE.

This audacity, diversified and embellished, was good campaigning. But the odds against him were too great, and the mayor made his throat sore, strained his modesty, and risked his reputation as a prophet for naught. Uncle Dick Oglesby was elected.

Carter also stood for the senate. He went down to Springfield at the beginning of that historic fight, which finally resulted in the re-election of Logan, and here his propensity for speechmaking found free vent. He burst into flights of rhetoric at every opportunity. Almost any evening he could be found sitting in the hotel offices, surrounded by gaping crowds of rural legislators. Of all the throng only one man talked, and he the mayor of Chicago. The personal pronoun I, and praise of the works himself had performed in the metropolis of the state, were thick upon his lips. But Morrison was the choice of the caucus.

The evening in which the nomination was to be made Carter Harrison was walking from one hotel to another. On the way he met two legislators. They were not intending to vote for him, and he stopped to labor with them. He endeavored to show them where their path of duty lay, and so persuasive did he become that both at length relented, renounced their former allegiance, promised to vote for the mayor, and desired to hasten on to the caucus hall. But the loquacious candidate was not satisfied. He loved the sound of his own voice that he was loath to stop. The winds whistled, snow fell, street lamps blinked with passing hours, and carriages and pedestrians hastened by. But the mayor talked on and on. At length a shout rose above the moaning of the wind, and the mayor paused.

"What's the noise about?" he inquired of a man who was shuffling along through the snow.

"Morrison nominated on first ballot," was the reply.

The two shivering legislators looked at each other in amazement. Their two votes, which the mayor's eloquence had won, the mayor's garrulity had lost. The caucus was over.

It is the fashion in Chicago to "go and see the mayor about it." Women who have been worsted in neighborhood quarrels, individual dissatisfied with their water rates or gas bills, merchants with grievances or corporation with complaints, employees who want more wages, employers whose men are on strike (athers with unruly sons—all call on the mayor. His doors are always open. He is the cad of Chicago. And when he has listened for a time in patience many words of wisdom fall from his lips.

Every day or so the mayor's office is filled by fifteen or twenty bright young men with tabs of paper and indifferently sharpened lead pencils. As the mayor talks the young men write.

"Now print this just as I say it to you," the mayor commands, "or you'll get no more news in the city hall."

These young men are reporters, and the mayor is giving the public, through them and the more or less great and more numerous journals which they represent, his regular

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Sight-seeing visitors in Chicago rarely fail to ask to be shown the mayor. The business man from New York, the stock drover from Kansas, the miner from Colorado, request the honor of an introduction to the rider of the mare. They have heard of him. In some manner their curiosity concerning him has been eager. What he has done to make him famous they do not know, nor does anybody else. But analysis shows that he is notorious, because he stands typical of Chicago.

It is difficult for non-residents to understand how big a man Carter Harrison is in Chicago, how he is regarded as the autocrat of the town and the one man of power. Chicago exceeds in population eight or ten states of the Union, and in wealth and importance many more. In this principality the mayor is supreme. There is a city council, but he has the power of veto, and in his control of the patronage, which all good aldermen hunger for, he controls the council. All of the other departments of the city government, excepting a few perfunctory offices, are under his thumb. He fills them with whom he likes. Even the police justices are his. Add to this lawful power the aggressiveness, individuality and paternalism of the mayor Harrison, and you have a potentate who moves in the orbit of an emperor.

There was a time when this mayor, mare-mounted, could not ride through the streets of Chicago without being followed by the buzz as of endless crowds. He was popular. "The best mayor" was his sobriquet in every man's mouth, without regard to politics. When he returned from a European trip, during which he had sounded the praises of the American eagle in the shadow of the castles of a half dozen effete monarchies, the crowd which met him at the railway station covered ten acres. In its arms the favorite was borne to his carriage, which no horses drew triumphant through the streets. But now the popularity has waned, and the vast majorities of years ago, to which men of all parties contributed their suffrage, dwindled a year ago to a contested election.

Yet in many ways Carter Harrison is truly the best Mayor Chicago ever had. In a city of jobbery, he has been in no jobs; surrounded by a corrupt council, he has been clean, and more than once has intervened his veto between blackmailers and their booty. His financial control has been close, able and honest. His police and fire departments have become models. He rid Chicago of bunco thieves, garroters and sand-baggers. At the same time, strangely inconsistent, he gave peace to the gamblers as long as their great political influence was exerted in his behalf, turning his police loose upon them only when they turned against him. All the while he has been over lenient with tough saloons and notorious dance houses.

In politics he has been something of a demagogue as well as a brilliant leader. Even the Socialists, cousins-German to the red-eyed Anarchists, have known his favor. One Socialistic leader is now one of his office-holders, and The Arbeiter Zeitung, late organ of the Socialists, Spies, was once "official paper of Chicago."

If this picturesque mayor is noted for anything more than his nerve and his handsome person, it is for his fluency. He is a wonderful talker. He makes every year more speeches than any other man in the west. His wit is of true temper and always ready.

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These young men are reporters, and the mayor is giving the public, through them and the more or less great and moral journals which they represent, his regular lecture. As like as not he is lecturing the newspapers, for he and they do not get along well together. They all are prone to criticize him, and he rarely fails to talk back. Several of them he sued for libel because of intimations that he had had a hand in the notorious election frauds.

Mayor Harrison is an aristocrat in whose veins flows the blood of that Harrison family which gave a president to the United States and a senator to Indiana. He has a Kentuckian's love for fine horses, a Virginian's adoration for beautiful women, and a truly Chicagoish love for himself. Though a man of the people he everywhere maintains his dignity. He has a "How are you?" for the ward worker, but not a shake of the hand. The gamblers can secure from him immunity from arrest, but they cannot speak to him or enter his office with his consent. He is a good man and a bad one, an able man and a weak one, a statesman and a demagogue, an aristocrat and a plebeian. He has many contradictions in his character and there are not a few faults in his conduct, but in his eight years' rule of Chicago he has done more for the city, in the way of public improvements, good order, cleanly administration and economical care of the finances, than any mayor since Chicago became an interior metropolis. He will not be elected mayor another time and wants to go once more to congress. He and the mare would make a sensation on Pennsylvania avenue, and the admiration his splendid horsemanship would be sure to elicit could not fail to stir the ambition which lies more or less dormant in every Chicagoan's breast, and which, in his case, has already been tickled by The New York Sun's suggestion of Carter Harrison for president.

WALTER WELLMAN.

Gen. Forest as a Letter Writer.

"Yes," said Col. McLure, appointment clerk of the postoffice department, to a reporter, "Gen. Forest of the Confederate army, though a born cavalry general, was one of the most illiterate men that ever lived. He and orthography, etymology, syntax and prosody were mortal foes. I have frequently seen letters from him. They would have made Josh Billings and Petroleum V. Nasby as jealous as a young girl is of her first sweetheart. As many battles as he was in he never could spell an engagement as being other than a 'fite.' I saw one letter from him in which he said he had been in the war a long time and had come to the conclusion that to be successful it was necessary 'to git thar the fustest with the mostest men.'"—Washington Critic.

Improvements Made in Slaughter-Houses.

The Ladies' Health Protective association has induced the owners of slaughter-houses to make the improvements recommended by the ladies. These consist of putting in asphalt floors, having the freshly slaughtered meat kept away from the edge of the sidewalk, keeping the avenue clear of trucks, and keeping the houses shut up so that the children in the neighborhood can not see the cattle slaughtered.—Demorest's Monthly.

As a Safeguard from Cyclones.

A cave large enough to accommodate all the citizens of the town is to be dug at Clifton, D. T. It is designed as a safe-guard from cyclones.

The best way to look at a friend's faults is to shut your eyes.

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