

THE NATIONAL
CYCLOPÆDIA OF AMERICAN
BIOGRAPHY



BEING THE
HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

AS ILLUSTRATED IN THE LIVES OF THE FOUNDERS, BUILDERS, AND DEFENDERS
OF THE REPUBLIC, AND OF THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE
DOING THE WORK AND MOULDING THE
THOUGHT OF THE PRE-
SENT TIME

EDITED BY

DISTINGUISHED BIOGRAPHERS, SELECTED FROM EACH STATE
REVISED AND APPROVED BY THE MOST EMINENT HISTORIANS, SCHOLARS, AND
STATESMEN OF THE DAY

VOLUME XIV.

NEW YORK
JAMES T. WHITE & COMPANY
1917

BONAPARTE, Charles Joseph, attorney-general, was born in Baltimore, Md., June 9, 1851, son of Jerome Napoleon and Susan May (Williams) Bonaparte. His ancestry is unusually picturesque and interesting. His grandfather was Jérôme Bonaparte, brother of Napoleon Bonaparte, who entered the French navy in 1800. While on a cruise in 1803 he visited the United States, and in Baltimore met and fell in love with Elizabeth, daughter of William Patterson, a native of Ulster, at that time one of the wealthiest citizens of Maryland. Young Bonaparte was then under nineteen and Miss

Patterson eighteen years of age. In due time the couple became betrothed, but Napoleon doggedly opposed the union, which nevertheless took place in Baltimore, in December, 1803. The emperor sent word to his brother that he must return to France, leaving the "young person" behind, and that if he should obey, all would be forgiven; but if he should undertake to bring this "person" with him, she would not be allowed to set foot upon French soil. Not regarding this threat as irrevocable, the young couple sailed for France

late in March, 1805. On reaching port the husband went ashore and proceeded to Paris to plead his cause with the emperor while the ship bearing Elizabeth sailed for Amsterdam. Two French men-of-war intercepted the young woman's progress and she was taken to England, where, very soon afterwards, at Camberwell, on July 7, 1805, Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte was born. Napoleon appealed to Pope Pius VII, for an annulment of the marriage with Miss Patterson, but without success. The French council of state then declared the marriage null, and the young bride never saw her husband again. After a time she returned to Baltimore. Jérôme Bonaparte was subsequently elected king of Westphalia and on Aug. 12, 1807, he married Catherine Frederika, princess of Würtemberg. Elizabeth Patterson, sustained by the great wealth of her father, employed every available means to maintain the legality of her marriage and the legitimacy of her son. Jerome, now having children by Princess Katherine, appealed to the council of state to prohibit "Jerome Patterson" from assuming the name Bonaparte, and while the decision was adverse, it held that the youth could not be considered as a legal member of the imperial family. Upon the death of Jerome Bonaparte in 1860 Elizabeth and her son brought suit for a share of his estate. The courts decided that she was not entitled and should not receive any portion of this estate, but declared that her son Jerome was entitled to the name of Bonaparte. He was ordered or "advised" to sue for the hand of the daughter of his uncle, Joseph Bonaparte, but refused to do this, and married the daughter of Benjamin Williams, a native of Roxbury, Mass., but for many years a well known merchant of Baltimore. He left two sons, Jerome Napoleon, born in Baltimore on Nov. 5, 1830, and Charles Joseph, the subject of this sketch. The latter was graduated at Harvard University in 1871, and at the Harvard law school in 1874. Immediately he began the practice of his profession in Baltimore. He was one of the earliest and most active champions of civil service

reform, and the value of his services in this direction has been universally recognized. He was chairman of the council of the National Civil Service Reform League and held the office until he entered Pres. Roosevelt's cabinet in 1905. Believing that the most fruitful source of civic corruption and maladministration was to be found in city governments, he promoted the organization of the National Municipal League, of which he is president, and he has been from the first a member of the executive committee of the National Civic Federation. The object of the National Civil Service Reform League is to extend the merit system to all civil appointments—state and municipal as well as national. The purpose of the National Municipal League, which is an organization formed by the union of local city associations throughout the country, is the improvement of municipal government. It takes no part in state or national politics or contests, but, regardless of political parties, confines its efforts strictly to city government. In 1902 Mr. Bonaparte became a member of the board of Indian commissioners, in which he served two years. In 1904 he was the only Republican presidential elector chosen by the voters of the state of Maryland. During that year he reviewed for the government the charges of "graft" in the management of certain branches of the post-office department and reported in favor of reforms and prosecutions which were subsequently carried out. On July 1, 1905, he was appointed secretary of the navy to succeed Paul Morton. The country being at peace with the world and as there was nothing warlike connected with the management of the navy department Mr. Bonaparte directed his energies toward improving and harmonizing bureau administration. After a careful examination of the situation in comparison with like features of foreign navies, he drafted a bill "to increase the efficiency of the personnel of the line of the navy of the United States." His investigation disclosed that the grade of captain, which was reached in foreign navies at the age of thirty-two to forty-two years was not reached in our navy until fifty-five, and that the average age of American sea-going flag officers was fifty-nine years. His bill to remedy this weakness was not adopted, but it opened a field of discussion which proved of much benefit to the service. He succeeded William H. Moody as attorney-general on Dec. 17, 1906. His administration was notable for the extent of his personal participation in the work of the department of justice. In this position of attorney-general his duties were numerous, complex and important, embracing prosecutions of the Standard Oil Co., the sugar trust, various railway corporations and the New York "World" for libelling the government in its discussions of the methods resorted to in acquiring the Panama canal, as well as watching the legal aspects of affairs in Cuba, Panama and the Philippines and the assaults of certain states upon the treaty obligation of the government. During his incumbency he took part in fifty-six cases in the supreme court, which is probably more than twice as many cases, in proportion to time, than were argued personally by any one of his immediate predecessors. Of these cases thirty-eight were decided favorably to the government and sixteen unfavorably, two remaining undecided. Mr. Bonaparte also rendered 125 opinions, all except three being given personally, and all being carefully revised, corrected, and signed by him, and a large proportion prepared by him alone. When he organized the detective force of special agents, he required a summary of the daily reports of each agent to be prepared and submitted



Charles J. Bonaparte.

to him every day. In short, he tried to control and direct, in every way possible, the details of work in his department, and he is reported to have said that he wished to make his own mistakes, as he felt responsible for mistakes made by everybody in the department. The change did not meet with universal approval in the department, and although it is generally conceded that Mr. Bonaparte was courteous and considerate towards his subordinates, and has apparently wished to give them credit for good work, some dissatisfaction was expressed at his interference with their initiative. At the end of Roosevelt's administration he resumed the practice of law in Baltimore. While a member of the cabinet he was a fairly consistent civil service reformer; he exercised his own powers of patronage with little, if any, regard for personal or political considerations and, so far as known, has been interested in but a single appointment by the president, the nomination of Mr. W. Hall Harris as postmaster of Baltimore. A somewhat marked feature of his character is his apparent complete indifference to newspaper criticism or unfavorable comments from any source, and the impression he has left among those brought in contact with him is that of an industrious and conscientious man, not readily understood, with peculiar tastes and few sympathies. Mr. Bonaparte was for twelve years an overseer of Harvard University and is regarded as one of the foremost Catholic laymen of the country. In 1903 he was awarded the Laetare medal by Notre Dame University, and he is a trustee of the Catholic University of America, at Washington, D. C. He has been active in national political contests and in Maryland opposed constitutional restrictions upon the suffrage and in favor of pure elections. On Sept. 1, 1875, he was married to Ellen Channing, daughter of Thomas Mills Day, of Newport, R. I. They have no children.

PAYNE, Henry Clay, merchant and postmaster-general, was born at Ashfield, Mass., Nov. 23, 1843, son of Orrin Pierre and Eliza Etta (Ames) Payne. His ancestors were among the earliest settlers of Braintree, Mass., and several of them served in the revolution. He was educated at Shelburne Falls, Mass., receiving excellent academic training. In 1863, after being rejected as a soldier, he removed to Milwaukee, Wis., and entered the wholesale dry goods house of Sherwin, Nowell & Pratt. About five years later the competition of greater aggregations of capital led him to take up the insurance business, in which he was very successful. He was postmaster of Milwaukee during 1875-85. He made the Milwaukee office one of the models of the nation and did more than any other person to develop and perfect the administration of the money-order branch—especially that which dealt with foreign countries. He entered actively into politics at an early age and finally became one of the most sagacious managers in the country, having formed one of the most perfect political machines that had ever been known. He also gave a great deal of attention to the business side of politics. He was for years secretary and chairman of the Wisconsin Republican state central committee; was for a quarter of a century a member of the Republican national committee (1880-1904), and was for eight years chairman of the executive committee; four years vice-president of the national committee and, after the death of Sen. Hanna, its chairman. His wide knowledge of the grafters and heeled of his party enabled him to check the disbursement of money for futile and illegitimate purposes. Upon leaving the Milwaukee post office he embarked actively in timber-land, telephone, townsite, street

railway, electric and gas light, municipal heating, banking and other business enterprises, in all of which he was uniformly successful. He was appointed one of the three receivers of the Northern Pacific railway in 1893, and engaged actively in administering its affairs for nearly three years, going through the trying litigation and vituperation that grew out of the injunction issued by Judge Jenkins to prevent the employees from striking. In 1900 he advocated the adoption of a plan to base representation in Republican national conventions upon the Republican vote cast for president instead of upon population, but the clamor against it which arose in the South led him to abandon the effort to carry it into practice. He at first favored the nomination of Elihu Root for vice-president on the ticket with McKinley in 1900, but as Mr. Root thought that he ought to remain in the cabinet as secretary of war, he turned his attention to Theodore Roosevelt, then governor of New York. Mr. Roosevelt wrote to Mr. Payne that he preferred the office of governor to that of vice-president and Mr. Payne made two special journeys to Albany for the purpose of bringing about a change of mind. When he found that he could not convert Mr. Roosevelt he deliberately set about solidifying the western delegations in behalf of his plan. He knew that nominating him for vice-president would strengthen the national ticket in the West and make New York safely Republican in the East. Mr. Roosevelt became president in September, 1901, and Charles Emory Smith having resigned the portfolio of postmaster general, Mr. Payne was selected to fill the vacancy in his cabinet. At this time Mr. Payne was not in good health. He had returned shortly before from an extended cruise in the Mediterranean only slightly improved; but as he loved the postal administration, he accepted the appointment gladly. He took keen delight in quietly bringing about administrative reforms that gave better service to the public and lighter burdens to employes and taxpayers. He concluded parcels post conventions with Japan, Germany and several other nations; organized the postal service into fifteen "battalions," and the rural free delivery into eight "battalions," each with its own head; gave literature for the blind free transmission through the mails and made numerous improvements in the administration of city post offices. He undertook to place letter boxes on the street cars of the entire country, but the labor unions protested so vigorously that to do so would make the street car lines United States mail routes and therefore interfere with their prerogatives of tying them up by strikes, that he was compelled to abandon this exceedingly meritorious plan for giving much better service to the public. He had not been long an incumbent of the post office department before charges of malfeasance in office on the part of old and trusted employees began to appear. An investigation was decided upon, to be conducted by the postmaster-general through his fourth assistant (see Bristow, Joseph L.) Wonderfully successful in business and politics, the one ambition of his life was to be



Henry Clay Payne