Walter Q. Gresham

By MARTHA ALICE TYNER

Walter Quintin Gresham was born on March 17, 1832, in a farmhouse near Lanesville, Harrison County, Indiana. His grandfather, George Gresham, whose ancestry can be traced back for many generations through a well known English family, moved his family from Kentucky to Indiana Territory. Mary Pennington, who married George Gresham, was a sister of Dennis Pennington. William Gresham, the father of Walter, who was born in Kentucky in 1802, was but seven years old when the family crossed the Ohio. He married Sarah Davis in 1825. While serving as sheriff of Harrison County, he was killed by an outlaw. On the mother fell the responsibility of rearing the five children. Walter, who was next to the youngest, was not quite two years old when the tragic death of his father occurred.

The Gresham family were not overcome by misfortune. The boys developed into strong, healthful, young men of character and courage. A schoolhouse stood in the edge of a wooded area on the Gresham farm, and here the children attended school during the winter months of each year. Walter seems to have made the most of his opportunities while attending this country school in the Gresham woods. Later he completed a two-year course in the Corydon Seminary, while serving as an assistant first to the auditor and then to the clerk of Harrison County. He taught his first term of school before he was sixteen, and another term three years later. The next year, 1851-1852, he was a student at Indiana University. On the advice of Dennis Pennington and Judge William T. Otto, both of whom were much interested in the young teacher, he now turned to the law. His course was taken in the law office of Judge William A. Porter. Much of his success in life he attributed to the training which he received from Judge Porter. The young man began the practice of law in 1854, as

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1 This study was first prepared as a master's thesis at Indiana University. As here published it is much abbreviated.

2 Dennis Pennington was born about the time that Washington became President. He was active in the later territorial period of Indiana history, served as a member of the constitutional convention of 1816, and was a vigorous leader in the affairs of the new state long after the capital was moved to Indianapolis. He lived to be a very old man, and through his long career served his commonwealth well.
a partner of Thomas C. Slaughter. The firm of Slaughter and Gresham was very successful.

While a law student, young Gresham fell in love with Matilda McGrain. The marriage occurred in 1858. Two children were born of this union, Otto Gresham, who is still living, and Kate, who died several years ago. Matilda McGrain Gresham was a woman of strong character and ability, an excellent companion for her famous husband, whom she outlived by a number of years.3

When the Republican party was born following the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, Gresham joined the movement and made speeches for Fremont in 1856. He was no extremist in regard to the slavery question. A strong supporter of the Union, he hoped emancipation could be brought about in time without violence and with proper compensation, to slaveholders. He was elected to a seat in the lower house of the Indiana Legislature in 1860. He was deeply concerned about Kentucky when the secession movement started, and exerted a strong influence on George D. Prentice, editor of the Louisville Journal. The day following a visit to Prentice by Gresham, the Journal took the position that secession by South Carolina was a hasty action, and that Kentucky should consider carefully her course.*

Gresham became chairman of the house Military Committee in the regular session of 1861. He sponsored bills which were aimed to place Indiana in a state of preparedness, but for these the Legislature was not yet ready. In regard to secession, while he did not champion the Crittenden Compromise, he favored compromise with the border states. In the special session, which convened about a fortnight after the firing on Fort Sumter, military measures were passed that placed great power in the hands of Oliver P. Morton. As chairman of the house Military Committee, Gresham had much to do with the enactment of laws that enabled Morton to become an outstanding "War Governor." Nevertheless a break came between the Governor and Gresham before the

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3 Mrs. Gresham wrote a valuable work on the career of her husband, *Life of Walter Q. Gresham* (2 vols., Chicago, 1919). The son, Otto Gresham, prepared a preliminary discussion of eighteen pages which is headed "Introductory." See also the sketch in the *Dictionary of American Biography* by Herbert F. Wright, and a "Biographical Sketch of Walter Q. Gresham" by James A. Woodburn (Indiana University Bulletin, June 15, 1911), for further information on the youth and early public career of Gresham.

close of the special session which widened as time went on. Following the close of the special session of 1861, Morton refused to grant a commission to Gresham as colonel of a regiment, or even a commission as a lower grade officer. The chairman of the Military Committee then returned to Corydon, aided in recruiting a regiment and enlisted as a private. Protests reached the Governor, and after a few weeks, he made Gresham Lieutenant Colonel of the thirty-eighth Indiana regiment which was organized at New Albany. This regiment was placed under General William T. Sherman who became a fast friend of Gresham. In December, 1861, Governor Morton asked Lieutenant Colonel Gresham to return to Indianapolis to become Colonel of the fifty-third Indiana which was then being recruited. The call was accepted, but resulted in a new quarrel with the Governor in regard to the expense of organizing the new regiment. Friends of Gresham came to his aid with funds, the regiment was formed and sent to join General Grant. After reaching the field a new controversy with Morton arose because Gresham complained that recruits from Harrison and adjoining counties which should have been assigned to the fifty-third were sent to other commands. The Governor now demanded the resignation of Colonel Gresham. Receiving no response, Morton took vigorous steps to obtain a removal, but the Colonel's friends evidently prevailed with the War Department and President Lincoln since he remained at his post.

After the siege and fall of Vicksburg, Generals Grant and Sherman united in recommending that Colonel Gresham, for "gallant and meritorious services", should be made a brigadier general, and the promotion promptly came. For some time General Gresham was in charge of Natchez, Mississippi. Later in the War he was in the Atlanta campaign. It was

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5 House Journal (Indiana), Jan. 25, 1861; Horace Bell to Otto Gresham April 27, 1897. Photostatic copy in Indiana State Library.
6 Mrs. Gresham, Gresham, I, 149; Bell to Otto Gresham, April 27, 1897.
7 Mrs. Gresham, Gresham, I, 169.
8 Ibid., I, 212-214. Mrs. Gresham states that Governor Morton even went to Washington to urge the dismissal of Gresham. Before going to Washington, Morton wrote Gresham at Indianapolis on February 4, 1863: "Sir: Your letter is at hand and confirms the impression before entertained of your purpose and character. If as you say in your letter, you are desirous of serving your country, you can best do so by resigning the office (Colonel of Fifty-Third Indiana Volunteers) you hold. A reasonable time will be given you to do so." See Ibid., I, 213.
9 Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies in the War of the Rebellion, Series I, LII, 419.
10 Woodburn, "Sketch of Gresham."
when Sherman's army was nearing that city, that Gresham was struck by a bullet that shattered one of his knees. This resulted in a lameness from which he never fully recovered. He was confined to his bed for a year and compelled to walk with crutches for five additional years. Following his enforced retirement from the army, General Gresham changed his residence to New Albany. While the General was confined to his bed by his injury, Governor Morton came that way campaigning for the governorship in 1864, but he did not call at the Gresham home. This was very soon after Gresham had returned from the front, at a time when many private soldiers, army officers and others were visiting the wounded man. The family did not forget the slight extended by the Governor of Indiana.11

In 1866, Gresham was made a candidate for the national House of Representatives in the second district, but he was defeated by Michael C. Kerr who was returned to his seat by a reduced majority.12 In regard to reconstruction, Gresham supported Lincoln's plan of political reconstruction, and later championed Andrew Johnson against the Radicals. When his party in Congress and in Indiana supported negro suffrage, Gresham was greatly dissatisfied. His disappointment over the action of the Republicans of Indiana was not lessened any by the fact that it was Governor Morton who reaped the benefit of the drift toward the policy of the Radicals. In 1867 the Governor was chosen to a seat in the United States Senate.13

In 1868 Gresham, as a delegate to the national convention, gave support to General Grant. In that year, he was once more a candidate against Kerr in the second congressional district but was again defeated. After the triumph of Grant, Gresham was urged to become a candidate for the United States Senate. Even Senator Morton "sent word he would not interpose any opposition to Gresham's candidacy for the Senate".14 Because of the swing of the party toward negro suffrage, Gresham declined to become a candidate.

President-elect Grant offered Gresham any one of three different federal offices in New Orleans early in 1869. One

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11 Mrs. Gresham, Gresham, I, 316.
12 In 1864, Kerr's majority was, 2,293, but in 1866 when he ran against Gresham it was 1,743. Tribune Almanac, 1865, 1867; New Albany Weekly Ledger, Oct. 17, 1866.
13 Mrs. Gresham, Gresham, I, 331.
14 Ibid., I, 345.
of these was at first considered favorably, but was after mature reflection declined.\textsuperscript{15} Relative to the situation, he wrote to his old law partner:

\begin{quote}
Since I saw you I have rec'd a very kind and flattering letter from Genl. Grant . . . . I have declined his offer and said to him, that I expect nothing from his administration that I am disgusted with politics and expect to keep clear of all such things in the future . . . . My mind is now made up. I will accept no office. I care not what it is. I know that you will laugh when I say that I have no political aspirations and that I would not today go to the U. S. Senate, if I could. I am disgusted with the whole thing and I think the Republican party is an infernally corrupt concern. I don't care how soon it is broken up, if the Democracy don't survive it.\textsuperscript{16}
\end{quote}

It was not long after the writing of this letter, that President Grant offered Gresham the office of attorney for the federal court of the district of Indiana. This offer was declined because at the time Gresham was calling at the White House in the interest of a friend who desired the office. The friend, General Thomas Brown, was appointed, but before the year was out Gresham was offered the office of district judge for Indiana which he accepted.\textsuperscript{17}

Though Gresham played his part well as a soldier and filled political posts of responsibility with efficiency, he was before anything else a lawyer and a judge. He was no diplomat nor was he a brilliant orator. As a lawyer he was successful from the first. He always enjoyed a trial or lawsuit. On the whole, he was self-possessed and appealed to the reason of his hearers. He studied carefully the decisions of John Marshall and Chancellor Kent, and tried to acquire their exactness of language and clearness of statement.\textsuperscript{18} On the bench, he was vigorous but humane. "His conception of equity as justice", wrote a friendly critic, "sometimes failed to meet the approval of the Supreme Court."\textsuperscript{19}

Although Judge Gresham was on the bench, he manifested a deep interest in public affairs. In the campaign of 1874, he ardently supported his former rival, Michael C. Kerr, again

\textsuperscript{15} John A. Rawlins to Walter Q. Gresham, Jan. 27 and Feb. 22, 1869; General U. S. Grant to Gresham, Feb. 11, 1869. Photostatic copies of these three letters and of that cited in the succeeding footnote are in the Indiana State Library.

\textsuperscript{16} Gresham to Thomas E. Slaughter, Feb. 26, 1869.


\textsuperscript{18} "Mrs. Gresham, Gresham, I, 30.

\textsuperscript{19} Walter Nelles, \textit{A Strike and its Legal Consequences}. Pamphlet, a reprint from \textit{Yale Law Journal}, Feb., 1931.
the Democratic candidate for Congress. Though the tariff was a minor issue, the great controversy was over hard or soft money. Kerr, like Gresham, stood for sound money as opposed to paper money. Kerr was elected.

Following the advice of Gresham, President Grant appointed Benjamin H. Bristow, Solicitor-General. The President was so well pleased that in 1874, Bristow was made Secretary of the Treasury. The Treasury Department was in bad condition. Bristow instituted some drastic reforms in the department. However, he rendered the greatest service to the country when he broke up the notorious Whisky Ring. This was a powerful and corrupt organization of distillers of the Middle West. For several years the Ring had defrauded the federal government of revenue by bribing the revenue officers, and, in some instances, other government officials were implicated in the conspiracy.

In the beginning of Bristow's war on corruption, he had the hearty support of President Grant. However, when the President's private secretary, Orville Babcock, was accused of being connected with the Ring, the President, who believed him innocent, grew cold toward Bristow. Judge Gresham was a friend to both Grant and Bristow and was greatly interested in the investigation. He made a trip to Washington in the hope that he could convince the President of Bristow's honesty and sincerity of purpose. Nevertheless, his mission failed. Grant came to the conclusion, largely through the influence of some of his friends, that Bristow was using his office as a stepping stone to the presidency, and the fighting Secretary was virtually forced from the Cabinet.

Senator Oliver P. Morton was a prominent candidate for the nomination for the presidency in 1876. In February, Morton and his friends let Gresham know that he would be approved if he would make the race for governor of Indiana. Gresham turned down this opportunity, since it would call for him to support Morton in the National Republican Convention.20 There was a counter-current organized by such reformers as Carl Schurz, Judge Gresham, John M. Harlan, Bristow's former law partner, and others. They worked for the nomination of Benjamin H. Bristow for president. The movement failed, but it prevented the nomination of Morton.

20 Mrs. Gresham, Gresham, II, 456.
or Blaine. Rutherford B. Hayes of Ohio, a compromise candidate, was nominated.

During the seventies, one of the most complicated problems, and one which was of very great importance, was the railroad question. After the panic of 1873, most of the railroads in the Middle West passed into the hands of receivers, who were selected, in the seventh United States circuit, by Judge Thomas Drummond, an honest, straightforward man "whose public and private character illustrated all the old-fashioned virtues."21

During the depression ushered in by the panic of 1873, the wage scale of railroad employees was several times reduced. Further reductions were to go into effect on August 1 of the year 1877. On many of the roads the payrolls were withheld to meet interest on the mortgages carried by the roads. The decision of Judge Drummond was that railroads are public concerns and that "arrears for wages and supplies that kept the railroad in operation must first be liquidated," by the appointed receivers.22

During June and the early part of July, 1877, there were many conferences between the employers and employees. Most of the men accepted the reductions. Nevertheless, by the middle of July, there was a strike on the Baltimore and Ohio road at Martinsburg, West Virginia, and the strike spread to the entire system. Fear was expressed that it would soon reach Indianapolis. News came that Pittsburgh was in the hands of a mob. The strike spread all around Indianapolis and finally struck that city. The strikers took possession of the Union Station and tied up freight and passenger trains that attempted to leave. The Governor and Mayor took no action to preserve order. Judge Gresham held a mass meeting in the federal court room at which he presided. Most of those present had served in the Civil War. Gresham called attention to the fact, "that the community was in possession of the mob, that the Governor, the Mayor and the Sheriff, whose duty it was to act, were supine; life and property were in danger; that society was disintegrating, if it had not dissolved." The best policy to pursue was to organize a Committee of Public Safety with enough volunteers to control the

21 Nelles, A Strike and Its Legal Consequences, 230.
22 Mrs. Gresham, Gresham, I, 372.
situation. Gresham promised that he would take "no action as Federal Judge in an administrative capacity," without the Committee's approval.\(^2\) Benjamin Harrison, although against hasty action and feeling that the strikers had some causes for complaint, took command of one of the volunteer companies.

Gresham offered to act under the Executive of the state, but both Governor and Mayor at first refused his services. Inasmuch as the city officials made no attempt to control the situation, Gresham ordered General Benjamin Spooner to notify the mob "that they were in contempt of court." Spooner went to the Union Station alone and delivered the Judge's message. The mob then permitted the trains that were under orders from receivers to leave the station. Gresham called for federal troops which he placed under command of the federal Marshall. Governor James D. Williams finally took the volunteer companies into the service of the state and, with the aid of the federal troops, the Indianapolis strike was ended.

In the conflict, the position of the Illinois and Indiana federal judges made them powerful as citizens. They were dealing with a revolutionary situation, and they performed their duties not only as officials but as citizens. During the strike, Judge Gresham did not proceed rashly. He inquired of Judge Thomas Drummond by telegram if he had authority to order the Marshal to make arrests.

It was Judge Drummond who presided at the trials of the strike leaders in Indiana as well as in Illinois. Judge Gresham did not hear the cases before the district court in Indiana because he had taken such an active part as a citizen in the effort to prevent violence while the strike was going on.

In 1883 Gresham resigned his judgeship to become Postmaster-General in President Arthur's Cabinet. During his almost twelve years of service as a federal district judge, he had proved to be fearless and upright. He commanded the respect and honor of the bar. The position that became vacant by the resignation of Judge Drummond from the seventh United States circuit, which included Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin, was tendered to Judge Gresham in 1884. He immediately resigned as Secretary of the Treasury to which office he had but recently been transferred, and began his work on the bench in Chicago on November 10, 1884.

\(^{2}\) Nelles, 522.
Of the many actions which came before Gresham during his years of service on the circuit court bench, the Wabash Railway contest brought him the greatest prominence. In May, 1884, Judge David J. Brewer, of the eighth United States circuit at St. Louis appointed John Humphreys and Thomas E. Tutt receivers for the Wabash Railroad. Up to the time of their appointment, they were stockholders and directors of the Wabash System. The circuit court at Chicago concurred in the appointments, but reserved "to itself power to make such further orders in the premises as may seem necessary."24

The famous case arose on the application of stockholders of the Chicago division of the Wabash to foreclose their mortgages and remove the present receivers, mainly on the ground that the existing receivership had resulted from secret agreements on the part of the old management of the road. Judge Gresham granted the petitioners leave to file their application in the seventh circuit court, "since the bulk of the property claimed by them was chiefly in the field of his jurisdiction." The attorneys for the receivers claimed and insisted that when the circuit court at St. Louis appointed the receivers it acquired "jurisdiction over the Wabash property and system throughout its length and breadth and that all persons, including creditors, whose bonds were secured by senior sectional mortgages on property," whether in the state of Missouri or not, must go to the circuit court at St. Louis to enforce their claims, and that no other court could remove the receivers.25

Receiver Humphreys had made a carrying contract with the Ellsworth Coal Company, whose place of business was adjacent to the Wabash Railroad, for the purchase of coal. The stock of the Coal Company was owned by Solon Humphreys, Jay Gould, Russell Sage, and others, all directors of the Wabash Railroad. The original capital of the Coal Company which was $24,000, was raised to $68,000. Moreover, the Wabash Railroad paid the Coal Company $250,000 a year for the coal used by the road. The Railway Company also paid back to the Coal Company rebates to the amount of $80,711 more even than the expanded capital stock of the Coal Company. This was a striking example of "the left hand paying

to the right," a method by which the directors of the Wabash enriched themselves at the expense of the stockholders of the road which they represented. Furthermore, interest was paid on bonds held by those in the "ring", but none to those who were fighting that corrupt organization. Tutt, one of the receivers, testified that when he heard of the serious charges in connection with the Coal Company, he instituted an investigation. However, he revealed nothing of importance to the court.

The object in appointing receivers was to protect the property of the Wabash R.R., but Judge Gresham saw clearly that it was "unusual and novel" to appoint any man who was a director or a stockholder, since the road had been managed unsuccessfully. The fighting spirit of an honest, clear-minded man was aroused, and Gresham dared to defy the power of wealth. He denied that the Federal circuit judge at St. Louis had jurisdiction over property in Illinois, and held that since interest on mortgages had not been paid, foreclosure could not be prevented. He also declared that the non-assenting stockholders of the Wabash were justified in asking the removal of Humphreys and Tutt as receivers, on the ground that they were unfit to act.25

Judge Gresham now appointed Judge Thomas M. Cooley as receiver in the place of Humphreys and Tutt who were members of the grafting "ring." This action restored to the stockholders their rights over the property in which they had invested their money. Jay Gould and those who served him became enemies of Judge Gresham, but he was defended by many newspapers whose praise of his stand found a wide response among the people. Gould at once insinuated that Gresham was making a bid for the presidency. The belief that Gould and other speculators and promoters of his kind would fight the Judge, caused many people to hope that he might be drafted.26

In 1888 the Burlington Railroad strike began in Chicago. The circuit court of the United States became implicated in it, since the Wabash Railroad east of the Mississippi River was operated by a receiver appointed by Judge Gresham. After the strike was declared, the Wabash Road accepted cars from

26 Public Opinion, Dec. 18, 1886. See for editorial opinions clipped from the following: Pittsburgh Dispatch, Toledo Bee, Toledo Blade, St. Louis Globe-Democrat, New York Herald.
Tyner: Walter Q. Gresham

the Burlington System while other roads remained neutral. A petition was filed in the circuit court which resulted in the decision of Judge Gresham "that common carriers were bound to interchange traffic although the employees of one were on a strike."

While Judge Gresham was faithful to his duties on the bench, he kept constantly in touch with political leaders, and had pronounced views on political issues. Although he was not a strong partizan, yet he manifested a deep interest in the success of his party. In a letter to a confidential friend he wrote the following after the Indiana state election and just prior to the national election of 1876:

The truth is the Republican party in Indiana is in bad hands. . . . I confess to you that I am fearful that Tilden will gain. His forces in New York are well organized and disciplined. There is no denying the fact that he has uncommon capacity as a leader. We are not in good shape—too many Republicans are with us as a choice of evils and the Germans have gone to the Democracy. . . . I don't believe Schurz can control the German vote in New York. I may be too much inclined to take a gloomy view of our situation. I hope I am. I am writing to you just as I feel. I shall not be surprised if Tilden is elected. Thousands of Republicans believe their party is corrupt, and believing that, they do not stop to reflect what will be the consequences of turning the government over to the Democracy.

The presidential election of 1876 was followed by a long dispute. Both Democrats and Republicans claimed the victory. Unquestionably each party was guilty of fraud. The excitement was intense, with threats of war on both sides. As the upper house of Congress was Republican, a group of Radicals, one of whom was Morton of Indiana, determined to decide the election in favor of the Republican standard bearer, Rutherford B. Hayes. In the hope of a fair solution, Senator George F. Edmunds proposed to have the controversy decided by an electoral commission composed of five members of the Senate, five members of the House of Representatives, and five justices of the Supreme Court. Gresham saw an opportunity to weaken Morton and the Radicals. He acted quickly. In the midst of a heated discussion, Senator Edmunds produced a

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28 Mrs. Gresham, Gresham, I, 416.
29 Carl Schurz was the foremost Liberal Republican in 1872. After the nomination of Hayes, Schurz called on him and soon announced that he would support the Republican ticket, but many Liberal Republicans supported Tilden.
30 Gresham to Thomas Slaughter, Oct. 19, 1876. Photostatic copy in Indiana State Library.
telegram from Indianapolis, signed by several leading Republicans, in favor of his plan. The Edmunds bill was passed. Commenting on the situation in a letter to Judge Slaughter, Gresham said:

I guess you accuse me of being at the bottom of getting up that telegram that went from here to Senator Edmunds. Well I was, and when I see you I will tell you some funny things concerning the affair. It was a staggering blow to Morton, and strong as he is, he felt it. How I do wish I was in the Senate but I let my opportunity pass and I must not think of such things now.31

The Joint High Electoral Commission turned out to be a strictly partizan body voting eight to seven on every count. Nevertheless Hayes came in with a new policy in regard to reconstruction. Gresham was so favorable to the withdrawal of federal troops from the South that the President could not move fast enough to satisfy the Judge. The new Administration was little over a month old when he was writing of Hayes that “indecision and hesitation” would be fatal to him. “Unless the Republican party abandons the policy of martial state government in the South,” he declared, “it can’t maintain its ascendency in the North. . . .”82 The President went on to carry out the withdrawal of troops, and Gresham was satisfied, but hostile to any interference with the policy on the part of the Radicals. He saw that the power of the latter element was waning, and believed that the people of the North would soon see “the wisdom of letting the Southern States settle their domestic affairs” just as was done in the North.83

In regard to Indiana politics, the Judge wrote at this time:

There has been quite a revolt here against Morton, growing in a great measure out of the contest over the Pension Agency. I understand that the President said last week that he would not support Terrell. Morton takes his defeat hard, and says there would have been no trouble about the office “if Gresham had kept his hands to himself.” . . . Morton seems to think that I induced Gen’l Knefler to make the fight. I can tell you many funny things when I see you. I plead guilty to having had something to do in developing opposition to Morton and Terrell here. Ben Harrison has no pluck at all. Jno. Hanna, and many others, openly denounce Morton on the streets.84

There was a bitter contest between General William H. H. Terrell and General Fred Knefler over the Pension Agency in

31 Gresham to Slaughter, Feb. 1, 1877.
82 Gresham to Slaughter, April 13, 1877.
83 Gresham to Slaughter, May 20, 1877.
84 Ibid.
Indianapolis. Terrell, the incumbent, had been appointed Pension Agent by President Grant in 1873 and served until 1877. He was military secretary of the Executive Department in Indiana during the Civil War and was made brigadier-general in 1865, which was an extraordinary honor for him. Terrell was a close friend of Governor Morton, who in thanking him for his excellent service said: "I wish to assure you, that should you ever ask me to do anything for you, I will do it." The other party in the conflict was General Knefler who served three years in the Civil War. At the close of the War, he formed a law partnership with John Hanna. Knefler was supported in the fight by Walter Q. Gresham, while Terrell was supported by Senator Morton. Knefler's side won, and he was appointed Pension Agent by President Hayes, in 1877.

In 1880 Judge Gresham again refused to be a candidate for governor. However, since the Republicans were in control of the Indiana State Legislature, he did become a candidate for the senatorial nomination, but "the strength of Harrison caused him finally to withdraw from the fight." Gresham now decided to retire from the bench and form a partnership with Joseph E. McDonald. In April, 1883, the Postmaster-General, Timothy Otis Howe, died. President Arthur, to block an incipient presidential boom, it is claimed, and with a view to an Arthur-Gresham ticket in 1884, offered Gresham the vacant post by wire. Gresham was holding his last term of court at Evansville, and it was there that he received the news of his selection. The office came entirely unsolicited and without a knowledge on his part that he was being considered. He immediately accepted.

The Indianapolis News promptly prophesied that Gresham's political career was just beginning:

He has those attributes belonging to a positive character, which do not perhaps attract or create a general enthusiasm. . . . His positiveness has perhaps, at times, tended to cause him to carry things with a high hand, but all in all, his judicial career has been one of honor to himself and credit to the bench. His general ability is conceded, and he has a fine executive faculty, which will stand him in a good stead in his new position. He is decidedly a man of action and the country will not expect too much in looking to him for an energetic and sufficient

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35 Memorial Record of Distinguished Men of Indianapolis and Indiana, edited by Jacob Piatt Dunn and others (Chicago, 1912), p. 288.
management of his department. . . . His place on the bench has made his political predilections, more matters of individual opinion, than party influence, and so it may be said he comes to his position in harmony with the general interests and feelings of his party in this state, and his appointment is, therefore, to be reckoned as a help to his party.87

The following day the News contained a special telegram from ex-President Grant which was given to the public:

I first made General Gresham's acquaintance in the early part of the War, when I first started out from Cairo. He served under me and I don't know a man who is better qualified to perform the duties of the office than he. His appointment will be received by the Republican party, and the people generally, with satisfaction I am sure. I heartily commend the wisdom of the appointment, and consider it one of the very best that could be made.88

The Cincinnati Commercial Gazette gave the following reasons for Gresham's appointment:

In considering the claims of Indiana it was remembered that it had been the judgment of the Republican leaders, since the campaign of 1880, that Indiana should have a cabinet position. Wrangling among the Indiana politicians had prevented the appointment of Judge Gresham, although General Garfield, who personally knew him, and greatly respected him, had fully determined to select him. The names most prominently considered from Indiana were those of Governor Porter and Judge Gresham. Governor Porter was not personally known to the President; Judge Gresham was personally and favorably known to him. Moreover, Governor Porter was not a Union soldier, and Judge Gresham was a very brilliant Union soldier and shows the effects of his wounds to-day. Moreover, the fact that General Garfield had selected Judge Gresham had a very strong influence upon President Arthur, and possibly turned the scale in Gresham's favor.89

It may be argued that Gresham's position as judge was more responsible and dignified than a cabinet portfolio, yet, if he had ambitions for the senatorship or the presidency, a cabinet position would bring him before the public and furnish an excellent start in the political field. It was believed by some, however, that Gresham's ambition was to be a United States circuit judge. The rumor had been afloat for some time that Judge Drummond, of the seventh United States circuit at Chicago, intended to retire from the bench. The Indianapolis Sentinel claimed that if Gresham accepted the appointment to the Cabinet, it would enhance his chances for

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87 Indianapolis News, April 5, 1888.
88 Ibid., April 6, 1888.
89 Cincinnati Commercial Gazette, clipped in Indianapolis News, April 5, 1888.
the judgeship, and added: "He will make one of the most ef-
ficient officials connected with President Arthur's Admin-
istration. He enjoys an exalted reputation for probity, and
as a judge he has won, so far as we know, as large a share of
public esteem as has fallen to the lot of any man who has
worn the ermine of the federal judiciary." The Sentinel
further declared that "the appointment will give general sat-
isfaction in this state, where Judge Gresham is honored and
respected by every one and stands at the very head of the
judiciary."40

*Harper's Weekly* endorsed Gresham's appointment:

The appointment of General Gresham has been received with uni-
versal favor, not because he is very generally known to the country
but because all that is said of him is high praise, both of his military
and judicial career, and because of the unsatisfactory names that had
been mentioned in connection with the office. As the only objection
made to the appointment is that he is not generally known, it is to be
remembered that the trouble with most of the persons named for the
office was that they were too well known. General or Judge Gresham
is from Indiana and he is a positive but independent Republican, person-
ally friendly to Grant, but a supporter of Mr. Bristow in 1876. He is
called to a post requiring extraordinary energy and administrative fac-
culty, and his conduct will be watched with hope and confidence.41

Judge Gresham adjourned his court at Evansville and re-
turned to Indianapolis. Several leading Republicans met him
at the station on his arrival, and he received congratulations
from all parts of the country. He prepared to go to Wash-
ington immediately. The officials of the Panhandle Railroad
offered Gresham a special car to carry him to Washington,
which he "respectfully declined." Instead, in the "style of
true Republican simplicity . . . he boarded the train, as
an ordinary passenger, at full rates.” A number of personal
friends, including the G. A. R. of Indianapolis, were at the
Union Station to bid him "a good bye and God bless you."42

It was characteristic of the new Postmaster-General, that
he requested that there be no demonstration on his arrival
at Washington. He was quietly driven to the home of Colonel
John W. Foster, who was practicing law in Washington, and
who had recently been appointed minister to Spain. A few
days later, The Indiana Republican Club of Washington gave

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40 *Indianapolis Sentinel*, April 6, 1883.
41 *Harper’s Weekly*, April 14, 1883.
42 *Indianapolis News*, April 19, 1883.
an informal reception in honor of Judge Gresham. Assistant Secretary of the Treasury John C. New said that Gresham’s appointment came through the recommendations of John W. Foster and Senator David Davis of Illinois. New further said that while he and Gresham had not been on good terms for some time, he was proud of the selection for the honor of Indiana, as Gresham was a man eminently fitted for any office, no matter how exalted it might be. On the whole, Gresham’s appointment was received with favor both by the public and the press. The prominence which he now enjoyed seemed to many to place him in the front row for the presidency.

There was a good deal of speculation as to how well Assistant Postmaster-General Frank Hatton and Walter Q. Gresham would agree. The former was a fierce partisan. His idea of the Department was to use it as an adjunct to the party machine. Gresham belonged to a different school, whose judicial mind preserved him from narrow partisanship. His opinion was not that the Post Office Department was a piece of political machinery, but that it should be run for the best interests of the postal service.

The new Postmaster-General at once showed the spirit of the reformer. Through his efforts legislation was secured to reduce letter postage from three cents to two cents, and the weight of first-class mail was increased from one-half to one ounce. The foreign postal service was improved; fast mails were re-established and letter postage to Canada was lowered. His most notable activity, however, was the war he waged against the Louisiana Lottery Company, which was denied the use of the mails according to law. The controversy, started by Gresham, was marked by rigid enforcement of existing laws and the passing of more stringent laws against the use of the mails for fraud. According to the Indianapolis Journal, the Lottery Company kept several high-priced men in Washington to guard their interest and any previous attempts to interfere with their usurped mail privileges had fallen flat. The Journal added in regard to the new situation:

> The men who compose the Lottery crowd are afraid as death of the new Postmaster-General, and quake in their boots for fear he may, by an official ruling kick their fat into the fire. The prompt manner in

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43 Indianapolis Journal, April 12, 1883.
44 Indianapolis Sentinel, April 12, 1883.
which he takes up questions and goes at once to the bottom of them is something new in departmental administration, and fills the parties who make a living expediting or delaying matters of business by arguments, demurrers and other means with a fear that their occupation will soon be gone. 46

After Gresham became Postmaster-General, his name appeared frequently as a possible candidate for the governorship of Indiana. He was likewise often mentioned for the presidency, and frequently as a strong man for the vice-presidency. In his boom for governor, it was reported that he had written to a friend in Fort Wayne stating his intention to return to his native state and the law practice as soon as he was through with the Cabinet. He then might take some part in politics. Notwithstanding this report, Gresham sent a telegram in which he stated positively that he was not a candidate for Governor. 46

A letter from New Albany, that was published in the Chicago Tribune claimed that southern Indiana was strongly backing Gresham for the presidency. The people of New Albany had known him from his youth. Although a “cabinet officer they called him Walt and he was regarded as one of the boys.” Gresham’s friends supported President Arthur. An Arthur-Gresham ticket would satisfy them. The writer of the letter quoted Morris McDonald, one of the delegates to the Chicago Convention, as saying that Harrison was an aristocrat, cold, and not for the common man. He added: “Its the same way at Washington. When the boys go on there and want anything, they have to go to Dan Voorhees. Gresham is genial to everybody, no matter whether he is a hod-carrier or a United States Senator.” 47

In the National Convention, which met at Chicago on June 1, 1884, it was openly declared that the Gresham movement had the support of Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, and probably would acquire the total strength counted for Senator Edmunds on the early ballots. While the Indiana delegation would present Harrison’s name, the Hoosier delegates would rally to the support of Gresham at any time. 48

Since Indiana had two favorite sons, the Greshamites argued that it would not be fair to present the name of Har-

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46 Indianapolis Journal, April 18, 1883.
47 Ibid., June 18, 1884.
48 Chicago Tribune, clipped in Indianapolis Sentinel, May 28, 1884.
49 Indianapolis Sentinel, June, 1884.
rison, since Gresham refused to have his name proposed for the first place as long as Arthur was in the field. The Postmaster-General was a warm friend of President Arthur, who in turn favored his candidacy for second place. Sherman and Gresham or Edmunds and Gresham were not infrequently mentioned as possible combinations. The outcome of the contest was that Blaine's friends succeeded in nominating him on the fourth ballot. John A. Logan of Illinois was given second place on the ticket.

On the death of Charles J. Folger, Secretary of the Treasury, the President offered the position to the Postmaster-General. Judge Gresham hesitated to accept since he desired to complete the investigations and reforms which he had begun in the Post-Office Department. However, he agreed to the transfer on September 23, 1884, as a matter of accommodation to his chief. President Arthur was reluctant to place new timber in his Cabinet. He much preferred to keep it as it was, and there was no man among the President's counselors in whom he reposed greater confidence than in Judge Gresham.49

Again Gresham's selection seemed to meet the general approval of the public and the press. An editorial in the Nation read:

The appointment of General Gresham, as Secretary of the Treasury, in place of Judge Folger, deceased, will be recognized, everywhere, as a fitting and appropriate disposition of that important office. . . . General Gresham has the full confidence of the country, earned by an industrious and unsullied career, in military, civil and judicial life. No appointment could have been freer from objection, and hardly any could have been made giving better promise of usefulness to the public service.50

During the short time that Judge Gresham was head of the Treasury Department, he made several investigations and started some reforms. One of his last acts while a member of the Cabinet was the making of a speech to the business men in Wall Street prior to the presidential election. He discussed the financial legislation from 1860 up to that time. Although Blaine, the presidential candidate, was for protection, nevertheless Gresham maintained that there should be

49 Indianapolis Journal, Sept. 14, 1884.
50 The Nation, Oct. 2, 1884.
a revision of the tariff laws and a reduction of the surplus revenue.

For several months, as already mentioned, it had been known that Judge Drummond of the seventh United States circuit intended to resign. The general supposition was that Judge Gresham would be appointed to fill the vacancy. His duties as a Cabinet officer would soon end, but the judgeship would be for life. On November 2 he accepted the appointment and assumed the duties of the bench a few days later. His career as circuit judge has already received notice.

The presidential campaign of 1888 opened with many possible candidates for nomination in the field. The Convention, which assembled on June 17, was held in Chicago. The name of James G. Blaine, the defeated candidate of 1884, was brought forth by his ardent admirers. The Chicago Tribune, the leading Republican newspaper in the West, was again urging Blaine's nomination. But Joseph Medill, editor of the Tribune, strongly approved Cleveland's annual message, in which the President advised that the surplus in the Treasury should be decreased by reducing the duties on imports. He argued that the government was collecting more revenue than was needed. He was not for free trade but for a revision of the tariff in the interests of both laborers and manufacturers. He condemned combinations and trusts which prevented competition. Blaine, who was in London at the time, denounced Cleveland as a free trader, and proposed a higher tariff than the United States had ever had. His supporters were very indignant at Medill, and pronounced him a free trader of the Grover Cleveland type. The Chicago Tribune had been favorably disposed toward Judge Gresham before the appearance of President Cleveland's message, and when the breach came with the Blaine leaders, the paper became a strong advocate of the Judge's candidacy, while the powerful Chicago Inter-Ocean also fell into line.

In February, the chairman of the Republican National Convention made public a letter from Blaine, who was in Florence, Italy, in which he stated that he was not a candidate for the presidency. However, a number of his warm friends continued to urge his nomination, but the highest number of votes received by him was forty-eight on the fifth ballot. Senator John Sherman reached the high tide of his success in the Convention when he received two hundred forty-nine votes
on the second ballot. Blaine's letter of withdrawal had increased the number of candidates. Fourteen different party leaders received votes on the first ballot. The real fight was between the Greshamites and the Harrisonites.

The powerful Indiana Republican machine was strongly behind Harrison in the Convention, while Gresham was not supported by any active organization. Since the time when Gresham accepted the appointment in Arthur's cabinet, he had been urged by his friends, both publicly and privately, to enter the race for the presidency. His fearless decision in the famous Wabash Railway Case had increased his popularity with the laboring class.

The Nation could not understand how Gresham could be a real tariff reformer and receive the support of the Chicago Tribune. If the choice for the president was between Cleveland "and a half-hearted milk and water revenue reform Republican," the Democratic candidate would be elected. Furthermore a protective tariff regardless of revenue was the only doctrine that would obtain the support of the steel interests. Gresham seemed to be ruled out by the protected industries.61

The Boston Globe conceded that Gresham had many good qualities, but feared that he was "not the kind of a man to rally a united party." He "was a Stalwart of the Stalwarts—a Grant, Conkling and Arthur man,"62 which would not please the Blaine-Garfield Republicans.

In April Gresham's Chicago friends held a meeting attended by a large number of representative Republicans. They felt that his qualifications and merits were so well known that it was not necessary to present them to the public. Several paid high compliments to the popularity of the Judge and commented upon the fact, that "as an active member of the federal judiciary, he could take no public cognizance of anything that might be done in his behalf." It was understood that he was adverse to any formal steps to further his nomination. However, "a resolution was submitted pledging the use of all honorable means to promote the nomination of Judge Gresham and expressing the opinion that the sentiment in his behalf was so general and spontaneous, that it was unnecessary to perfect a distinct organization to further his interests."63

61 Ibid., March 22, 1888.
62 Boston Globe, clipped in Public Opinion, April 14, 1888.
63 Pittsburgh Commercial-Gazette, clipped in ibid.
Moreover, since Judge Gresham had been on the circuit bench in Chicago for over three years, Illinois championed his cause as an adopted son. The Illinois delegation was pledged to him and on the first three ballots he received her forty-four votes. Even on the eighth ballot, Gresham had lost only four of the Illinois delegates.

Senator Harrison’s cause was greatly enhanced from the fact that he had captured a delegate from Gresham’s own Indiana county. However, intimated an independent newspaper, that might be due “to the wire pulling and delegate-electing class of Indiana Republicans,” adding that quite a difference exists between “popularity with party bosses and workers” and popularity with the mass of voters. Nevertheless, the Republican political machine in Indiana, by skillful management obtained pledges from the delegates of eleven of the thirteen districts. In two districts the delegates were not pledged. However, analysis of the eight ballots cast at the Chicago Convention shows that the Indiana delegation at no time gave Gresham more than two votes, and on the eighth ballot the total of thirty votes went to Harrison.

The Brooklyn Times proclaimed that Harrison, by securing the Indiana delegation, put Gresham out of the race more effectively than if he had declined to enter. The Indianapolis Sentinel contended that Gresham’s many Republican friends in Indiana would not submit to the “high-minded methods employed . . . in packing the delegation to Chicago, for Harrison.” The Nation claimed that, while Gresham represented the best elements of the Republican party, that the “aggressiveness of his Illinois supporters” would “excite the hostility of the Blaine faction.” Moreover, “he was one of the suspects of the Arthur administration.” The Washington Gazette professed to see only campaign propaganda in the support which Democratic editors were giving to Gresham. Such support would increase the dissensions within the party and in the end weaken Harrison. Inasmuch as Republicans would choose their own nominee, Democrats should remember that any man wanted by them, Republicans would not want. Harrison was a true Republican.

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54 Philadelphia Ledger, clipped in ibid.
55 Brooklyn Times, clipped in ibid.
56 Indianapolis Sentinel, clipped in ibid., April 28, 1888.
57 The Nation, May 10, 1888.
The New Orleans States contained a "handsome testimonial," for Gresham "from Senator Voorhees, who declared that 'neither malice nor envy can breathe a word against the judge's character. His whole life,' he adds, 'has been cleanly and honest.' From one who has known him from his school days, and a political opponent to boot, such a testimonial means something." The Louisiana editor added: "Many Democrats said that the chief obstacle to the nomination of Gresham was Jay Gould, and that the Republican party would not dare nominate a man to whom Jay Gould was opposed."

Some weeks before the meeting of Gresham's friends in Chicago, a conference of prominent Republicans "Favorable to Gresham's candidacy" was held in Indianapolis. This meeting came in February. Two days later an editorial in the Chicago Tribune, addressed to Indiana politicians, asked if they were "not making a mistake in pushing him (Harrison) instead of Judge Gresham, a far stronger and more popular man?" They were told that "on every point where Harrison was weak Gresham was strong."

It was the judgment of General Lew Wallace, one of the most attractive men at the Harrison headquarters, but a friend of Gresham, that since the Indiana delegation was instructed for Harrison, no Indiana leader had a right to support any one else. To the Indianapolis News, the Gresham boom seemed rather curious. His candidacy was pushed mostly by newspapers and especially by the Chicago Tribune and the Inter-Ocean. It was held to be a little queer, too, that the Gresham headquarters were in the hands of a self-appointed committee, representing the so-called labor element of Indianapolis. The News also intimated that the strangest thing about the whole affair was that the Judge was supported in the Convention by men on whom he had been very severe. For example, "After the election four years ago, Major Calkins attributed his defeat largely to something that Gresham had said against him," yet Calkins was in Chicago working with might and main for Gresham. "Oliver Morton, Jr. did the same, and yet Gresham had fought his father bitterly at Cincinnati in '76.

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90 Indianapolis News, June 18, 1888.
and helped to defeat him for the presidential nomination.”

According to a letter by Murat Halstead, published in the Indianapolis News, the friends of Judge Gresham received a blow when Mrs. Logan, wife of General John A. Logan, did not hesitate to say that her choice for the presidency was General Horatio Alger, adding that “she feared that the Judge was not true to the ticket in 1884.” He did not even give it, she asserted, “half-hearted support.” She, “therefore, did not feel favorable to his candidacy, and did not think he stood much show, or that he ought to.”

Gresham was constantly termed a “mugwump” and a “free trader.” His opponents defended their antagonism on the ground that he supported Kerr for Congress in 1874, had not been loyal to the Republicans in 1876, and had voted for Cleveland in 1884.

Nevertheless, it was reported by the Indianapolis Journal that John Henry of Chicago, who was an intimate friend of Gresham, knew that the Judge did support Blaine in 1884, since Henry “was with him and saw him deposit the Blaine ticket straight.” This also, added the Journal, “effectually disposes of the suspicion of lukewarmness on protection,” but one wonders how this latter contention could be made.

However, the best evidence that Gresham voted for Blaine in 1884 was his own statement made during the campaign of 1892. Then he said that he had “voted the Republican ticket at every Presidential election since the party was organized,” except in 1864, when he was not able to go to the polls.

The New York Mail and Express declared that Gresham never had “been counted among the leaders of his party,” and further that although he was always classed as a Republican, “for twenty years, he had taken no active part, personally, in politics.” He was “more of a disorganizer than anything else.” He “adjourmed his court” in 1876, to work against the nomination of Governor Morton, the idol of the Republicans of Indiana, for the presidency. In 1884, while a Cabinet member, he refused to lend a helping hand to his party in his own state, and he had “quarreled with every prominent Republican in the

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82 Ibid., June 19, 1888. Major William R. Calkins was the Republican candidate for governor in Indiana in 1884. He was defeated by Isaac P. Gray. Calkins resigned a seat in the national House to make the race.
84 Indianapolis Journal, June 21, 1888.
85 Gresham to Bluford Wilson, Oct. 27, 1892, in Literary Digest, Nov. 5, 1892.
When Judge Gresham went on the district bench, General Tom Browne was district attorney; a quarrel arose and Browne resigned. The attempted boom for the Judge in his native state had already failed. Among his supporters not one prominent Republican was found. Indiana had only one favorite son and leader, that was Harrison. The statements of this eastern paper were not accurate as Gresham had many staunch supporters at the Convention from Indiana. Such men as Charles W. Fairbanks, the leader of the Gresham boom, Albert J. Beveridge, Noble C. Butler, Kenesaw M. Landis, and many others were in the ranks of his friends.

According to the Sentinel of June 22, it was significant that the sons of great men were for Gresham. Robert Lincoln, Stephen A. Douglas, Jr., and Fred and Jesse Grant were all active in the Judge's behalf. Walker Blaine preferred him to any other man before the Convention. Fred Grant heard his father say during his last illness, that the man the Republicans should nominate for president was Judge Gresham.

Conkling said just before his death that there were only two Republicans who could defeat Cleveland—General Sherman and Walter Q. Gresham. The St. Paul Press believed that the desire for Gresham was increasing daily, and that the Judge would be the successful candidate. The Indiana Republicans were able to secure the election of Judge Gresham and it was "their duty to refuse to allow local controversies to divide the party. The Press held that it was "morally certain" that Harrison could not secure the nomination.

"The men who call for Gresham," declared the independent and influential Springfield Republican, "ask for a candidate whose prospects for election would be good. They demand to know whether this man, who entered the army as a private and came out a general, who is a wise judge, a clean and positive personality; whose views as to tariff revision, are said to be moderate;" who served in the President's Cabinet; who would "antagonize no faction," whether such a one would not serve the country honestly and well. The nomination of such a man was "necessary to make a victory possible."

The Minneapolis Journal was of the opinion, that the thing which would prevent the election of Judge Gresham was that

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Mrs. Gresham, Gresham, II, 580.
Springfield Republican, clipped in ibid., June 2, 1888.
he would not discuss the presidency while he was on the bench. Therefore there could be no "treaties" or promises or "deals" of any kind. It meant that if the Republicans took him it must be without pledges. This paper admired "the fearless course of Judge Gresham in dealing with corporations and capital." His decisions had "attracted the attention of working men everywhere." He had "demonstrated repeatedly that the weak and the poor have as good a chance for justice in his court, as the wealthy and the powerful." If the working men "get a chance to vote for him, they will gladly avail themselves of the opportunity to prove their appreciation of the qualities they so heartily approve."65

Robert Ingersoll was in Chicago working for Gresham. He wanted Gresham because he believed the Judge to be "the best and most available man." Ingersoll, asserting that he was not a politician, and was not seeking an office, was for Gresham because he knew that the Judge was "honest, straightforward, patriotic and capable," because he was "sound to the core on the question of protection;" because he is genuine man, who stood "by his convictions in the field or on the bench."70

To counteract the report that the laboring men were not for Gresham, on account of his activities in Indianapolis during the strike in 1877, there was a great demonstration at the time of the Convention in the streets and in the hotels by the working men in Chicago, each wearing a Gresham badge and carrying a tin pail.

On June 21, Illinois, through Leonard Swett, placed the name of Walter Q. Gresham before the Convention. After reviewing his life, the speaker concluded by saying that Gresham was more like Lincoln than any other man. He was honest, fearless in danger, full of justice, and had a noble heart. The same sympathy and confidence existed between Gresham and the people as had existed between Lincoln and the people. His nomination was seconded by C. K. Davis, of Minnesota, John K. Lynch, a colored leader from Mississippi, and by Daniel W. McDall, of Massachusetts. A representative of the Indianapolis Sentinel reported to his paper that the nominating speeches were too long, that there was no enthusiastic response from the floor of the Convention, and that but little came from

65 Minneapolis Journal, clipped in Ibid., June 9, 1888.
66 Indianapolis Journal, June 18, 1888.
the gallery. The meaning of this was that the stronger currents were running against the Gresham forces.

According to the statement of Mrs. Gresham, if the Judge had made the pledges which Matthew Quay of Pennsylvania and Thomas C. Platt of New York, who practically controlled the Convention, tried to exact from him, he would have been nominated. Platt's ambition was to be Secretary of the Treasury. Medill was convinced that only by catering to Platt's desire could the Judge control the Convention, and insisted that a bargain should be made. Gresham, however, was firm in his stand, that if nominated, it must be without pledges.

Shortly before the Convention, Gresham stated that he "could not give . . . any information as to the political situation." He felt that "individual interests should weigh nothing compared with the interests of the party." He declared that he was not anxious for the nomination and that he would not be disappointed or unhappy over the result, whatever it should be.

Gresham reached the climax of his strength on the third ballot when he received 123 votes. On the last ballot his strength had fallen to 59 votes. Outside of the Illinois delegation, his votes throughout the eight ballots were scattering. Harrison, who started with 80 votes, received 544 votes on the eighth ballot and was therefore nominated.

On July 7, a few weeks after the nomination of Harrison, George William Curtis wrote the following to Lucius B. Swift of Indianapolis:

The steady departure from the Republican ranks, of the kind of men who made the party and have given it character and strength, are signs not to be disregarded.

At the convention, as reported, I saw no evidence, whatever, of any interest in reform, except to make a case against Mr. Cleveland. Mr. Blaine's and Mr. Sherman's reform views are familiar and they were the real candidates. Judge Gresham's supposed identification with reasonable views of any kind was fatal to him.

The evidence seems to be that Judge Gresham failed to become

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11 Indianapolis Sentinel, June 22, 1888.
12 Mrs. Gresham, Gresham, II, 888-890.
13 Gresham to L. C. Embree, June 1, 1888. Embree letters in Indiana State Library.
14 For a table showing the votes cast for the several candidates on each of the eight ballots, see Edward Stanwood, A History of the Presidency, I, 419. On the first ballot Gresham stood second with 111 votes, and John Sherman first, with 225. On the third ballot, Gresham was second again, with 129.
15 George William Curtis to Lucius B. Swift, June 7, 1888. Swift letters in Indiana State Library.
the Republican nominee for the presidency, in 1888, because he did not play into the hands of the party machine.

From the time of the Republican National Convention of 1888, Judge Gresham became more and more pronounced in his views on the tariff. He believed, as he had expressed in his Wall Street speech of 1884, that tariff revision was an imperative necessity. The McKinley Tariff Act of 1890 increased the breach between him and the leaders of the Republican party.

Just after the Democratic Convention in 1888, Gresham made the statement in New Albany, Indiana, that he considered "the action of the Democratic Convention, in the platform accepted, a complete endorsement of the low tariff wing of the party." It was a "splendid triumph," he continued, "of the principles so long and so ably advocated by Mr. Watterson and his Courier Journal."70

A movement was organized to defeat President Harrison's nomination for a second term at the Republican Convention in Minneapolis in 1892. It was led chiefly by Matthew S. Quay and Thomas C. Platt. Gresham was repeatedly assured that if he would lead the fight, they would nominate him; but he was decided in his stand, declaring, "I am out of politics, and have no political aspirations."71 In the Convention, the candidates brought forward were Blaine, McKinley, and President Harrison. The President was renominated.

An organization was started at a preliminary conference of the People's party leaders, held in St. Louis in February, 1892, to nominate Judge Gresham for president, at the Omaha Convention, which was to be held in July. Even though Gresham had repeatedly declined the nomination assured by the People's party, the leaders, on the eve of assembling on July 4, were in favor of drafting him. Many prominent men of both major parties declared their intention of supporting the Judge, if he would accept the nomination of the new party. During the Convention, General James B. Weaver, whom the People's party subsequently selected as their nominee, together with other prominent members of the Convention, made a final appeal by telegram soliciting Gresham's acceptance. However, he did not change his former decision. His reply was the

70 Indianapolis Sentinel, June 8, 1888.
71 Robert McElroy, Grover Cleveland, the Man and the Statesman (New York, 1925), II, 8.
same, that while he was clearly in sympathy with some of the principles of the party, yet he was strongly against inflation of the currency.\textsuperscript{78}

In the August number of the \textit{Review of Reviews} there appeared an article entitled, “What Might Have Been at Omaha.” The author stated that it was the intention of the Convention to nominate Judge Gresham who would “lift the political situation well out of traditional ruts.” He had been a prominent Republican and his decisions and actions in the judiciary positions which he had held made him popular with the so-called “antimonopolists.” If Gresham had assumed the “role of a Moses for the new movement, there would have been a great stirring up of dry bones.” The strength of the People’s party would have been amazing in November. The Convention had been assured by Populist leaders of Gresham’s acceptance, so that his final refusal was a severe blow to the enthusiasm of the delegates assembled at Omaha.\textsuperscript{79}

The Indiana delegation put forth great efforts to induce Gresham to accept the nomination. There was no question but that he was the choice of the People’s party. He was “lionized by the convention, from the start, as the most available man the People’s party had, and the only one likely to harmonize the different factions.”\textsuperscript{80}

The People’s party needed the leadership of a “great practical statesman,” logical in his thinking and able to separate “things essential from things trivial.” Gresham would have aided the party greatly in the campaign, but he denied that he entertained any thought of publicly supporting Mr. Weaver the nominee.\textsuperscript{81}

The Judge had been much more deeply interested in the Democratic National Convention which was held in Chicago. The platform contained a plank for tariff reform, which harmonized with his views. Isaac P. Gray of Indiana was a possible nominee for vice-president, but after Cleveland was selected as the presidential candidate, Gresham suggested to the Democratic managers that since they were sure of the

\textsuperscript{78} Mrs. Gresham, \textit{Gresham, II}, 368.
\textsuperscript{79} \textit{Review of Reviews}, VI, 9.
\textsuperscript{80} \textit{Ibid.}, VI, 135-136.
pivotal state of Indiana, it would be well to choose a running mate from Illinois and carry that state also. Adlai E. Stevenson, of Illinois, was nominated.

After it was definitely certain that Gresham would not support the People's party ticket it seemed to be taken for granted, generally, that he was still within the fold of the Republican party. It was made known to the Judge that if a vacancy came in the Supreme Court he would receive the appointment. Inasmuch as he was now opposed to the Republican principles, he caused it to be announced that even though a position on the Supreme Court was tendered him by President Harrison he would not accept it. Then the idea was presented to the country that Walter Q. Gresham intended to vote for Grover Cleveland.

So many contradictory statements were made, and so many appeals and protests were forthcoming that the Judge finally decided that the best method by which to make known his position was through a public letter. Thereupon, the following letter written to a friend that it might be published, appeared in the *Literary Digest* of November 5, 1892:

I have your letter of 21st, inst. I did tell you at Springfield that after mature reflection I had determined to vote for Mr. Cleveland this fall because I agree in the main with his views on the tariff and did not believe in the principles embodied in the McKinley Bill. I adhere to that determination and have said nothing indicating a change of purpose.

It is not true that with my knowledge or consent the President was asked to appoint me to any office. It is not true that I requested anyone to say or to do anything to obtain the Republican nomination this year. It is not true that I voted for Mr. Cleveland in 1888. I voted the Republican ticket at every presidential election since the party was organized, except in 1864, when I was not able to go to the polls.

The Republicans were pledged to a reduction of the war tariff long before 1888, and during the campaign of that year the pledge was renewed with emphasis again and again. Instead of keeping that promise the McKinley Bill was passed, imposing still higher duties.

It was passed in the interest of favored classes, and not for the benefit of the whole people.

It neither enhanced the price of farm products nor benefited labor. Wages are and ever will be regulated by supply and demand. Duties were imposed on some articles so high as to destroy competition and foster trusts and monopolies. I think you will agree with me that this was an abandonment of the doctrine of moderate incidental protection.

The tariff is now the most important question before the people and whatever others may do I shall exercise the right of individual judgment and vote according to my convictions.
I think, with you, that a Republican can vote for Mr. Cleveland without joining the Democratic party. How I shall vote in the future will depend on the question at issue.82

Woodrow Wilson considered Gresham's announcement that he would vote for Cleveland "one of the notable incidents of the campaign." He stated that Gresham's attitude changed many votes, especially in Indiana and Illinois, "where his name stood for courage, sagacity, integrity and public spirit."83 Be that as it may, Cleveland received a safe majority over his opponents President Harrison and General Weaver in the electoral college.

The President-elect without suggestion, pressure from anyone, or the knowledge of his campaign managers, determined to offer Gresham the first place in his Cabinet. In his letter to Gresham tendering him the headship of the State Department, Cleveland said: "In what may be called an emergency, in the affairs of the people, I need you. Will you come to us?"84 This offer came as a great surprise to Judge Gresham. His wife and son, Otto, objected to his acceptance. They felt that the Judge's popularity would be sacrificed and that his motives would be misjudged. Owing partly to their influence, the offer was at first rejected. Notwithstanding, a number of Cleveland's personal friends and prominent Democrats, among them John G. Carlisle, recently selected to be Secretary of the Treasury, urged Gresham to accept. He still hesitated. Cleveland sent him a message asking him to reconsider his refusal. It was the appeal made by Henry Watterson, however, who was not a friend of Cleveland, that finally persuaded Gresham to accept the offer.85 He was reported to have said in regard to his acceptance of the post:

I accepted the Secretaryship of State, purely from a sense of duty. I've had all that I care for in politics, I know its shallowness and its intrigues, and it was not the glamour that prompted me to accept. I had no desire to return to Washington, and whatever may be said, I accepted simply because the office was urged upon me as a duty that I owe to the American people.86

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82 Gresham to Bluford Wilson, Oct. 27, 1892, in Literary Digest, Nov. 5, 1892.
83 Woodrow Wilson, "Mr. Cleveland's Cabinet," in Review of Reviews VII, 287-289.
86 Literary Digest, March 4, 1893.
It had been rumored for some time that the western jurist would be offered a place in the new administration, but the selection of Judge Gresham to the premiership of the Cabinet caused the greatest excitement and comment not only among politicians of both parties but among business men and citizens of all classes. However, all were agreed in regard to the Judge's honesty and efficiency. Even by those who criticized the appointment most severely, it was admitted that he was competent and eminently fitted for any position that might be offered him. The chief objection voiced was that the Judge was such a recent comer among Democrats. But it must be remembered that he never had been an extreme partizan, and for sometime, had been out of sympathy with the Republican party. According to the Boston Republic, "He never had a high regard for Benjamin Harrison and Reedism, and McKinleyism made him shudder." His position on the federal bench barred him from participating in partizan politics. However, under the circumstances existing in 1892, he felt it his duty to break away from his traditions, and publicly throw his support to Cleveland.

The Indianapolis Sentinel of February 10, carried a heavy headline relative to the appointment and declared that there was "joy in the camp, over the news," that Gresham would be premier in the incoming administration. His conservative and judicial cast of mind made him well fitted for the position. His selection was accepted with almost universal favor not only by Indiana Democrats, but by the Democracy of the country in general.\(^7\)

The Indianapolis Journal presented the following on the situation:

There is not a Democrat in Washington, who does not, in private, remind the casual observer, by his facial contortions, of a man biting a green persimmon, when he hears the name of Gresham mentioned, and yet there is scarce a one of them, who dares to breathe his discontent.\(^8\)

The Journal contended that it was humiliating to Democrats that Cleveland could find no statesman among them able to fill the first Cabinet position. Gresham was evidently a poor choice, being "blunt, aggressive and open in procedure and accomplishments." He had "no skill in diplomacy, or learning

\(^7\) Indianapolis Sentinel, Feb. 10, 1893.
\(^8\) Indianapolis Journal, Feb. 12, 1893.
in international law," nor had he any "power in handling men." He might have served in the Department of the Interior or as Postmaster-General, but Democrats in Congress saw nothing that fitted him for Secretary of State. The leading Republican organ of Indiana concluded that these must have been some underlying secret reason that caused his selection, intimating that it was Gresham's reward for aiding quietly in Cleveland's nomination, and publicly in his election.\(^9^9\)

The Indianapolis News felt sure that to the independent and conservative element of the party, the appointment would be satisfactory, but possibly not to the party organization and old-line Democrats. On February 13, the News published comments on Gresham's appointment in which the Honorable W. H. English declared that he was not dissatisfied in the least with the selection. On the contrary, English felt about Gresham's appointment as Clay did about the annexation of Texas, when he said, "I think I should be glad to see it." English and Gresham were born in the same congressional district. They belonged to different parties, but were always personal friends. English believed that Gresham "by nature was a Democrat," and had drifted into the Republican party through "family and other influences." For years he was certain that the Judge had been in sympathy with the leading Democratic principles. It was natural that Cleveland would give some recognition to the Independents who supported him, and the selection of Gresham was the "very best, he could have made."\(^9^9\)

Two days later the same paper contained the opinions of other Indianapolis citizens in regard to Gresham as a Cabinet member. Among these Thomas Taggart expressed his high regard for Gresham, who, he felt, was amply able to fill any position that Cleveland would bestow upon him. At the same time Taggart feared that the appointment would not "meet the general approval of those who for many years had been identified with the Democratic party."\(^9^1\)

Woodrow Wilson discussing Cleveland's Cabinet in a current magazine characterized Gresham as a man of fine qualities of mind, "of engaging liberality of temper, and elevation of moral view." Yet he believed that with "all his reading, his

\(^9^9\) Ibid., Feb. 15, 1893.
\(^9^0\) Indianapolis News, Feb. 11, 1893.
\(^9^1\) Ibid., Feb. 18, 1893.
knowledge of men, and of the history of the country, wide sympathies and quick insight, he will be a novice in adjusting the foreign relations of the country.” Gresham’s learning and experience was far from the diplomatic field. He would be ignorant regarding the affairs of state, but would, no doubt, have been a fine Secretary of the Interior. “It would seem a pity, I say,” added Professor Wilson, “to lose so fine a Secretary of the Interior in order that a man of brilliant gifts may have the honor of the chief post in the Administration.”

Possibly no other Cabinet appointment ever caused so much comment and criticism as that of Judge Gresham to the office of Secretary of State. The party which he deserted naturally condemned the selection and there was some bitter resentment. Of course, there was a dissatisfied element in the Democratic party who disapproved of the appointment to a high office of any one who had just come over from the enemy’s ranks.

Gresham was, however, received into the Democratic family at Washington with a hearty welcome. He entered upon the duties of his new office at once. There were several international questions left unsettled by the former administration. Before the inauguration, the newly selected Secretary of State had a conference with President-elect Cleveland at his home at Lakewood, New Jersey. One of the questions discussed was the Bering Sea arbitration. The commissioners were to meet in Paris on February 23, 1893, but the work did not really begin until after Cleveland became President. Seal hunters were depopulating the waters of Bering Sea and making vast profits. During Cleveland’s first administration, a controversy with the Dominion of Canada arose. Secretary of State, Thomas F. Bayard, decided to confine the United States claims to the three-mile limit in the Alaskan waters, and to urge the British and Canadian governments to stop seal fishing in the open seas. The question was not settled and became more serious under the Harrison administration. The Paris arbitration commissioners conducted the investigation before Secretary of State, John W. Foster, who served under Harrison, and gave a decision in favor of Great Britain. The United States succeeded in holding only those rights previously held by Russia in Alaskan and adjacent waters. This was

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far short of what the American government claimed. Secretary Gresham accepted the report subject to the appropriation by Congress of $425,000 awarded to Great Britain in full settlement. But the next Congress, for partizan reasons refused to make the appropriation. A joint commission was appointed in 1897 which awarded Great Britain $48,151.26 more than had the tribunal of 1893. Congress then made the appropriation authorizing the payment of the award.

The most significant international question, and the one that brought forth the greatest store of adverse criticism on the State Department, was the policy in relation to the Hawaiian Islands. For instance, Gresham was accused of leaving the bench of a federal circuit court to become premier in a Democratic Cabinet in order to reverse one of Harrison’s pet schemes. His attack on the Hawaiian policy of the former administration was carried to the extent of bolstering up the worn out Hawaiian dynasty by force.  

In January, 1893, just before Cleveland first approached Judge Gresham, a revolt, organized largely by a Committee of Public Safety, had deposed the Hawaiian queen and established a provisional government. Then a deputation of five commissioners was sent to Washington to secure annexation to the United States. Within eleven days the commission and Secretary of State Foster had drawn up a treaty of annexation which was submitted to the Senate on February 14, 1893, together with a message from President Harrison urging ratification. At the Lakewood conference, between Cleveland and Gresham before Cleveland’s inauguration, Gresham expressed opposition to the aggressive policy of the Harrison administration in regard to the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands.

Three days after the inauguration, the President withdrew the Harrison treaty of annexation from the Senate, and, upon the advice of Secretary Gresham, sent James H. Blount of Georgia, recently chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the House, as a special commissioner to Hawaii to ascertain “the facts.” Blount’s report strengthened the belief of the administration that the Americans had aided the revolution with a view to acquiring the Islands. Attention was drawn to a sentence in a dispatch from John L. Stevens, the

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American minister at Honolulu at the time of the revolt, under date of February 1, 1893, in which that official said: "The Hawaiian pear is fully ripe, and this is the golden hour for the United States to pluck it."84

Secretary Gresham's policy was to restore the rights of the Queen. In closing a review of Blount's report to the President, he said:

Should not a great wrong done to a feeble, but independent State by an abuse of the authority of the United States, be undone, by restoring the legitimate government? Anything short of that, will not, I respectfully submit, satisfy the demands of justice.

Can the United States consistently insist that other nations shall respect the independence of Hawaii while not respecting it themselves? Our government was the first to recognize the independence of the islands, it should be the last to acquire sovereignty over them, by force and fraud.85

Albert S. Willis, our new minister to Honolulu, was instructed to have an interview with the Queen on his arrival in Hawaii. He was to assure her that the Harrison Treaty would not be sent to the Senate, and to express the President's "sincere regrets" for the "reprehensible conduct" of Minister Stevens, which had "obliged her to surrender her sovereignty," and that she could rely on the justice of the United States government.86

A letter was also sent to the provisional government stating the attitude of the Cleveland Administration toward the Hawaiian situation. Minister Willis explained to the Queen that her rights would be restored, provided she would grant complete amnesty to all connected with the provisional government. This she refused to do, as the laws of her government required persons who had committed treason to be beheaded and their property confiscated. The Queen, herself, thus blocked restoration, and the Cleveland Administration found itself at the end of the tether. Gresham ordered Willis to explain that the President could not use force without the authorization of Congress. On December 18, 1893, Cleveland laid the whole controversy before Congress, for such action as it might advise.

Hawaii continued under the provisional government until

85 Public Opinion, Nov. 16, 1898.
86 Henry James, Richard Olney and His Public Service (Boston, 1928), 90.
July 4, 1894, when the Hawaiian Republic with a liberal constitution was proclaimed. The following month President Cleveland recognized the new Republic. The Senate, in January, 1895, after prolonged discussion, passed a resolution approving the Administration's policy of non-intervention. The Hawaiian government continued undisturbed, with the exception of an unsuccessful revolution in 1895, until 1898, when, during the Spanish-American War, the islands were annexed to the United States by a joint resolution of Congress.

Many Republican newspapers explained the Hawaiian policy of the Cleveland Administration as an outgrowth of Gresham's hostility to ex-President Harrison. On account of "personal hatred," it was charged, the Secretary of State had deliberately "thrown away the key to the Pacific." On the other side, the Indianapolis Sentinel claimed that the Gresham policy gave general satisfaction. The national government would "not play the part of the bully" nor be involved in questionable transactions. It was the pride of America that she had protected the weak countries of the western continents against the greed of Europe. The last administration had established a brilliant foreign policy under a pretense of friendship. The only proper course to pursue was to retrace our steps in the Hawaiian matter. The Sentinel hoped that Congress would arrive at that conclusion.

The Indianapolis News concurred with the Cleveland Administration, holding that the facts relating to both sides of the revolution centering at Honolulu should be ascertained before a decision as to the policy of the United States could be made. "Let us act as men and Americans, not as partisans," was the appeal made to the country by this independent paper. Gresham evidently understood the situation. If, on the other hand, the Cleveland Administration was playing the game of politics, that fact would be found out. The attitude of the Administration received the support of the Baltimore Sun and of the Boston Herald. If the government of Hawaii was unjustly overthrown, it should be restored. Nothing would

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88 Indianapolis Sentinel, Nov. 13, 1893.
89 Indianapolis News, Nov. 15, 1893.
90 Baltimore Sun and Boston Herald, clipped in Public Opinion, Nov. 16, 1893.
strengthen the administration and win the “confidence of fair-minded and right-thinking men,” better than the act of justice to Hawaii which Secretary Gresham announced, asserted the New York Times.\(^\text{101}\)

The de facto government of Hawaii sent Lorin A. Thurston as minister to the United States. During the time the movement was on foot to restore Queen Liliuokalani, stormy interviews between Secretary Gresham and Thurston took place. Gresham’s letter to the United States minister at Honolulu sets forth in detail the circumstances of the rupture which took place between himself and Thurston. According to the Secretary of State, Thurston called at the State Department to discuss the alleged violation of the neutrality laws of the United States in carrying arms to Hawaii. “After a brief” discussion of this subject, Gresham mentioned that he understood that Thurston “was not pleased with the action of Minister Willis” in connection with recent events in Honolulu. Whereupon “Thurston desired to know why” the Secretary should arrive at such a conclusion. Gresham then inquired of the Hawaiian minister if he were responsible for matter that had appeared in a New York paper, written by a “prominent” Hawaiian lawyer, describing the situation in Honolulu and which matter was adverse to the Administration and reflected upon its Hawaiian policy? Thurston denied that he furnished the article to the newspaper but acknowledged that “he had permitted an employee or agent of one of the press associations to copy at his legation a private letter or letters which he had received.” He declared that he furnished the letter simply “as news or information which the public might like to know from Honolulu.” It was not done in his representative capacity nor to cause a bitter feeling against the Administration or against Minister Willis. Two days later Thurston again called at the State Department. This time he admitted that he “was guilty of official impropriety in furnishing for publication the matter” previously mentioned. He regretted what he had done and apologized for it. The secretary requested that his apology be presented in official form but Thurston declined to acquiesce because he “did not feel called upon to make a written apology.” The Secretary was surprised that a foreign minister would use “influence through

\(^{101}\) New York Times, clipped in ibid.
the press to bias public opinion in a country whose hospitality he enjoyed," adding "that the President would be pleased were Mr. Thurston replaced by another minister from Hawaii in whom he may feel that confidence which is essential to frank and cordial intercourse. The government at Honolulu was notified that a new minister would be acceptable to the government of the United States.

Concerning Cuba, the Cleveland Administration was anxious to maintain perfect neutrality relative to the disturbance existing there. Nevertheless, supplies from the United States were reaching the Cuban shores. In March, 1895, the United States mail ship, Alliance, was fired upon by a Spanish gunboat, when six miles off the Cuban coast. The Secretary of State made very strong statements to the Spanish government and received a "disavowal of any intended discourtesy and an apology from the Spanish government." After Secretary Gresham's death, President Cleveland notified the Spanish government that its explanations were accepted, thus closing the incident.

In 1889, Brazil had overthrown the monarchical form of government and established a republic. In September, 1893, a revolt in the Brazilian navy broke out in an attempt to crush the republican government and restore the old regime. American shipping suffered as did also British shipping. Reports reached Washington that Great Britain intended withdrawing her protection from the operations of neutral commerce at Rio de Janeiro, and the Brazilian minister claimed to have information that several European nations were aiding the insurgents. Secretary Gresham sent the following message to Thomas F. Bayard, American ambassador to the Court of St. James: "The consistent views of the Government of the United States, touching non-intervention of the powers of Europe, in the domestic questions of the American hemisphere have become well known abroad, and are firmly rooted here."

Having restated to Great Britain the Western Hemisphere policy of the United States, the Cleveland Administration sent General Benham with his flagship and several cruisers to Rio de Janeiro with instructions to protect American commerce.

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234 Dictionary of American Biography.
Upon the Admiral's arrival, complaints were brought to him by various ship captains that they were being fired upon by the insurgents. Thereupon he sent orders to the insurgents that firing on American vessels must cease, and, moreover, that he would sink any vessel that attempted to stop the progress of his ships to the wharf. A few shots were exchanged and the rebels surrendered. This ended their efforts to re-establish a monarchy in Brazil. This was only one of the instances in which Secretary Gresham expressed his firm belief in the Monroe Doctrine.

One of the most knotty problems which occurred during Gresham's period in the State Department was that relating to the Mosquito Coast. This controversy which had begun in 1838 when the British vice-consul informed the Nicaraguan government that the Mosquito Indians were an independent nation under the protection of Great Britain. Prolonged discussions with the United States over the violation of the Monroe Doctrine occurred. The questions at issue were supposed to be settled by the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850, which stipulated that neither the United States nor Great Britain would ever “occupy, or fortify, or colonize, or assume, or exercise any dominion over Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito Coast, or any part of Central America.” Differences of opinion over the interpretation of the treaty followed, and finally in 1894, a provisional government was set up in which the local British consul and a British naval officer had prominent parts. Secretary Gresham at once ordered Ambassador Bayard to ascertain the cause of British action. The British Foreign Office denied any intention to extend British authority over any part of Nicaragua. The aim was simply to protect British citizens. Secretary Gresham maintained in his reply to the British government, that according to the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, joint authority of Great Britain and Nicaragua could not exist on the Mosquito Coast, and that no foreign agency would be permitted to dictate to Nicaragua. The British government explained that the only wish was to cooperate with the United States for the protection of the interests of both governments, but the State Department refused to be drawn into any joint agreement.106 Great Britain withdrew and the Mosquito Reserve question was settled.

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106 Ibid., VIII, 255-260.
In 1894, both China and Japan sent troops into Korea to put down an uprising against the government. When the rebellion was settled, the Korean King asked that the troops be withdrawn. This Japan refused to do. The King made an appeal to foreign governments, stating that the independence of Korea was threatened. Secretary Gresham through the Japanese minister at Washington urged a peaceful settlement adding that, if the situation continued, European powers would possibly interfere. Japan withdrew her troops and the war ended.

The Secretary of State deplored our action in the Samoan Islands and urged the President to recommend to Congress in his message of May 9, 1894, a withdrawal from the Tripartite Treaty of 1889. He believed it a departure from the traditional policy of the United States and declared: “Every nation, and especially every strong nation, must sometimes be conscious of an impulse to rush into difficulties that do not concern it, except in a highly imaginary way.”

Gresham’s death occurred during the first stages of the Venezuelan boundary dispute, which was therefore left to his successor, Richard Olney, who sent a note to the British government that was practically an ultimatum. However, had Gresham lived, the question might have been settled with less excitement and ill feeling, as is indicated by the following dispatch from Gresham to Ambassador Bayard at London, dated December 1, 1894: “England and America are fully committed to the principle of arbitration, and this government will gladly do what it can to furnish a determination in that sense.” Judge Gresham believed he could make such a statement of the case that the British government would accept it or ask that it be left to arbitration. Later, Mrs. Gresham in conversation with a friend regarding the Venezuelan dispute said: “There was to be no ultimatum as my husband had prepared it (the note to Great Britain), and Mr. Olney and Mr. Cleveland are entitled to all the credit for such a state paper.”

Speculators were disappointed because the State Department did not establish a more vigorous foreign policy, but the Secretary opposed imperialism as being contrary to the prin-
ciples and traditions of the American republic because it involved large armaments and because his theory was that a strong nation should protect a weaker nation.

In April, Secretary Gresham contracted a cold which developed into pleurisy and finally into pneumonia which led to his death on May 28, 1895. He was temporarily buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Chicago. A year later his remains were taken to Arlington Cemetery. His final resting place is near the Lee mansion. The family was accompanied to Chicago by President Cleveland.

In some respects Judge Walter Q. Gresham did not measure up to "the ideal requirements of a Secretary of State." He received "ambassadors and ministers—men bred in most punctilious etiquette—sitting in his shirt sleeves at his desk, chewing on the stump of a cigar." Persons familiar with his habits noticed that "he was overfond of lounging about the corridors of Willard's Hotel, and mingling with the very motley mob which sprawled there at all hours of the day and night." According to an observer, he was the man who first put shirt sleeve diplomacy into actual visual operation. He was handsome, personally attractive and his free and easy western habits led him into the indiscretion of receiving diplomats at his office in his shirt sleeves, when the weather was hot. This only increased the additional sneers of Europeans at the alleged crudeness and amateurishness of the handling of international questions by the United States.

He was a typical American, "red-blooded, honest-minded, alert mentally and physically, but lacking in that sort of discriminating tact and physical camouflage," which is "supposed to be necessary in the conduct of diplomatic affairs." In a contemporary magazine article, by Henry Cabot Lodge, headed "Our Blundering Foreign Policy," that "scholar in politics" asserted: "Indeed the desire of the Administration to retreat has been the desire to meddle." The State Department was so anxious "to yield to any foreign demand" that Mr. Gresham actually advised giving up even obvious rights. In contrast to the estimate of Mr. Lodge that of the *Nation* is interesting: "Judged by the international standards (and that is the standard by which a Secretary of State should be chiefly

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337 Tyner: Walter Q. Gresham

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Harry Thurston Peck, Twenty Years of the Republic (New York, 1906), 408.

David S. Barry, Forty Years in Washington (Boston, 1924), 177-179.

judged), Mr. Gresham has been a great success and has made American honor, capacity, and courtesy mean more in the eyes of the world than they had meant for many a day."

With the exception of approximately five years, Walter Q. Gresham was in public service from the time he became a member of the State Legislature in 1861 until his death in 1895. While it cannot be said that he rose rapidly in public life, yet each appointment could be called a promotion. It is of interest that he resigned each position that he held, with the exception of General in the Civil War when a severe wound ended his military career and that of Secretary of State which was ended by his death.

Gresham's greatest strength was in his absolute honesty and undaunted courage. No matter how severely his enemies censured him at no time was he charged with deception, dishonesty or fraud. The criticism which he received relative to the Hawaiian controversy can hardly be justified when compared with his conscientious administration of all foreign affairs. He was courageous enough in the face of adverse criticism, both of the public and of the press, to make no unjust claims for his government. Because he advocated square dealing and fairness, and because he refused to follow his party into paths, which, in his judgment, were wrong, he never had the support of party bosses or of the party machine. His independence caused him many bitter enemies.

Gresham was as fearless on the field of battle as he was in rendering his decisions on the federal bench. He was as true to his convictions on the tariff question as he was in his dealings in foreign affairs. It was his natural temperament.

In rendering judicial decisions and in arriving at conclusions, he was perhaps hasty. In his manners he was, no doubt, blunt, and cared little for that superficial polish which makes so many political leaders prominent. In his various public positions, as member of the Indiana State Legislature, as Colonel and Brigadier-General in the Civil War, as United States District Judge, as Postmaster-General and Secretary of the Treasury in President Arthur's Cabinet, as United States Circuit Judge, and as Secretary of State, Walter Quintin Gresham unquestionably rendered valuable service to both his state and to his nation.

112 The Nation, May 30, 1895. Dr. James A. Woodburn in his "Sketch of Gresham" quotes this passage with approval.