

Careers of Six Hoosier Candidates of 1860

By H. S. K. BARTHOLOMEW

In the election of 1860, there were six candidates for state offices, three on each ticket, who were destined later to figure conspicuously in national affairs and several of them in state affairs as well. Three of these were to fill the governor's chair, five to serve in the United States Senate, one to become president of the United States, and one to be speaker of the national House of Representatives. The three Republicans all of whom were elected in that memorable year, were Henry S. Lane, Oliver P. Morton and Benjamin Harrison; the three Democrats were Thomas A. Hendricks, David Turpie and Michael C. Kerr. Henry S. Lane and Thomas A. Hendricks were the opposing candidates for governor, and Oliver P. Morton and David Turpie for lieutenant-governor. Benjamin Harrison and Michael C. Kerr ran against each other for reporter of the supreme court.

Lane was elected governor succeeding Abram A. Hammond, who was serving out the unexpired term of Ashbel P. Willard, the latter having died in office four months before the end of his term. A few days after Lane was inaugurated, he was elected to the United States Senate and resigned the governorship. Morton, who had been elected lieutenant-governor, succeeded him and served the full term of four years excepting the few days that had been served by Lane. He is always known in history as Indiana's war governor. In 1864 he was elected to the governorship and served a little over two years of that term, when he resigned to go to the Senate as the successor of Lane. In the Senate he took a prominent place among the Radicals though he had been a moderate reconstructionist. His career in the Senate somewhat dims the luster of his reputation as governor. He died in 1877, after serving ten years as Senator.

Not long after Lane's election to the Senate, his colleague Jesse Bright, was expelled from that body on account of alleged sympathy with the southern confederacy. Governor Morton filled the vacancy by the appointment of ex-Gov. Joseph A. Wright, a former Democrat, who was to serve until the next Legislature should be elected. That body then had to elect senators for the short term and the long term.

The Democrats won a majority of the seats in the Legislature in the election of 1862. They elected David Turpie for the short term, which expired March 4, 1863, and Thomas A. Hendricks for the long term, which expired March 4, 1869. Hendricks at once became a leader of the small minority of Democrats in the senate. That small minority with seven independent and patriotic Republicans prevented the conviction of President Johnson, who had been brought to trial by the vote of the Radical majority in the House of Representatives. The Senators who stood by Johnson saved the nation from having placed upon it a stain which never could have been blotted out. In 1868 while still serving in the senate and against his wishes, Hendricks was again nominated for governor of Indiana, but was defeated by Conrad Baker, who was serving out Governor Morton's unexpired term. Afterwards Baker and Hendricks became law partners in the well known firm of Baker, Hord & Hendricks. In 1872 Hendricks was nominated a third time for governor and elected, though the rest of the Democratic state ticket, with the exception of State Superintendent of Public Instruction, was defeated. In 1876 Governor Hendricks received the vice-presidential nomination, becoming the running mate of Governor Samuel J. Tilden. In 1884 he ran for vice-president on the ticket with Grover Cleveland and was elected but lived to serve only a little over eight months of his term.

Benjamin Harrison served only a portion of his term as reporter of the state supreme court. He resigned to enter the army, rising to the rank of brigadier-general. In 1876 he became the Republican candidate for governor after Godlove S. Orth, the regular nominee of the Republican state convention had withdrawn from the ticket. He was defeated by a substantial majority by James D. Williams, better known as "Blue Jeans," a sturdy, honest Knox county farmer. In 1880 the Republicans won a majority in the Legislature and Harrison was elected to the United States senate, succeeding Joseph E. McDonald. He served one term in the senate without winning any particular distinction. In 1888 he was nominated and elected to the presidency, defeating Grover Cleveland. His presidential term was creditable but not marked by any great or outstanding service. He was defeated for reelection in 1892 by his predecessor and competitor of 1888,

Grover Cleveland. Harrison's greatest fame was won after his retirement from the presidency, when he again took up the legal profession. He was employed in a number of notable cases.

Michael C. Kerr served in the state Legislature previous to his candidacy for reporter of the supreme court and made an excellent record in that body. In 1866 he was elected to the national House and re-elected in both 1868 and 1870. After an absence of two years from that body he was again elected in 1874. That year the Democrats obtained a majority in the House, and when the forty-fourth Congress convened, Kerr was elected to the Speakership, succeeding James C. Blaine. During his career in Congress, Kerr was a tireless worker and became known as one of the most substantial members of that body. There is no doubt that he would have risen still higher, for he had the full confidence of the people whom he served, had not death cut short his promising career before the expiration of the term for which he had been elected to preside over the House. It is a rather singular coincidence that only a short time before Vice-President Henry Wilson had died, thus the presiding officers of both branches of Congress were removed by the hand of death in the same session. Though not so well known as Morton, Hendricks or Harrison, the name of Michael C. Kerr will always have a conspicuous place among those of Indiana's strongest men.

David Turpie, after his brief term in the Senate in the early part of 1863, resumed the practice of law, in the course of time becoming recognized as one of Indiana's greatest legal lights. In 1864 and again in 1866 he was nominated by the Democrats of his district for congress but was defeated each time, his competitor being Schuyler Colfax, afterwards Vice-President. In 1876 he was elected a member of the state Legislature and chosen speaker of the house. In 1884 he was a candidate for the nomination for governor in the Democratic state convention, but Col. Isaac P. Gray, was nominated, a man who, in the judgment of the writer, was greatly his inferior. In 1887 the legislature elected him to the United States senate, where he served two full terms, retiring March 4, 1899, to be succeeded by Albert J. Beveridge. Senator Turpie was one of the most scholarly man who ever represented Indiana in the upper house of Congress. During the en-

tire twelve years of his service, he enjoyed the full confidence and esteem of his colleagues in that body. After his retirement, he wrote a volume of reminiscences, under the modest title, *Sketches of My Own Times*, which is among the classics in autobiographical literature. On account of this reminiscence, he will probably be remembered longer than for his public service, honorable though that was.

While each of the six leaders—Lane, Morton, Hendricks, Harrison, Kerr and Turpie—has a high place in Indiana's history, the two outstanding figures among them were Morton and Hendricks. Both were born leaders of men. Each one found a place among the strong men of his party at an early age and each one retained leadership until death. Their characteristic methods differed widely and many and fierce were the battles which they fought on Hoosier soil. The leadership of these great rivals has never been better described than in the words of Congressman William D. Owen in his memorial address in the House of Representatives shortly after the death of Hendricks:

Two more diverse spirits never battled in government before: Morton and Hendricks—Sir Richard and Sir Launcelot, the lion hearted warrior and the fair knight. The one spoke to men with the majesty of an autocrat: the other talked to men as a man with his fellows. The one always commanded, the other always pleaded. The one brooked no dissent in his followers; the other let his train camp wide apart. The one, like Caesar, would burn eight hundred villages, bathe his sword in a million lives, and wade through blood to preserve the cause he championed; the other, Coriolanus-like, seeing the carnage, the desolation, the anguish, would sheathe his sword and turn away. The one could seize the helm when the nation was strained in every fiber; the other might take direction when peace hath her victories. They lie within speaking distance. The vast energies of the one are hushed; the broad powers of the other are pulseless. They have grounded arms and rest well in immortal renown.