

leading members of the bar of Western New York. A few years afterward he became a student at the State National Law School at Poughkeepsie, N. Y., an institution long since discontinued, from which he was graduated and was admitted to the bar in 1860, when only twenty-one years of age. In October of that year he began the practice of his profession in Medina with Adna Bowen, with whom he continued for eleven years. He then practiced alone two years, when he formed a partnership with John W. Graves, which was dissolved in 1876. The same year he became associated with Hon. Henry A. Childs, with whom he continued as a partner until 1886. Again he was alone for nearly two years, and since 1887 has been in partnership with Leon M. Sherwood.

From early life Mr. Pitts has always taken an active and a prominent part in politics, and since the age of twenty-one has rendered his party valuable service on the stump and in convention. He is an unswerving Republican and a man of eminent oratorical ability, and in every position to which he has been called he has served with distinction and rare fidelity. In 1864, when only twenty-five years of age, he was elected to the Assembly, which office he held by re-election for five successive terms. In 1867, when twenty-seven, he was chosen speaker, being the youngest man that ever occupied that position. In 1868 he was a delegate to the Republican National Convention that nominated General Grant for president, under whose administration he served for five years as assessor of internal revenue, or until the office was abolished. In 1884 he was a delegate to the Republican National Convention that nominated James G. Blaine for the presidency. In 1879, 1881, and 1885 he was elected to the State Senate, and during his last term was president *pro tem.* of that body. During the whole of his legislative career Mr. Pitts was active in debate and on various important committees. His voice was frequently heard on the floor and his speeches always commanded attention. In 1866, during the great fight for municipal reform in New York city, his unparalleled work in the Assembly was signally recognized by the Citizens' Association, who thanked him publicly and presented him with a handsome set of Appleton's Encyclopædia. At Saratoga in 1882 he made the speech renominating Hon. Alonzo B. Cornell for governor, which was commented upon by the press for and near as a superior effort. These are only a few of the numerous occasions which he has signalized by word and deed. He has frequently been called upon to represent his party in convention, and has filled every position with marked distinction. As a lawyer he ranks with the best in the State. Scholarly, thorough, and discriminating, he goes to the very bottom of a case, and never gives up until every resource is exhausted.

December 9, 1862, Mr. Pitts was united in marriage with Una E., daughter of James O. Stokes, jr., of Lyndonville, and granddaughter of Rev. James O. Stokes, sr., one of the first rectors of the Episcopal church of Medina, of which he has for several years been a vestryman. They have an only daughter, Grace M. Mr. Pitts has ever been a liberal supporter of religion, contributing of both time and means towards the maintenance of local denominations. He is thoroughly and prominently identified with village, town, and county affairs, and takes a foremost part in all that tends to the betterment and advancement of society, education, and the home.