

FEBRUARY 6, 1898.

SCENE IN THE MAYOR'S OFFICE AT THE HOUR WHEN HE RECEIVES ALL VISITORS.

DRAWN BY H. G. MARATTA.



ONE HOUR WITHOUT RED TAPE.

How Mayor Harrison for a Short Time
Each Day Receives All
Visitors.

Mayor Carter H. Harrison does not intend that people shall say that he does his hand-shaking only at election time and that a plain citizen without a political pull or a bank account cannot reach the ear of the city's executive head. He has introduced an innovation not heard of in Chicago before his election. An hour of each day is set apart for the reception of the common people, the plain citizens who may have a complaint to make, a request to prefer, or who may simply call to pay their respects and pass the time of day.

And not only those who have business to transact call upon the Mayor. Each day brings its quota of visitors from out of town who are intent only upon catching a glimpse of or shaking hands with the young man who is at the head of the government of the most cosmopolitan community on the globe. For all the Mayor has a pleasant word.

The crowd which collects in the general office of the Mayor at 11 o'clock is a curious one. Politicians, of course, are in the assemblage, but there are also men who know nothing of politics except that which they glean from the newspapers. Women and children contribute their presence to the audience and the objects of their visit are many and varied. Mayor Harrison tries to give audience to all and the woman who pleads for the pardon of her husband, son, or other relative from the House of Correction gets the same share of attention which is given to the man interested in a public works contract or with a plan of municipal improvement to unfold.

Many are the pitiful tales poured into the Mayor's ear. Sitting at a flat desk inside the railing of the general office Mayor Harrison leans forward and lends his attention to all sorts of stories of poverty, the snarlings and pleadings, as the case may be, of politicians of the fry termed "ward" the dreams, notions, and all such of persons in whose minds birth is given to all varieties of ideas for the benefit—and damage, too—of the public weal.

The pardoning power of the Mayor is well understood by every mother's son who dabbles in precinct, ward, or the general politics of the city, and when one of this sort stows away too much of the famous "fightin' boot" of the cheap groceries in the neighborhood in which he lives and gets into an argument with a policeman and is sent to jail, he will think it over to it is his mother, or sister or one of his political "crushes" who trudges to the City Hall for pardon and a pardon. And to all their petitions it is the Mayor who is compelled to listen only at the sign of his signal.

TWO PORTRAITS OF MRS. M'KINLEY.

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turns loose the subject under discussion. Mayor Harrison, however, does not always give a pardon. He believes in keeping his corrigibles in close quarters, and the musician fellow who beats his wife or grandmother when under the spell of the fiery draft, or deals a "funny push" in the direction of an unoffender, stands a poor chance for freedom until sentence is satisfied. In the case of a husband or son who is the sole support of a family the Mayor usually acts leniently.

There is a never ending stream of the sort of persons who are always ready to do charity or who have tickets to sell to the ball or concert, church fair, or raffle. Particularly are the raffle and masquerade ball ticket venders endowed with a quality of stick-to-it-iveness.

How they hang to their task! Not content with selling a single ticket or a couple, they unfold a batch worth \$10 and with unblinking directness demand currency in exchange therefor.

The begging woman, in whose bin there is no coal, takes her turn with the rest, and of the case of one particularly deserving the Mayor never fails to make note. He knows when he is being blarneyed, and this nonsense he will have none. To the serving he points the way to the Charitable Agent, or if one is in need of medical attention he refers him or her to an infirmary free dispensary, as requirement demands.

Not long ago a little mite of colored humanity drifted into the general office and mixed with the crowd. He probably had heard that the Mayor was in the business of relieving want and giving new bones to the halt. Poor, ragged, hungry, and of course tired, the diminutive African decided to take his chance with the crowd. But he became tired and fell asleep upon a bench. There he remained until long after the others had gone. He was found, happy in dreamland.

"What have we got here?" the Mayor asked as he passed from his private room into the general office and found the little fellow asleep.

"Wake up, my man!" said Mayor Harrison, gently poking his cane into the man's head.

"Please, sah, I cum to see de Mayor. What's he?"

"I am he."

"Mistah, I got no whar't' stay, an' no clothes, an' mah boots are no good."

"Where do you live?"

"I got no whar't' stop."

"And sleep?"

"I sleep in alleys an' undah side I'm honest, but I'm black an' got."

Mayor Harrison and the party men with him made up a purse, giving the money to a policeman on duty instructed him to start the lad on his way, giving him a meal ticket, and the week's supply of newspapers. The doing well today.

The above is but an incident of the audience by the Mayor.

It is said 100 persons of

audience by the Mayor

general office.