

John M. Patterson

John M. Patterson was born in Philadelphia in 1874. As a graduate of the public school system, Patterson at the age of 14 took a position in a stockbroker's office earning \$2.50 a week. He then worked for his father, and subsequently clerked for the Pennsylvania Railroad. Deciding to study law, Patterson attended Brown Prep School and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, Class of 1896.

After serving in the National Guard of Pennsylvania, Patterson's law career advanced rapidly. In 1904 he was appointed Assistant District Attorney and in 1913 was elected to the Common Pleas Bench of Philadelphia County.

The fall primaries prior to the 1919 mayoralty election provided the first test of Philadelphia's charter and of the city's devotion to reform. After weeks of haggling the Penrose men who had formed the Republican Alliance as their vehicle for challenging the Vare brothers agreed with the independents to support Cong. J. Hampton Moore as their candidate for **mayor**. Moore had been around the city for a long time, as a *Ledger* reporter, as chief clerk to City Treasurer Richard Gardner Oellers, as private secretary to **Mayor** Samuel Ashbridge, then as city treasurer himself, and finally for the past fourteen years as congressman from the Third District. Campaigning on the issue of "contractor rule," Moore won a narrow victory over the organization's choice, Judge **John M. Patterson**, proving thereby, in the words of a writer in the October 1 *Outlook*, that 51 percent of Philadelphia's voters "refuse to be called 'corrupt and contented.'"⁷

