

NEW YORK'S CONVENTION.

A DISTINGUISHED JURIST WILL PRESIDE OVER IT.

Hon. Joseph H. Choate, Lawyer and Politician—His Many Legal Successes—Big Fees Earned—An Authority on Constitutional Law.

His distinguished qualities, his brilliant career and the weight of a renowned American ancestry have all combined to make Joseph H. Choate the natural choice of his party for the Presidency of the Constitutional Convention of New York.

Mr. Choate was born in Salem, Mass., on January 24, 1832, and is, therefore, now in his sixty-second year. But his erect and firm carriage, his healthy complexion, his ever redundant vitality, seem to belie his age.

His curling brown hair is only tinged here and there with a sprinkling of gray, and his face is that of a man who might be judged to have borne an active part in the affairs of his time for, at the utmost, twenty-five years.

Despite these appearances, Mr. Choate has been an active factor in the more advanced life of New York city and State, both, legal, political and social, since 1856, when he first went to New York.

A nephew of Rufus Choate, the famous jurist, the prestige of his name has never been anything but an incident in a career carved out by sheer force of indomitable will and extraordinary intelligence.

Mr. Choate entered Harvard College at the age of eighteen, graduating with honors in 1852. He then followed a two years' course of lectures in the law school attached to Harvard, which was founded by Nathan Dane.

While here his studies were supervised by the remarkable legal minds which the Dane Law School then boasted, among his preceptors being the Prof. Greenleaf whose work on evidence is a standard for future generations of lawyers.

Mr. Choate graduated from the law school in 1854 and one year later was admitted to the bar in Massachusetts. In 1856 he qualified as a member of the bar in New York city, where he has since remained.

He entered the employ of Everts, Butler & Southmayd, and within a year was a member of the firm, which was then known as Everts, Southmayd & Choate.

The firm at once began to take a prominent position at the New York bar, and to-day is known to every lawyer in the land.

The office and local practice of the firm was for many years Mr. Choate's occupation. William M. Everts appeared in the larger number of cases which attracted national attention, and in which the firm's reputation brought in in great numbers.

In Mr. Choate's during this period Mr. Everts found an able conductor, fully worthy of his great genius, and one whose influence on his success Mr. Everts has often acknowledged. But Mr. Choate's ability before long began to manifest itself clearly and originally.

As a result of his ready wit and genial presence, as well as because of his distinction at the bar, Mr. Choate was made President of the New England Society in New York. He has for many years presided over the meetings of that

body with characteristic urbanity and success. He was also elected President of the Union League Club. In recognition of his services to the Republican party he was in 1890 offered the nomination for Congress, which he, however, declined.

One of the most important trials in which Mr. Choate was concerned was the Fitz-John Porter court-martial at West Point. President Hayes directed that a new tribunal be appointed to re-investigate the charges brought against Gen. Porter, upon which he had been disgraced. Mr. Choate was Gen. Porter's counsel, and secured a reversal of the verdict of the former court-martial.

Another case of his which attracted great attention was the trial of Gen. D. Cosmala on charges of selling the art collection in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York city. Here, as in almost every legal battle which he has ever attempted, Mr. Choate triumphed.

With Hon. D. W. McCurdy, Mr. Choate appeared for the defendants in the case against the Tilden Trust, in which an important legal point concerning the discretion of executors was raised. Here he was again successful. It is a matter of common report among lawyers that for his work on this case he received a fee of \$100,000.

The great Standard Oil case, which was brought by the State of Ohio for the abolition of certain privileges of the corporation, was ably defended by Mr. Choate, and finally won by him. Again in the Stewart will case, Mr. Choate and Judge Collins represented the heirs as against Judge Hilton. The litigation ended in a compromise.

Mr. Choate's recent connection with the suit of Mr. Laidlaw against Russell Sage for damages for injuries claimed to have been sustained while robbing Mr. Sage from a dynamite bomb in the hands of the assassin Socrates, and the jury's subsequent award of heavy compensation to Mr. Choate's client, are still fresh in the public mind.

But while giving his attention to intricate and involved questions of corporation law, and while demonstrating his ability as a forceful and impressive jury lawyer in common law cases, Mr. Choate has been at the same time engaged in the solution of many grave

constitutional questions. His experience in this line has been so vast that only a few of the more important questions in which he has been interested within the past six or eight years can be cited.

The Kansas liquor law case, at the time it was tried, was much talked about. It involved the constitutional right to declare breweries and manufacturing a nuisance under the law. The Noggle case, arising from an attack made by Judge Terry upon Mr. Justice Field, involved the constitutional right of the Federal Government to protect the person of Federal Judges.

In the Massachusetts fishery case the question at issue was the constitutional right of the State to prohibit certain fishing in Buzzard's Bay more than three miles from shore. Mr. Choate's connection with the Behring Sea seal fisheries case, which involved the international and constitutional rights of the United States, is a matter of history. Other weighty constitutional questions were the so-called Chinese exclusion case, where the issue was the right of the United States, under its Constitution and treaties, to send the Chinese resident in this country back to their native land; the Philadelphia Fire Association case, touching the constitutionality of the reciprocal taxation laws of New York and the Canada Southern Railroad case, relating to the effect under the United States Constitution of reorganizations of foreign railroads which impaired the obligation in the contract of bonds held by United States citizens.

Various cases have been submitted to Mr. Choate for opinions with reference to the constitutionality of oleomargarine laws, of cigarette laws and also concerning the constitutionality of similar laws in cases involving the original package questions. The laws of various States in the Union have been concerned in these disputes.

TWO AKKA PIGMIES.

Daughters of the Afelean Wilds, Dwarfish But Graceful.

For nearly two years the celebrated Dr. Stuhlmann, of Berlin, has been experimenting with his civilization theories on two Akka girls, whom he has brought for this purpose to the German capital. The two African pigmies, small as they are, have proved "elephants on his hand."

In the first place he found it little impossible to accustom the little women, who although their size gives them the appearance of six-year-old children, are more than 20 years of age. They suffered especially during the winter months from the rigorous atmosphere of Northern Prussia, accustomed as they were to the unobscured heat of the tropics. Another obstacle to their happiness was the restraint of dress and customs to which it was necessary, for the sake of decency, to subject them in their new cultured surroundings.

It would not do to use the word dwarf in speaking of their size and build, for both Chicanele and Asmin, though perhaps not complying in facial expression and color to our ideal of beauty, yet exhibit remarkable symmetry in their contour, and are agile and graceful little bodies. They feel awkward in the conventional dresses of European girls, and they object to long petticoats altogether. They insist upon arranging their own coiffure.

While these interesting dwarfs showed intelligence in learning the ways of civilization, their native ferocity seems to have been unquenchable. When angry, their disposition was murderous, and on more than one occasion they sought to kill those in charge of them. Dr. Stuhlmann finally decided to send them back to Africa, and it is interesting to know that when the day of departure arrived they cried bitterly. The pigmies, in their native forests, are very savage, and their language is an incomprehensible jargon. The little girls will not be returned to savagery, but their education will be continued in Africa.

Incorrigible.

"Yes," said the young man with plaid trousers and a big watch chain. "I must confess that I am deficient in musical taste." "Perhaps the modern music bores you," said the pleasant young woman. "It does many people, you know." "Yes; I don't care for modern music. There is one thing about the old songs that I like very much."

"What is that?" "The fact that nobody sings them."

His Feelings Had Changed.

"About a year ago you challenged me to fight a duel," said a gentleman, entering the apartment of a second gentleman. "I did, sir," sternly. "And I told you that I had just been married and I did not care to risk my life at any hazard."

"Well," said the man, bitterly, "my feelings have changed; any time you want to fight let me know."

A Harlem Boarding-House Saint.

Landlady—Poor Mr. Lightweight died last week, and if any one ever deserved to go to heaven he did. M. Heavyweight (who is slightly in arrears)—Why? Landlady (weeping)—He always paid his board in advance, never complained if his bed wasn't made up, and oh, such a delicate appetite as that poor saint had.—Harper's Bazar.

Reasonable Precation.

Lady Purchaser—Will you guarantee that this parrot will not swear? Birdseller—Why, no, ma'am, not unless I know what kind of a family it is going into.

Both.

Marry—Was that a marriage of love or money? Darcy—Both. Love of money.

NOTES FROM GOTHAM.

THE RETIREMENT OF CHIEF SACHEM CROKER.

Mayor Gilroy as the Probable New Leader of Tammany—Big Issues Involved in the Coming Enlargement of the City's Environs.

Special New York Letter. The special retirement of Richard Croker as chief of Tammany Hall, and his probable succession by Thomas F. Gilroy, are the chief political topics of the moment.

The movement was unexpected, but Croker grew weary of the worry and abuse he has had to stand up under. He has learned of late years to take interest in some things beside politics, and his love of horseflesh, in particular, is said to have lured him away from sympathy with the endless contentions of political management.

It is believed that Mayor Gilroy is to be the real leader of Tammany Hall hereafter, although he may not fill the office of Chief Sachem. "It is funny," said a prominent Tammany politician the other day, "but New York politics attracts more attention than that of all the other cities going. I don't know why this is, but I suppose we ought all to feel complimented. You never hear of politics anywhere else, except about election time. I suppose it is all on account of the Tammany tiger and Wall street. These are two institutions the country is bound to keep its eyes upon."

With the retirement of Mr. Croker, some rather pleasant things will be said of that gentleman. He really has been a pretty mild sort of "boss," and bosses we must have. At least, I do not believe that any party will



Thomas F. Gilroy.

long hold power here except under the boss system. It seems as indigenous to this municipality as the Bowery is, and even Dr. Parkhurst, if he should get into power, would straightway be dubbed with the title of "boss." But the modern boss must be a pretty unique fellow. The foreign element in New York city is no longer principally of Irish extraction. The German, Italian, Hebrew and certain other elements have come in such large numbers that it would seem that the Irish-American politician must soon retire. But as a matter of fact, he has adapted himself to the situation with an address and diplomacy that was not supposed to be part of the Milesian character.

Sitting in a "cafe" the other day I was much amused by the conversation going on at the next table between a ward boss and one of his subordinates. These were the words I caught: "Now, there's— Look out for him. He's a big gun among the Italians, and you treat him as if he owned the ward. They like attention, so be very polite to him. Then there's— He is popular with the Germans, and they all hang together. Do everything you can to get his good will. Then don't forget— The Jews all have votes, and you want to show him as much attention as if he belonged to the Astor family."

After listening to this instruction for some time I concluded that the modern Tammany politician is considerable of a diplomat. In this view of the case, Mayor Gilroy will fill the bill as the new chief of Tammany. The Mayor is, in my opinion, beyond question the shrewdest and most suave political leader that our city has developed of recent years.

Mayor Gilroy is a man of rather a rare type, combining great executive ability and political activity with the manners and habits of an unassuming gentleman. He belongs to a new era



Mrs. Gilroy and Children.

of local politics, and the success that awaits him as the leader of such a political body as Tammany Hall will remain an open question for some time. He is happily married, and moves in a select circle of society.

The coming politics of this city is no doubt largely affected by the coming of the city. The greater development of the city. The rapid transit measure, involve a colossal redistribution of power and patronage. Mayor Gilroy has been a strenuous opponent of the Board of Commerce scheme of rapid transit, which involves the addition of a bonded indebtedness of \$50,000,000. Doubtless the capital for the purpose will be ready in private hands as soon as the political control of the greater New York is settled. There is every indication that the investment will be immensely profitable, regardless of the cost of the great enterprise. Capital is not waiting on that account, but rather for the development of electric traction and to see how the political cut will jump.

MILTON S. MAYHEW.

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