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HOMES

OF

AMERICAN STATESMEN.

Birthplace of Henry Clay

HARTFORD.

Marshfield, Residence of Daniel Webster

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[i]

HOMES

OF

AMERICAN STATESMEN

WITH

Anecdotical, Personal, and Descriptive Sketches,

BY VARIOUS WRITERS.

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS ON WOOD, FROM DRAWINGS BY DÖPLER AND DAGUERREOTYPES: AND FAC-SIMILES OF AUTOGRAPH LETTERS.

HARTFORD:

PUBLISHED BY O.D. CASE & CO.

LONDON:

SAMPSON LOW, SON & CO.

M.DCCC.LVI.

[ii]

[iii]

PUBLISHERS' NOTICE.

We need hardly commend to the American public this attempt to describe and familiarize the habitual dwelling-places of some of the more eminent of our Statesmen. In bringing together such particulars as we could gather, of the homes of the men to whom we owe our own, we feel that we have performed an acceptable and not unnecessary service. The generation who were too well acquainted with these intimate personal circumstances to think of recording them, is fast passing away; and their successors, while acknowledging a vast debt of gratitude, might still forget to preserve and cherish the individual and private memories of the benefactors of our country and race. We therefore present our contribution to the national

annals with confidence, hoping that in all respects the present volume will be found no unworthy or unwelcome successor of the "Homes of American Authors." [iv]

Dr. R.W. Griswold having been prevented by ill health from contributing an original paper on Marshall, we have availed ourselves, with his kind permission, of the sketch which he prepared for the "Prose Writers of America." All the other papers in the present volume have been written expressly for it: and the best acknowledgments of the publishers are due to the several contributors for the zealous interest and ability to which these sketches bear witness.

For several of the original letters which we have copied in *fac-simile*, we are indebted to the kindness of the Rev. Dr. Sprague of Albany.

The drawing of the residence of the "Washington Family," and a few of the smaller cuts, have been copied, with some variations, from Mr. Lossing's very valuable work, "The Field-Book of the Revolution." Most of the other illustrations have been engraved from original drawings, or daguerreotypes taken for the purpose.

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[v]

CONTENTS.

[vi]

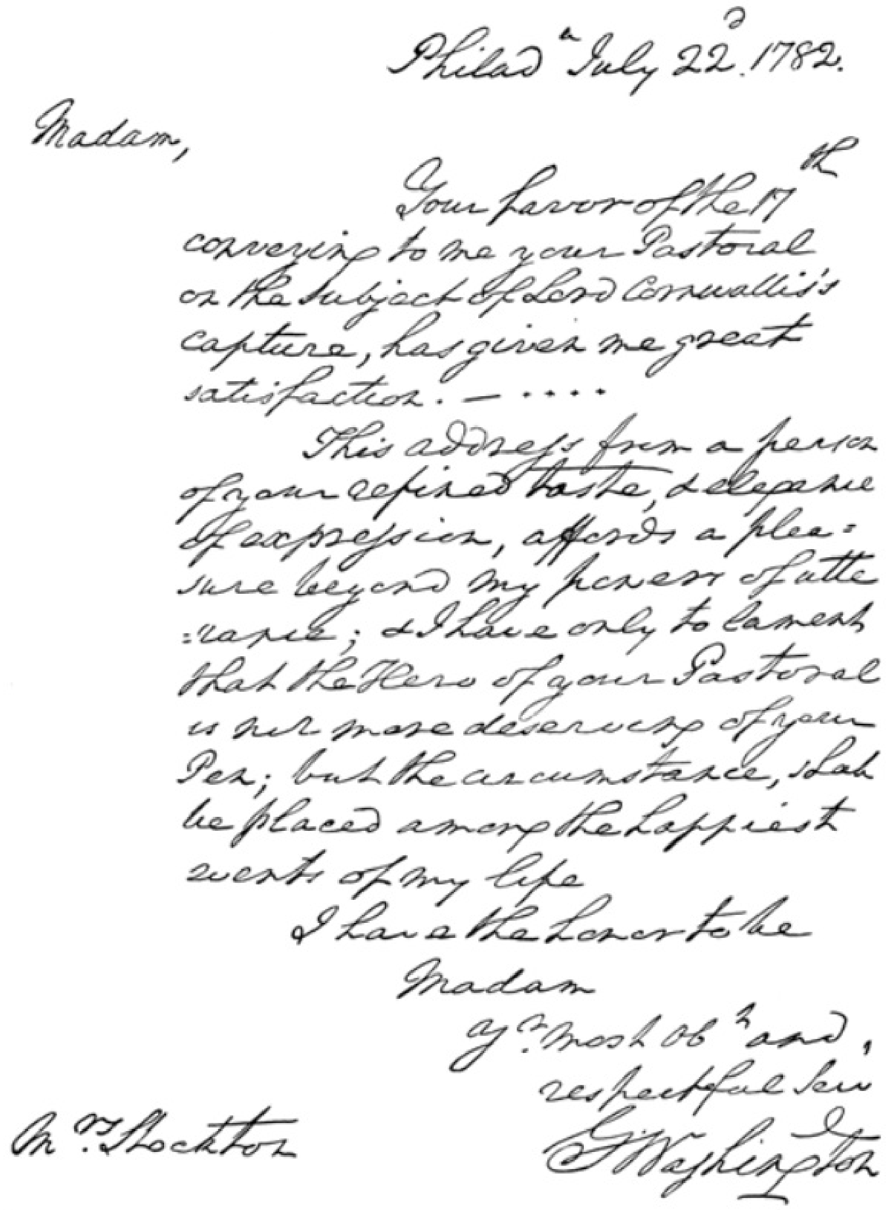
[vii]

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Fac-similes of Letters

Washington.

[2]



Philada July 22d 1782.

Madam,

Your favor of the 17th conveying to me your Pastoral on the subject of Lord Cornwallis's capture, has given me great satisfaction.— ....

This address from a person of your refined taste, & elegance of expression, affords a pleasure beyond my power of utterance; & I have only to lament that the Hero of your Pastoral is not more deserving of your Pen; but the circumstance, shall be placed among the happiest events of my life

I have the honor to be
Madam
Yr most obt and
respectful Servt
G Washington

Mrs Stockton

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[3]

Site of Washingtons Birthplace

WASHINGTON.

1732—1799.

To see great men at home is often more pleasant to the visitor than advantageous to the hero. Men's lives are

two-fold, and the life of habit and instinct is not often, on superficial view, strictly consistent with the other—the more deliberate, intentional and principled one, which taxes only the higher powers. Yet, perhaps, if our rules of judgment were more humane and more sincere, we should find less discrepancy than it has been usual to imagine, and what there is would be more indulgently accounted for. The most common-place man [4] has an inner and an outer life, which, if displayed separately, might never be expected to belong to the same individual; and it would be impossible for him to introduce his dearest friend into the sanctum, where, as in a spiritual laboratory, his words and actions originate and are prepared for use. Yet we could accuse him of no hypocrisy on this ground. The thing is so because Nature says it should be so, and we must be content with her truth and harmony, even if they be not ours. So with regard to public and domestic life. If we pursue our hero to his home, it should be in a home-spirit—a spirit of affection, not of impertinent intrusion or ungenerous cavil. If we lift the purple curtains of the tent in which our weary knight reposes, when he has laid aside his heavy armor and put on his gown of ease, it is not as malicious servants may pry into the privacy of their superiors, but as friends love to penetrate the charmed circle within which disguises and defences are not needed, and personal interest may properly take the place of distant admiration and respect. In no other temper is it lawful, or even decent, to follow the great actors on life's stage to their retirement; and if they be benefactors, the greater the shame if we coolly criticize what was never meant for any but loving eyes.

The private life of him who is supereminently the hero of every true American heart, is happily sacred from disrespectful scrutiny, but less happily closed to the devout approach of those who would look upon it with more than filial reverence. This is less remarkable than it may at first sight appear to us who know his merit. The George Washington of early times was a splendid youth, but his modesty was equal to his other great qualities, and his neighbors could not be expected to foresee the noon of such a morning. And when the first [5] stirring time was over, and the young soldier settled himself quietly at Mount Vernon, as a country gentleman, a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, a vigorous farmer and tobacco planter, a churchwarden in two parishes, and a staid married man with two step-children, to whom he was an active and faithful guardian, no one thought of recording his life and doings, any more than those of his brother planters on the Potomac, all landed men, deer and fox-hunters and zealous fishermen, who visited each other in the hospitable Southern fashion, and lived in rustic luxury, very much within themselves. Few, indeed, compared with the longings of our admiration, are the particulars that have come down to us of Washington's Home—the home of his natural affections; but he had many homes of duty, and these the annals of his country will ever keep in grateful memory. Through these our present design is to trace his career, succinctly and imperfectly indeed, and with the diffidence which a character so august naturally inspires. Happily, many deficiencies in our sketch will be supplied by the intimate knowledge and the inborn reverence of a large proportion of our readers.

It seems to be a conceded point that ours is not the age of reverence, nor our country its home. While the masses were nothing and individuals every thing, gods or demigods were the natural product of every public emergency and relief. Mankind in general, ignorant, and of course indolent, only too happy to be spared the labor of thought and the responsibility of action, looked up to the great and the fortunate till their eyes were dazzled, and they saw characters and exploits through a glorious golden mist, which precluded criticism. It was easy, then, to be a hero, for a single success or a happy chance sufficed. Altars sprang up in every bye- [6] road, and incense fumed without stint or question.

To-day the case is widely different. We give nothing for nothing. Whatever esteem or praise we accord, must be justified, inch by inch, by facts tangible and productive, successes undimmed by any after failure, and qualities which owe nothing to imagination or passion in the observer. No aureole is allowed about any head unless it emanate from it. Our Apollo must actually have sent the shaft, and to the mark, too, or we sneer at the attitude of triumph. If we erect a statue, no robe is confessed to be proper drapery but the soiled and threadbare one of every-day life and toil. No illusion—no poetry! is the American maxim of our time. Bald, staring, naked literality for us! He is the true philosopher who can

> Peep and botanize
> Upon his mother's grave

if the flowers required by science happen to grow there.

All this may be very wise and knowing, yet as long as the machine called man has something within it which is not exactly a subject for mathematical measurement, there will remain some little doubt of the expediency of thus stripping life of its poetry, and bringing all that is inspiring to the test of line and plummet. Just now, however, there is no hearing for any argument on this side.

Greenough's Statue of Washington

What shall we think, then, of a character which, in a single half century, has begun, even among us, to wear something of a mythical splendor? What must the man have been, whom an age like this deliberately deifies? Who but Washington has, in any age, secured for himself such a place in the universal esteem and reverence of his countrymen, that simple description of him is all that can be tolerated, the public sense of his merits being such as makes praise impertinent, and blame impious? [7]

WASHINGTON! It were almost enough to grace our page and our volume with this honored and beloved name. The commentary upon it is written in every heart. It is true the most anxious curiosity has been able to find but a small part of what it would fain know of the first man of all the earth, yet no doubt remains as to what he was, in every relation of life. The minutiæ may not be full, but the outline, in which resides the expression, is perfect. It were too curious to inquire how much of Washington would have been lost had the rural life of which he was so fond, bounded his field of action. Providence made the stage ready for the performer, as the performer for the stage. In his public character, he was not the man of the time, but for the time, bearing in his very looks the seal of a grand mission, and seeming, from his surprising dignity, to have no private domestic side. Greenough's marble statue of him, that sits unmoved under all the vicissitudes of storm and calm, gazing with unwinking eyes at the Capitol, is not more impassive or immovable than the Washington of our imaginations. Yet we know there must have been another side to this grand figure, less grand, perhaps, but not less symmetrical, and wonderfully free from those lowering discrepancies which bring nearer to our own level all other great, conspicuous men.

[8]

Houdon's Statue of Washington.

We ought to know more of him; but, besides the other reasons we have alluded to for our dearth of intelligence, his was not a writing age on this side the water. Doing, not describing, was the business of the day. "Our own correspondent" was not born yet; desperate tourists had not yet forced their way into gentlemen's drawing-rooms, to steal portraits by pen and pencil, to inquire into dates and antecedents, and repay enforced hospitality by holding the most sacred personalities up to the comments of the curious. It would, indeed, be delightful to possess this kind of knowledge; to ascertain how George Washington of Fairfax appeared to the sturdy country gentlemen, his neighbors; what the "troublesome man" he speaks of in one of his letters thought of the rich planter he was annoying; whether Mr. Payne was proud or ashamed when he [9]

remembered that he had knocked down the Father of his Country in a public court-room; what amount of influence, not to say rule, Mrs. Martha Custis, with her large fortune, exercised over the Commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States. But rarer than all it would have been to see Washington himself deal with one of those gentry, who should have called at Mount Vernon with a view of favoring the world with such particulars. How he treated poachers of another sort we know; he mounted his horse, and dashing into the water, rode directly up to the muzzle of a loaded musket, which he wrenched from the astounded intruder, and then, drawing the canoe to land, belabored the scamp soundly with his riding whip. How he would have faced a loaded pen, and received its owner, we can but conjecture. We have heard an old gentleman, who had lived in the neighborhood of Mount Vernon in his boyhood, say that when the General found any stranger shooting in his grounds, his practice was to take the gun without a word, and, passing the barrel through the fence, with one effort of his powerful arm, bend it so as to render it useless, returning it afterwards very quietly, perhaps observing that his rules were very well known. The whole neighborhood, our old friend said, feared the General, not because of any caprice or injustice in his character, but only for his inflexibility, which must have had its own trials on a Southern plantation at that early day.

[10]

Chantrey's Statue of Washington.

Painting and sculpture have done what they could to give us an accurate and satisfying idea of the outward appearance of the Father of our Country, and a surpassing dignity has been the aim if not the result, of all these efforts. The statue by Chantrey, which graces the State House at Boston, is perhaps as successful as any in this respect, and white marble is of all substances the most appropriate for the purpose. From all, collectively, we derive the impression, or something more, that in Washington we have one of the few examples on record of a complete and splendid union and consent of personal and mental qualifications for greatness in the same individual; unsurpassed symmetry and amplitude of mind and body for once [11] contributing to the efficiency of a single being, to whom, also, opportunities for development and action proved no less propitious than nature. In the birth, nurture and destiny of this man, so blest in all good gifts, Providence seems to have intended the realization of Milton's ideal type of glorious manhood:

> A creature who, endued
> With sanctity of reason, might erect
> His stature, and, upright with front serene
> Govern the rest, self-knowing; and from thence
> Magnanimous, to correspond with Heaven;
> But, grateful to acknowledge whence his good
> Descends, thither, with heart voice and eyes,
> Directed in devotion, to adore
> And worship God supreme, who made him chief
> Of all his works.

We may the more naturally think this because Washington was so little indebted to school learning for his mental power. Born in a plain farm-house near the Potomac—a hallowed spot now marked only by a memorial stone and a clump of decaying fig-trees, probably coeval with the dwelling; none but the simplest elements of knowledge were within his reach, for although his father was a gentleman of large landed estate, the country was thinly settled and means of education were few. To these he applied himself with a force and steadiness even then remarkable, though with no view more ambitious than to prepare himself for the agricultural pursuits to which he was destined, by a widowed mother, eminent for common sense and high integrity. His mother, characteristically enough, for she was much more practical than imaginative, always spoke of him as [12] a docile and diligent boy, passionately fond of athletic exercises, rather than as a brilliant or ambitious one. In after years, when La Fayette was recounting to her, in florid phrase, but with the generous enthusiasm which did him so much honor, the glorious services and successes of her son, she replied—"I am not surprised; George was always a good boy!" and this simple phrase from a mother who never uttered a superfluous word, throws a clear light on his early history. Then we have, besides, remnants of his school-exercises in arithmetic and geometry, beautiful in neatness, accuracy and method. At thirteen his mathematical turn had begun to discover itself, and the precision and elegance of his handwriting were already remarkable. His precocious wisdom would seem at that early age to have cast its horoscope, for we have thirty pages of forms for the

transaction of important business, all copied out beautifully; and joined to this direct preparation for his future career are "Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," to the number of one hundred and ten, all pointing distinctly at self-control and respect for the rights of others, rather than at a Chesterfieldian polish or policy, and these he learned so well that he practised them unfailingly all his life after.

[13]

Residence of the Washington Family.

A farm in Stafford County on the Rappahannoc, where his father had lived for several years before his death, was his share of the paternal estate, and on this he lived with his mother, till he had completed his sixteenth year. He desired to enter the British Navy, as a path to honorable distinction, and one of his half brothers, many years older than himself, had succeeded in obtaining a warrant for him; but the mother's reluctance to part with her eldest boy induced him to relinquish this advantage, and to embrace instead the laborious and trying life of a surveyor, in those rude, early days of Virginia exposed to extraordinary hazards. Upon this he entered immediately, accepting employment offered him by Lord Fairfax, who had come from England to ascertain the value of an immense tract of land which he had inherited, lying between the Potomac and Rappahannoc rivers, and extending beyond the Alleghanies. The surveying party was accompanied by William Fairfax, a distant relative of his lordship, but the boy of sixteen was evidently the most important member of the party. When the hardships of this undertaking became too exhausting, he returned to the more settled regions, and employed himself in laying out private tracts and farms, but he spent the greater part of three years in the wilderness, learning the value of lands, becoming acquainted with the habits and character of the [14] wild Indian tribes, then so troublesome in the forests, and fitting himself by labor, study, the endurance of personal hardships and the exercise of vigilance and systematic effort, for the arduous path before him.

At nineteen Washington had made so favorable an impression that he was appointed, by the government of Virginia, Adjutant-General with the rank of Major, and charged with the duty of assembling and exercising the militia, in preparation for expected or present difficulties on the frontier. He had always shown a turn for military affairs, beginning with his school-days, when his favorite play was drilling troops of boys, he himself always taking command; and noticeable again in his early manhood, when he studied tactics, and learned the manual exercise and the use of the sword. It was not long before the talent thus cultivated was called into action. Governor Dinwiddie sent Major Washington as commissioner to confer with the officer commanding the French forces, making the delicate inquiry by what authority he presumed to invade the dominions of his Majesty King George III., and what were his designs. A winter journey of seven hundred and fifty miles, at least half of which lay through an unbroken wilderness, haunted by wild beasts, and more formidable savages, was the first duty of the youthful Major under this commission, and it occupied six weeks, marked by many hardships and some adventures. The famous one of the raft on a half-frozen river, in which Washington narrowly escaped drowning, and the other of a malcontent Indian's firing on him, occurred during this journey; but he reached the French post in safety, and had an amicable, though not very satisfactory [15] conference, with the Sieur St. Pierre, a courteous gentleman, but a wily old soldier. Governor Dinwiddie caused Major Washington's account of the expedition to be published, and when a little army was formed for the protection of the frontier, Washington received a command, with the rank of Colonel, at twenty-two years of age. Advancing at once into the wilderness, he encountered a French detachment, which he took prisoners, with their commander, and so proceeded during the remainder of the season, with general success. The next year, serving as a volunteer, it was his painful lot, when just recovering from a severe illness, to witness Braddock's defeat, a misfortune which, it is unanimously conceded, might have been avoided, if General Braddock had not been too proud to take his young friend's prudent counsel. All that an almost frantic bravery could do to retrieve the fortunes of this disastrous day, Washington, whom we are in the habit of thinking immovable, and who was at this time weak from the effects of fever, is reported to have done; and the fact that he had two horses shot under him, and his coat well riddled with rifle balls, shows how unsparingly he exposed himself to the enemy's sharp-shooters. A spectator says—"I saw him take hold of a brass field-piece as if it had been a stick. He looked like a fury; he tore the sheet lead from the touch-hole; he pulled with this and pushed with that; and wheeled it round as if it had been nothing. The powder-monkey rushed up with the fire, and then the cannon began to bark, and the Indians came down." Nothing but defeat and disgrace was the result of this unhappy encounter, except to Washington, who in that instance, as in so many others, stood [16]

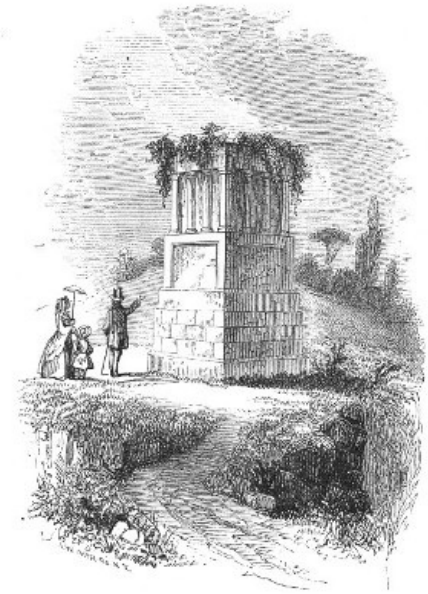
out, individual and conspicuous, by qualities so much in advance of those of all the men with whom he acted, that no misfortune or disaster ever caused him to be confounded with them, or included in the most hasty general censure. It is most instructive as well as interesting to observe that his mind, never considered brilliant, was yet recognized from the beginning as almost infallible in its judgments, a tower of strength for the weak, a terror to the selfish and dishonest. The uneasiness of Governor Dinwiddie under Washington's superiority is accounted for only by the fact that that superiority was unquestionable.

Mount Vernon.

After Braddock's defeat, Washington retired to Mount Vernon,—which had fallen to him by the will of his half-brother Lawrence—to recoup his mind and body, after a wasting fever and the distressing scenes he had been forced to witness. The country rang with his praises, and even the pulpit could not withhold its tribute. The Reverend Samuel Davies hardly deserves the reputation of a prophet for saying, in the course of a eulogy on the bravery of the Virginian troops,—"As a remarkable instance of this, I may point out that heroic youth, Colonel Washington, whom I cannot but hope Providence has hitherto preserved in so signal a manner for some important service to his country." [17]

When another army was to be raised for frontier service, the command was given to Washington, who stipulated for a voice in choosing his officers, a better system of military regulations, more promptness in paying the troops, and a thorough reform in the system of procuring supplies. All these were granted, with the addition of an aid-de-camp and secretary, to the young colonel of twenty-three. But he nevertheless had to encounter the evils of insubordination, inactivity, perverseness and disunion among the troops, with the further vexation of deficient support on the part of the government, while the terrors and real dangers and sufferings of the inhabitants of the outer settlements wrung his heart with anguish. In one of his many expostulatory letters to the timid and time-serving Governor Dinwiddie, his feelings burst their usual guarded bounds: "I am too little acquainted, sir, with pathetic language, to attempt a description of the people's distresses; but I have a generous soul, sensible of wrongs and swelling for redress. But what can I do? I see their situation, know their danger and participate in their sufferings, without having it in my power to give them further relief than uncertain promises. In short, I see inevitable destruction in so clear a light, that unless vigorous measures are taken by the Assembly, and speedy assistance sent from below, the poor inhabitants that are now in forts must unavoidably fall, while the remainder are flying before a barbarous foe. In fine, the melancholy situation of the people, the little prospect of assistance, the gross and scandalous abuse cast upon the officers in general, which reflects upon me in particular for suffering misconduct of such extraordinary kinds, and the distant prospect, if any, of gaining honor and reputation in the service, cause me to lament the hour that gave me a commission, and would induce me, at any other time than this of imminent danger, to resign, without one hesitating moment, a command from which I never expect to reap either honor or benefit; but, on the contrary, have almost an absolute certainty of incurring displeasure below, while the murder of helpless families may be laid to my account here. The supplicating tears of the women and moving petitions of the men melt me into such deadly sorrow, that I solemnly declare, if I know my own mind, I could offer myself a willing sacrifice to the butchering enemy, provided that would contribute to the people's ease." [18]

[19]



Tomb of Washington's Mother.

This extract is given as being very characteristic; full of that fire whose volcanic intensity was so carefully covered under the snow of caution in after life; and also as a specimen of Washington's style of writing, clear, earnest, commanding and business-like, but deficient in all express graces, and valuable rather for substance than form. We see in his general tone of expression something of that resolute mother, who, when her son, already the first man in public estimation, urged her to make Mount Vernon her home for the rest of her days, tersely replied——"I thank you for your affectionate and dutiful offers, but my wants are few in this world, and I feel perfectly competent to take care of myself." Directness is the leading trait in the style of both mother [20] and son; if either used circumlocution, it was rather through deliberateness than for diplomacy. Indeed, the alleged indebtedness of great sons to strong mothers, can hardly find a more prominent support than in this case. What a Roman pair they were! If her heart failed her a little, sometimes, as what mother's heart must not, in view of toils, sacrifices, and dangers like his; if she argued towards the softer side, how he answered her, appealing to her stronger self:

Mount Vernon, 14th Aug., 1755.

"Honored Madam,

"If it is in my power to avoid going to the Ohio again, I shall; but if the command is passed upon me by the general voice of the country, and offered upon such terms as cannot be objected against, it would reflect dishonor upon me to refuse it; and that, I am sure, must, or ought to, give you greater uneasiness than my going in an honorable command. Upon no other terms will I accept of it. At present I have no proposals made to me, nor have I advice of such an intention, except from private hands.

"I am, &c."

When the object for which he had undertaken the campaign—viz.: the undisturbed possession of the Ohio River—was accomplished, Washington resigned his commission, after five years of active and severe service, his health much broken and his private affairs not a little disordered. The resignation took effect in December, 1758, and in January, 1759, he was married, and, as he supposed, finally settled at Mount Vernon—or, as he [21] expresses it in his quiet way—"Fixed at this seat, with an agreeable partner for life, I hope to find more happiness in retirement than I ever experienced amidst the wide and bustling world." And in liberal and elegant improvements, and the exercise of a generous hospitality, the young couple spent the following fifteen years; the husband attending to his duties as citizen and planter, with ample time and inclination for fox-hunting and duck-shooting, and the wife, a kind, comely, thrifty dame, looking well to the ways of her household, superintending fifteen domestic spinning-wheels, and presiding at a bountiful table, to the great satisfaction of her husband and his numerous guests. When the spirit of the people began to rise against the exactions of the mother country, Washington was among the foremost to sympathize with the feeling of indignation, and the desire to resist, peaceably, if possible, forcibly if necessary. Of this, his letters afford ample proof. When armed resistance was threatened, Washington was immediately thought of as the Virginia leader. When Congress began, in earnest, preparations for defence, Washington was chairman of all the committees on the state of the country. When the very delicate business of appointing a commander-in-chief of the American armies was under consideration, Washington was the man whose name was on every tongue, and who was unanimously chosen, and that by the direct instrumentality of a son of Massachusetts, though that noble State, having commenced the struggle, might well have claimed the honor of furnishing a leader for it. What generosity of patriotism there was, in the men of those days, and how a common indignation and a common danger seem to have raised them above the petty jealousies and heart-burnings that so disfigure [22] public doings in time of peace and prosperity! How the greatness of the great man blazed forth on this new field! What an attitude he took before the country, when he said, on accepting the position, "I beg leave to assure the Congress that as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to accept this arduous employment, at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit from it. I will keep an exact account of my expenses. These, I doubt not they will discharge, and that is all I desire." There was a natural, unconscious sovereignty in thus assuming to be the judge of what it might be proper to expend,

in concerns the most momentous, extensive, and novel, as well as in taking the entire risk, both of payment and of public approbation,—in a direction in which he had already found the sensitiveness of the popular mind,—that equals any boldness of Napoleon's. We can hardly wonder that, in after times, common men instinctively desired and expected to make him a king.

The battle of Bunker Hill had taken place in the time that intervened between Washington's consent and the receipt of his commission, so that he set out for Cambridge, with no lingering doubt as to the nature, meaning, or result of the service in which he had pledged all. He writes to his brother, "I am embarked on a wide ocean, boundless in its prospect, and in which, perhaps, no safe harbor is to be found." His residence at Cambridge, a fine old mansion, still stands, and in worthy occupancy. Here it was that he undertook the intolerable duty of organizing a young army, without clothes, tents, ammunition, or money, with a rich, bitter and disciplined enemy in sight, and boiling blood on both sides. Here it was that General Gage, with whom he [23] had fought, side by side, twenty years before, on the Monongahela, so exasperated him by insolent replies to his remonstrances against the cruel treatment of American prisoners, that he gave directions for retaliation upon any of the enemy that might fall into American hands.

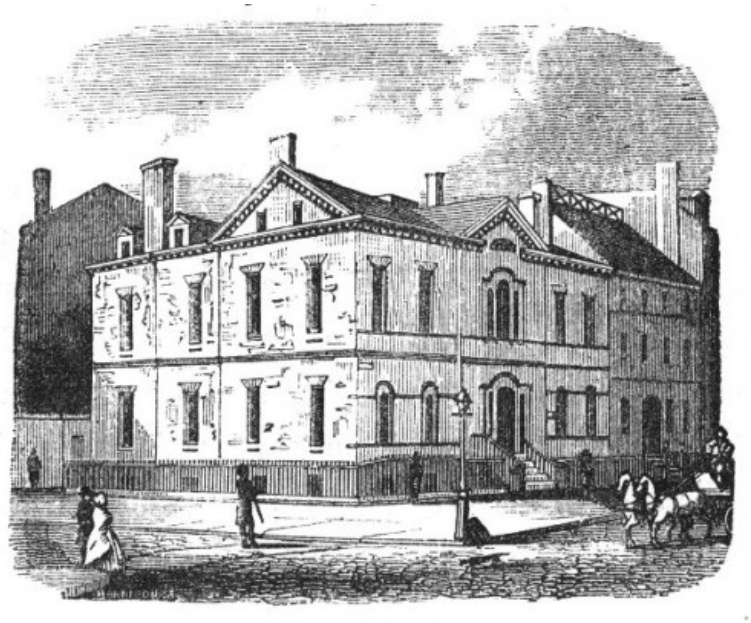
Washington's Headquarters, Cambridge, 1775.

He was, however, Washington still, even though burning with a holy anger; and, ere the order could reach its destination, it was countermanded, and a charge given to all concerned that the prisoners should be allowed parole, and that every other proper indulgence and civility should be shown them. His letters to General Gage [24] are models of that kind of writing. In writing to Lord Dartmouth afterwards, the British commander, who had been rebuked with such cutting and deserved severity, observes with great significance, "The trials we have had, show the rebels are not the despicable rabble we have supposed them to be."

Washington was not without a stern kind of wit, on certain occasions. When the rock was struck hard, it failed not in fire. The jealousy of military domination was so great as to cause him terrible solicitudes at this time, and a month's enlistments brought only five thousand men, while murmurs were heard on all sides against poor pay and bad living. Thinking of this, at a later day, when a member of the Convention for forming the Constitution, desired to introduce a clause limiting the standing army to five thousand men, Washington observed that he should have no objection to such a clause, "if it were so amended as to provide that no enemy should presume to invade the United States with more than *three* thousand."

Amid all the discouragements of that heavy time, the resolution of the commander-in-chief suffered no abatement. "My situation is so irksome to me at times," he says after enumerating his difficulties in a few forcible words, "that if I did not consult the public good more than my own tranquillity, I should long ere this have put every thing on the cast of a die." But he goes on to say, in a tone more habitual with him—"If every man was of my mind, the ministers of Great Britain should know, in a few words, upon what issue the cause should be put. I would not be deceived by artful declarations, nor specious pretences, nor would I be amused by unmeaning propositions, but, in open, undisguised and manly terms, proclaim our wrongs, and our resolution to be redressed. I would tell them that we had borne much, that we had long and ardently sought for reconciliation upon honorable terms; that it had been denied us; that all our attempts after peace had proved abortive, and had been grossly misrepresented; that we had done every thing that could be expected from the best of subjects; that the spirit of freedom rises too high in us to submit to slavery. This I would tell them, not under covert, but in words as clear as the sun in its meridian brightness." [25]

Washington's Headquarters, 180 Pearl street, New-York. 1776.



House No. 1 Broadway.

The house No. 1 Broadway, opposite the Bowling-green, remained unaltered until within a year or two in the shape here presented, in which it had become familiar to all New-Yorkers. It was built by Captain Kennedy of the Royal Navy, in April, 1765. There Lee, Washington, and afterwards Sir Henry Clinton, Robertson, Carleton, and other British officers were quartered, and here André wrote his letter to Arnold.—*Lossing.* It was afterwards occupied by Aaron Burr. Very recently, this interesting house, which in New-York may be termed *ancient*, has been metamorphosed by the addition of two or three stories, and it is now *reduced* to be the Washington Hotel.

[26]

When the British evacuated Boston, Congress voted Washington a gold medal, with abundant thanks and praises; and, thus compensated for the cruel anxieties of the winter, he proceeded with unwavering courage to New-York, where new labors awaited him, and the mortifying defeat at Gowanus, turned into almost triumph by the admirable retreat Afterwards.

The movement from New-York city to Harlem Heights should have been another glory, and nothing on the part of the Commander-in-Chief was wanting to make it such, but a panic seized two brigades of militia, who ran away, *sans façon*, causing Washington to lose, for a moment, some portion of the power over his own emotions for which he is so justly celebrated. He dashed in among the flying rout, shouting, shaming them, riding exposed within a few yards of the enemy; and, finding this of no avail, drew his sword and threatened to "run them through," and cocked and snapped his pistol in their faces. But all would not do, and General Greene says, in a letter to a friend, "He was so vexed at the infamous conduct of the troops, that he sought death rather than life." Washington, the "man of marble," would have preferred a thousand deaths to dishonor.

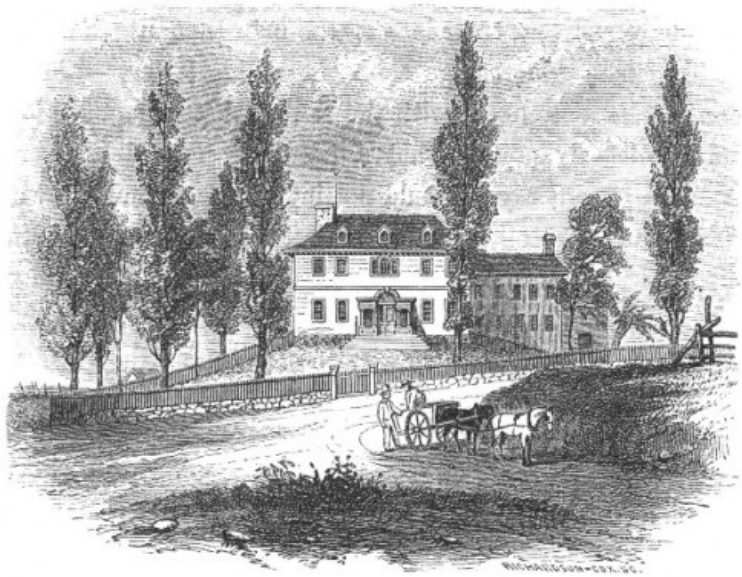
[27]

A new army was now to be raised, the term of the last enlistment having expired; and, to form a just opinion of Washington's character and talents, every letter of his, to Congress and others during this period, should be studied. Such wisdom, such indignation, such patience, such manly firmness, such disappointment! every

thing but despair; the watchfulness, the forethought, the perseverance displayed in those letters, give a truer idea of the man than all his battles.

Take a single passage from one of his letters:—"I am wearied almost to death with the retrograde motion of things, and I solemnly protest, that a pecuniary reward of twenty thousand pounds a year would not induce me to undergo what I do; and after all, perhaps, to lose my character, as it is impossible, under such a variety of distressing circumstances, to conduct matters agreeably to public expectation, or even to the expectation of those who employ me, as they will not make proper allowances for the difficulties their own errors have occasioned."

And besides that which came upon him daily, in the regular line of duty, the yet more difficult work of bearing up the hearts of others, whose threats of abandoning the service were the running bass that made worse the din of war. "I am sorry to find," writes the Chief to General Schuyler, "that both you and General Montgomery incline to quit the service. Let me ask you, sir, what is the time for brave men to exert themselves in the cause of liberty and their country, if this is not? God knows there is not a difficulty that you both very justly complain [28] of, which I have not in an eminent degree experienced, that I am not every day experiencing. But we must bear up against them, and make the best of mankind as they are, since we cannot have them as we wish." In studying the career of Washington, nothing strikes one more frequently than that no fame came to him fortuitously, not only did he borrow none, usurp none, fall heir to none that belonged to others; he earned every tittle that has ever been awarded to him, and evidently contributed very much, by his secret advice and caution to officers placed in difficult positions, to enhance the measure of praise bestowed on his companions in arms.



Washington's Headquarters, Morristown, New Jersey. 1779.

Dark as these times were, Washington's peculiar merits were every day becoming more and more evident; indeed the darkest hours were his opportunities. He might well say, after the loss of Fort Washington, which [29] had been held contrary to his judgment,—"No person ever had a greater choice of difficulties to contend with than I have;" yet he carried the war into New Jersey with all the resolution and courage of a victor. Never without a party, too often a very large one, ready to disparage his military skill, and throw doubts upon his energy in the conduct of the war, he pursued his plans without swerving a hair's breadth to court the popular gale, though a natural and honorable love of reputation was one of the ruling passions of his soul. It was impossible to make the people believe that a series of daring encounters would have cost the Commander-in-chief far less than the "Fabian policy," so scorned at the time; but Washington saw then, in the very heat of the contest, what the result has now made evident enough to all, that England must carry on a war on the other side of the globe under an immense disadvantage, and that considering the general spirit of the American people, the expense to an invading power must be greater than even the richest nation on earth could long sustain. That the necessity for delay was intensely mortifying to him, we have a thousand proofs; and it was not the least bitter drop in his cup, that in order to conceal from the enemy the deficiencies occasioned by the delay of Congress to meet his most strenuous requisitions, he was obliged to magnify his numbers and resources, in a way which could not but increase the public doubts of his promptness. No one can read his letters, incessant under these circumstances, without an intense personal sympathy, that almost forgets the warrior and the patriot in the man.

His being invested with what was in reality a military dictatorship, did not help to render him more popular, [30] although he used his power with his accustomed moderation, conscientiousness and judgment. In this, as in other cases, he took the whole responsibility and odium, while he allowed others to reap the credit of particular efforts; giving to every man at least his due, and content if the country was served, even though he himself seemed to be doing nothing. This we gather as much from the letters of others to him as from his own writings.

The celebrated passage of the Delaware, on Christmas-day, 1776,—so lifelike represented in Leutze's great picture,—flashed a cheering light over the prospects of the contest, and lifted up the hearts of the desponding, if it did not silence the cavils of the disaffected. The intense cold was as discouraging here as the killing heat had been at Gowanus. Two men were found frozen to death, and the whole army suffered terribly; but the

success was splendid, and the enemy's line along the Delaware was broken. The British opened their eyes very wide at this daring deed of the rebel chief, and sent the veteran Cornwallis to chastise his insolence. But Washington was not waiting for him. He had marched to Princeton, harassing the enemy, and throwing their lines still more into confusion. New Jersey was almost completely relieved, and the spirits of the country raised to martial pitch before the campaign closed. Those who had hastily condemned Washington as half a traitor to the cause, now began to call him the Saviour of his Country. Success has wondrous power in illuminating merit, that may yet have been transparent without it. But even now, when he thought proper to administer to all the oath of allegiance to the United States, granting leave to the disaffected to retire within the enemy's lines, a new clamor was raised against him, as assuming undue and dangerous power. It was said there were no "United States," and the Legislature of New Jersey censured the order as interfering with their prerogative. But Washington made no change. The dangers of pretended neutrality had become sufficiently apparent to him; and he chose, as he always did, to defer his personal popularity to the safety of the great cause. And again he took occasion, though the treatment of General Lee was in question, to argue against retaliation of the sufferings of prisoners, in a manly letter, which would serve as a text in similar cases for all time.

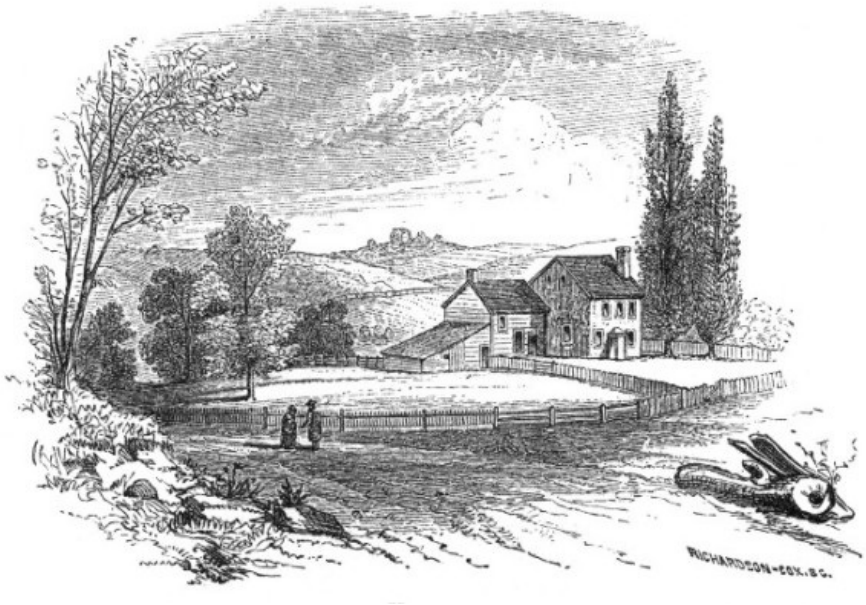
What a blessing was Lafayette's arrival! not only to the struggling States, but in particular to Washington. The spirit of the generous young Frenchman was to the harassed chief as cold water to the thirsty soul. No jealousies, no fault-finding, no selfish emulation; but pure, high, uncalculating enthusiasm, and a devotion to the character and person of Washington that melted the strong man, and opened those springs of tenderness which cares and duties had well-nigh choked up. It is not difficult to believe that Lafayette had even more to do with the success of the war than we are accustomed to think. Whatever kept up the chief's heart up-bore the army and the country; for it is plain that, without derogation from the ability or faithfulness of any of the heroic contributors to the final triumph, Washington was in a peculiar manner the life and soul,—the main-spring and the balance-wheel,—the spur and the rein, of the whole movement and its result. Blessings, then, on Lafayette, the helper and consoler of the chosen father of his heart, through so many trials! His name goes [32] down to posterity on the same breath that is destined for ever to proclaim the glory of Washington.

Washington's Headquarters, Chad's Ford, 1777.

Chad's Ford, in Delaware, was the scene of another of those disasters which it was Washington's happy fortune to turn into benefits. The American army retreated from a much superior force, and retreated in such disorder as could seem, even to its well-wishers, little better than a flight. But when, after encamping at Germantown, it was found that the General meant to give battle again, with a barefooted army, exhausted by forced marches, in a country which Washington himself says, was "to a man, disaffected," dismay itself became buoyant, and the opinion spread, not only throughout America, but even as far as France, that the leader of our armies was indeed invincible. A heavy rain and an impenetrable fog defeated our brave troops; [33] the attempt cost a thousand men. Washington says, solemnly, "It was a bloody day." Yet the Count de Vergennes, on whose impressions of America so much depended at that time, told our Commissioners in Paris that nothing in the course of our struggle had struck him so much as General Washington's venturing to attack the veteran army of Sir William Howe, with troops raised within the year. The leader's glory was never obscured for a moment, to the view of those who were so placed as to see it in its true light. Providence seems to have determined that the effective power of this great instrument should be independent of the glitter of victory.

Washington's Headquarters, White Marsh, 1777.

Encamped at Whitemarsh, fourteen miles from Philadelphia, Washington, with his half-clad and half-fed troops, awaited an attack from General Howe who had marched in that direction with twelve thousand [34] effective men. But both commanders were wary—the British not choosing to attack his adversary on his own ground, and the American not to be decoyed from his chosen position to one less favorable. Some severe skirmishing was therefore all that ensued, and General Howe retreated, rather ingloriously, to Philadelphia.



Washington's Headquarters, Valley Forge, 1777.

This brings us to the terrible winter at Valley Forge, the sufferings of which can need no recapitulation for our readers. Washington felt them with sufficient keenness, yet his invariable respect for the rights of property extended to that of the disaffected, and in no extremity was he willing to resort to coercive measures, to remedy evils which distressed his very soul, and which he shared with the meanest soldier. His testimony to the patience and fortitude of the men is emphatic: "Naked and starving as they are, we cannot enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiery, that they have not been, ere this, excited by their [35] sufferings to a general mutiny and dispersion." And while this evil was present, and for the time irremediable, he writes to Congress on the subject of a suggestion which had been made of a *winter campaign*, "I can assure those gentlemen, that it is a much easier and less distressing thing to draw remonstrances, in a comfortable room, by a good fireside, than to occupy a cold bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow, without clothes or blankets. However, although they seem to have little feeling for the naked and distrest soldiers, I feel super-abundantly for them, and from my soul I pity those miseries which it is neither in my power to relieve nor prevent."

It was during this period of perplexity and distress on public accounts, that the discovery of secret cabals against himself, was added to Washington's burthens. But whatever was personal was never more than secondary with him. When the treachery of pretended friends was disclosed, he showed none of the warmth which attends his statement of the soldiers' grievances. "My enemies take an ungenerous advantage of me," he said, "they know the delicacy of my situation, and that motives of policy deprive me of the defence I might otherwise make against their insidious attacks. They know I cannot combat their insinuations, however injurious, without disclosing secrets which it is of the utmost moment to conceal." * * * "My chief concern arises from an apprehension of the dangerous consequences which intestine dissensions may produce to the

common cause."

General Howe made no attempt on the camp during the winter, but his foraging parties were watched and often severely handled by the Americans. When Dr. Franklin, who was in Paris, was told that General Howe [36] had taken Philadelphia, "Say rather," he replied, "that Philadelphia has taken General Howe," and the advantage was certainly a problematical one. Philadelphia was evacuated by the British on the 18th of June, 1776, General Clinton having superseded General Howe, who returned to England in the spring. Washington followed in the footsteps of the retreating army, and, contrary to the opinion of General Lee, decided to attack them. At Monmouth occurred the scene so often cited as proving that Washington *could* lose his temper—a testimony to his habitual self-command which no art of praise could enhance. Finding General Lee with his five thousand men in full retreat when they should have been rushing on the enemy, the commander-in-chief addressed the recreant with words of severe reproof, and a look and manner still more cutting. Receiving in return a most insolent reply, Washington proceeded, himself, by rapid manœuvres, to array the troops for battle, and when intelligence arrived that the British were within fifteen minutes march, he said to General Lee, who had followed him, deeply mortified,—"Will you command on this ground, or not?" "It is equal with me where I command," was the answer. "Then I expect you to take proper measures for checking the enemy," said the General, much incensed at the offensive manner of Lee. "Your orders shall be obeyed," said that officer, "and I will not be the first to leave the field." And his bravery made it evident that an uncontrolled temper was the fault for which he afterwards suffered so severely. During the action Washington exposed himself to every danger, animating and cheering on the men under the burning sun; and when night came, he lay down in his cloak at the foot of a tree, hoping for a general action the next day. But in the morning Sir [37] Henry Clinton was gone, too far for pursuit under such killing heat—the thermometer at 96°. Many on both sides had perished without a wound, from fatigue and thirst.

Washington's Headquarters, Tappan, 1778.

The headquarters at Tappan will always have a sad interest from the fact that Major André, whose fine private qualities have almost made the world forget that he was a spy, there met his unhappy fate. That General Washington suffered severely under the necessity which obliged him, by the rules of war, to sanction the decision of the court-martial in this case, we have ample testimony; and an eye-witness still living observed, that when the windows of the town were thronged with gazers at the stern procession as it passed, those of the commander-in-chief were entirely closed, and his house without sign of life except the two sentinels at the door. [38]

The revolt of a part of the Pennsylvania line, which occurred in January, 1781, afforded a new occasion for the exercise of Washington's pacific wisdom. He had felt the grievances of the army too warmly to be surprised when any portion of it lost patience, and his prudent and humane suggestions, with the good management of General Wayne, proved effectual in averting the great danger which now threatened. But when the troops of New Jersey, emboldened by this mild treatment, attempted to imitate their Pennsylvania neighbors, they found Washington prepared, and six hundred men in arms ready to crush the revolt by force—a catastrophe prevented only by the unconditional submission of the mutineers, who were obliged to lay down their arms, make concessions to their officers, and promise obedience.

As we are not giving here a sketch of the Revolutionary War, we pass at once to the siege and surrender at Yorktown, an event which shook the country like that heaviest clap of thunder, herald of the departing storm. All felt that brighter skies were preparing, and the universal joy did not wait the sanction of a deliberate treaty of peace. The great game of chess which had been so warily played, on one side at least, was now in check, if not closed by a final check-mate; and people on the winning side were fain to unknit their weary brows, and indulge the repose they had earned. Congress and the country felt as if the decisive blow had been struck, as if the long agony was over. Thanks were lavished on the commanders, on the officers, on the troops. Two stands of the enemy's colors were presented to the Commander-in-Chief, and to Counts Rochambeau and De Grasse each a piece of British field ordnance as a trophy. A commemorative column at Yorktown was [39] decreed, to carry down to posterity the events of the glorious 17th of October, 1781. There was, in short, a kind of wildness in the national joy, showing how deep had been the previous despondency. Watchmen woke the citizens of Philadelphia at one in the morning, crying "Cornwallis is taken!" Sober, Puritan America was

almost startled from her habitual coolness; almost forgot the still possible danger. The chief alone, on whom had fallen the heaviest stress of the long contest, was impelled to new care and forecast by the victory. He feared the negligence of triumph, and reminded the government and the nation that all might yet be lost, without vigilance. "I cannot but flatter myself," he says, "that the States, rather than relax in their exertions, will be stimulated to the most vigorous preparations, for another active, glorious, and decisive campaign." And Congress responded wisely to the appeal, and called on the States to keep up the military establishment, and to complete their several quotas of troops at an early day. With his characteristic modesty and courage, Washington wrote to Congress a letter of advice on the occasion, of which one sentence may be taken as a specimen. "Although we cannot, by the best concerted plans, absolutely command success; although the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; yet, without presumptuously waiting for miracles to be wrought in our favor, it is an indispensable duty, with the deepest gratitude to Heaven for the past, and humble confidence in its smiles on our future operations, to make use of all the means in our power for our defence and security."

It was this man, pure, devoted, and indefatigable in the cause of his country and her liberties, that some shortsighted malcontents, judging his virtue by their own, would now have persuaded to finish the struggle [40] for liberty by becoming a king. The discontent of the officers and soldiers, with the slowness of their pay, had long been a cause of ferment in the army, and gave to the hasty and the selfish an excuse for desiring a change in the form of government. The king's troops had been well fed, well clothed, and well paid, and were sure of half-pay after the war should be finished, while the continentals, suffering real personal destitution, were always in arrear, drawing on their private resources, and with no provision whatever for any permanent pecuniary recompense. As to the half-pay, Washington had long before expressed his opinion of the justice as well as policy of such a provision. "I am ready to declare," he says, "that I do most religiously believe the salvation of the cause depends upon it, and without it your officers will moulder to nothing, or be composed of low and illiterate men, void of capacity for this or any other business. * * * Personally, as an officer, I have no interest in the decision; because I have declared, and I now repeat it, that I never will receive the smallest benefit from the half-pay establishment." But the deep-seated jealousy of the army, which haunted Congress and the country, like a Banshee, throughout the whole course of the war, was too powerful for even Washington's representations. All that could be effected was an unsatisfactory compromise, and some of the officers saw or affected to see, in the reluctance of the government to provide properly for its defenders, a sign of fatal weakness, which but little recommended the republican form. Under these circumstances, a well written letter was sent to the Commander-in-Chief, proposing to him the establishment of a "mixed government," in which the supreme position was to be given, as of right, to the man who had been the instrument of Providence in saving the country, in "difficulties apparently insurmountable by human power," the dignity to be accompanied with the title of KING. Of this daring proposition a colonel of good standing was made the organ. Washington's reply may be well known, but it will bear many repetitions. [41]

Washington's Headquarters, Newburgh, N.Y.

NEWBURGH, 22 May, 1782.

"SIR,

"With a mixture of great surprise and astonishment, I have read with attention the sentiments you submitted to my perusal. Be assured, Sir, no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations than your information, of there being such ideas existing in the army as you have expressed, and I must view with abhorrence, and reprehend with severity. For the present, the communication of them will rest in my own bosom, unless some further agitation of the matter shall make a disclosure necessary.

"I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address, which, to me, seems big with the greatest mischiefs that can befall my country. If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable. At the same time, in justice to my own feelings, I must add that no man possesses a more sincere wish to see ample justice done to the army than I do; and as far as my powers and influence, in a constitutional way, extend, they shall be employed to the utmost of my abilities to effect it, should there be any occasion. Let me conjure

you, then, if you have any regard for your country, concern for yourself or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or any one else, a sentiment of the like nature. [42]

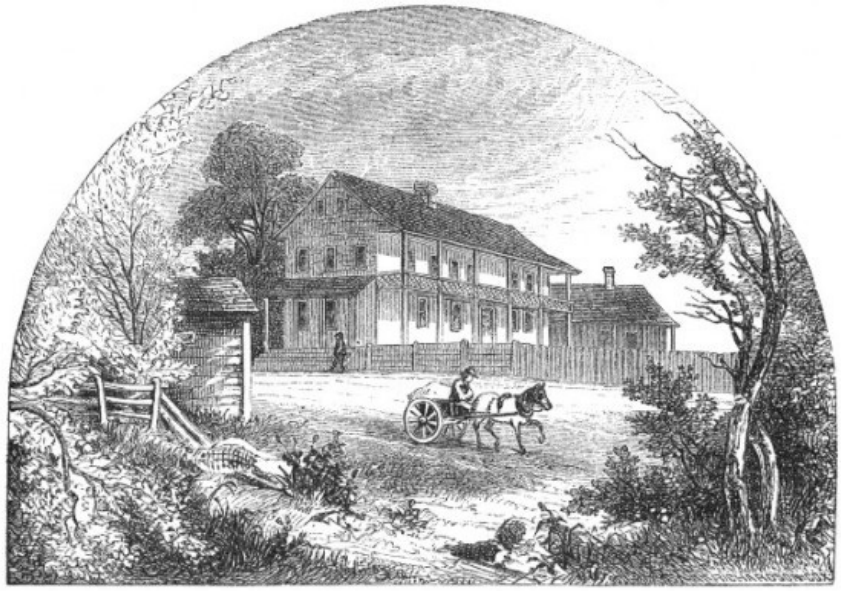
"I am, Sir, &c.,
"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

This letter is extremely characteristic, not only because it declines the glittering bait, for that is hardly worth noticing where Washington is in question, but for the cool and quiet tone of rebuke, in a case in which most other men would have been disposed to be at least dramatically indignant. The perfectly respectful way in which he could show a man that he despised him, is remarkable. He does not even admit that there has been injustice done to the army, though the fact had cost him such loads of anxious and ingenious remonstrance; but only promises to see to it, "should there be any occasion." It would have been easier for him, at that very moment, at the head of a victorious army, and with the heart of the nation at his feet, to make himself a king, than to induce Congress to do justice to the troops and their brave officers; but identifying himself with his army, he considered that his own private affair, and would accept no offer of partnership, however specious. Happily the name of the "very respectable" colonel has never been disclosed; an instance of mercy not the least noticeable among the features of this remarkable transaction.

During the negotiations for peace which so soon followed the surrender at Yorktown, the discontent of the army reached a height which became alarming. Meetings of officers were called, for the purpose of preparing threatening resolutions, since called "the Newburgh addresses," to be offered to Congress. The alternative proposed was a relinquishment of the service in a body, if the war continued, or remaining under arms, in time of peace, until justice could be obtained from Congress. Washington, having timely notice of this danger, came forward with his usual decision, wisdom, and kindliness, to the rescue of the public interest and peace. While he took occasion, in a general order, to censure the disorderly and anonymous form proposed, he himself called a meeting of officers, taking care to converse in private beforehand with many of them, acknowledging the justice of their complaints, but inculcating moderation and an honorable mode of obtaining what they desired. It is said that many of the gentlemen were in tears when they left the presence of the Commander-in-Chief. When they assembled, he addressed them in the most impressive manner, imploring them not to tarnish their hard-won laurels, by selfish passion, in a case in which the vital interests of the country were concerned. He insisted on the good faith of Congress, and the certainty that, before the army should be disbanded, all claims would be satisfactorily adjusted. [43]

His remonstrance proved irresistible. The officers, left to themselves,—for the General withdrew after he had given utterance to the advice made so potent by his character and services,—passed resolutions thanking him for his wise interference, and expressing their love and respect for him, and their determination to abide by his counsel. In this emergency Washington may almost have been said to have saved his country a second time, but in his letters written at the time he sinks all mention of his own paramount share in restoring tranquillity, speaking merely of "measures taken to postpone the meeting," and "the good sense of the officers" having terminated the affair "in a manner which reflects the greatest glory on themselves." His own remonstrances with Congress were immediately renewed, setting forth the just claims of those who "had so long, so patiently, and so cheerfully, fought under his direction," so forcibly, that in a very short time all was conceded, and general harmony and satisfaction established. [44]

His military labors thus finished,—for the adjudication of the army claims by Congress was almost simultaneous with the news of the signing of the treaty at Paris,—Washington might, without impropriety, have given himself up to the private occupations and enjoyments so religiously renounced for eight years,—the proclamation of peace to the army having been made, April 19, 1783, precisely eight years from the day of the first bloodshedding at Lexington. But the feelings of a father were too strong within him, and his solicitudes brooded over the land of his love with that unfailing anxiety for its best good which had characterized him from the beginning. Yet he modestly observes, in a letter on the subject to Col. Hamilton, "How far any further essay by me might be productive of the wished-for end, or appear to arrogate more than belongs to me, depends so much upon popular opinion, and the temper and dispositions of the people, that it is not easy to decide." He wrote a circular letter to the Governors of the several States, full of wisdom, dignity, and kindness, dwelling principally on four great points—an indissoluble union of the States; a sacred regard to public justice; the adoption of a proper military peace establishment; and a pacific and friendly disposition among the people of the States, which should induce them to forget local prejudices, and incline them to mutual concessions. This address is masterly in all respects, and was felt to be particularly well-timed, the calm and honoured voice of Washington being at that moment the only one which could hope to be heard above the din of party, and amid the confusion natural during the first excitement of joy and triumph. [45]



Washington's Headquarters, Rocky Hill, N.J., 1783

Congress was not too proud to ask the counsel of its brave and faithful servant, in making arrangements for peace and settling the new affairs of the country. Washington was invited to Princeton, where Congress was then sitting, and introduced into the Chamber, where he was addressed by the President, and congratulated on the success of the war, to which he had so much contributed. Washington replied with his usual self-respect and modesty, and retired. A house had been prepared for him at Rocky Hill, near Princeton, where he resided for some time, holding conference with committees and members, and giving counsel on public affairs; and where he wrote that admirable farewell to his army, perhaps as full of his own peculiar spirit as [46] any of his public papers. His thanks to officers and soldiers for their devotion during the war have no perfunctory coldness in them, but speak the full heart of a brave and noble captain, reviewing a most trying period, and recalling with warm gratitude the co-operation of those on whom he relied. Then, for their future, his cautions and persuasions, the motives he urges, and the virtues he recommends, all form a curious contrast with those of Napoleon's addresses to his troops. "Let it be known and remembered," he says, "that the reputation of the federal armies is established beyond the reach of malevolence; and let a consciousness of their achievements and fame still incite the men who composed them to honorable actions; under the persuasion that the private virtues of economy, prudence, and industry, will not be less amiable in civil life, than the more splendid qualities of valor, perseverance and enterprise were in the field." Thus consistent to the last he honored all the virtues; showing that while those of the field were not misplaced in the farm, those of the farm might well be counted among the best friends of the field—his own life of planter and soldier forming a glorious commentary on his doctrines.

The evacuation of New-York by the British was a grand affair, General Washington and Governor George Clinton riding in at the head of the American troops that came from the northward to take possession, while Sir Guy Carleton and his legions embarked at the lower end of the city. The immense cavalcade of the victors embraced both military and civil authorities, and was closed by a great throng of citizens. This absolute *finale* of the war brought on the Commander-in-Chief one of those duties at once sweet and painful—taking leave of [47] his companions in arms; partners in toil and triumph, in danger and victory. "I cannot come to each of you to take my leave," he said, as he stood, trembling with emotion, "but I shall be obliged if each of you will come and take me by the hand." General Knox, the warm-hearted, stood forward and received the first embrace; then the rest in succession, silently and with universal tears. Without another word the General walked from the room, passed through lines of soldiery to the barge which awaited him, then, turning, waved his hat, and bade to friends and comrades a silent, heartfelt adieu, which was responded to in the same solemn spirit. All felt that it was not the hour nor the man for noisy cheers; the spirit of Washington presided there, as ever, where honorable and high-minded men were concerned.

The journey southward was a triumphal march. Addresses, processions, delegations from religious and civil bodies, awaited him at every pause. When he reached Philadelphia he appeared before Congress to resign his commission, and no royal abdication was ever so rich in dignity. All the human life that the house would hold came together to hear him, and the words, few and simple, wise and kind, that fell from the lips of the revered chief, proved worthy to be engraved on every heart. In conclusion he said:—"Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action; and, bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life." He said afterwards to a friend:—"I feel now as I conceive a wearied traveller must do, who, after treading many a step with a heavy burden on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having [48] reached the haven to which all the former were directed, and from his house-top is looking back, and tracing with an eager eye the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mire which lay in his way, and into which none but the all-powerful Guide and Dispenser of human events could have prevented his falling." And to Lafayette, he says:—"I am not only retired from all public employments, but I am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk, and tread the paths of private life with a heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being the order of my march, I will move gently down the stream of life until I sleep with my fathers."

That the public did not anticipate for him the repose and retirement he so much desired, we may gather from

the instructions sent, at the time he resigned his commission, by the State of Pennsylvania, to her representatives in Congress, saying that "his illustrious actions and virtues render his character so splendid and venerable that it is highly probable the world may make his life in a considerable degree public;" and that "his very services to his country may therefore subject him to expenses, unless he permits her gratitude to interpose." "We are perfectly acquainted," says the paper, "with the disinterestedness and generosity of his soul. He thinks himself amply rewarded for all his labors and cares, by the love and prosperity of his fellow-citizens. It is true no rewards they can bestow can be equal to his merits, but they ought not to suffer those merits to be burdensome to him. * * * We are aware of the delicacy with which such a subject must be treated. But, relying in the good sense of Congress, we wish it may engage their early attention."

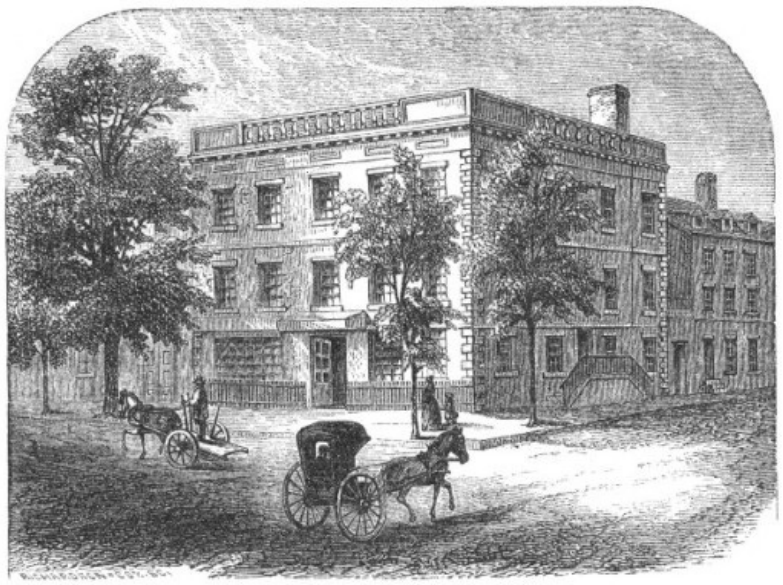
The delegates, on receipt of these instructions, very wisely bethought themselves of submitting the matter to [49] the person most concerned before they brought it before Congress, and he, as might have been expected, entirely declined the intended favor, and put an end to the project altogether. If he could have been induced to accept pecuniary compensation, there is no doubt a grateful nation would gladly have made it ample. But Washington, born to be an example in so many respects, had provided against all the dangers and temptations of money, by making himself independent as to his private fortune; having neglected no opportunity of enlarging it by honorable labor or judicious management, while he subjected the expenses of his family to the strictest scrutiny of economy.

Mount Vernon (rear view).

His first care, on arriving at Mount Vernon, was to ascertain the condition of his private affairs; his next to [50] make a tour of more than six hundred miles through the western country, with the double purpose of inspecting some lands of his, and of ascertaining the practicability of a communication between the head waters of the great rivers flowing east and west of the Alleghanies. He travelled entirely on horseback, in military style, and kept a minute journal of each day's observations, the result of which he communicated, on his return, in a letter to the Governor of Virginia, which Mr. Sparks declares to be "one of the ablest, most sagacious, and most important productions of his pen," and "the first suggestion of the great system of internal improvements which has since been pursued in the United States." On a previous tour, through the northern part of the State of New-York, he had observed the possibility of a water communication between the Hudson and the Great Lakes, and appreciated its advantages, thus foreshowing, at that early date, the existence of the Erie Canal. In 1784, Washington had a final visit from Lafayette, from whom he parted at Annapolis, with manifestations of a deeper tenderness than the weak can even know. Arrived at home, he sat down at once to say yet another word to the beloved: "In the moment of our separation, upon the road as I travelled, and every hour since," (mark the specification from this man of exact truth,) "I have felt all that love, respect and attachment for you, with which length of years, close connection, and your merits have inspired me. I often asked myself, as our carriages separated, whether that was the last sight I should ever have of you? And though I wished to say No! my fears answered Yes!" He was right; they never met again, but they loved each other always. Lafayette's letters to Washington are lover-like; they are alone sufficient to [51] show how capable of the softest feeling was the great heart to which they were addressed.

Space fails us for even the baldest enumeration of the instances of care for the public good with which the life of Washington abounded, when he fancied himself "in retirement," for we have unconsciously dwelt, with the reverence of affection, upon the picture of his character during the Revolution, and felt impelled to illustrate it, where we could, by quotations from his own weighty words; weighty, because, to him, words were things indeed, and we feel that he never used one thoughtlessly or untruly. Brevity must now be our chief aim, and we pass, at once, over all the labor and anxiety which attended the settlement of the Constitution, to mention the election of Washington to the Presidency of the States so newly united, by bonds which, however willingly assumed, were as yet but ill fitted to the wearers. The unaffected reluctance with which he accepted the trust appears in every word and action of the time; and it is evident that, as far as selfish feelings went, he was much more afraid of losing the honor he had gained than of acquiring new. The heart of the nation was with him, however, even more than he knew; and the "mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations" than he had words to express at the outset, was soon calmed, not only by the suggestions of duty, but by the marks of unbounded love and confidence lavished on him at every step of his way by a grateful people. The Inaugural Oath was taken, before an immense concourse of people, on the balcony of Federal Hall, New-York,

April 30, 1789, and the President afterwards delivered his first Address, in the Senate Chamber of the same building, now no longer standing, but not very satisfactorily replaced by that magnificent Grecian temple wherein the United States Government collects the Customs of New-York. [52]



House of the First Presidential Levee, Cherry street.

The house in which the first Presidential levee was held will always be a point of interest, and the consultations between Washington and the great officers of state about the simple ceremonial of these public receptions, are extremely curious, as showing the manners and ideas of the times, and the struggle between the old-country associations natural to gentlemen of that day, and the recognized necessity of accommodating even court regulations to the feelings of a people to whom the least shadow of aristocratic form was necessarily hateful. We must not condemn the popular scrupulousness of 1789 as puerile and foolish, until we too have perilled life and fortune in the cause of liberty and equality.

A dangerous illness brought Washington near the grave, during his first Presidential summer, and he is said never to have regained his full strength. In August his mother died, venerable for years and wisdom, and always honored by her son in a spirit that would have satisfied a Roman matron. She maintained her simple habits to the last, and is said never to have exhibited surprise or elation, at her son's greatest glory, or the highest honors that could be paid him. Her remains rest under an unfinished monument, near Fredericksburgh, Virginia. [53]

Of the wife of the illustrious Chief, it is often said that little is known, and there is felt almost a spite against her memory because she destroyed before her death every letter of her husband to herself, save only one, written when he accepted the post of Commander-in-Chief. But, to our thinking, one single letter of hers, written to Mrs. Warren, after the President's return from a tour through the eastern States, tells the whole story of her character and tastes, a story by no means discreditable to the choice of the wisest of mankind. Mr. Sparks gives the letter entire, as we would gladly do if it were admissible. We must, however, content ourselves with a few short extracts:—

"You know me well enough to believe that I am fond only of what comes from the heart. Under a conviction that the demonstrations of respect and affection to him originate in that source, I cannot deny that I have taken some interest and pleasure in them. The difficulties which presented themselves to view in his first entering upon the Presidency, seem thus to be in some measure surmounted. * * * I had little thought, when the war was finished, that any circumstances could possibly happen which would call the General into public [54] life again. I had anticipated that from that moment we should be suffered to grow old together, in solitude and tranquillity. That was the first and dearest wish of my heart. I will not, however, contemplate with too much regret, disappointments that were inevitable, though his feelings and my own were in perfect unison with respect to our predilection for private life. Yet I cannot blame him for having acted according to his ideas of duty, in obeying the voice of his country. The consciousness of having attempted to do all the good in his power, and the pleasure of finding his fellow-citizens so well satisfied with the disinterestedness of his conduct, will doubtless be some compensation for the great sacrifice I know he has made. * * * With respect to myself, I sometimes think the arrangement is not quite as it ought to have been, that I, who had much rather be at home, should occupy a place with which a great many younger and gayer women would be extremely pleased. * * * I am still determined to be cheerful and happy, in whatever situation I may be; for I have learned from experience that the greater part of our happiness or misery depends on our dispositions and not on our circumstances. We carry the seeds of the one or the other about with us, in our minds, wherever we go." The whole letter bespeaks the good, kind, dutiful and devoted wife, the loving mother,—for she represents her grandchildren as her chief joy,—and the sensible, domestic woman. What more can any man ask in the partner of his bosom? She was the best wife possible for Washington, and he thought her such, and loved her entirely and always. The picture by Stuart shows her, even in the decline of life, to have been of a delicate and sprightly beauty.

Another eight years of public duty and public life—two presidential terms—were bravely borne by the pair always longing for Mount Vernon. The reluctance of Washington to the second term of office was even [55]

stronger than that which he had expressed to the first, but he was overborne by stress of voices. "The confidence of the whole Union," writes Jefferson, "is centred in you. * * * There is sometimes an eminence of character on which society have such peculiar claims, as to control the predilection of the individual for a particular walk of happiness, and restrain him to that alone arising from the present and future benedictions of mankind. This seems to be your condition, and the law imposed on you by Providence in forming your character, and fashioning the events on which it was to operate." And Hamilton says—"I trust, and I pray God, that you will determine to make a further sacrifice of your tranquillity and happiness to the public good." And such were, throughout, the sentiments of the first men of the country, without distinction of politics. Thus urged, he yielded once more, even after he had prepared a farewell address to the people on his contemplated resignation.

It was during this second term that Fox spoke of Washington before Parliament, concluding thus:—"It must indeed create astonishment, that, placed in circumstances so critical, and filling for a series of years a station so conspicuous, his character should never once have been called in question. * * * For him it has been reserved to run the race of glory without experiencing the smallest interruption to the brilliancy of his career." And Mr. Erskine, writing to Washington himself, says:—"I have taken the liberty to introduce your august and immortal name in a short sentence which will be found in the book I send you.[1] I have a large [56] acquaintance among the most valuable and exalted classes of men; but you are the only human being for whom I ever felt an awful reverence. I sincerely pray God to grant a long and serene evening to a life so gloriously devoted to the universal happiness of the world."

The evening was indeed serene, but it was not destined to be long. Two years were spent in domestic and social duty and pleasure, the old Virginia hospitality being carried to an enormous extent at Mount Vernon, over which General and Mrs. Washington presided, with all that good sense, dignity, and *bonhommie* united, which seems now to have characterized their home life. Mrs. Washington, content with the greatness described by the wise king, looked well to her maidens, and so managed the affairs of a large establishment that "the heart of her husband could safely trust in her, so that he had *no need of spoil*." Who knows how much the good management of his household affairs had to do with Washington's superiority to the temptations of gain? The ladies should see to it that they so regulate their habits of expense that their husbands have "no need of spoil." The extravagant tastes of Mrs. Arnold, amiable woman though she was, are known to have heightened her husband's rapacity, and thus added to the incentives which resulted in treason and just ruin. Mrs. Washington, when she was in the highest position in the nation, wore gowns spun under her own roof, and always took care, in her conversation with the ladies about her, to exalt domestic employments, and represent them as belonging to the duty of woman in any station. She was supposed to have written a patriotic paper, published in 1780, called "The Sentiments of American Women," but the [57] authorship has not been ascertained. The energy and consistency of her patriotic feeling was, however, perfectly well understood, and she is said to have borne her part in the conversation of the distinguished company at Mount Vernon, with invariable dignity and sweetness. The General had returned with unction to his rural and agricultural pursuits, keeping up his life-long habit of rising before the sun, and after breakfast making the tour of the plantation on horseback. These employments were somewhat interrupted by the speck of war which troubled our horizon in 1798, on which occasion all eyes were turned to him, and his friends and the President called upon him once more to give his services to the country. His reply was consistent with the tenor of his life, "In case of actual invasion by a formidable force, I certainly should not intrench myself under the cover of age and retirement, if my services should be required by my country in repelling it." Without waiting for his reply, the Senate had appointed him to the post of Commander-in-Chief, and the Secretary at War was despatched immediately to Mount Vernon with the commission, which was at once accepted. This involved Washington once more in a press of correspondence and many anxious duties; and his letters during this time show that his mind had lost none of its fertility or his judgment of its soundness. He predicted at once that France would not invade the United States, and the event justified his foresight. But another Enemy lay in wait for him, and to this one the hero succumbed, in the same manly spirit in which he had battled with an earthly foe. Great suffering was crowded into the twenty-four hours' illness which served to prostrate that vigorous form, and to still that active brain; but he could look up, at the last, and say—"I am not afraid to die." [58]

December 14, 1799, was the day of his death, and the 18th of the same month saw him laid, by a weeping multitude, in the family vault at Mount Vernon; not the tomb in which his ashes now repose, but the old one, which he had been planning to rebuild, saying "Let that be done first, for perhaps I shall want it first."

We have thus traced the Father of our Country through all his earthly Homes, to that quiet one by the side of the Potomac, the object of devout pilgrimage to millions yet unborn. One more Home there is for him, even in this changing world—that which he possesses in the hearts of his countrymen, one which we cannot picture or describe, but from which he can never be displaced by the superior merit of mortal man. Other heroes may arise, will arise, as the world shall need them, exponents of their times and incarnations of the highest spirit of the race from which they spring; but America can have but one Washington—one man in whom the peculiar virtues of the *American* character found their embodiment and their triumph. In saying this we may well be proud but not vainglorious. If the great truth it implies be not yet known and read of all men, we should be humbled by the thought that we are so slow to follow our immortal leader. Washington's indomitable spirit of freedom, as evident when at nineteen he withstood the English governor, as when in 1774 he "went to church and fasted all day," in sympathy with the people of Boston, in their resolution against the Port Bill; his self-control, the perfection of which made his fierce passions the sworn servants of virtue; his humanity, which no [59] personal suffering or fatigue could blunt, and no provocation extinguish; his manly temper, never daunted by insolence or turned into arrogance by triumph; the respect for the civil virtues which he carried with him through all the temptations and trials of war; the faith in God and man which sustained him, and was indeed the secret of his power and his success,—what a legacy are these! All that he accomplished is less to us than what he was. To have left an example that will never need defence or substitution to the end of time; an ideal that will warm the heart and point the aspiration of every true American, when hundreds of millions shall be proud of the name; to stand forth, for ever, as what we, happy citizens of the country in which that great soul

was cradled, and to which his heart and life were devoted, think a MAN ought to be—what a destiny for him! It is his reward. God has granted his prayers. Nothing earthly would have satisfied him, as we know by what he rejected. He has received that for which he labored. Who dare imagine the complacency—only less than divine, with which the retrospect of such a life may be fraught! Let us indulge the thought that when in the heat of party, the lust of power, or the still deadlier hunger for wealth, we depart from his spirit, he is permitted to see that the dereliction is but temporary and limited; that his country is true to him if his countrymen sometimes err; that there is for ever imprinted, on the heart and life of the nation, the conviction that in adherence to his precepts and imitation of his character there is safety, happiness, glory; in departure from that standard, deterioration and decay. It must be so, for can we conceive him blest without this?

[60]

Washington's Tomb.

As if to stamp the American ideal with all perfection, it is remarkable that Washington stood pre-eminent in manly strength and beauty, and that a taste for athletic exercises kept him, in spite of illnesses brought on by toil, anxiety, and exposure, in firm health during most of his life. His picture at sixty-two, that which he himself thought the best likeness that had been taken of him, exhibits one of the loveliest faces that an old man ever wore. And it is marvellous how any one that ever looked into the clear blue depths of the eye in Stuart's unfinished picture, could be persuaded to believe Washington stern, cold, and unfeeling. Some have even thought it added to his dignity to represent him thus. All the historians in the world could not prove such a contradiction to the stamp of nature. But the picture by Pine—the old man, faded somewhat, and a little fallen in outline, wears the face of an angel; mild, firm, modest, sensitive, aspiring, glorious! It meets your gaze with a tenderness that dims our eye and seems almost to dim its own. Of all the portraits of Washington, this and the half-imaginary one made by Mr. Leutze from a miniature taken when Washington was seventeen, are the most touchingly beautiful, and, as we verily believe, most characteristic of the man.

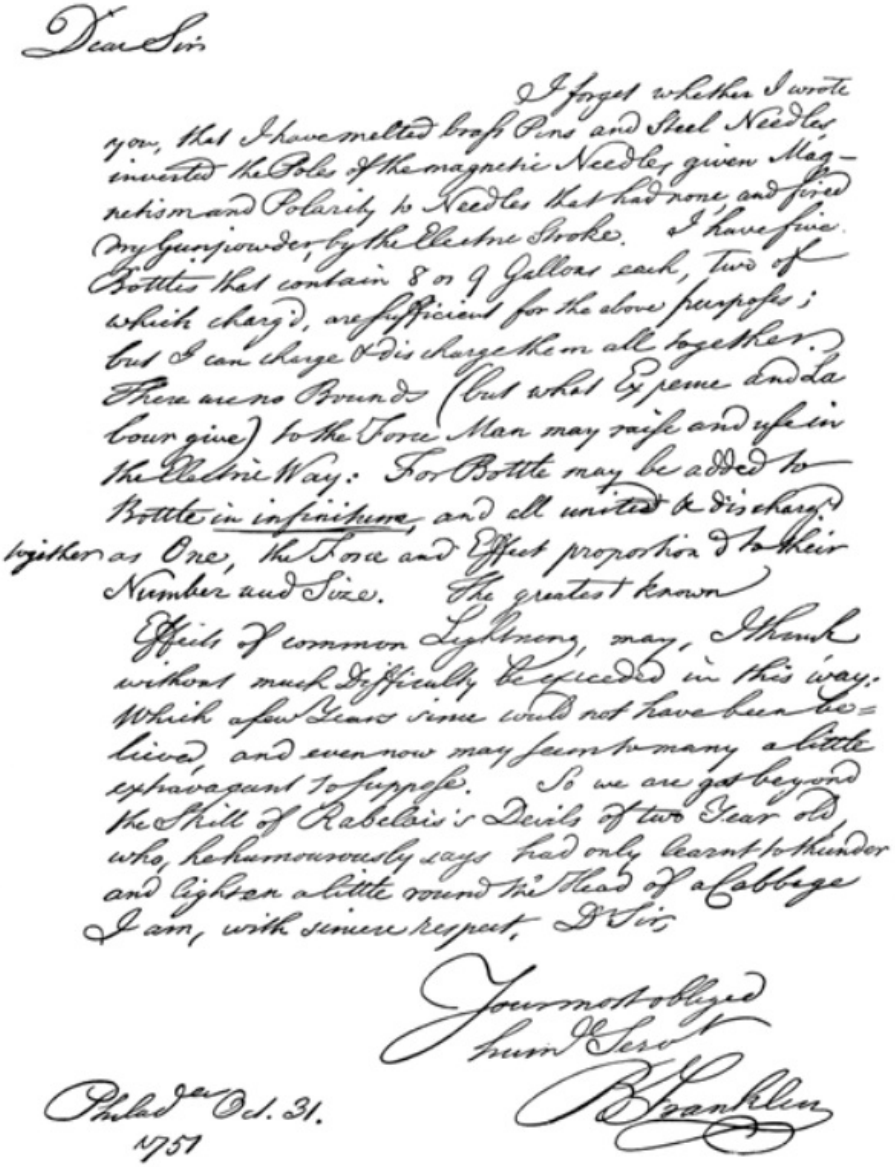
[61]

It is proper, though scarcely necessary, to say that this sketch of Washington's life is drawn from Mr. Sparks' history, since no research can discover a single fact overlooked by that faithful and just chronicler.

[62]

Franklin.

[63]



Dear Sir

I forget whether I wrote you, that I have melted brass Pins and Steel Needles, inverted the Poles of the magnetic Needles, given Magnetism and Polarity to Needles that had none, and fired my Gunpowder, by the Electric Stroke. I have five Bottles that contain 8 or 9 Gallons each, two of which charg'd, are sufficient for the above purposes; but I can charge & discharge them all together. There are no Bounds (but what Expence and Labour give) to the Force Man may raise and use in the Electric Way: For Bottle may be added to Bottle in infinitum, and all united & discharg'd together as One, the Force and Effect proportion'd to their Number and Size. The greatest known Effects of common Lightning, may, I think without much Difficulty be exceeded in this way, which a few Years since would not have been believed, and even now may seem to many a little extravagant to suppose. So we are got beyond the Skill of Rabelais's Devils of two Years old, who, he humorously says had only learnt to thunder and lighten a little round the Head of a Cabbage

I am, with sincere respect, Dr Sir,

Your most obliged
humble Servt

B Franklin

Philad.a Oct. 31.
1751

FRANKLIN.

An English traveller in the United States once expressed his astonishment at nowhere finding a monument of [65] Franklin. He regarded it as a new proof of the ingratitude of republics. But if we have erected no columns, nor statues, to the memory of our first great man, we have manifested our gratitude for the services he rendered us, and the hearty appreciation of his character, which is universal among us, in a better, more affectionate and enduring manner. We name our towns, counties, ships, children, and institutions after him. His name is constantly in our mouth, and his benevolent countenance and lofty brow are as familiar to us as the features of Washington. We have Franklin banks, Franklin insurance companies, Franklin societies, Franklin hotels, Franklin markets, and even Franklin theatres. One of our line of battle ships is called the Franklin, and there will be found a Ben Franklin, the name affectionately abbreviated, on all our western lakes and rivers. The popular heart cherishes his memory more tenderly than that of any of our great men. Washington's heroism and lofty virtues set him above us, so that while we look up to him with veneration and awe, we hardly feel [66] that he was one of us. His impossible grandeur forbids the familiar sympathy which we feel for our own kind. But Franklin's greatness is of that kind which makes the whole world kin. In him we recognize the apotheosis of usefulness. He was our Good Genius, who took us by the hand in our national infancy, and taught us the great art of making the most of the world. He warmed our houses by the stove which still bears his name, and protected us from the terrifying thunderbolt by his simple rod. He showered upon us lessons of wisdom, all calculated to increase our happiness, and his wise and pithy apothegms have become an important part of our language. Never before was a young nation blessed with so beneficent and generous a counsellor and guide. The influence of Franklin upon the national character is beyond estimate. He taught us alike by precept and example; and, in his autobiography, he laid the corner stone of our literature, bequeathing us a book which will always be fresh, instructive, and charming, while our language endures, or we look to literature for instruction and entertainment.

Franklin was a pure, unadulterated Englishman; he came of that great stock whose mission it is to improve the world. Though we claim him, and justly, as an American, he was born, and lived the better part of his life, a subject of the English crown. There was never a more thorough Englishman, nor one whose whole consistent life more happily illustrated the Anglo-Saxon character, nor one who was better entitled to be called an American, or who showed a more lively and enduring love for his native soil.

Every schoolboy is familiar with the history of Franklin; his autobiography is our national epic; it is more read than Robinson Crusoe; and our great national museum, the Patent Office, has been filled with the results of [67] ambitious attempts to follow in the path of the inventor of the lightning-rod. One boy reads Robinson Crusoe and runs off to sea, while another reads Franklin's Life and tries for a patent, or begins to save a penny a day, that he may have three hundred pennies at the end of the year. There are writers who have accused Franklin of giving a sordid bias to our national character. But nothing could be more unjust. There is nothing sordid in the teachings of our great philosopher; while the example of his purely beneficent life has, doubtless, been the cause of many of the magnificent acts of private benevolence which have distinguished our countrymen.

Franklin says in his autobiography, in reference to his stove, which has warmed so many generations of his countrymen, and rendered comfortable so many American homes: "Governor Thomas was so pleased with the construction of this stove that he offered to give me a sole patent for the vending of them for a term of years; but I declined it from a principle which has ever weighed with me on such occasions, viz., that as we enjoy great advantages from the inventions of others, we should be glad of an opportunity to serve others by an invention of ours: and this we should do freely and cordially." No, there was no sordidness in the teachings of Franklin.

His immortal biography was commenced at the ripe age of sixty-six, while he was in England, a time of life when most men have lost the power to instruct or amuse with the pen; but it has the ease, the freshness, and the vigor of youth. It was continued at Passy, in France, and concluded in Philadelphia. He was one of the few instances of a precocious genius maintaining his powers to an advanced period of life. There were no signs of [68] childishness in his almost infantile compositions, or of senility in his latest productions.

Every body knows that the grandfather of Doctor Franklin was the sturdy old puritan, Peter Folger, who wrote the homely verses which Mr. Sparks doubts the propriety of calling poetry, and who dwelt in "Sherborn Town." The house in which he lived, and where the mother of Franklin was born, was still in existence but a few years since, though in a very dilapidated condition. We remember making a pilgrimage to it in our boyish days, after reading the Life of Franklin, and wondering in which of its little rooms the grandfather of the philosopher sat, when he penned the lines which the grandson thought were "written with manly freedom and a pleasing simplicity." The house stood near the water, at the head of a little cove, or creek, and near it was a bubbling spring, from which the mother of the philosopher must have often drank. At that time there were no evidences of the surrounding grounds having been cultivated, and a wretched family inhabited the ruin. There are many descendants of Peter Folger still living, some of whom have been eminent for their learning and talents; but, it is a remarkable circumstance, that, though Franklin's father and grandfather each had five sons, who grew up to man's estate, there is not one male descendant living of that name.

Franklin was born on the 6th of January, old style, 1706, in a house that stood on the corner of Milk-street, opposite the old South Church, Boston, in which he was christened. The church is still standing, but the house has been demolished, and, in its place, there is a large and handsome granite warehouse, which is made to serve the double purpose of a store and a monument. On the frieze of the cornice is the inscription in bold [69] granitic letters, THE BIRTH-PLACE OF FRANKLIN.

Old South Church, Boston.

We cannot help thinking that it is just such a monument as he would have recommended, if his wishes had [70] been consulted. But the house in which our great philosopher spent his earlier years, and to which his father removed soon after the birth of his youngest son, is still standing, very nearly in the same condition in which it was during his youth. It is on the corner of Hanover and Union streets, and the wooden gilt ball of the old soap-boiler is still suspended from an iron crane, with the inscription JOSIAS FRANKLIN, 1698. The ball is the original one, but it must have been many times regilt and relettered. The building is occupied by a shoe dealer in the lower part, but the upper rooms are in the occupancy of an industrial whose art had no existence until near a century after the death of Franklin's father. A daguerrean artist now takes likenesses in the rooms where the boy-philosopher slept, and sat up late at night to read Defoe's Essay on Projects, and Plutarch's Lives, by the glimmering light of one of his father's own dips. It was here too that he read the Light House Tragedy, after having cut wicks all day; and it was in the cellar of this house, too, that he made that

characteristic suggestion to his father, of saying grace over the barrel of beef, which he saw him packing away for the winter's use, to save the trouble of a separate grace over each piece that should be served up for dinner. This anecdote may not be strictly true, but it is perfectly characteristic, and very much like one he tells of himself, when he was the Commander-in-Chief of the military forces of Pennsylvania. The chaplain of his regiment complained to him that the men would not attend prayers, whereupon, says Franklin, "I said to him, 'it is perhaps below the dignity of your profession to act as steward of the rum; but if you were only to distribute it out after prayers you would have them all about you.' He liked the thought, undertook the task, [71] and, with the help of a few hands to measure out the liquor, executed it to satisfaction, and never were prayers more generally and more punctually attended."

This kind of humorous good sense, was one of the marked peculiarities of his character; there was lurking wit and humor in all his acts, and in his gravest essays, of which his epigrammatic letter to his old friend Strahan, the king's printer, is a notable example.

The old house in which Franklin spent his boyhood is now a long distance from the water, and in the midst of a wilderness of brick and granite buildings, but he speaks of it as near the shore, and it was close by that he built the little wharf of stolen stones, which induced his father to impress upon him the great truth that "that which was not honest could not be truly useful."

Where the young apprentice lived when he was boarded out by his brother, and first "went in" to vegetarianism, we have not been able to ascertain; and, on his flight from Boston, in his seventeenth year, he does not appear to have remained long enough in New-York to have had a home. The first place he slept in, in Philadelphia, was a quaker meeting-house; but his first home in the city which he afterwards rendered famous, from having resided in it, was at a public house in Water-street, known as the Crooked Billet; not a very significant sign to us of the present generation.

Wherever Franklin went, or in whatever new sphere he applied himself to business, he immediately inspired confidence in his ability, and gained friends, as all able men do. The runaway boy of seventeen had hardly begun to put Bradford's printing office in order when he was called upon by Colonel French, and Sir William [72] Keith, governor of the province, who invited him to a tavern, offered him a bottle of Madeira, and proposed to set him up in business; yet he was not of a glib tongue and a prepossessing appearance.

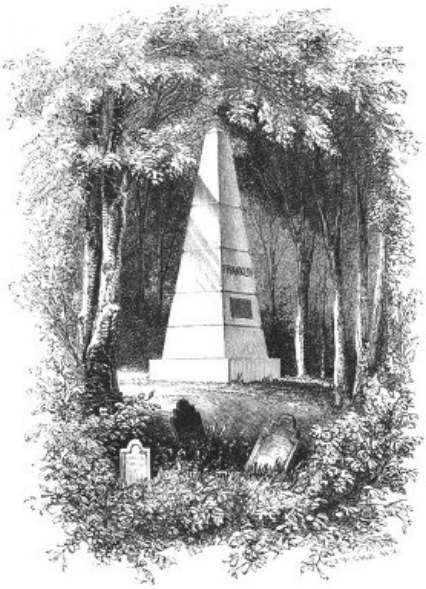
At the age of eighteen he made his first voyage to London, and lived in Little Britain with his friend Ralph at a cost of three shillings and sixpence a week. Franklin worked in Palmer's famous printing house in Bartholomew Close, near a year, and for the first and only time of his life was improvident and extravagant, spending his earnings at plays and public amusements, and neglecting to write to Miss Read in Philadelphia, with whom he had "exchanged promises." He worked diligently, though, and during that time wrote and published "A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain," This essay gained him the friendship of an author who took him to the Horns, a pale ale-house, introduced him to Dr. Mandeville and promised him a sight of Newton. He afterwards removed to lodgings in Duke-street, and occupied a room up three pairs of stairs, which he rented of a widow, who had an only daughter, with whom he used to sup on half an anchovy, a very small slice of bread and butter, and half a pint of ale between them. He remained eighteen months in England, and returned to Philadelphia with the expectation of entering into mercantile business with his friend Denman.

It was during his voyage from London to Philadelphia that he wrote out the plan for regulating his future conduct, which, he says, he had adhered to through life. The plan has not been preserved, but we have the life which was conformed to it, and can easily conceive what it was.

Fortunately for mankind his friend Denman died soon after the return of Franklin to Philadelphia, whereby his [73] mercantile projects were frustrated, and he was compelled to return to his trade of printing; he was just turned of twenty-one, and not finding employment as a merchant's clerk, he undertook the charge of his former employer's printing office. Here his inventive genius was taxed, for he had to make both types and ink, as they could not be procured short of London. He also engraved the copper plates, from his own designs, for the paper money of New Jersey, and constructed the first copper plate press that had been seen in the country. He could not long remain in the employment of another, and, before the end of the year, had established himself in business as a printer, in partnership with his friend Meredith. His life now commenced in earnest, he was his own master, and held his fortune in his own hands; he had already discerned "that truth, sincerity, and integrity, were of the utmost importance to the felicity of life;" and day by day his genius ripened and his noble character was developed. In the year 1730, he was married to Miss Read, and laid the foundation of the Pennsylvania Library; the first public library that had been commenced in the country. The two succeeding years of his life were not marked by any striking event, but they were, perhaps, the two most important in his history, as during that time he schooled himself to virtue by a systematic course of conduct, the particulars of which he has given in his biography. At the end of this period he commenced his "Poor Richard's Almanac," the publication of which was continued by him twenty-five years. It was the first successful attempt in authorship on this side of the Atlantic. His first "promotion," as he calls it, meaning his first public employment, was on being chosen Clerk of the General Assembly; and the next year he was [74] appointed Postmaster at Philadelphia. His private business all the time increased; he founded societies for philosophical purposes; continued to publish his paper; wrote innumerable pamphlets; was elected colonel of a regiment; invented his stove, and engaged in all manner of beneficial projects; he established hospitals and academies, made treaties with the Indians, became Postmaster General, and after devising means for cleaning the streets of Philadelphia, turned his attention to those of London and Westminster.

Grave of Franklin, Philadelphia.

But, it is with the "Homes" of Franklin that our limited space must be occupied, and not with his life and [75]
actions. Although he occupied, at various times, almost as many different houses as there are headquarters of Washington, yet there are few of them now left; living always in cities, the houses he inhabited have been destroyed by the irresistible march of improvement. In his fifty-first year, he was sent to London by the General Assembly to present a petition to the king, and to act as the agent of Pennsylvania in England. He sailed from New-York and arrived in London in July, 1757, and at this point of his life his autobiography ends. From an original letter of his in our possession, written on the eve of his departure from Philadelphia, he directs that letters must be sent to him in London at the Pennsylvania Coffee House, in Birchin Lane, where he doubtless lived on his first arrival, but his permanent home in London, during fifteen years, was at Mrs. Stevenson's in Craven-street. He travelled much in Great Britain and on the continent, was present at the coronation of George III., and returned to America in 1762, having stopped awhile at Madeira on the voyage. He went to England again in 1764, and after a brilliant and most serviceable career abroad, returned to his native home in season to sign his name to the Declaration of Independence, giving a greater weight of personal character, and a more potent popular influence to the cause than any other of the immortal participators in that glorious act. He died in the year 1790, on the 17th of April, at 11 o'clock at night, in his 85th year, in his house in Market-street, Philadelphia, which he had built for his own residence. His remains lie by the side of his wife's, in the burying ground of Christ Church, covered by a simple marble slab, in [76]
conformity with his directions. There is a small granite pyramid in the Granary burying ground in Boston, which the economical citizens make do double duty, as a memorial of the greatest name of which their city can boast, and a monument to his parents.



Franklin's Monument, Boston.

Jefferson. [77]

[78]

Sir Monticello in Virginia. May 20. 24.

The construction of the University of Virginia, in which we have been some time engaged, having occasioned us to charge mr Appleton of Leghorn with several successive commissions for articles we want, I have been indebted to him for the advantage of passing our remittances and letters thro' you. and I have found the passages you have been so good as to give them so safe and expeditious that I am induced to repeat the liberty by asking your transmission of the inclosed; a liberty indeed which must be from time to time renewed, as we shall have repeated remittances and communications to make him for a year or two to come. postages &c. will of course find their place in the acc^{a}. of remittances. I must therefore ask your indulgence for the present trouble, adding assurances of my thankfulness as well as of my great esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson

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[79]

Monticello, Jefferson's Residence.

JEFFERSON.

JEFFERSON would have been a notable man in any country and any age, because he possessed both genius and character. Without the former he could never have succeeded, as he did, in moulding the opinions of his contemporaries and successors, and without the latter, he would not have been, as he was, bitterly hated by his enemies and cordially loved by his friends. His genius, however, was not of that kind which in the ardor of its inspiration intoxicates the judgment; nor was his character, on the other hand, of the sort which moves an [80] admiration so profound, unquestioning and universal, as to disarm the antagonism its very excellence provokes. There was enough error and frailty, therefore, mingled with his eminent qualities both of mind and heart, to involve him in seeming contradictions, and to expose his life to double construction and controversy. At the same time, it has happened to him as it has often happened in human history, that the hostility awakened by his acts during his life, has dwindled with the lapse of time, while his fame has grown brighter and broader with every renewal of the decisions of posterity. No man, we may now safely say, who has figured on the theatre of events in this country, with the single exception of Washington, occupies a larger share of the veneration of Americans.

He was born at Shadwell, in Albemarle county, Virginia, in 1743. His father, dying when he was twelve years of age, left him a large inheritance. He was educated at the College of William and Mary, studied law under the celebrated George Wythe, began the practice of it in 1767, and in 1769 was chosen a member of the provincial legislature, where his first movement—an unsuccessful one—was for the emancipation of the slaves. But a greater question soon engrossed his mind. Already a spirit of opposition had been excited in the colonies to the arbitrary measures of the parliament of Great Britain,—that very legislature was dissolved by the Governor, in consequence of the sympathy displayed by its leading members with the patriotic proceedings of Massachusetts,—it appealed to the constituency, and was triumphantly returned,—and then in 1773, its more active spirits organized, in a room of a tavern at Raleigh, a system of correspondence, designed [81] to inflame the zeal and unite the efforts of the colonists against the encroachments of power. As a result of this activity, a convention was called in Virginia for the purpose of choosing delegates to a more general Congress. Jefferson was a member of it, but not being able, on account of ill-health, to attend, drew up a paper on the Rights of British America, which the convention did not adopt, but which it published; "the leap he proposed," as he says, "being too long for the mass of the citizens,"—and which Edmund Burke in England caused to run through several editions. The pamphlet procured him reputation, and the more honorable distinction of having his name placed in a bill of attainder, moved in one of the houses of Parliament. Thus early was he identified with the champions of liberty in the new world.

In 1775, Jefferson took his seat for the first time in the Continental Congress, whither he carried the same decided and liberal tone which had marked his legislative efforts. He was soon appointed on the most important committees, and especially on that, which, on the motion of the delegates of Virginia, was raised to prepare a Declaration of Independence for the colonies. It was a measure carried only after a strenuous and hot debate, but it was finally carried by a large majority; and to Jefferson was assigned the task, by his associates, of preparing the document destined to inaugurate a new era in the history of mankind. How he executed the duty the world knows; for this paper became the charter of freedom to a whole continent; and annually to this day, millions of people read it with gratitude, reverence, joy, and praise to God. For a second time, then, we behold our Jefferson, a chosen champion of liberty, linking his name, not with a bill of attainder [82] this time; but with the most signal event in the destiny of his country,—and one, second to none in the political fortunes of humanity.

The Declaration proclaimed, Mr. Jefferson retired from his place in the Congress to resume his seat in the legislature of his native State; where, an imperfect Constitution having been adopted, during his absence, he was immediately involved in the most indefatigable labors for its reform. In connection with Wythe, Mason, Pendleton, and Lee, he prepared no less than 136 different acts, from which were derived all the most liberal features of the existing laws of the Commonwealth. They laid the foundation, in fact, of the code of Virginia,—as a mere monument of industry, they were a most extraordinary work, but when we consider the importance of some of the principles of legislation which they introduced, sufficient in themselves to have immortalized the name of any man. Among these principles, were provisions for the abrogation of the laws of entail and primogeniture, for the establishment of religious freedom, for a complete amelioration of the criminal code, including the abolition of capital punishments in all cases, except of treason and murder, for the emancipation, at a certain age, of all slaves born after the passage of the act, for the division of the counties into wards and towns, and the establishment thereby of free municipal institutions, and for the introduction of a system of popular education, providing for schools in each town, academies in each county, and a University for the State. The three first were carried into effect; but the others, in consequence of his personal absence on other duties, failed. But what a different destiny would have been that of Virginia if they had not failed! [83] How intrepid, too, the mind which could conceive and urge such measures at that time! Society in Virginia was then divided into three classes, the land and slave-owners, the yeomanry, and the laboring people. Jefferson was by birth and position of the first class, but his chief associations had been among the second class, while his sympathies were with the third class, or rather with all classes. Had his suggestions been adopted, these distinctions would have been destroyed, and Virginia raised to the first place among the free nations of the earth. Thus, for a third time, we find Jefferson among the foremost advocates of the liberty and advancement of the people.

In 1779 he was chosen the successor of Patrick Henry, as the Governor of the State; but war having been declared, and a military invasion being at hand, he resigned the position on account of his want of military talents, in favor of General Nelson. He had barely time to escape with his family before the enemy entered his house. Congress twice solicited him to go abroad, first to negotiate a peace, and then a treaty of alliance and commerce with France, but as "the laboring oar," in his own language, "was at home," it was not until the year 1782, when the assurance that a general peace would be concluded, became stronger, that he consented to quit his country. The preliminary articles of a peace, however, were received before the time of his departure, and the objects of his mission being thus accomplished, he was again chosen to Congress in 1783.

The great question then, was the formation of a better government for the colonies, than the weak and ill-jointed confederation of the time had afforded. Jefferson was prepared to enter into its discussion with ardor, [84] bringing to the task that keen sagacity and that stern republican spirit, which were among his chief characteristics, when he was joined to Adams and Franklin in a commission for negotiating treaties of commerce with foreign nations. He arrived in Paris in June of 1785. His practical insight into affairs, his vast information, and his determined will, made him a valuable acquisition even to the distinguished abilities of his colleagues. His labors were incessant, and yet he found time to participate, as far as his diplomatic functions allowed, in the stirring and brilliant scenes then going forward on the theatre of Europe. The part that he had performed in the great battles for liberty in America, attracted towards him the regards and the confidence of all the prominent actors of the revolutionary drama of France. It was at his house that the patriots most frequently met; it was in his house that the Declaration of Rights which preceded the first French Constitution was drafted; it was at his house that the First Constitution was proposed; it was from him that Lafayette received many of his best and noblest impulses, and to him that the earlier leaders of the struggle looked for sympathy, concurrence, and direction. In after years, in the bitter political contests of the day, it was a topic

of reproach that he was under French influence, but the truth was, as some one has sagaciously remarked, that the French had been brought under an American influence. He simply continued to be abroad what he had always been at home, the pioneer and consistent friend of popular rights,—the unflinching supporter of popular liberty.

It was during this interval of absence in Europe, that the controversy in respect to a better constitution of government for the colonies, to which we have just alluded, was brought to a head. There had always been a [85] substantial union between them, founded upon contiguous geographical position and their common interests, as well as their community of origin, languages, laws and religion, which the common danger of the Revolution had served to strengthen and cement. But as yet their political union was inchoate and fragile. It was a simple improvement upon the classical confederacies of history, such as had prevailed in ancient Greece, on the plains of Etrusca, before Rome was, among the dikes of Holland, or along the declivities of the Swiss Alps,—and such as Montesquieu and the accepted writers praised as the perfection of political arrangement, clear of all defects, and secure from foreign violence and domestic weakness. Yet, in the practice of the New World, it had not justified the praises of the theorists, for a fatal vice, an alarming and radical weakness had been developed in its want of due centripetal force. In other words, it was rather a conglomerate than a united whole, and the difficulty of the new problem which it raised consisted in the proper adjustment of the federal and central with the State and local authority. Parties were, of course, immediately formed on the question of the true solution of it, the one favoring a strong central power, taking the name of Federalist; and the other, disposed to adhere to the separate sovereignty and independence of the States, taking the name of Anti-Federalist. In the end, the Constitution actually adopted, a work only second in importance to the Revolution itself, or more properly the constructive completion of it, was a compromise between the two, although the original parties still maintained their relative positions, as the friends and foes of a preponderating general government.

Jefferson inclined to the anti-federalists, but not being in the midst of the debate, was scarcely mingled with [86] its more exciting quarrels. It is hard to say, what shape, or whether a different shape at all, would have been given to the instrument of union, had he been at home to take part in its formation. We think it probable, however, that his immense personal influence, combined with his sharp forecast and decentralizing tendency, would have succeeded in modifying its more aristocratic and conservative features, especially in regard to the absorbing power of the Executive and the irresponsible tenure of the Judiciary. Be that as it may, the choice of him by Washington, in 1789, for the post of the first Secretary of State, gave him an opportunity of exercising his talents and manifesting his disposition, in the organization of the new experiment.

There were two antagonisms which he found it necessary at the outset to meet; first, the tendency to federal absorption, and second, the reliance upon law rather than liberty, both embodied in the person of Alexander Hamilton, the Secretary of the Treasury, a man of genius, of energy, of sincere convictions, and the confidant of Washington. The two men were, therefore, speedily self-placed in strong opposition. Hamilton had been educated in a military school, he admired the British Constitution, and, though he was an earnest patriot, as his efficient services in the war, and his masterly vindications of the Constitution had proved, he cherished a secret distrust of the people. Jefferson, on the other hand, had sympathized all his life with the multitude, approved, or rather had anticipated, the French philosophy, which was then in vogue, disliked the English models of government, and was sanguine of the future. It was inevitable, consequently, that the opposition of [87] such men, both able, both decided, both earnest in their plans, should widen into an almost irreconcilable hostility. In 1793, Jefferson resigned, but not until, by his reports to Congress on the currency, the fisheries, weights and measures, and by his correspondence with foreign ministers, he had placed his department on a level with the Foreign Offices of the older nations. It is to him that we are indebted for our decimal coinage, and through him, as Mr. Webster, a competent and not too friendly judge, has confessed, our diplomatic intercourse was raised to a dignity and strength which will bear comparison with any that other governments can produce.

In 1797 Jefferson was called from his retirement to act as Vice-President of the United States,—a place of not much practical efficiency, but which he illustrated by compiling a manual of Parliamentary Practice, which has ever since been the standard by which the proceedings of legislative bodies in this country are regulated. There was no position, indeed, which he does not appear to have been able to turn to some advantage to his country and his fellow-men.

At the close of his term as Vice-President, he was chosen President,—a choice in which a final blow was given to the doctrines of Federalism, and the democratic republic finally inaugurated. We shall not, however, enter into the contests of that period, nor attempt to detail the measures of his administration. They are subjects for history, not for an outline like this we sketch. Suffice it to say, that the aspirations of the people were not disappointed by the results of his action. He rescued the functions of government from the improper direction which had been given to them, he organized strength through simplicity, he almost doubled the territory of [88] the Union, he caused the vast regions of the west, now the seat of populous empire, to be explored, he gave us character abroad, and maintained tranquillity at home,— and, last of all, against the solicitation of his friends, with a popular prestige that would have carried him in triumph through a third or fourth term of office, even to the close of his days, he consecrated for ever the example of Washington, by resigning, as that great man had done, at the end of eight years.

These are the simple facts of Jefferson's active career, and they need no comment. They present a character obviously too transparent to allow of much mistake. All his life points to a few simple but great objects. By his sanguine temperament, his keen insight, his quick and cherishing sympathies, his strong love of justice, his kindly visions of the future, he was made a democrat; and, under no circumstances could he have been any thing else. He hated tyranny, he loved truth, and he was not afraid of man; how then could he avoid becoming what he was, the apostle of freedom, author of the Statutes of Virginia and the Declaration of Independence, founder of the republican party, a name of power to future generations which have scarcely yet come up to the greatness and breadth of his enlightened opinions? Errors of conduct he may have committed, for who is

perfect? impracticable views he may have enunciated, for who is all-wise? but the glory of his achievements is an imperishable remembrance of his countrymen, illustrating their history to all nations and to all times. "A superior and commanding intellect," it has been eloquently said, "is not a temporary flame burning brightly for a while, and then giving place to returning darkness. It is rather a spark of fervent heat, as well as radiant [89] light, with power to enkindle the common mass of human mind; so that when it glimmers in its own decay, and finally goes out in death, no night follows, but it leaves the world all light, all on fire, from the potent contact of its own spirit."

The retirement of Mr. Jefferson at Monticello was passed in the cultivation of his estate, in the pursuit of letters, in cheerful intercourse with friends, in the duties of a liberal hospitality, and in advancing his favorite project of a University of Virginia. His notes on Virginia, and his contributions to scientific periodicals, together with his extensive correspondence, had brought him to the acquaintance of the most distinguished scientific men of the world, and his eminent political services had made him known to statesmen. His house was, therefore, always thronged with visitors, who, attracted by his fame, were charmed by his conversation, astonished by his learning, and warmed into love by the unaffected kindliness of his deportment. A beautiful retirement, full of grandeur, of simplicity, of dignity and repose! A patriarch of the nation which he had helped to found, and which he lived to see in a condition of unparalleled advancement,—illustrious in two hemispheres,—his name connected with events that introduced a new era in the history of his race,—surrounded by the grateful admiration of growing millions of people; his old age was passed in the serenest contentment, amid the blandishments of literature and science, the interchanges of friendly offices, and in useful labor in the library or on the farm.

Monticello, which is the name which Mr. Jefferson had given to his home, was built in one of the most enchanting regions of Virginia. "It seemed designed by nature," says a writer, "as the very seat from which, [90] lifted above the world's turmoil, one who has exhausted what it can bestow of eminence, might look down, withdrawn from its personal troubles, but contemplating at leisure the distant animation of the scene. It was a place scarcely less fit for the visionary abode of the philosophic speculatist, than by its far-spread and shifting beauties of landscapes to inspire a poet with perpetual delight." On a spire of the romantic Blue Ridge, whose varying outlines stretch away from it till they are lost to the sight, with a sylvan scene of unsurpassed loveliness in the vale below, the quiet Rivanna meandering through rich fields on one side, the pleasant village of Charlotteville dotting the other, while the porticoes and domes of the University rise in the distance behind, it overlooked a combination of natural pictures that are rarely found in one spot.

"The country," says the visitor we have just quoted, "is not flat, but a gently waving one; yet, from above and afar, its inequalities of surface vanish into a map-like smoothness, and are traceable only in the light and shade cast by hill and plain. The prospect here has a diameter of near a hundred miles: its scope is therefore such that atmospheric effects are constantly flickering over it, even in the most cloudless days of a climate as bright if not quite so soft as that of Italy; and thus each varying aspect of the weather is reflected, all the while, from the features of the landscape, as the passions are over the face of some capricious beauty, that laughs, and frowns, and weeps almost in the same breath. Near you, perhaps, all is smiling in the sunlight; yonder broods or bursts a storm; while, in a third quarter, darkness and light contend upon the prospect, and [91] chase each other. The sky itself is thus not more shifting than the scene you may have before you. It takes a new aspect at almost every moment, and bewitches you with a perpetual novelty."

The mansion of the philosopher was placed on the top of an eminence commanding this beautiful scene. It was somewhat fantastic in its architecture, owing to the additions and rebuildings that had been constantly going on, to adapt it to the enlarged wants and changing tastes of the occupant, but it was spacious, richly furnished and commodious. The rarest treasures of literature adorned the library, and indeed every part bore witness to the affluence and cultivated pursuits of the venerable sage. A farm of some fourteen thousand acres lay about among the hills, which was laboriously and carefully husbanded, and which gave employment in various ways to a number of artificers and mechanics, whose dwellings were distributed about the slopes. His estate, in short, was a small and almost independent community in itself, capable of supplying the ordinary needs and even the luxuries of a highly civilized condition of social existence. As a proof of this, we may state by the way, that the carriage of the proprietor, as well as many of the tools and implements in daily use, had been manufactured on the premises. But the wonder of the place was the library, which was not only extensive, but extensively rich in its rare possessions, which the master had seduously collected during his long residence abroad from every nook and corner of Europe. Unfortunately many of these books, afterwards presented to Congress, were burned in the conflagration of the Capitol. Of the man himself, a guest, who was any thing but an admirer, has left this record.

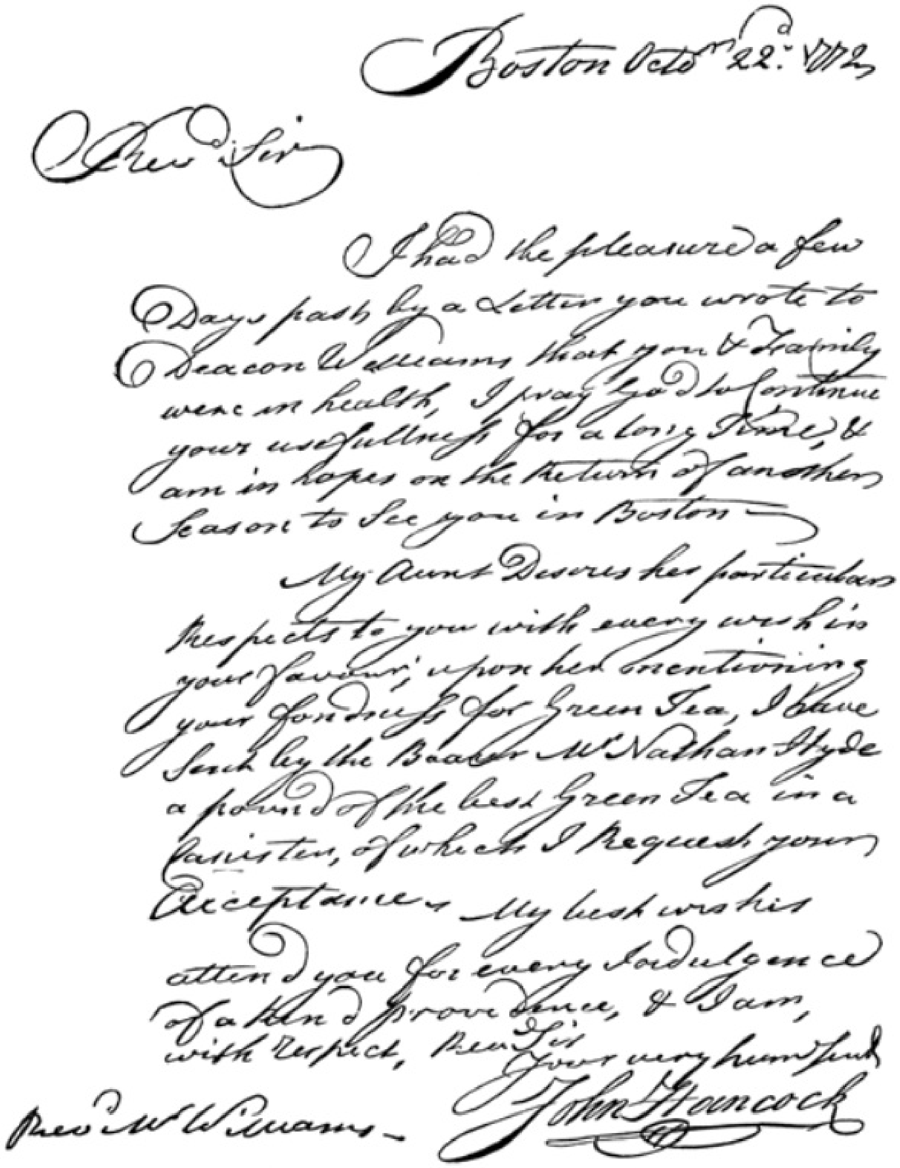
"Dressed, within doors, as I saw him last, no longer in the red breeches, which were once famous as his [92] favorite and rather conspicuous attire; but still vindicating by a sanguine waistcoat his attachment to that Republican color; in gray shorts, small silver kneebuckles, gray woollen stockings, black slippers, a blue body-coat, surmounted by a gray spencer; tall, and though lithe of person and decidedly graceful and agile of motion and carriage, yet long and ill-limbed, Mr. Jefferson's figure was commanding and striking, though bad, and his face most animated and agreeable, although remarkably ugly. His legs, by no means shunned observation; yet they were scarcely larger at the knee than in the ankle, and had never been conscious of a calf. Still, though without strength, they had always borne him along with vigor and suppleness. These bodily qualities and a health almost unfailing, he preserved, in a singular degree, to the very close of his long life. At the time I speak of, when he was in his eighty-first year, he not only mounted his horse without assistance and rode habitually some ten miles a day, but, dismounting at a fence breast-high, would leap over it, by only placing his hand on the topmost rail. He walked not only well and swiftly, but with a lightness and springiness of tread, such as few young men even have. It was a restless activity of mind, which informed all this unusual mobility of body; and the two, I think, were, in him, greatly alike. For his intellect had, like his person, more size than shape, more adroitness than force, more suppleness than solidity, and affected its ends by continuity of action not mass of power, by manipulation not muscularity. You may batter to pieces with a small hammer that which a cannon-ball would not shiver. He was never idle: nay, hardly a moment still. He rose early and [93]

was up late, through his life; and was all day, whenever not on foot or a-horse-back, at study, at work, or in conversation. If his legs and fingers were at rest, his tongue would sure to be a-going. Indeed, even when seated in his library in a low Spanish chair, he held forth to his visitors in an almost endless flow of fine discourse, his body seemed as impatient of keeping still as his mind, it shifted its position incessantly, and so twisted itself about that you might almost have thought he was attitudinizing. Meantime, his face, expressive as it was ugly, was not much less busy than his limbs, in bearing its part in the conversation, and kept up, all the while, the most speaking by-play, an eloquence of the countenance as great as ugly features could well have. It stood to his conversation like the artful help of well-imagined illustrations to the text of a book: a graphic commentary on every word, that was as convincing to the eyes as was his discourse to the ears. The impression which it conveyed was a strong auxiliary of all he uttered: for it begat in you an almost unavoidable persuasion of his sincerity."

Jefferson's conversation is described as the most agreeable and brilliant of his day; but was it this which gave him his personal power? He was not in other respects a man of any pre-eminent personal qualities; he did not possess commanding military skill; he was no orator, having seldom spoken in public; and though a good writer, he was not particularly distinguished in that line. His conversation, therefore, may have helped him in acquiring a mastery of the minds of men; but the real secret of his success consisted in two things—in his general superiority of intellect, and in his rich, generous, noble intuitions. He saw the truths and spoke the words, which the world wanted to see and hear, at the right time—a little in advance of his generation, but not [94] too much in advance so as to "dwarf himself by the distance." His sympathetic genius beat responsive to the genius of his age. His instincts were the instincts of the men of his day; more decided and pronounced than theirs, but still recognized as a prophecy of what they felt the deepest and wanted the most. All the talent, all the cunning, all the selfish calculation of the world could not have enabled him to reach the heights which he attained by the simple and consistent utterance of his nature. He conquered, as Emerson says in speaking of the force of character over and above mere force of some special faculty, because his arrival any where altered the face of affairs. "Oh, Iole, how did you know that Hercules was a God?" "Because," answered Iole, "I was content the moment my eyes fell upon him. When I beheld Theseus, I desired that I might see him offer battle, or at least guide his horses in the chariot race; but Hercules did not wait for a contest; he conquered whether he stood or walked, or sat, or whatever thing he did."

Happy in his life, Jefferson was no less happy in his death, for he went peacefully to rest on the fiftieth anniversary of the great day which he had done so much to make great, the Jubilee of our national freedom,—when the shouts of the people, as they ascended from the innumerable vales, to his receding ears, must have sounded as a prelude to the swelling voices of posterity.

Hancock. [95]



Boston Octo.r 22.d 1772

Rev.d Sir

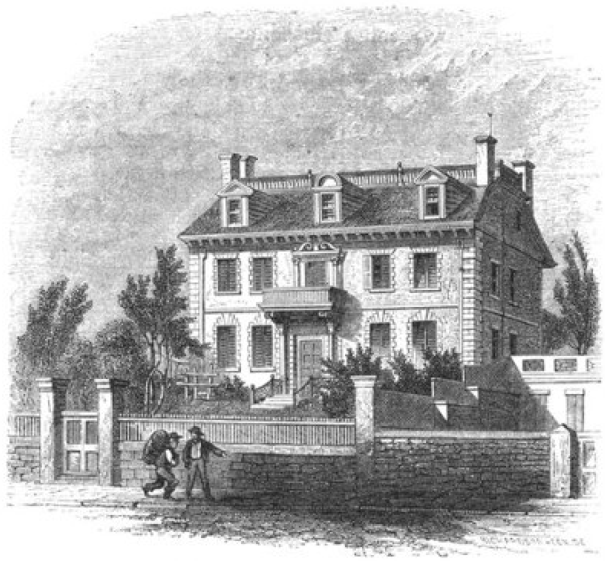
I had the pleasure a few Days past, by a Letter you wrote to Deacon Williams that you & Family were in health, I pray God to Continue your usefullness for a long Time, & am in hopes on the Return of another Season to See you in Boston —

My Aunt Desires her particular Respects to you with every wish in your favour; upon her mentioning your fondness for Green Tea, I have Sent by the Bearer Mr Nathan Hyde a pound of the best Green Tea in a Canister, of which I Request your Acceptance. My best wishes attend you for every Indulgence of a kind Providence, & I am, with respect, Rev.d Sir

Your very hum. Serv.t

John Hancock

Rev.d Mr Williams —



Hancock House, Boston.

HANCOCK.

In the mouths of the people of New England, and indeed throughout the United States, the name of John Hancock has become a household word. In the State of Massachusetts, where he was born, lived, and died, and in the affairs of which he took, for five-and-twenty years, so very active and leading a part, he enjoyed a degree and a permanence of popularity never yet obtained by any other man. And yet we may observe and the

same thing may be noted in other and more recent instances—a remarkable fact that deserves to be pondered [98]
—that his high degree of popularity was not at all dependent upon any peculiar embodiment or manifestation on his part of the more prevailing and characteristic traits of the community about him. Indeed the popular favor which Hancock enjoyed would seem to have been determined, as the attachment of individuals so often is, and as has happened also in other notable instances, rather by the attraction of opposites.

And yet Hancock's line of descent was such as might naturally enough have inspired the expectation of finding in him a good many more marks of the old puritan temper and manners than he ever exhibited. From the days of the first settlement of New England, down to the period of the Revolution and afterwards, the "ministers" constituted a sort of clerical nobility, enjoying a very high degree of influence and consideration; and it is to forefathers of that order, that a large part of the most distinguished and influential New England families may trace their origin. The elder sons of these ministers, commonly, and the younger ones often, were educated to the profession of their fathers, long regarded in New England as the most certain road to distinction, whether spiritual or temporal. But as the demand for ministers was limited, and as their families were generally pretty large, many of their sons found it necessary to engage in the avocations of civil life, in which they not uncommonly attained to wealth and high social positions. Yet, for the most part, however zealous and successful they might be in the pursuit of temporal objects, they still continued to exhibit pretty evident marks of their clerical descent and breeding in a certain stiff, cold, and austere gravity, if not, indeed, in a certain sanctimonious air even in the very act of concluding the very tightest and sharpest of bargains;—all the [99]
attributes, in fact, comprehensively and impressively conveyed to an inhabitant of New England by the title of *Deacon*, which office, as if still clinging to the horns of the altar, they often filled; thus becoming pillars and supports of that church of which their fathers had been the candlesticks.

The grandfather of John Hancock, himself called John, was for more than fifty years, as if by a sort of vaticination of the future, minister of Lexington, near to Concord; thus associating with that of Hancock another name, now to all American ears so familiar as the scene of the first revolutionary bloodshed. We are told by a biographer of this first John Hancock, that he possessed "a facetious temper," but in the grim old portrait which still hangs on the walls of his grandson's family mansion-house, very small traces of facetiousness appear; and so far as physiognomy goes, we should be rather inclined to look to his grandmother, to whose accompanying portrait the artist has given a fine open countenance, with something of a magnificent and voluptuous style of beauty, for the source of those social qualities and captivating manners by which their famous grandson was distinguished. The minister of Lexington had two sons, both also ministers, one of whom became his father's colleague. The other, the father of our John Hancock, was settled at Braintree, near Boston, in that part of it which now constitutes the town of Quincy; and it was here that in the year 1737 our John Hancock was born, only a short distance from the birth-place of John Adams, who was some two years his senior. The old house in which the future patriot first saw the light was destroyed by an accidental fire previous to the Revolution; and the land on which it had stood coming subsequently into the [100]
possession of John Adams, he presented it to the town of Quincy as a site for a future academy.

At the age of six or seven years, the young John Hancock was left without a father; but in his uncle, Thomas Hancock, he found a guardian and protector, who not only loved him, but was able to assist him. Thomas Hancock early in life had been placed as an apprentice to a Boston stationer, and had afterwards set up in that line of business for himself: but subsequently extending the sphere of his operations, he became one of the most eminent and successful merchants of New England. As he had no children, he adopted, as his own, his young nephew, whose affable and joyous temper had not failed to make him dear to his uncle, as they did to so many others; and having sent him to Harvard College, where he graduated at the early age of seventeen, he took him afterwards into his counting-house to be initiated into the mysteries of merchandise; and in due season admitted him as a partner. It was, perhaps, as well on business as for pleasure, or general improvement, that the young Hancock visited England, whither he went in company with the returning Governor Pownall, whose taste for social enjoyment was similar to his own, and where he saw the funeral of George II. and the coronation of George III., little thinking at that moment how active a part he was himself soon to take in curtailing the limits of the British monarchy, and in snatching from the young king's crown its brightest jewel.

Thomas Hancock, the uncle, died in 1764, leaving behind him a fortune amassed by his judicious and successful mercantile enterprises, of not less than $350,000, one of the largest ever acquired in Boston, up to [101]
that time, though small in comparison with several of the present day, when even ten times as much may be produced by combined good fortune, tact, and perseverance. Thomas Hancock bestowed by his will some considerable legacies for charitable purposes, among others a thousand pounds to Harvard College to endow a professorship of oriental languages, being thus, as the historian of the college assures us, the first native American to endow a professorship in any literary institution;—but the great bulk of his fortune he bequeathed to his favorite nephew, $250,000 at once, and a reversionary interest in $100,000 more, of which his widow was to enjoy the use during her life.

Thus in 1764, at the early age of twenty-seven, and just upon the eve of the commencement of the revolutionary disputes with the mother country, John Hancock came into possession of one of the largest fortunes in the province.

Yet, though this large estate was an instrument and a stepping-stone, without the help of which Hancock would never have attained to that social and political distinction which he coveted and enjoyed so much, yet without his rare personal gifts and accomplishments it would have been wholly unavailing to that end; and so far from qualifying him, would have disqualified him, as it did so many other of the rich men of that time, for playing the conspicuous part he did in political affairs. Though for some time after his uncle's death he continued in business as a merchant, there were others who knew much better than he how to increase estates, already in the popular estimate—especially considering the use made of them—quite too large. Indeed, his business operations do not seem to have had mainly or primarily in view the making of money; for [102]
though he started new enterprises, going largely into ship-building, it was rather, at least so Hutchinson

insinuates, as a politician than as a capitalist, looking more to the number of people he employed, and the increase thereby of his influence and popularity, than to the enlargement of his already plentiful fortune. There were others also who knew much better than he how to keep what they had, at least as they thought, men who used no less economy in spending their money than they or their fathers had done in acquiring it. But although the rich man who keeps his capital entire, and even increasing, is, in some sense, certainly a public benefactor, yet the fountain that overflows, sending forth a copious stream which the thirsty passers-by are all free to drink from, or at least to look at, is always more joyfully seen and more pleasingly remembered —even though it does run the risk of some time running dry—than the deep well, whose water is hardly visible, and which, though quite inexhaustible, yet for want of any kind of a bucket that can be made to sink into it, or any rope long enough to draw such a bucket up, is very little available to the parched throats of the fainting wayfarers, who, in the spirit and with the feelings of Tantalus, are thus rather disposed to curse than to bless it.

To be able to make money is, at least in New England, a very common accomplishment, to be able to keep it not a rare one; but very few have understood so well as Hancock did, how to make the most of it in the way of spending it, obtaining from it, as he did, the double gratification of satisfying his own private inclinations, at the same time that he promoted his political views by the hold that he gained on the favor and good-will of his [103
fellow-citizens.

He possessed, indeed, in a degree, those tastes which wealth is best able to gratify, and to the gratification of which it is most essential. In the very face and eyes of the puritanical opinions and the staid and ultra-sober habits of New England, he delighted in splendid furniture, fine clothes, showy equipages, rich wines, good dinners, gay company, cards, dances, music, and all sorts of festivities. Nothing pleased him so much as to have his house full of guests to share with him in these enjoyments, and few were better qualified, by winning manners, graceful and affable address, a ready wit, a full flow of spirits, and a keen enjoyment of the whole thing, to act the part of master of the feast. But while thus luxuriously inclined, he had no disposition for gross debauch: and the presence of ladies at all his entertainments, while it seemed to give to them a new zest, banished from his house that riotous dissipation into which mere male gatherings are so certain to sink; and which in times past, in New England, made the idea of gross dissipation almost inseparable from that of social enjoyment, nor even yet is the distinction between them fully apprehended by every body.

Among other property which Hancock had inherited from his uncle, was a stone mansion-house, still standing, and now in the very centre of the city of Boston, but which then was looked upon as quite retired and almost in the country. This house, which was built about the year that Hancock was born, fronts eastwardly on Boston Common, since so elaborately improved and converted into so beautiful a park, with its gravel walks, trees, and smooth-shaven lawns, but which was then a *common* in the old English sense of the word, a [104
common pasture for the cows of the neighbors, and a training field for the militia, with very few improvements except a single gravel walk and two or three rows of trees along Tremont-street. This house was situated a little west of the central and highest summit of that triple hill, which had early acquired for the peninsula of Boston the name of Trimountain,—since shortened into Tremont, and preserved in the name of the street above mentioned, which central summit was, from an early period, known as Beacon Hill, a name preserved in that of Beacon-street. This name was derived from the use to which this highest central summit had been put from a very early period—materials being always kept in readiness upon the top of it for kindling a bonfire, as a means of alarming the country round in case of invasion or other danger. After having been a good deal graded down, this summit is now occupied as a site for the State House, which, with its conspicuous dome, crowns and overlooks the whole city.

It was in this mansion-house of his uncle's, which seems as if by a sort of attraction to have drawn the State House to its side, that Hancock continued to live except when absent at Philadelphia in attendance on the Continental Congress; and not content with its original dimensions, to afford more room for his numerous guests, he built at one end of it a wooden addition, since removed, containing a dining-room, dancing-hall, and other like conveniences. It was here Hancock, assisted by his amiable and accomplished wife, who entered into all his tastes and feelings, and who contributed her full share to give expression and realization to them, presided over so many social dinner parties and gay assemblages, dressed out, both host and guests, in that [105
rich costume which Copley, who was one of Hancock's near neighbors, loved so well to paint, and of which his pencil has transmitted to us so vivid an idea. Nor did he show himself abroad with less display than he exhibited at home, his custom being to ride on public occasions in a splendid carriage drawn by six beautiful bays, and attended by several servants in livery.

While the public attention was thus drawn upon him by a display which at once attracted and gratified the eyes of the multitude, whose envy at that time there was less fear than now of exciting, and by a generous and free hospitality, the more captivating for not being either indigenous or common, the part which Hancock took in the rising disputes with the mother country converted him into that popular idol, which he continued to be for the remainder of his life; and which, to one so greedy as he was of honor and applause, must have been in the highest degree gratifying. It is indeed not uncommon to depreciate the public services of such men as Hancock, by ascribing all to vanity and the love of distinction; as if without the impulse of these motives any great efforts would be made to serve the public! Worthy indeed of all honor are those men in whom these impulses take so honorable a direction; and happy the nation able to purchase such services at so cheap a rate!

In 1766, two years after his uncle's death, Hancock was chosen, along with James Otis, Samuel Adams, and Thomas Cushing, one of the four representatives from Boston to the General Court. The seizure, two years after, of his sloop Liberty, for alleged violations of the revenue laws, in evading the payment of duties on a cargo of wine imported from Madeira, closely and personally identified him with the resistance then making [106
throughout the colonies to the attempt to collect a revenue in America by parliamentary authority alone. This seizure led to a riot which figures in all the histories of that period, by which the commissioners of the customs were driven from the town, and in consequence of which two or three British regiments were ordered

to Boston—the first step on the part of the mother country towards a military enforcement of the authority which she claimed. Hancock felt personally the consequences of this riot, in a number of libels or criminal informations filed against him in the Court of Admiralty, to recover penalties to the amount of three or four hundred thousand dollars, for violations of the revenue laws. "It seemed," writes John Adams in his Diary, and he had ample opportunity to know, for he was retained as Hancock's counsel, "as if the officers of the court were determined to examine the whole town as witnesses." In hopes to fish out some evidence against him; they interrogated many of his near relations and most intimate friends. They even threatened to summon his aged and venerable aunt: nor did those annoyances cease till the battle of Lexington, the siege of Boston, and the expulsion of the British from that town shut up the Admiralty Court, and brought the prosecution, and British authority along with it, to an end.

At the commencement of the disputes with the mother country, the sentiment against the right of parliament to impose taxes on the colonies had seemed to be almost unanimous. The only exceptions were a few persons holding office under the crown. The rich especially, this being a question that touched the pocket, were very loud in their protests against any such exercise of parliamentary authority. But as the dispute grew more [107
warm and violent, threatening to end in civil commotions, the rich, not doubting that the mother country would triumph in the end, and fearing the loss of their entire property in the attempt to save a part of it, began to draw back; thus making much more conspicuous than ever the position of Hancock as a leader of the popular party. Indeed there was hardly a wealthy man in Boston, he and Bowdoin excepted, both of whom had not accumulated but inherited their property, who did not end with joining the side of the mother country. And the same thing may be observed of Massachusetts, and indeed of New England generally. Of all the larger and better-looking mansion-houses, of eighty years old and upwards, still standing in the vicinity of Boston, of which the number is considerable, there are very few that did not originally belong to some old tory who forfeited his property out of his very anxiety to preserve it. Hancock's acceptance of the command of the company of cadets or governor's guard, whence the title of colonel by which for some time he was known; his acting with that company as an escort, at the funeral of Lieutenant-Governor Oliver, who was very obnoxious to the patriots; his refusing to go all lengths with Samuel Adams in the controversy with Hutchinson as to the governor's right to call the General Court together, elsewhere than in Boston; and the circumstance that although he had been several times before negatived as a member of the council, Hutchinson had at length allowed his name on the list of counsellors proposed by the General Court; these and perhaps some other circumstances excited indeed some suspicions that Hancock also was growing lukewarm to the popular cause. But these he took care to dissipate by declining to sit as counsellor, by acting as orator at the Anniversary of [108
the Boston Massacre, and by accepting, not long after, an appointment as one of the delegates to the Continental Congress. The oration above alluded to, delivered in March, 1774, and which Hancock's enemies pretended was written for him by Dr. Cooper, was pronounced by John Adams, who heard it, "an eloquent, pathetic, and spirited performance."

"The composition," so he wrote in his diary, "the pronunciation, the action, all exceeded the expectation of every body. [These last were certainly not Cooper's.] They exceeded even mine, which were very considerable. Many of the sentiments came with great propriety from him. His invective, particularly against a preference of riches to virtue, came from him with a singular dignity and grace." A passage in this oration, which was afterwards printed, on the subject of standing armies, gave great offence to the British officers and soldiers by whom the town continued to be occupied, and not long after Governor Gage dismissed Hancock from his command of the company of cadets; whereupon they disbanded themselves, returning the standard which the governor on his initiation into office had presented to them.

The sensibilities of the British officers and soldiers being again excited by some parts of an oration delivered the next year by Dr. Warren, on the same anniversary, a few weeks before the battle of Lexington, a military mob beset Hancock's house and began to destroy the fences and waste the grounds. Gage sent a military guard to put a stop to their outrages.

But it was no longer safe for Hancock to remain in such close contiguity to the British troops. He was president of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, which, in consequence of the act of parliament to [109
modify the charter of that province, had lately assumed to themselves the power of the purse and the sword. He was also president of the provincial committee of safety, which, under authority of the Provincial Congress, had begun in good earnest to prepare for taking arms for the vindication of those rights which the men of Massachusetts claimed under the now violated and (so far as parliament had the power) abrogated Charter of the province. Under these circumstances, Hancock abandoned his house, which was subsequently occupied by Lord Percy as his headquarters; and at the time of the march of the British troops for Concord, he was living at Lexington, in company with Samuel Adams. Indeed it was supposed that one of the objects of this march was to seize the persons of those two patriots, to whom Gage seemed to point as the authors of the collision at Lexington by the issue of a proclamation, in which pardon was offered to all who, giving over their late traitorous proceedings, would furnish proof of their repentance and of their renewed allegiance to their king, by submitting to the authority of his duly appointed governor, and of the late act of parliament: but from this pardon John Hancock and Samuel Adams were excepted, their offences being too flagrant to be passed over without condign punishment.

Before the issue of this proclamation, Hancock had already proceeded to Philadelphia, where the famous Continental Congress of 1775 was already in session, composed, to a great extent, of the same members with its predecessor of the year before, but of which he had been chosen a member in place of Bowdoin. He was a fluent and agreeable speaker, one of those who, by grace of manner, seem to add a double force and weight to all which they say; yet in that illustrious assembly there were quite a number, including John Adams, from his [110
own State, compared with whom he could hardly have claimed rank as an orator. There were also in that assembly several able writers; the state papers emanating from whose pens were compared by Chatham to the ablest productions of the republican ages of Greece and Rome; but Hancock was not one of those. There were men of business there who undertook, without shrinking, all the Herculean labors of organizing the army and navy, the treasury and the foreign office of the new confederation—but neither in this line does Hancock

appear to have been greatly distinguished. And yet it was not long before, by his appointment as president of that body, he rose to a position in Continental affairs, no less conspicuous than that which we have seen him exercising in those of his own province. Circumstances led indeed to this situation, quite apart from Hancock's personal qualifications, and yet had he not possessed those qualifications in a high degree, he would never have had the opportunity of immortalizing himself as he has done by his famous signature at the head of the Declaration of Independence,—a signature well calculated to give a strong impression with those who judge of personal character by handwriting, of the decided temper and whole-hearted energy of the man. Virginia, as the most populous and wealthy of the colonies, had received the compliment of furnishing the President of the Congress of 1774; and Peyton Randolph—a planter and lawyer, an elderly gentleman of the old school, formerly attorney general of that province, and in Governor Dinwiddie's time, sent by the Assembly on a special message to England, to complain of the governor for the fees he exacted on patents of land—had been first selected for that distinguished station. He had again been chosen as President of the new Congress; but [111
being also speaker of the Virginia House of Burgesses, and that body having been called together by Lord Dunmore, in what proved to be its last meeting, to consider Lord North's conciliatory propositions, it became necessary for Randolph to return home. His place in Congress was filled, in compliance with an arrangement previously made by the House of Burgesses, by no less distinguished a successor than Thomas Jefferson; but in filling up the vacant seat of President of Congress, during what was then regarded as but the temporary absence of Randolph, it was natural enough to look to Massachusetts, the next province to Virginia in population and wealth, no ways behind her in zeal for the cause, and, as the result proved, far her superior in military capabilities. Nor among the delegates present from Massachusetts, was there any one who seemed, on the whole, so well fitted for the station, or likely to be at all so satisfactory to the delegates from the other States, as John Hancock. Had James Bowdoin been present, he would perhaps have been more acceptable to the great body of the members than Hancock, as being less identified than he was with violent measures. But though chosen a delegate to the first Congress, the sickness of Bowdoin's wife had prevented his attendance; and the same cause still operating to keep him at home, John Hancock had been appointed, as we have mentioned, in his place. Of Hancock's four colleagues, all of whom were older men than himself, Samuel Adams certainly, if not John Adams also, might have disputed with him the palm of zeal and activity in the revolutionary cause; but not one of them risked so much as he did, at least in the judgment of his fellow-
members from the middle and southern provinces, who were generally men of property. He alone, of all the [112
New England delegates, had a fortune to lose; and while his wealthy southern colleagues looked with some distrust upon the Adamses, regarding them perhaps a little in the light, if we may be pardoned so coarse an illustration, of the monkey in the fable, who wished to rake his chestnuts out of the fire at the risk and expense of other people's fingers, no such idea could attach to Hancock, who, in point of fortune, had probably as much to lose as any other member, except perhaps John Dickinson—for the wealthy Charles Carrol, of Maryland, had not a seat in the Congress. At the same time Hancock's genial manners and social spirit, seemed to the members from the southern and middle provinces to make him quite one of themselves, an associate in pleasure and social intercourse, as well as in business; while the austere spirit and laborious industry of the Adamses threatened to inflict upon them the double hardship of all work and no play. But while the moderate members found, as they supposed, in the fortune which Hancock had at stake a pledge that he would not hurry matters to any violent extremes; the few also most disposed to press matters to a final breach, were well satisfied to have as president, one who had shown himself in his own province so energetic, prompt, decisive, and thorough.

Yet Hancock's colleagues, and the members generally from New England, never entirely forgave the preference which had been thus early shown to him; and upon many of the sectional questions and interests which soon sprung up, and by which the Continental Congress was at times so seriously belittled and so greatly distracted, Hancock was often accused of deserting the interests of New England, and of going with [113
the southern party. The internal and secret history of the Continental Congress or rather of the temporary and personal motives by which the conduct of its members, as to a variety of details, was influenced, remains so much in obscurity that it is not easy to ascertain the precise foundation of those charges, reiterated as they are in letters and other memoirs of those times; but on the whole, no reason appears to regard them otherwise than as the natural ebullition of disappointed partisanship against a man, who, in the struggle of contending factions and local interests, strove to hold the balance even, and who did not believe, with Samuel Adams and some others, that political wisdom was limited to New England alone.

The President of Congress, in those times, was regarded as the personal representative of that body and of the sovereignty of the Union; and in that respect filled, to a certain degree, in the eye of the nation and of the world, the place now occupied by the President of the United States, though sharing, in no degree, the vast patronage and substantial power attached to the latter office. In his capacity of personal representative of the nation the President of Congress kept open house and a well-spread table, to which members of Congress, officers of the army, attachés of the diplomatic corps foreign and domestic, distinguished strangers, every body in fact who thought themselves to be any body—a pretty large class, at least in America—expected invitations; whereby was imposed upon that officer pretty laborious social duties, in addition to his public and political ones, which were by no means trifling. All these duties of both classes, Hancock continued to discharge with great assiduity and to general satisfaction, for upwards of two years and a half, through a [114
period at which the power and respectability of the Continental Congress was at its greatest height, before the downfall of the paper money and the total exhaustion of the credit of the nation at home and abroad had reduced the representative of the sovereignty of the nation to a pitiful dependence on the bounty of France, and upon requisitions on the States, to which very little attention was paid. Feeling all the dignity of his position, Hancock took one of the largest houses in Philadelphia, where he lived in profuse hospitality, and all upon advances made out of his own pocket. After his day, it became necessary for Congress to allow their president a certain annual stipend out of the public treasury to support the expenses of his household. In Hancock's time, this was not thought of; and it was not till near the close of the war, after the precedent had been established in the case of his successors, that he put in any claim for the reimbursement of his expenses.

There is a story, that Hancock, when chosen President of Congress, blushed and modestly hung back, and was

drawn into the chair only by the exertion of some gentle force on the part of the brawny Harrison, a member from Virginia, and afterwards governor of that State. And yet, according to John Adams, Hancock was hardly warm in his seat when he aspired to a much more distinguished position. He expected to have been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the American armies, and displayed in his countenance, so Adams says in his Diary, the greatest vexation and disappointment when Washington was named for that station. It is certain that he had some military aspirations, for he wrote to Washington shortly after his assumption of command, requesting that some place in the army might be kept for him, to which Washington replied with compliments [115
at his zeal, but with apprehension that he had no place at his disposal worthy of Colonel Hancock's acceptance. Not long after his return to Boston, his military ardor revived. He procured himself to be chosen a major-general of the Massachusetts militia, and he marched the next summer (1778) at the head of his division to join the expedition against Newport, in which the French fleet and troops just arrived under D'Estaing, a detachment from Washington's army under Sullivan, Greene, and La Fayette, and the militia from the neighboring States were to co-operate. But D'Estaing suffered himself to be drawn out to sea by the English fleet, which had appeared off Newport for that express purpose, and after a slight running engagement, the fleet, while struggling for the weather gauge, were separated by a violent storm, in which some of D'Estaing's ships were dismasted and others greatly damaged, so that he judged it necessary to put into Boston to refit. The American army meanwhile had crossed to Rhode Island, and established itself before Newport, but as Count D'Estaing could not be persuaded to return, it became necessary to abandon the island, not without a battle to cover the retreat. With this expedition, Hancock's military career seems to have terminated; but on arriving at Boston, he found ample work on hand better adapted perhaps to his talents than the business of active warfare. Sullivan, of a hot and impetuous temper, and excessively vexed at D'Estaing's conduct, was even imprudent enough to give expression to his feelings in general orders. It was like touching a spark to tinder, and the American army before New-York, which shared the general's feelings, encouraged by his example, "broke out," so Greene wrote to Washington, "in clamorous strains." The same [116
disappointment was bitterly felt also at Boston; for the British occupation of Newport had long been an eyesore to New England, occasioning great expense in keeping up militia to watch the enemy there, and in projects for their expulsion; and the prevailing dissatisfaction at the conduct of the French admiral soon found expression in a serious riot between the populace of the town and the sailors of the French fleet, threatening to revive all those violent prejudices against the French, fostered in the colonies for near a hundred years, and which the recent alliance with France had glossed over indeed, but had not wholly subdued. Upon this occasion, Hancock exerted himself with zeal and success to prevent this ill-temper, which had broken out between the classes least accustomed to restrain their feelings or the expression of them, from spreading any higher. He opened his house to the French officers, who, delighted at the opportunity of social enjoyment and female society, kept it full from morning till night, and by his "unwearied pains," so La Fayette wrote to Washington, did much to heal the breach which Sullivan's imprudence had so dangerously aggravated. On this occasion, at least, if on no other, Hancock's love of gayety, and of social pleasures, proved very serviceable to his country.

During his absence at Philadelphia, his popularity at home had undergone no diminution, and he soon resumed, as a member of the council, on which since the breach with Gage the executive administration had devolved, a leading influence in the State administration; and when at last, after two trials, a constitution was sanctioned by the people, he was chosen by general consent the first governor under it. This was a station of vastly more consideration then than now. Under the old confederation, at least after the Continental [117
Congress, by the exhaustion of its credit and the repudiation of its bills, had no longer money at command, the States were sovereign in fact as well as in words; while all that reverence which under the old system had attached to the royal governors, had been transferred to their first republican successors. Since that period the State governments have sunk into mere municipalities for the administration of local affairs, and all eyes being constantly turned towards Washington, the executive offices of the States, even the station of governor, are no longer regarded except as stepping-stones to something higher.

Hancock discharged his office as governor to good acceptance for five years, when he voluntarily retired, making way for James Bowdoin, who might be regarded in some respects as his rival, the head of a party, perhaps more intelligent, and certainly far more select, than that great body of the population by whom Hancock was supported; but whom, so at least his opponents said, he rather studied to follow than aspired to lead. During Bowdoin's administration, occurred Shays' insurrection, one of the most interesting and instructive incidents in the history of Massachusetts, but into the particulars of which we have not space here to enter. This insurrection, of which the great object was the cancelling of debts, an object which the States now practically accomplish by means of insolvent laws, was thought to involve, either as participators more or less active, or at least as favorers and sympathizers, not less than a third part of the population of the State. The active measures taken at Bowdoin's suggestion for putting down the insurgents by an armed force, and the political disabilities and other punishments inflicted upon them after their defeat, did not at all tend to [118
increase Bowdoin's popularity with this large portion of the people. Though Hancock's health had not allowed him to take his seat in the Continental Congress, to which he had again been chosen a delegate, and by which he had, in his absence, been again selected as their president—yet, weary of retirement, he suffered himself to be brought forward as a candidate, and to be elected as governor over Bowdoin's head—a procedure never forgiven by what may be called the party of property, against which the insurrection of Shays had been aimed, whose members thenceforth did not cease, in private at least, to stigmatize Hancock as a mere demagogue, if not indeed almost a Shaysite himself. Nor indeed is it impossible, that the governor, with all his property, had some personal sympathies with that party. He, like them, was harassed with debts, which, as we have seen in the case of the college, he was not much inclined, and probably not very able, to bring to a settlement. He still had large possessions in lands and houses in Boston, but at this moment his property was unsalable, and to a considerable extent unproductive; and a stop law might have suited his convenience not less than that of the embarrassed farmers in the interior, who had assembled under the leadership of Shays to shut up the courts and put a stop to suits. This scheme, however, had been effectually put down prior to Hancock's accession to office, and it only remained for him to moderate, by executive clemency, the penalties inflicted on the suppressed insurgents—a policy which the state of the times and the circumstances of the case very loudly

demanded, however little it might be to the taste of the more imperious leaders of the party by which those penalties had been inflicted. But even this same party might acknowledge a great obligation to Hancock for [119
the assistance which they soon after obtained from him in securing the ratification by Massachusetts of that federal constitution under which we now so happily live. Still governor of the State, he was chosen a delegate from Boston to the State convention, called to consider the proposed constitution: and though incapacitated by sickness from taking his seat till near the close of the session, he was named its president. The federal constitution had been already ratified by five States, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, and Connecticut. But Virginia, New York, and North Carolina, were known to be strongly against it, and its rejection by Massachusetts would, in all probability, prevent its acceptance by the number of States required to give it effect. The convention was very equally divided, and the result hung long in doubt. At last Hancock came upon the floor and proposed some amendments, principally in the nature of a bill of rights, agreed to probably by concert out of doors, to be suggested for the approval of Congress and adoption by the States under the provision for amendments contained in the constitution, and most of which were afterwards adopted. Thus sweetened, the constitution was fairly forced down the reluctant throat of the convention; and unlike the typical book of St. John, though so bitter in the mouth, it has fortunately proved sweet enough and very nourishing in the digestion.

On the occasion of Washington's visit to Boston, subsequently to his inauguration as President, a curious struggle took place between him and Hancock, or perhaps we ought rather to say, between the Governor of Massachusetts and the President of the United States, on a question of etiquette. Hancock, as Governor of [120
Massachusetts, insisted upon the first call, a precedence which Washington, as President of the United States, refused to yield. Finding himself obliged to succumb, Hancock's gout and other complicated diseases served him for once in good stead; for in the note which he finally sent, announcing his intention to wait upon Washington, they answered as a convenient excuse for not having fulfilled that duty before.

Some two or three years after, we find Governor Hancock, out of deference to the puritanical opinions and laws of the State, involved in another noticeable controversy, but one into which he could not have entered with any great heart. Shortly after the adoption of the federal constitution, a company of stage-players had made their appearance in Boston, and though the laws still prohibited theatrical exhibitions, encouraged by the countenance of the gayer part of the population, they commenced the performance of plays, which they advertised in the newspapers as "Moral Lectures." Some of their friends among the townsfolks had even built a temporary theatre for their accommodation, a trampling under foot of the laws, which seemed the more reprehensible as the legislature, though applied to for that purpose, had twice refused to repeal that prohibitory statute. "To the legislature which met shortly after," we quote from the fourth volume of Hildreth's History of the United States, "Governor Hancock gave information that 'a number of aliens and foreigners had entered the State, and in the metropolis of the government, under advertisements insulting to the habits and education of the citizens, had been pleased to invite them to, and to exhibit before such as attended, stage-plays, interludes, and theatrical entertainments, under the style and appellation of Moral Lectures.' All which, [121
as he complained, had been suffered to go on without any steps taken to punish a most open breach of the laws, and a most contemptuous insult to the powers of government. Shortly after this denunciation by the governor, suddenly one night, in the midst of the performance of 'The School for Scandal,' the sheriff of the county appeared on the stage, arrested the actors, and broke up the performances. When the examination came on, having procured able counsel (one of whom, if we mistake not, was the then young Harrison Gray Otis), the actors were discharged on the ground that the arrest was illegal, the warrant not having been sworn to. This error was soon corrected, and a second arrest brought the performances to a close. But the legislature, finding that the sentiment of the town of Boston was strong against the law, and that a new and permanent theatre was in the course of erection, repealed the prohibitory act a few months after."

This temporary triumph over the poor players was one of the last of Hancock's long series of successes; unless indeed we ought to assign that station to the agency which he had in procuring the erasure from the federal constitution of a very equitable and necessary provision, authorizing suits in the federal courts against the States by individuals having claims upon them. At such a suit, brought against the State of Massachusetts, Hancock exhibited a vast deal of indignation, calling the legislature together at a very inconvenient season of the year, and refusing to pay the least attention to the process served upon him. Yet the Supreme Court of the United States, not long after, decided that such suits would lie, as indeed was sufficiently plain from the letter of the constitution. But the sovereign States, with all the insolence customary to sovereigns, whether one- [122
headed or many-headed, scorned to be compelled to do justice; and the general clamor raised against this reasonable and even necessary provision, caused it to be ultimately struck from the constitution.

Before this was accomplished, Hancock's career of life was over. Worn down by the gout and other aristocratic diseases, which the progress of democracy seems, since his time, to have almost banished from America, he expired at the early age of fifty-six, in the same house in which he had presided over so many social and political festivities, lamented by almost the entire population of the State in whose service he had spent the best part of his life, and whose faithful attachment to him, spite of some obvious weaknesses on his part, had yet never flagged.

Had we space and inclination, many lessons might be drawn from the history of his life. We shall confine ourselves to this one, which every body's daily experience may confirm: that success in active life, whether political or private, even the attainment of the very highest positions, depends far less on any extraordinary endowments, either of nature or fortune, than upon an active, vigorous, and indefatigable putting to use of such gifts as a man happens to have. What a difference, so far as name and fame are concerned, and we may add, too, enjoyment and a good conscience, between the man who puts his talent to use and him who hoards it up, so that even its very existence remains unknown to every body but himself and his intimate friends.

[123

[124

Amsterdam May 29 1781

My dear Son

I am two Letters, I believe in your Debt, but I have been too busily engaged, to be able to write you.

I am pleased with the divisions of your time, which you tell your Brother you have lately made, which appears to be a judicious distribution of Study and Exercise, of Labour and Relaxation.

But I want to have you, upon some higher Authors than Xheedus and Nipos. — I want to have you upon Demosthenes. — the plainer Authors you may learn yourself at any time. — I absolutely insist upon it, that you begin upon Demosthenes and Cicero — I will not be put by. — You may learn Greek from Demosthenes and Homer as well as from Isocrates and Lucian — and Latin from Virgil and Cicero as well as Xhaedus and Nepos. —

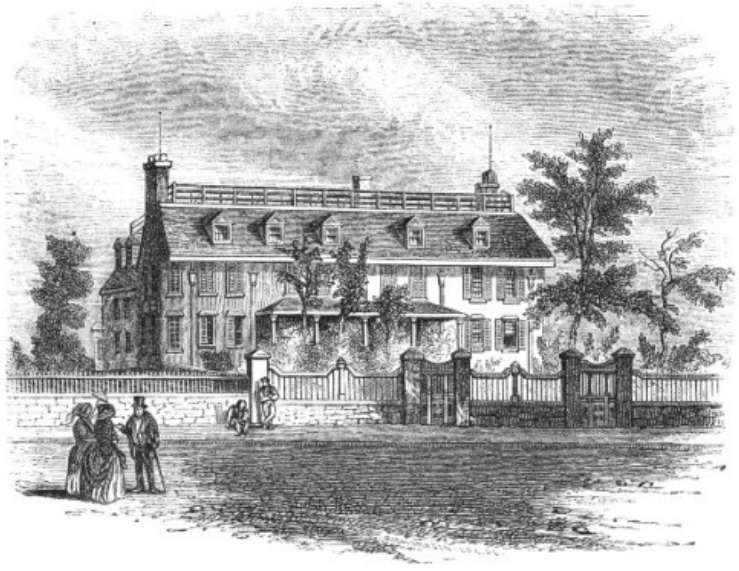
What should be the Cause of the aversion to Demosthenes in the World I know not, unless it is because his Sentiments are wise and grand, and he teaches no frivolities. —

If there is no other Way, I will take you home and teach you Demosthenes and Homer myself.

I am your affectionate Father

John Adams.

[125



Residence of the Adams Family, Quincy, Mass.

JOHN ADAMS.

"Oh that I could have a home! But this felicity has never been permitted me. Rolling, rolling, rolling, till I am very near rolling into the bosom of mother earth."

Thus wrote the venerable John Adams to his wife, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the last of his Presidency. A few years previous he had uttered the same sigh, nor is it infrequent in his letters. "I am weary, worn, and disgusted to death. I had rather chop wood, dig ditches, and make fence upon my poor little farm. Alas, poor farm! and poorer family! what have you lost that your country might be free! and that others might [126
catch fish and hunt deer and bears at their ease!"

This was written in the days when there was such a thing as genuine patriotism; when, as in the noble Greek and Roman years, there lived among us also noble men, who freely surrendered all that life offered them of sweet and splendid, to work for their fellows, and to exalt their country's state, content that old age should find them poor in fortune and broken in health, so only that integrity remained, and a serene conscience led them undisturbed to the end of life.

Among these former glories of our Republic, the name of John Adams stands in the clearest sunlight of fame. No purer patriot ever lived. The names which dazzle us in history become no fables when read by his light; Plutarch tells no nobler story, records no greater claims; Athens and Sparta smile upon him from their starry places, and Rome holds out her great hand of fellowship to him—for there is no virtue which has lived that may not live again, and our own day shows that there has never been a political corruption so base as to despair of being emulated.

Concerning the civil life of such a man, much might with ease be written. The head and front of every great political movement of his country, from his thirtieth year to the day of his death he lived no obscure life, and was missed from no contest. "The great pillar of support to the Declaration of Independence," as Jefferson called him, its fearless and eloquent defender, the right hand of his country's diplomacy, and the strength of her treaties, he is a portion of her history and his acts are her annals. But this devotion to the great political struggles of his time was not consistent with home delights. These he was to scorn and to live laborious days. [127
Early immersed in the stirring events of his day, he surrendered to the duty of serving, all private claims; he gave up his profession, he separated himself from his wife and children to go wherever he could be useful; he abandoned a mode of life most dear to him; and leaving his little Sabine farm and his friendly books, with no hopes of personal aggrandizement, and small, unjoyous prospect of success in the venture he was aiding, went out to fight. His first act of importance, a worthy beginning to such career, was his defence of Preston, in the famous trial for the murder of certain citizens of Boston by British soldiers, in 1770. Preston was the captain of the British troops stationed in Boston, and under government orders. As may easily be imagined, in the uneasy state of public feeling, exasperated by real injuries and petty tyrannies, suspicious, discontented and spurred on by men who circulated a thousand injurious reports, the people and the foreign soldiery were ready at any moment to break out into open quarrel. Finally, this did indeed happen. The soldiery, provoked beyond endurance, resisted the assaults of the people, and fired upon them. Captain Preston was arrested and imprisoned; five citizens had been killed and many wounded, and it was with difficulty that the people were restrained from rising into furious rebellion. Preston was taken to prison to await his trial, but it was for a time impossible to obtain counsel, so great was the hatred of the people to the soldiery, and so strong the feeling that no man would be safe from violence who would attempt to defend these foreigners for the murder of his own fellow-citizens. John Adams—then a rising lawyer in Boston, and a man who had already given hints of coming greatness—was sent for by the unfortunate captain, who begged him to undertake his cause. "I had [128
no hesitation in answering," says Adams in his autobiography, "that counsel ought to be the very last thing that an accused person should want in a free country; that the bar ought, in my opinion, to be independent and impartial at all times, and in every circumstance, and that persons whose lives were at stake ought to have the counsel they preferred. But he must be sensible this would be as important a cause as was ever tried in any court or country in the world; and that every lawyer must hold himself responsible, not only to his country, but to the highest and most infallible of all tribunals, for the part he should act. He must therefore expect from me no art or address, no sophistry or prevarication in such a cause, nor anything more than fact, evidence, and law would justify." And a little after he tells us what it cost him to act up to his own standard of duty. "At this time I had more business at the bar than any man in the province. My health was feeble. I was throwing away as bright prospects as any man ever had before him, and I had devoted myself to endless labor and anxiety, if not to infamy and to death, and that for nothing, except what was and ought to be all in all, a sense of duty. In the evening, I expressed to Mrs. Adams all my apprehensions. That excellent lady, who has always encouraged me, burst into a flood of tears, but said she was very sensible of all the danger to her and to our children, as well as to me, but she thought I had done as I ought; she was very willing to share in all that was to come, and to place her trust in Providence."

Such were the politicians of that day; and though we do not doubt that private virtue as much abounds with us as with them, and that as great private sacrifices as this was public can be instanced in these later times, yet [129
no one will be so hardy as to say that any politician of this day would brave such hazards or so daringly face peril. Politics are become a trade with us. The curse of popular governments is this, that they make office desirable in proportion to the ease with which it is attained, and that seeking place becomes in time as legitimate a profession as seeking oysters. No one will so mock at common sense, or hold the judgments of his fellow spectators in such light esteem, as to aver that any one of our public men serves his country for his country's sake, or for any better reason than because it is conducive to bread and butter. Hence it is with us a jeer and a by-word to talk about patriotism. The fact seems to be, that our material prosperity is so great, our resources so boundless, our outlook so glorious, our liberty so well assured—or at least the liberty of those among us who are white—that there is no call for sacrifice and patriotic service. The country is rich and can well afford, if she will be served, to pay the servant; but we speak of devotion to principle, which we believe is clean gone out from us, and can be predicated of no public man.

John Adams, son of John Adams and Susannah Boylston Adams, was born at Quincy, Massachusetts, on the 19th day of October, 1735. He received the best education that the times afforded, graduated at Harvard College, and afterward commenced the study of divinity with a view to the ministry; at the same time he was occupied in teaching school, that universal stepping-stone in New England to professional life. Indeed, there was then hardly more than there is now any such thing as a schoolmaster by profession; and without doubt a

sufficing reason for the fact that our young men are so inefficiently educated, is, that the teachers are in nine [130
cases out of ten only one lesson in advance of their scholars. In those days, however, the schoolmaster was apt to be a person of some consequence. He held a position very often next in importance to that of the parson, and ruled an autocrat over his little flock of beardless citizens. Nowhere has he been better described than in "Margaret," in the character of Master Elliman, whose mingled pompousness, verbiage, and pedantry, admirably represent the class to which he belonged. But the character gradually lost its individuality as society advanced, until at length the great bulk of teachers, except in the colleges, were merely young men preparing for the learned professions.

The injurious effect of this state of things, which has made a very decided mark upon our national character, we will not discuss here, but it is well to note the differences between the manners of the colonial times, and those of our present day—and of these differences none is so striking as the great decrease of respect in which professional men are held with us compared with that which was yielded to them by our forefathers. With them the schoolmaster, the parson, the physician, the lawyer, were considered and treated as a sort of sacred nobility, apart from the vulgar, and wholly refusing admixture with them; they were placed in the seats of honor, and counted among counsellors; their company was sought by the wealthy and the educated, their acts were chronicled, and their words were echoed from mouth to mouth. In the streets, when the schoolmaster or minister appeared, the children at play drew up into a hurried line, took off their caps, made deferential bows and listened with humility to the greeting or word of advice. Nowadays, the Pope himself [131
would be hustled in an omnibus, and if Master Elliman were to appear in the streets and offer advice to the children, ten to one but that they would throw dirt at him. It was in the twilight which followed the departing day of these venerable times and preceded the coming on of these degenerate darker hours, that John Adams became a pedagogue. He was hardly at that age fit to be a teacher. He was thoughtful, ambitious and lofty in his aims, but he was also somewhat indolent and wanted persistency. It is true that his mind was hardly made up as to what he should do for a living. We have said that he began with studying for the ministry, but he tells us that he at one time read much in medical books, and inclined to the study of physic.[2]

Yet I imagine that his inclination to either of these professions was never very strong. His education at Cambridge, then the high seat of orthodoxy, and perhaps the advice of his parents, his father holding an office in the church government of his town of some importance at that day, may have led his mind in the direction of the ministry, and his studies in that line were very regular and persistent for some time. Surgery and medicine had probably merely the fleeting fascination for him which they have for multitudes of eager young [132
men, striving to pry into all the subtile secrets of nature, and to find out all the mysteries which environ us. But as he says of himself, "the law drew me more and more," and in his Diary under the date of Sunday, 22d of August, 1756, we have the following entry:—

"Yesterday I completed a contract with Mr. Putnam to study the law, under his inspection, for two years. I ought to begin with a resolution to oblige and please him and his lady in a particular manner; I ought to endeavor to please every body, but them in particular. Necessity drove me to this determination, but my inclination, I think, was to preach; however, that would not do. But I set out with firm resolutions, I think, never to commit any meanness or injustice in the practice of law. The study and practice of law, I am sure, does not dissolve the obligations of morality or of religion; and, although the reason of my quitting divinity was my opinion concerning some disputed points, I hope I shall not give reason of offence, to any in that profession, by imprudent warmth."

He now gave up his school, and somewhat changed his manner of life. Before we leave him let us hear his quaint description of the schoolboys of his day—not very different from the youngsters of 1853.

"15. Monday (1756).—I sometimes in my sprightly moments consider myself in my great chair at school, as some dictator at the head of a commonwealth. In this little state I can discover all the great geniuses, all the surprising actions and revolutions of the great world, in miniature. I have several renowned generals not three feet high, and several deep projecting politicians in petticoats. I have others catching and dissecting [133
flies, accumulating remarkable pebbles, cockle-shells, &c., with as ardent curiosity as any virtuoso in the Royal Society. Some rattle and thunder out A, B, C, with as much fire and impetuosity as Alexander fought, and very often sit down and cry as heartily upon being outspelt as Cæsar did, when at Alexander's sepulchre he recollected that the Macedonian hero had conquered the world before his age. At one table sits Mr. Insipid, foppling and fluttering, spinning his whirligig, or playing with his fingers, as gayly and wittily as any Frenchified coxcomb brandishes his cane or rattles his snuff-box. At another, sits the polemical divine, plodding and wrangling in his mind about "Adam's fall, in which we sinned all," as his Primer has it. In short, my little school, like the great world, is made up of kings, politicians, divines, L.L.D.'s, fops, buffoons, fiddlers, sycophants, fools, coxcombs, chimney-sweepers, and every other character drawn in history, or seen in the world. Is it not, then, the highest pleasure, my friend, to preside in this little world, to bestow the proper applause upon virtuous and generous actions, to blame and punish every vicious and contracted trick, to wear out of the tender mind every thing that is mean and little, and fire the new-born soul with a noble ardor and emulation? The world affords us no greater pleasure. Let others waste their bloom of life at the card or billiard-table among rakes or fools, and when their minds are sufficiently fretted with losses, and inflamed by wine, ramble through the streets, assaulting innocent people, breaking windows, or debauching young girls. I envy not their exalted happiness. I had rather sit in school and consider which of my pupils will turn out in his future life a hero, and which a rake, which a philosopher, and which a parasite, than change breasts with [134
them; though possessed of twenty laced waistcoats and a thousand pounds a year."[3]

One of the most interesting features of the early part of the "Diary" from which these extracts have been taken, is the perfect simplicity and truthfulness with which the writer details his efforts to attain steadfastness of purpose and diligence in study. He feels in moments of reflection the value of his time and the sacredness of duty; he makes the best resolutions, and concocts the wisest plans for improvement and the most liberal schemes of study; but his animal spirits, which flowed on in cheerfulness, even to his latest day of life, his social nature, and his admiration for women, all played sad pranks with his resolves, and drew out from him

many a repentant sigh over lost and wasted time. Yet this trouble ceases almost as soon as he begins to study law and gives up his uncertain dallyings with schoolkeeping, divinity, and medicine. Having once put his shoulder to the wheel, he worked with vigor, and began to show what greatness of character there was in him. Let it not be understood from what we have said, that John Adams was ever a seeker after low or vulgar pleasures. More than once in his "Diary" he ridicules the foolish, extravagant, licentious amusements of the young men of his time. Card-playing, drinking, backgammon, smoking, and swearing, he says are the fashionable means of getting rid of time, which excited in his mind only contempt. "I know not," he says, "how any young fellow can study in this town. What pleasure can a young gentleman who is capable of thinking, take in playing cards? It gratifies none of the senses, neither sight, hearing, taste, smelling, nor feeling; it can [135
entertain the mind only by hushing its clamors. Cards, backgammon, &c., are the great antidotes to reflection, to thinking, that cruel tyrant within us! What learning or sense are we to expect from young gentlemen in whom a fondness for cards, &c., outgrows and chokes the desire of knowledge?"

Up to the time of his commencing the study of law with Mr. Putnam, John Adams had resided in Braintree, sharing in the social intercourses of the place, its tea-parties, clubs of young men, visiting and receiving visitors, and all the common civilities of country life. On one occasion, we find him taking tea and spending the evening at Mr. Putnam's, in conversation about Christianity. This was at the time when Adams was studying divinity, and it is evident that he discussed religion and theological subjects with a good deal of interest, since we find that the talk at almost all these meetings turns in that direction. There seems to have been a decided leaning towards speculation and doubt in the minds of many men, on the subject of Christianity, at that day, and we frequently find their opinion very frankly expressed in the "Diary," and left almost without comment by the recorder. He was very fond of chatting with his neighbors over a social cup of tea, sometimes after a day spent in hard study, at other times resting from the fatigues of attending to little affairs about the farm, loading and unloading carts, splitting wood, and doing other chores. He is apt to be a little impatient with himself. He finds it easier to say before going to bed that he will rise at six than to get up when the hour arrives. Several days in the "Diary" bear for sole record—"Dreamed away this day," and once [136
when several had slipped by without any seeming good result, he writes—"Thursday, Friday. I know not what became of these days;" and again—"Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday. All spent in absolute idleness, or which is worse, gallanting the girls." The next day—"Tuesday. *Sat down and recollected my self*, and read a little in Van Muyden, a little in Naval Trade and Commerce."

And so the good seems always leading him on, always eluding him, and playing sad momentary havoc with his peace of mind. But he consents to no doubtful terms with the enemy. He determined to conquer the foes of sloth, inattention, social indulgence, and do his whole duty. With the responsibilities of time came the cure for youthful follies, and his marriage in the thirtieth year of his age, dealt the last fatal blow to all his enemies. In 1764 he thus writes:—

"Here it may be proper to recollect something which makes an article of great importance in the life of every man. I was of an amorous disposition, and, very early, from ten or eleven years of age, was very fond of the society of females. I had my favorites among the young women, and spent many of my evenings in their company; and this disposition, although controlled for seven years after my entrance into college, returned, and engaged me too much till I was married.

"I shall draw no characters, nor give any enumeration of my youthful flames. It would be considered as no compliment to the dead or the living. This I will say:—they were all modest and virtuous girls, and always maintained their character through life. No virgin or matron ever had cause to blush at the sight of me, or to regret her acquaintance with me. No father, brother, son, or friend, ever had cause of grief or resentment for [137
any intercourse between me and any daughter, sister, mother, or any relation of the female sex. These reflections, to me consolatory beyond all expression, I am able to make with truth and sincerity; and I presume I am indebted for this blessing to my education.

"I passed the summer of 1764 in attending courts and pursuing my studies, with some amusement on my little farm, to which I was frequently making additions, until the fall, when, on the 25th of October, I was married to Miss Smith, second daughter of the Rev. William Smith, minister of Weymouth, granddaughter of the Hon. John Quincy, of Braintree, a connection which has been the source of all my felicity, although a sense of duty, which forced me away from her and my children for so many years, produced all the griefs of my heart and all that I esteem real afflictions in life."[4]

In 1758, his term of study with Mr. Putnam being expired, John Adams left Worcester, having determined for several reasons not to settle there, but to establish himself, if possible, in Braintree, where his father and mother resided. They had invited him to live with them, and he says that as there had never been a lawyer in any country part of the county of Suffolk, he was determined to try his fortune there. His acquaintances told him that "the town of Boston was full of lawyers, many of them of established characters for long experience, great abilities, and extensive fame, who might be jealous of *such a novelty as a lawyer* in the country part of their county, and might be induced to obstruct me. I returned, that I was not wholly unknown to some of the most celebrated of those gentlemen; that I believed they had too much candor and generosity to injure a [138
young man; and, at all events, I could try the experiment, and if I should find no hope of success, I should then think of some other place or some other course." The result was that he established himself in Braintree, living at his father's house, and continuing his studies patiently and perseveringly until clients began to appear. He gives an amusing account of his first "*writ*," and chronicles its failure with a nonchalant stoicism which can hardly conceal his vexation at being laughed at by his acquaintances among the young lawyers of the town. His residence in Braintree seems to have been a pleasant one. He had much leisure for study and reading, and made good use of his time. He was acquainted with all the people of consequence in the town, and was, as we have said, fond of visiting, calling in to take a social pipe or glass, as was the fashion of the day, to chat with the wife or daughter of the house, to discuss with the head of the family the last political bubble of the hour, the prospect of the crops, the expediency of this or that proceeding in the village, or any of

the local topics of the day. Sometimes we find him with a knot of young fellows met together of an evening, discussing with one or two some question in morals or rhetoric, or sitting abstracted with a book or his pipe on one side the chimney, the room filled with smoke, the rest of the party engaged in card-playing, backgammon, or other sedative game. At another time, though somewhat later, he speaks of hearing "the ladies talk about ribbon, catgut, and Paris net, riding-hoods, cloth, silk, and lace;" and again he has a pleasant picture of taking tea at his grandfather Quincy's—"the old gentleman inquisitive about the hearing before the governor and council, about the governor's and secretary's looks and behavior, and about the final [139
determination of the board. The old lady as merry and chatty as ever, *with her stories out of the newspapers*." He had through life a serene equable mind, he took the kindness and unkindness of fortune with even looks, and preserved his relish for a joke undiminished, in all his circumstances. We have before us two portraits of John Adams painted, the one when about forty years of age, the other when he was ninety. The younger likeness is a face of remarkable beauty, the forehead broad, serene, and intelligent, the eyebrows dark and elegantly arched over a pair of eyes which we make no doubt did fierce execution among the young women of the period who came under their sparkling influence. The lips full, finely curved, and giving an expression of great sweetness to the face, are yet firmly set, and combine with the attitude of the head to convey an impression of haughtiness and dignity. The chin is full, rounded, and inclined to be double; the powdered hair and the stiff coat take away from the youthful appearance of the picture.[5] The other portrait is from an original by Gilbert Stuart, and was painted when John Adams was in his ninetieth year. At this time he was obliged to be fed from a spoon; yet no one, looking at this noble, vigorous head, with its fine color and magnificent forehead, would suppose his age so great. The beauty of the young man has grown into the fuller nobility of a face in which there appears no trace of any evil passion, no mark of any uneasy thought, but an undisturbed serenity that looks back on life and awaits death with the happiest memories and the gladdest [140
anticipations.

In 1768, Mr. Adams, by the advice of his friends, who were urgent with him, removed to Boston, and took the house in Brattle Square called the White House. His son, John Quincy Adams, was born the year before—his life commenced with the most stirring period of his country's history, and it was his good fortune to bring down to our times so clear a memory of those events as to make a conversation with him on the subject an era in the life of an American. Shortly after the removal of John Adams to Boston, he was requested to accept an office under government; but although it was offered to him without respect to his opinions, which were well known to be hostile to the British rule in Massachusetts, and although the office was very lucrative, yet he insisted on refusing it, because he feared that he should sacrifice his independence in some manner to the influences of the position. He therefore declined any connection with the government, and continued the practice of the law, which had now become the source of a very handsome income, and was leading him by rapid steps into a very wide and honorable repute.

Before leaving Braintree, John Adams had become accustomed to a great deal of exercise, riding horseback to Boston, Germantown, Weymouth, and other adjoining towns; cutting down trees, superintending planting and harvesting, and every way taking a good share of the work on his farm. Some of the pleasantest portions of the "Diary" are those in which he describes this part of his life. The following extract gives a moral picture of his habits:—

"October, 22. Friday. Spent last Monday in taking pleasure with Mr. Wibird. * * * * * [141
Upon this part of the peninsula is a number of trees, which appear very much like the lime tree[6] of Europe, which gentlemen are so fond of planting in their gardens for their beauty. Returned to Mr. Borland's,[7] dined, and afternoon rode to Germantown, where we spent our evening. Deacon Palmer showed us his lucerne growing in his garden, of which he has cut, as he tells us, four crops this year. The Deacon had his lucerne seeds of Mr. Greenleaf, of Abington, who had his of Judge Oliver. The Deacon watered his but twice this summer, and intends to expose it uncovered to all the weather of the winter for a fair trial, whether it will endure our winters or not. Each of his four crops had attained a good length. It has a rich fragrance for a grass. He showed us a cut of it in 'Nature Displayed,' and another of St. Foin, and another of trefoil. The cut of the lucerne was exact enough; the pod in which the seeds are is an odd thing, a kind of ram's-horn or straw.

"We had a good deal of conversation upon husbandry. The Deacon has about seventy bushels of potatoes this year on about one quarter of an acre of ground. Trees of several sorts considered. The wild cherry-tree bears a fruit of some value; the wood is very good for the cabinet-maker, and is not bad to burn. It is a tree of much beauty; its leaves and bark are handsome, and its shape. The locust; good timber, fattening to soil by its leaves, blossoms, &c.; good wood, quick growth, &c. The larch-tree; there is but one[8] in the country, that in [142
the lieutenant-governor's yard at Milton; it looks somewhat like an evergreen, but is not; sheds its leaves.

"I read in Thompson's Travels in Turkey in Asia, mention of a turpentine called by the name of turpentine of Venice, which is not the product of Venice, but of Dauphinè, and flows from the larch tree. It is thick and balsamic, and used in several arts, particularly that of enamelling.

"24. Sunday. Before sunrise.—My thoughts have taken a sudden turn to husbandry. Have contracted with Jo. Field to clear my swamp, and to build me a long string of stone wall, and with Isaac to build me sixteen rods more, and with Jo. Field to build me six rods more. And my thoughts are running continually from the orchard to the pasture, and from thence to the swamp, and thence to the house and barn, and land adjoining. Sometimes I am at the orchard ploughing up acre after acre, planting, pruning apple-trees, mending fences, carting dung; sometimes in the pasture, digging stones, clearing bushes, pruning trees, building to redeem posts and rails; and sometimes removing button-trees down to my house; sometimes I am at the old swamp burning bushes, digging stumps and roots, cutting ditches across the meadows and against my uncle; and am sometimes at the other end of the town buying posts and rails to fence against my uncle, and against the brook; and am sometimes ploughing the upland with six yoke of oxen, and planting corn, potatoes, &c., and digging up the meadows and sowing onions, planting cabbages, &c., &c. Sometimes I am at the homestead, running cross-fences, and planting potatoes by the acre, and corn by the two acres, and running a ditch along [143

the line between me and Field, and a fence along the brook against my brother, and another ditch in the middle from Field's line to the meadows. Sometimes am carting gravel from the neighboring hills, and sometimes dust from the streets upon the fresh meadows, and am sometimes ploughing, sometimes digging those meadows to introduce clover and other English grasses."[9]

Thus passed the days of his early married life in Braintree, between the earnest study of the law, the participation in social intercourse with friends and neighbors, and occasional Bucolical episodes. In 1768, as we have said, he removed to Boston, and but seldom went into the country. In 1771, however, we find him writing as follows:

"The complicated cares of my legal and political engagements, the slender diet to which I was obliged to confine myself, the air of the town of Boston, which was not favorable to me, who had been born and passed almost all my life in the country, but especially the constant obligation to speak in public, almost every day, for many hours, had exhausted my health, brought on a pain in my breast, and a complaint in my lungs, which seriously threatened my life, and compelled me to throw off a great part of the load of business, both public and private, and return to my farm in the country. Early in the Spring of 1771, I removed my family to Braintree, still holding, however, an office in Boston. The air of my native spot, and the fine breezes from the sea on one side, and the rocky mountains of pine and savin on the other, together with daily rides on horseback and the amusements of agriculture, *always delightful to me*, soon restored my health in a considerable degree. [144

"April 16. Tuesday evening. Last Wednesday, my furniture was all removed to Braintree. Saturday I carried up my wife and youngest child, and spent the Sabbath there very agreeably. On the 20th or 25th of April, 1768, I removed into Boston. In the three years I have spent in that town, have received innumerable civilities from many of the inhabitants; many expressions of their good will, both of a public and private nature. Of these I have the most pleasing and grateful remembrance. * * * * *

"Monday morning I returned to town, and was at my office before nine. I find I shall spend more time in my office than ever I did. Now my family is away, I feel no inclination at all, no temptation, to be any where but at my office. I am in it by six in the morning, I am in it at nine at night, and I spend but a small space of time in running down to my brother's to breakfast, dinner, and tea. Yesterday, I rode to town from Braintree before nine, attended my office till near two, then dined and went over the ferry to Cambridge. Attended the House the whole afternoon, returned and spent the whole evening in my office alone, and I spent the time much more profitably, as well as pleasantly, than I should have done at club. This evening is spending the same way. In the evening, I can be alone at my office, and nowhere else; I never could in my family.

"18. Thursday—Fast day. Tuesday I staid at my office in town; yesterday went up to Cambridge, returned at night to Boston, and to Braintree,—still, calm, happy Braintree,—at nine o'clock at night. This morning, cast my eyes out to see what my workmen had done in my absence, and rode with my wife over to Weymouth; [145 there we are to hear young Blake—a pretty fellow.

"20. Saturday. Friday morning by nine o'clock, arrived at my office in Boston, and this afternoon returned to Braintree; arrived just at tea-time; drank tea with my wife. Since this hour, a week ago, I have led a life active enough; have been to Boston twice, to Cambridge twice, to Weymouth once, and attended my office and the court too.

"But I shall be no more perplexed in this manner. I shall have no journeys to make to Cambridge, no General Court to attend; but shall divide my time between Boston and Braintree, between law and husbandry; —*farewell politics*."[10]

During Mr. Adams's residence in Boston he did not always occupy the same house. In April, 1768, he removed, as we have said, to the White House in Brattle Square. In the spring, 1769, he removed to Cole Lane, to Mr. Fayerweather's house. In 1770, he removed to another house in Brattle Square.

In 1772 he again removed to Boston with his family, and finding, as he says, that "it was very troublesome to hire houses, and to be often obliged to remove, I determined to purchase a house, and Mr. Hunt offering me one in Queen-street, near the scene of my business, opposite the Court House, I bought it, and inconvenient and contracted as it was, I made it answer, both for a dwelling and an office, till a few weeks before the 19th of April, 1775, when the war commenced." [146

In 1774 Mr. Adams was appointed delegate to the first American Congress at Philadelphia, and was obliged to leave his family in Braintree, while he himself remained with the Congress. He continued to reside in Philadelphia, visiting his family but seldom, and then in a very hurried manner, till the year 1776, when he was appointed commissioner to France in the place of Silas Deane, who was recalled. The treaty with France having been concluded by Dr. Franklin before Mr. Adams reached Paris, he returned home after an absence of a year and a half.

Hardly had he returned before he was again dispatched as Minister to the Court of St. James. While abroad at this time he made some stay in Paris, was afterwards at Amsterdam for the purpose of negotiating a loan and forming a treaty of amity and commerce with Holland, and still later, in 1785, was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to Great Britain. During all this time he had been separated from his wife—a space of nearly six years—but in 1784, finding that there was no prospect of a return, he sent for Mrs. Adams to join him in London. On reaching London, Mrs. Adams found that her husband was in Paris; her son, John Quincy Adams, was sent by his father to escort his mother and sister to France. The letters of Mrs. Adams, describing their mode of life in Paris, or rather at the little town of Auteuil, and also those which give an account of her residence in London, are most charmingly written, and we wish there was room for long extracts from them, but we already trespass upon the reader's kindness. We have space for only one pretty domestic picture.

The family are expecting a packet of letters from America, which their friend Mr. Charles Storer has sent from

London to Paris. They had some difficulty in procuring them from the post-office. [147

"About eight in the evening, however, they were brought in and safely delivered, to our great joy. We were all together. Mr. Adams in his easy chair upon one side of the table, reading Plato's Laws; Mrs. A. upon the other, reading Mr. St. John's "Letters;" Abby, sitting upon the left hand, in a low chair, in a pensive posture;—enter J.Q.A. from his own room, with the letters in his hand, tied and sealed up, as if they were never to be read; for Charles had put half a dozen new covers upon them. Mr. A. must cut and undo them leisurely, each one watching with eagerness. Finally, the originals were discovered; 'Here is one for you, my dear, and here is another; and here, Miss Abby, are four, five, upon my word, six, for you, and more yet for your mamma. Well, I fancy I shall come off but slenderly. Only one for me.' 'Are there none for me, sir?' says Mr. J.Q.A., erecting his head, and walking away a little mortified."

On his return from Europe, Mr. Adams resided—whenever political duties permitted his absence from the seat of government—at the mansion in Quincy, the name by which the more ancient portion of Braintree was called.

The estate was purchased after the revolution. The house had been built long before by one of the Vassall family, a well-known republican name in England in the time of the commonwealth, some members of which had transferred themselves to Jamaica under Cromwell's projects of colonizing that island, and from thence had come to Massachusetts. But time had changed them from republicans to royalists, and when the revolution broke out they were on the side of the mother country. In Quincy, however, the race had run into [148
females, and the house belonged to a descendant by the name of Borland, who sold it to the agent of Mr. Adams. It was then, however, very different from what it is now. Mr. Adams nearly doubled the size of it, and altered the front. It has since been altered once or twice, and lately by the present occupant, Mr. Charles Francis Adams, a grandson of the President.

In this house Mr. Adams continued to reside till his death in 1826. During the time that he was in Philadelphia and Washington as President and Vice-President, Mrs. Adams remained at Quincy, partly on account of her health, partly to take charge of her husband's private property, which had never been large, and which had suffered much diminution from the expenses incident to public life.

Mrs. Adams's account of her residence in Washington—the troubles which she had in procuring almost the necessaries of life in that out of the way settlement—her description of Washington and the White House at that early date, have been printed too often in newspapers all over the country, to need insertion here. Not less interesting than these letters are those which describe her life in Philadelphia; her little sketches of society in that city, then the seat of government, have all the charms which the unaffected letters of an elegant woman cannot fail to display.

The following letter will conclude our article, showing, as it does, the peaceful occupations of this happy aged couple, retired to their beloved home to await the inevitable summons, to which they looked forward with the beautiful resignation of minds in love with virtue, and conscious of no offence against the laws of God or man. [149

TO THOMAS B. ADAMS.

QUINCY, 12 *July*, 1801.

"MY DEAR SON:

"I am much delighted to learn that you intend making a visit to the old mansion. I wish you could have accomplished it so as to have been here by this time, which would have given you an opportunity of being at Commencement, meeting many of your old acquaintances, and visiting the seat of science, where you received your first rudiments.

"I shall look daily for you. You will find your father in the fields, attending to his haymakers, and your mother busily occupied in the domestic concerns of her family. I regret that a fortnight of sharp drought has shorn many of the beauties we had in rich luxuriance. The verdure of the grass has become a brown, the flowers hang their heads, droop, and fade, whilst the vegetable world languishes; yet still we have a pure air. The crops of hay have been abundant; upon this spot, where eight years ago we cut scarcely six tons, we now have thirty. 'We are here, among the vast and noble scenes of nature, where we walk in the light and open ways of the divine bounty, and where our senses are feasted with the clear and genuine taste of their objects.' * * * * *

"I am, my dear Thomas, affectionately, your mother,

"ABIGAIL ADAMS."

Mrs. Adams died at Quincy on the 28th of October, 1818, aged seventy-four years.

John Adams died at the good age of ninety-one years, on the 4th of July, 1826. We thank God, as he did, that a [150
life spent in the service of his country should close without pain and in perfect tranquillity of soul, on the anniversary of the best day in her history, and a day with which his name is for ever associated in our gratefullest memories.

Patrick Henry. [151

[153

Residence of Patrick Henry, Va.

PATRICK HENRY.

There is no "Home of an American Statesman" that may more fitly claim the leading place in this our repository than the dwelling of Patrick Henry—the earliest, the most eloquent, and the wisest of those whose high counsels first swayed us as one people and drew us to a common cause; as resolutely as ably directed that cause to its noble event; and, in a word, performing in the civil struggle all that Washington executed in the military, achieved for us existence as a nation.

In the Heroic Age, however, such as was to us the Revolution, men build not monuments nor engrave [154
commemorative inscriptions: those of nature, identified by rude but reverential tradition, alone attest where the founders of a race, the great-fathers of an empire, have sprung.

If there be, among the many men of that brave day, one prompter and more unfaltering than all the rest; if, among all who moved by stirring words and decisive acts the general mind of the country, there was one who more directly than any, or than all, set it in a flame not to be extinguished; if amidst those lights there was one, the day star, till whose coming there was no dawn, it was certainly Henry. It is true that, before him, Massachusetts had her quarrel with England, but not with the common sympathy of the colonies. For, averse, from her very foundation, to not merely the dominion, but the very institutions of the mother country, she had kept up with it a continual bickering, religious as well as civil; a strife at best local, often ill-tempered and factious; so that her too frequent broils, commanding little regard, would have continued to come to nothing had not an opposition to English measures sprung up in a more loyal quarter. The southern colonies, meanwhile, had always loved the parent land, both church and state, and naturally had been indulgently dealt with by its legislation. Thus, until that ill-advised measure, the Stamp Act, came, to affect all the American plantations alike, there had been nothing to draw us together in a common cause, a common resistance. The Stamp Act gave that cause, and Henry led that resistance. Young, obscure, unconnected, unaided, uncounselled, and even uncountenanced, he yet, by the sudden splendor of his eloquence, his abilities, and his dauntless resolution, carried every thing before him; animated the whole land to a determined assertion of [155
their rights; established for himself a boundless influence over the popular mind; used it, whenever the occasion came, to sound the signal of an unshrinking opposition to every encroachment; led the way, independently of all movements elsewhere; devised and brought about every main measure of preparation; rejected all compromise; clearly the first to see the certain issue of the contest in European interposition and the establishment of our Independence, pursued steadily that aim before even he could openly avow it: and finally, when things were ripe; assumed it for his State, instructed her deputation to propose it to all the rest, and indeed, involved them in it beyond avoidance, by setting up a regular and permanent Republican Constitution in Virginia; a step that allowed no retreat, and was not less decisive than the heroical act of Cortez, when, marching upon Mexico from his landing-place, he burnt his vessels behind him. Henry was, in a word, the Moses who led us forth from the house of bondage. If there had been an opposition before his, it was not the appointed, and would have been an ineffectual one. There had, no doubt, been Jews enough that murmured, even before he who was to deliver them appeared. We may, therefore, fitly apply to Henry, in regard to the bringing about of our Independence, all that Dryden so finely said of Bacon in science:

> "Bacon, like Moses, led us forth, at last:
> The barren wilderness he passed;
> Did on the very border stand
> Of the blest promised land;
> And from the mountain-top of his exalted wit,
> Saw it himself and showed us it."

And yet Henry, like nearly all his illustrious fellow-laborers of freedom, sleeps in an undistinguished grave. At [156
his death, party spirit denied to his memory the tokens of public admiration and regret, offered in that very

legislature of which he had been the great light, and which, indeed, he had called into being. Since that sorry failure—for all faction should have been hushed over the body of a citizen and a man so admirable—no further notice has been taken of him; and he who merited a national monument, only less proud than that due to Washington himself, slumbers beneath an humble private one at Red Hill, the secluded residence where he died.

But we turn to those personal particulars of this extraordinary man which are appropriate to the design of the present volume. Not a few of them will be found to involve important corrections of the received account of his early years, and a new view, therefore, of his genius and character.

In that received account, his sole original biographer, Mr. Wirt—writing without any personal knowledge of him, and neglecting to consult the most obvious and authentic source of information, his four surviving sisters, ladies of condition and of remarkable intelligence—has fallen into the vulgar error, to which the peculiar position and fortunes of Mr. Henry at first gave rise, and which he afterwards, for warrantable political purposes, encouraged. When he suddenly burst out from complete obscurity, an unrivalled orator, a consummate politician, and snatched the control of legislation and of the public mind from the veteran, the college-bred, the wealthy and high-born leaders who had till then held it, the homeliness of dress which befitted his narrow circumstances, the humility of aspect and the simplicity of manners, which were [157
unaffected traits of his disposition, naturally assigned him in the eyes of both those who were of it and of those who looked down upon it, to the plebeian class. It suited the envy of these, it delighted the admiration of those, to regard him—that unintelligible marvel of abilities, which had thus all at once effaced every thing else—as a mere child of the people. The really skilful, who understand intellectual prodigies and never refer them to ignorance or chance, must have seen at once, through the cloud in which he stood, a great and an enlightened understanding, too competent to a high and a complex public question, not to be strong in knowledge as well as faculties. The few cannot have mistaken him for that fabulous thing, an ignorant genius; for they must have seen in his commanding and complete eloquence the art, in his masterly measures the information, of one thoroughly trained, though in secret, to the business of swaying men's minds, and of conducting their counsels, though hitherto apart from them. All but this highest class, however, of the rivals whom he at once threw into eclipse naturally sought to depreciate him as a mere declaimer, a tribunitian orator, voluble and vehement as he was rude, rash, and illiterate. Could the tapers that, at Belshazzar's feast, went out before the blaze of that marvellous handwriting on the wall, have been afterwards permitted to give their opinion of it, they would, of course, have talked disdainfully of its beam, as mere phosphorus or some other low pyrotechnic trick. Such was the reputation which the vanquished magnates in general, and their followers, endeavored to fix upon the young subverter of their ascendency. He was not of one of the old aristocratic families; he was a low person, therefore he had never been within the walls of a college, still less [158
had he, like many of them, finished, with the graces of foreign travel, a public discipline of learning; he was, therefore, by their report, illiterate, although, certainly, in his performances, all the best effects of education were manifest, without its parade. While they called him ignorant, he always proved himself to know whatever the occasion demanded, and able victoriously to instruct foe and friend. Shunning, from his sense, all assumption, and from his modesty, all display, he never pulled out the purse of his acquirements to chink it merely, but only to pay; so that no man could tell what he had left in the bottom of his pocket; and thus, a ragged-looking Fortunatus, he always surprised men with his unguessed resources. Strange powers, undoubtedly, he had, that must have not a little confounded the judgment of the best observers; unexercised in the forum, he had risen up a consummate master of the whole art of moving in discourse the understanding or the passions; unpractised in public affairs, he had only to appear in them, in order to stand the first politician of his day; unversed in the business and the strategy of deliberative assemblies, he had only to become a member of one, in order to be its adroitest parliamentary tactician. As he was dexterous without practice, so was he prudent without experience; for, from the first he shone out as the wisest man in all the public councils. He seems to have escaped all that tribute of error which youth must almost invariably pay, as the price of eminence in public affairs; he fell into no theory, he indulged no vision, he never once committed a blunder; in short, ripe from the beginning, he appeared to be by instinct and the mere gift of nature, whatever others slowly become only by the aid of art and experience. Bred up in seclusion, though (as the [159
high cultivation of his sisters testified to all who knew them) in a household whose very atmosphere was knowledge, he had, beyond a good acquaintance with Latin, the rudiments of Greek, French, mathematics, and an early familiarity with the best English authors—those of the Elizabethan age, of the Commonwealth, and of Queen Anne's day—received little direct instruction; none, but from his father and books, his early companions, so that his scholastic instruction was really slender. But he had been taught, betimes, to love knowledge and how to work it out for himself; how, in a word, to accomplish what best unfolds a great genius, self-education. For schools and colleges—admirable contrivances as they are for keeping up among mankind a common method and a common stock of information—are but suited, as they were but designed, for the common run of men. Applying to all the same mechanical process; bringing to the same level the genius and the dunce, they act excellently to repair the original inequality, sometimes so vast, with which nature deals out understanding among the human race. In a word, they are capital machines for bringing about an average of talent; but it is at the expense of those bright parts which occasionally come, that they do it. Their methods clap in the same couples him who can but creep and him who would soar; harness in the same cart the plough-horse and the courser. The highest genius must be its own sole method-maker, its own entire rule. From what it has done, rules are deduced; but for its inferiors, not for it: its whole existence is exceptional, original; and whatever, in its disciplining, would tend to make it otherwise, serves but to check and to diminish its development. [160

No greater error, therefore, than to suppose that a man as extraordinary as Patrick Henry, who, mature from the first, rose up a consummate speaker and reasoner, and, amongst men of large abilities, knowledge, and experience, constantly showed himself, in matters the weightiest and the most difficult, superior to them all, could have been uneducated. In reality he had learned of the best possible master, for such a man—himself. That he knew, that he even knew more solidly, because more effectually and to the purpose, than all those around him, the great subjects with which he dealt so wonderfully, is beyond all question. Now, though the

genius of Mr. Henry was prodigious, and though there be things which genius does, as it were, intuitively and spontaneously, there are other things which are not knowable, even by genius itself, without study; which the utmost genius cannot extemporize, cannot produce from nothing, cannot make without their materials previously amassed in its mind, cannot understand without their necessary particulars accumulated in advance; and it was in just such things—the highest civil ability, which comes of wisdom, not genius; the greatest eloquence which cannot be formed but by infinite art and labor—that he stood up at all times supreme. The sagacity of statesmanship with which he looked through the untried affairs of this country, saw through systems and foretold consequences, has never been surpassed; and his eloquence, judged (as we have alone the means of judging it) by its effects, has never been equalled.

Such then, even upon the traditionary facts out of which his biographer has shaped into a mere fable his sudden rise and his anomalous abilities, is, of necessity, the rational theory of Mr. Henry's greatness. But, [161 without any resort to induction, the simple truth, if Mr. Wirt had sought it in the natural quarter, would have conducted him to the same conclusions as we have just set forth.

At the time when Mr. Wirt collected his materials, he was yet, though of fine natural abilities, by no means the solid man that he by and by became. His fancy was exuberant, his taste florid, his judgment unformed. Himself in high repute for a youthful and gaudy eloquence, which, however, he afterwards exchanged for a style of great severity and vigor—he had been urged to his immature and ambitious undertaking, by admirers who conceived him to be little less than a second Henry. His besetting idea seems to be much akin to Dr. Johnson's "who drives fat oxen should himself be fat:" namely that the life of a great orator should be written by a great orator; and that he was to show not only Mr. Henry but himself eloquent. In general his book does him credit, as merely a literary performance, although sadly deformed, in what were intended for its best passages, by an inflation of which he must have been afterwards greatly ashamed, as a sin against all style, but especially that proper to his subject—the historic. Let us add—in simple justice to a man of great virtues and elevation, as well as gentleness of mind and feelings, whose memory has upon us, besides, the claim of public respect and of hereditary friendship—that his biography, wherever his own, is, in spite of party spirit, written with the most honorable candor, and vindicates Mr. Henry with equal fairness and ability from the aspersions cast upon his conduct in the "Alien and Sedition" business by the Jeffersonian faction. Wherever he (Mr. Wirt) has depended upon his own researches alone, he displays both diligence and discrimination; but [162 unhappily, he accepted the loose popular traditions, which are never any thing but a tissue of old women's tales; he relied upon a mass of casual contributions, chiefly derived from the same legendary sources or from uncertain, confused, and (as himself lets us see) often contradictory memories; and above all, he adopted implicitly the information supplied by a certain Thomas Jefferson; who, besides being a person of whom the sagacious and upright Henry cherished a very ill opinion—so that *he* could not well be supposed a very special repository of the orator's personal confidences—was a gentleman who had all his life driven rather the largest and most lucrative trade in the calumny of nearly all the best and greatest of his contemporaries, that has ever been carried on in these United States, much as that sort of commerce has long flourished and yet flourishes amongst us. Upon such things he had come to a splendid political fortune while he lived, and when he died, with a pious solicitude to provide for his posterity, he bequeathed to his grandson all the unspent capital stock of his slanders (his Memoirs and Ana) to carry on the old business with and keep up the greatness of the family.

The effect of all this was to turn what before was strange or obscure, in Henry's history, into little better than a fable, a sort of popular and poetic myth of eloquence, in which the great speaker and statesman fades away into a fiction, a mere creation of the fancy, scarcely more real or probable than the account in old Master Tooke's "Pantheon," of Orpheus's drawing the rocks and trees and the very wild beasts along with him by his powers of song. Nay, in one main point, Master Tooke's legend more consults verisimilitude: for *he*, instead of [163 shocking all probability by representing his hero to have been without education, sends him as private pupil to the Muses themselves, who are reputed to have kept, then as now, the best Greek and Latin colleges a-going.

It is certainly true, in excuse for all this, that the mighty men who, for their exploits and services, became the demigods of fable, "the fair humanities of old religion," had scarcely more struck the excited imagination of their times than had Henry. Like theirs was the obscurity of his birth, the mystery of his education, the marvel of his achievements. Of his many great speeches, scarcely one uncorrupted passage can be said to survive; so that even of that which all felt and know we have but the faintest shadow. A fragmentary thought is all of genuine that is left us out of a whole immortal harangue; some powerful ejaculation stands for an entire oration, and dimly suggests, not explains its astonishing effects. To all purpose historic of his eloquence, he might just as well have lived before alphabetic writing was invented. At best, the oratory that entrances, agitates, enraptures, transports every man in a whole assembly, and hurries him totally away, thrilling and frenzied with sensations as vehement as novel, sets all reporting, all stenography at defiance. Before it, shorthand—at most, the dim reflection of such things; a cold copy, a poor parody where it is not a burlesque of speech in its great bursts—drops its pen, and forgets even to translate; which, after all (*haud inexpertus loquor*), is the utmost it can do. But of not even such translation did Mr. Henry, upon any occasion but two,[11] receive the advantage such as it is. Every where in these the single but skilful reporter confesses, by many a [164 summary in parenthesis, that at certain passages he lost himself in the speaker, and could not even attempt to render him. Thus it comes that, of his transcendent harangues—those which made or directed the Revolution—we have only a few scattered sentences, and the seemingly amazed descriptions which attest their extraordinary effects. There is but one exception: a version, to appearance tolerably entire, though still evidently but a sketch, of his "Liberty or Death" speech, when, on the 20th March, 1775, he told the Convention of Virginia, assembled in the "Old Church" at Richmond (St. Johns), that "they must fight," and moved to arm and organize the militia. This, even in its existing form, is a prodigiously noble speech, full of vigor in the argument, full of passion in the appeals, breathing every where the utmost fire of the warrior, orator, patriot, and sage. Fitly uttered, it is still—though of course it must have lost greatly in the transmission—a discourse to rouse a whole nation invincibly to arms, if their cause and their courage were worthy of it. That speech evidently, and that speech alone, is, in the main, the true thunder of Henry: all the others are but

the mustard-bowl.

Old Church Richmond, Va.

But though from all these causes, he already, in Mr. Wirt's day, stood, as seen through the fast-gathered haze of tradition, a huge but shadowy figure, it was the business of the biographer, instead of merely showing him to us in that popular light, to set him in a true one. The critical historian clears up such mists, defines such shadows, and calls them back not only to substance but proportion, color, life, the very pressure and body of the times. What if the historic truth had passed into a poetic fable? Mr. Wirt should have dealt with it, not as a [165
bard, a rhapsodist, but a philosophical mythologist, who from fable itself sifts out the unwritten facts of a day, when fable was the only form of history.

Besides, however, adopting for the fundamental facts of Mr. Henry's character all these false sources, his biographer utterly neglected (as we have already intimated) the most obvious and the most natural ones. He had then four surviving sisters, women not merely of condition but intellectually remarkable.

To none of these did Mr. Wirt resort for any domestic particulars of his early life, which of course none knew so well as they. Well acquainted with them all—sprung from one of them—we have cause to know the astonishment with which they met this written account of his early years and his breeding up. Had Mr. Wirt personally known these highly cultivated and very superior ladies, distinguished as they were for the completeness and solidity of their old-fashioned education, he must have seen at once that his own story of Henry's youthful institution and ways is about as true as it is that Achilles was born of a sea-goddess, had a centaur for his private tutor, and was fed upon lion's marrow to make him valiant.

His very lineage was literary. His father, John Henry, a Scottish gentleman of Aberdeen, was a man of good birth, of learned education, and, when he migrated to Virginia, of easy fortune. He was the nephew of Robertson, the great historian of his own country and of ours. The name of his mother, Jane Robertson, an admirable and accomplished person, is still preserved and transmitted among her female descendants. His cousin, David Henry, was the associate editor of the "Gentleman's Magazine," then a leading publication, with Edward Cave, the last of the learned printers; whose brother-in-law and successor he became. The family bred [166
many of its members for the church, which in Britain implies such influence as secures preferment. John's younger brother, Patrick, thus taking orders, received a rectorship near him, and followed him to this country. In those days of Episcopacy, benefices drew after them not merely comfortable reverence, but goodly emolument and even authority in civil life; so that the parsons were a power in the State. All this Patrick, a man worthy of it, employed. His brother already possessed it; and thus both took their station among the gentry, though not the aristocracy, of the land—its untitled nobility: for, in effect, such an order, sustained by primogeniture and entails, then existed throughout lower or tide-water Virginia.

John attained to the command of the regiment of his county, to its surveyorship, and to the presiding chair of its magistracy; stations then never conferred but upon leading men in the community. More careless, however, of his private interests than of the public, without exactly wasting his fortune, he gradually frittered it away; and though he repaired it for a time, by an advantageous marriage with the young and wealthy widow (a Winston by birth) of his most intimate friend, Col. John Syme, of the Rocky Mills, yet before the tenth year of Patrick, his second son (born 29th May, 1736), he found himself so straitened as to have need to make himself an income by setting up in his house a private classical school. Assisted to this by the reputation of being one of the best scholars in the country, he taught for a number of years with great approval the children of his friends and his own; abandoning the pursuit only when one of its inducements—the education of his own [167
sons and daughters (two of the former and five of the latter)—had ceased.

Under such circumstances, and especially when we repeat that those four of his daughters whom we knew were persons greatly admired for the masculine goodness and extent of their education, it may be judged how likely, how possible it is that Patrick, with his boundless aptitude—always, in after life, applied most rapidly and successfully to whatever he had need to understand—can have grown up to manhood almost uninstructed, ignorant, and idle. Genius, of which it is the very essence that it has an uncontrollable affinity for the knowledge proper to its caste, has often been seen to surmount obstacles seemingly invincible to its

information; never yet wilfully, incorrigibly, and in spite of every influence around, to shut out the open and easy daylight of intelligence, and darken itself into voluntary duncedom. The thing, we repeat is a flat, a bald and a flagrant impossibility. You might as well tell us that a young eagle, instead of taking to the sky as soon as its pinions were grown, has, though neither caged nor clipped, remained contented on foot and preferred to run about the barn-yard with the dunghill fowls. No! your "mute Miltons" and your harmless Cromwells sound very prettily to the fancy, but in plain fact, were no Miltons unless they sang, no Cromwells unless they conquered. Genius and Heroism—the most strenuous of human things—were never dull, slothful, idle; never slighted opportunity, but always make, if they do not find it.

Accordingly, the sisters of Mr. Henry always asserted that, whatever their brother might appear abroad, he was a close voluntary student at home; exploring not only his father's library, which was large and good, but [168
whatever other books he could lay his hands upon; dwelling, with an especial delight, upon certain great authors, of whom he seemed to make his masters; but cultivating assiduously what was then called "polite learning," and merited the name, along with history at large, and that of the free states of antiquity, and of England in particular. His great favorites were Livy and Virgil; not (as Mr. Wirt supposes of the former) in a translation, but the original. That the sisters were right on this point is sufficiently proved by the fact that, a few years ago, his Latin Virgil was in existence, its margins all filled with his manuscript notes. We need hardly say that he who was not content with Dryden as a translator was clearly not a-going to take up with poor old Philemon Holland, then the current English disfigurer of the most animated and picturesque of historians. Henry's sisters indeed, and the only one of his schoolfellows that we have ever met, were persuaded that he read Latin almost as readily as English. Mr. Wirt himself had learned that the great Paduan was ever in his boyish hands; now, that single point established, he might without hesitation have proceeded to five clear and important inferences: first, that no boy has a favorite book but because he is fond of books generally; secondly, that when his favorite is, though of the highest merit, a very unusual one, he must not only have read much, but with great discrimination: thirdly, that if his favorite was in a special class (not a mere miscellanist) he was well read in that class, addicted to it: fourthly, that he was enamored of such a favorite for his matchless merits, both of matter and of style; his sensibility to the former of which particulars implied information, to the latter a well-formed taste: fifthly, that no mere translation of Livy—especially not [169
flat, tame old Holland—nothing short of the golden original, could have inspired such a Livian affection. But this is not all; when—coming to be put into the possession of the scanty remaining body of Mr. Henry's papers (ill-preserved by his not very wise progeny) and invited to write his life more authentically—we ourselves began first to study his speeches and his mind critically, it did not take us long to perceive, what is indeed easily seen, that Mr. Henry's early passion for Livy—born of course of Livy's conformity to his genius—had deeply tinged the peculiar style of his eloquence, the peculiar character of his politics, was, in sooth, the immediate source of both; that the harangues in Livy had been his models of discourse; that the sentiments of public magnanimity, which Livy every where, and we may say Livy alone breathes, were transfused into Henry's spirit, and gave to his ideas of a state that singular grandeur, that loftiness, that heroism, which fills and informs them. His love of freedom even—his republicanism—was such as Livy's; popular, yet patrician: not your levelled liberty, too low to last, which, to keep down the naturally great, sets up the base on high; but a freedom consistent with the eminence and the subordination of natural orders mutually dependent; equal under the law, but distinct in their power to serve the state, as bringing to its aid, this rank higher counsels and obligations, that, force and numbers; in short, not merely a tumultuary, a mob liberty, but a social and a regulated concert of all classes, the absolute predominance of none; a republican, not a democratic aim. Less learned than Milton, certainly, but of a highly kindred spirit, he was very like him in his general political system; but was more practical, better acquainted with men. The one had more of the poetical element in him, [170
the other more of the political. Both were deeply religious; without which no man can be a safe politician. Each towered above all the men of his day, except one, a warrior; and nearly such relation as Milton held to Cromwell did Henry hold to Washington. Alike in the antique cast of their minds, they were yet alike in being, withal, thoroughly English in their notion of actual freedom: for Henry's mind was just as little touched with any of the Jeffersonian fancies of Frenchified liberty as Milton's own. Both were of the historic, not the so-called philosophic school of politics: for history was evidently the only treatise on government that either thought worthy of any attention. If they had ever stooped to the systematic writers, from the great sources (wise histories) out of which those writers can at most draw, it can only have been to despise nearly every mother's son of them. Finally, alike in so many things, they were not unlike in their fate: both "fell upon evil times," and lost their public credit in the land of which they had matchlessly vindicated the public cause: Milton died sightless, and Henry too blind for the light of the Virginia abstractions.

Every thing confutes the vulgar theory of his greatness. Had he been ignorant at his first rise, the growth of his talent, as well as of his knowledge, would have been traceable in his performances; but on the contrary, he burst out, from the first, mature and finished. By the universal consent, his very earliest speeches were quite equal to any thing he ever after pronounced. Had these been at sixteen, it would go far to prove that his eloquence, his ability, and even his information came (as such things never came in any other instance) without cultivation: but his first speech, that in "the parson's cause," at Hanover Court House, in 1763, when [171
he was twenty-nine years old; the same period of life at which Demosthenes and Cicero shone out; a period after which there may be large additions to artificial knowledge, but can seldom be any to the natural splendor of the faculties.

We have known many who knew Mr. Henry, in the entire unreserve of that domestic life, in which he so much loved to unbend himself. All such agreed that he was a man of very great and very various information. He read every thing. At home, his interval between an early dinner and supper-time (after which he gave himself up to conversation with his friends, or to sport with his children, or to music on the violin and flute, which he played) was always consecrated to study: he withdrew from company to his office and books. His very manner of reading was such as few attain, and marks the great and skilful dealer with other men's thoughts: he seldom read a book regularly on; but seemed only to glance his eye down the pages, and, as it were, to gallop athwart the volume; and yet, when he had thus strid through it, knew better than any body else all that was worth knowing in it contents. A learned physician who dwelt near him, told us, in speaking of this wide range

of his knowledge, that he had, for instance, to his surprise, found him to be a good chemist, at a time when an acquaintance with that science was almost confined to medical men. Except in private, however, he kept the secret of his own attainments, content to let them appear only in their effects. This was, originally, out of his singular modesty; but by and by when his vanquished rivals of college-breeding sought to depreciate him as low-born and uneducated, he from policy conformed to imputations which heightened the wonder of his performances and therefore added to his success. [172

Let us add one more fact, substantive and significant. The range of a man's mind, the very particulars of his studies may usually, when he is not a mere book-collector or other affector of letters, be pretty definitely ascertained from the contents of his library. In that view, finding that a list of Mr. Henry's was embraced in the records of the Court of Probate of his county, we examined and copied it. For that day, his library, besides its merely professional contents, is quite a large one—some five hundred volumes, mostly good and solid. We found it to contain the usual series of Greek school-books, probably all he had ever read; for the language was then slightly learnt in Virginia: a good many of the Latin authors, and various French ones. The last language we know, from other sources, that he understood. Now, he was the man in the world the least likely to have got or to keep books that he did not comprehend.

Such was the enigma of Patrick Henry's mind; and such is its clear solution: a solution which, at least, must be confessed to substitute the rational for the irrational, the possible for the impossible, the positive of domestic evidence for the negative of popular tradition.

Apart, however, from such testimony, there were other proofs that should have suggested themselves to the anatomist of life character, the physiologist of his genius. When we ourselves first began minutely to consider his speeches, their effects, all that is told of the manner in which those effects were brought about, the reach and the diversity of his powers, their admirable adaptation to all occasions and to all audiences—for he swayed all men alike by his eloquence, the low and the high, the ignorant and the learned; the unapproached [173
dramatic perfection of his voice, gesture, manner, and whole delivery; his mastery, not only in speech, but off the tribune and man to man, of all that can affect either men's reason or their imagination, we could not, for our lives, help coming to the conclusion that all this must be skill, not chance; and that instead of being the mere child of nature, he was the most consummate artist that ever lived. Nature bestows marvellous things, but these are not within even her gift. She gives the gold, but she does not work it into every beautiful form; she gives the diamond, but she does not cut it; she bestows the marble, but did not carve the Olympian Jove nor the Belvidere Apollo. In fine, we had, in much acquaintance with men the ornaments of the public life of our times, been accustomed to understand all the minute mechanism of civil abilities; and when we came to examine closely this matchless piece of machinery, we could not avoid believing, in spite of all assertions to the contrary, that each particular part, however nice and small, must have been made by hand and most painfully put together. And thus, perceiving every thing else in this prodigious speaker to have been so masterly, we became convinced that his style, his diction must have been, in the main, as excellent as every thing else about him. It could not have been otherwise. He whose thought was so high and pure, whose fancy was so rich, and the mere outward auxiliaries of whose discourse (voice, and action) had been so laboriously perfected, can, by no possibility, have failed to make himself equally the master of expression. What we have as his, is mere reporter's English; and no man is to be judged by that slop of sentences into which he is put and melted away by their process. In that menstruum of words, all substances are alike. It is the true universal solvent, so long sought, that acts upon every thing and turns it into liquid babble. Mr Henry knew [174
and often practised, not only upon the multitude but the refined; the power of a homely dialect, and saw how wise or brave or moving things may be made to come with a strangely redoubled effect, in the extremest plainness of rustic speech. His occasional resort to this, however, of course struck much upon the common attention and got him the reputation, among other foolish reputations, of habitually using such locutions; when, in reality, he was master of all modes of discourse alike, and only employed always that which best suited his purpose.

There is yet one more false notion, in regard to him, which Mr. Wirt has done much to propagate: the notion, we mean, that Henry never condescended to be less than the great orator; that, instead of sometimes going about his business on foot, like other lawyers and legislators, he rode for ever in a sort of triumphal car of eloquence, dragging along a captive crowd at his conquering wheels; and, in short, that

> "He could not ope
> His mouth, but out there flew a trope."

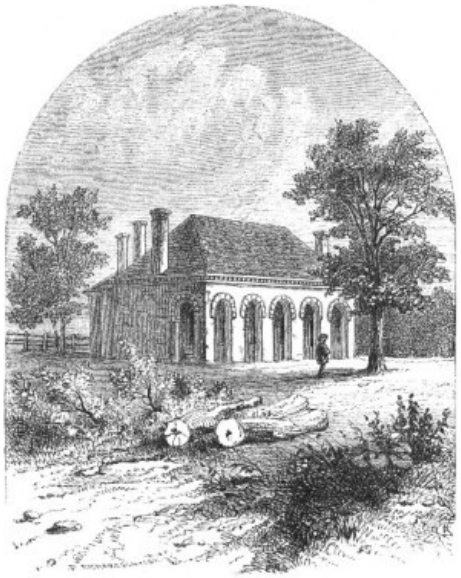
On the contrary, no man was ever less the oration-maker. He never used his eloquence but as he used every thing else—just when it was wanted. In the mass of public business, eloquence is out of place, and could not be attended to. A man who was always eloquent would soon lose all authority in a public body. Mr. Henry kept up always the very greatest, and merited it, by taking a leading part in all important matters and making more and better business speeches than any body else.

A long preliminary this; but we trust not uninteresting. It was, at any event, necessary that we should first, in [175
the Bentonian phrase, "vindicate the truth of history," and set a great character in its proper public light, before passing to those humble particulars of private life to which we now proceed.

In person, he was tall and rather spare, but of limbs round enough for either vigor or grace. He had, however, a slight stoop, such as very thoughtful people are apt to contract. In public, his aspect was remarkable for quiet gravity. It seems to have been a rule with him never to laugh and hardly to smile, before the vulgar. In their presence he wore an air always fit to excite at once their sympathy and their reverence; modest, even to humility; and yet most imposing. In all this he played no assumed, though he could not have played a more skilful part: for the occasion and the presence appear always to have so duly and so strongly affected him, as at once to transform him into what was, at each instant, fittest. Thus his art, of which we have already spoken, might well be consummate; for he was all that, for mere purposes of effect, he should have seemed to be, the very impersonation of the cause and the feelings proper to the hour. Great wisdom, indeed, an unshrinking

courage, and yet an equal prudence, a patriotism the most fervent, a profound sensibility, a rare love of justice, yet a spirit of the greatest gentleness and humanity, and in a word, the highest virtues, public and private, crowned with a disinterestedness, an absence of all ambition most singular in a democracy (which above all things breeds the contrary) made him—if Cicero be right—the greatest of orators, because the most virtuous of men that ever possessed that natural gift. No man ever knew men better, singly or in the mass; none ever better knew how to sway them; but none ever less abused that power, for he seems ever to have felt, in a religious force, the solemnity of all those public functions, which so few now regard. It was probably [176
the weight of this feeling, along with his singular modesty, that made him shun official honors as earnestly as others seek them. It is evident that no power, nor dignity, nor even fame could dazzle him. It was only at the public command that he accepted trusts from his State; and he always laid them down as soon as duty permitted. All offers of Federal dignities,[12] up to the highest, he rejected. He had served his State only in perilous times, when (as the Devil says in Milton) to be highest was only to be exposed foremost to the bolts of the dreaded enemy; or at some conjuncture of civil danger; but when peace and ease had come and ambition was the only lure to office, he would not have it.

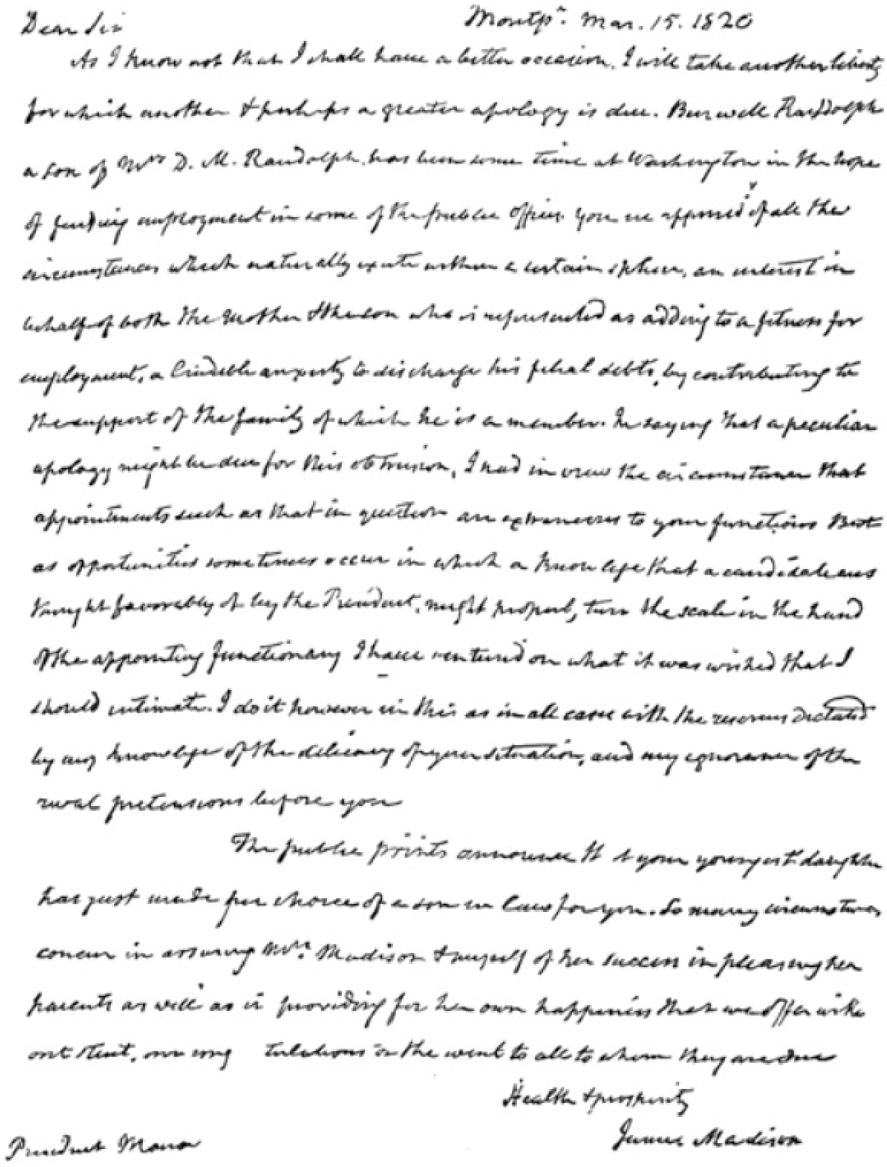
If, however, he was thus grave, on what he considered the solemn stage of public life, he made himself ample amends in all that can give cheerfulness to the calm of retirement in the country. When at last permitted to attend to his private fortune, he speedily secured an ample one. It was enjoyed, whenever business allowed him to be at home, in a profuse and general, but solid and old-fashioned hospitality, of which the stout and semi-baronial supplies were abundantly drawn from his own large and well-managed domain. His house was usually filled with friends, its dependencies with their retinue and horses. But crowds, besides, came and [177
went; all were received and entertained with cordiality. The country all about thronged to see the beloved and venerated man, as soon as it went abroad that he was come back. Some came merely to see him; the rest to get his advice on law and all other matters. To the poor, it was gratuitous; to even the rich without a fee, except where he thought the case made it necessary to go to law. All took his counsel as if it had been an oracle's, for nobody thought there was any measure to "Old Patrick's" sense, integrity, or good nature. This concourse began rather betimes, for those who lived near often came to breakfast, where all were welcomed and made full. The larder seemed never to get lean. Breakfast over, creature-comforts, such as might console the belated for its loss, were presently set forth on side-tables in the wide entrance hall. Of these—the solid, not the liquid parts of a rural morning's meal—breakfast without its slops, and such as, if need were, might well stand for a dinner, all further comers helped themselves as the day or their appetites advanced. Meanwhile, the master saw and welcomed all with the kindliest attention, asked of their household, listened to their affairs, gave them his view, contented all. These audiences seldom ceased before noon or the early dinner. To this a remaining party of from twenty to thirty often sat down. It was always, according to the wont of such houses in that well-fed land, a meal beneath which the tables groaned, and whose massive old Saxon dishes would have made a Frenchman sweat. Every thing is excellent at these lavish feasts; but they have no luxuries save such as are home-grown. They are, however, for all that is substantial and plain, the very summit of good cheer. At Governor Henry's, they never failed to be, besides, seasoned with his conversation, [178
which at table always grew gay and even gamesome. The dinner ended, he betook himself, as already told, to his studies until supper, after which he again gave himself up to enjoyment. In this manner came, with the kindliest and most cheerful approach, the close of his days; upon which there rested not a stain nor (such had been through life his personal benignity) a hostility. Except tyrants and other public enemies, he had lived at peace with man and God, achieving most surprising and illustrious things, and content, save the sight of his liberated country, with little reward beyond that which he bore in his own approving bosom.



Old Court House, Va.

Madison. [179

[180



Dear Sir Montpr. Mar. 15. 1820

As I know not that I shall have a better occasion, I will take another liberty for which another & perhaps a greater apology is due. Burwell Randolph a son of Mrs D. M. Randolph, has been some time at Washington in the hope of finding employment in some of the public offices. You are apprised of all the circumstances which naturally excite within a certain sphere, an interest in behalf of both the Mother & the son who is represented as adding to a fitness for employment, a laudable anxiety to discharge his filial debts, by contributing to the support of the family of which he is a member. In saying that a peculiar apology might be due for this obtrusion, I had in view the circumstance that appointments such as that in question are extraneous to your functions. But as opportunities sometimes occur in which a knowledge that a candidate was thought favorably of by the President, might properly turn the scale in the hand of the appointing functionary I have ventured on what it was wished that I should intimate. I do it however in this as in all cases with the reserve dictated by my knowledge of the delicacy of your situation, and my ignorance of the rival pretensions before you.

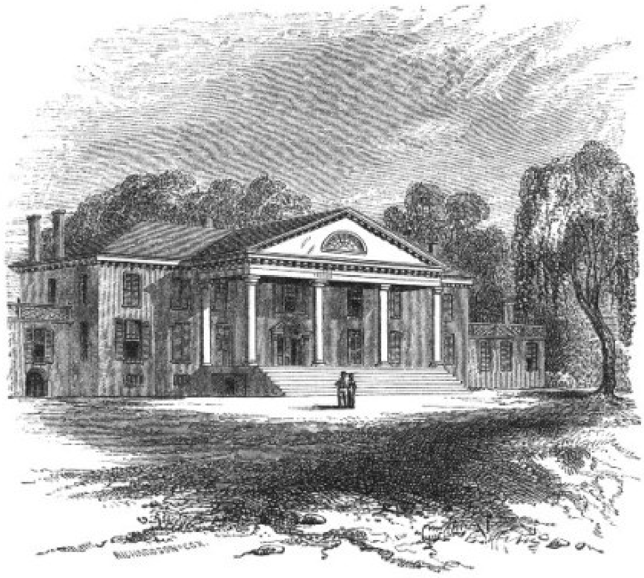
The public prints announce that your youngest daughter has just made her choice of a son in Law for you. So many circumstances concur in assuring Mrs. Madison & myself of her success in pleasing her parents as well as in providing for her own happiness that we offer without stint, our congratulations on the event to all to whom they are due

Health & prosperity

James Madison

President Monroe

[181



Montpelier, Madison's Residence.

MADISON.

Science has had, and perhaps will ever have, its fancies; and fancy has often aspired to become science; for between the two—wide apart as they are said to lie—stretches an uncertain domain, which they seem alternately to occupy by incursion, and of which, when thus seized upon, each appears, oddly enough, often to take possession in the rival name of the other. Thus Astronomy, growing visionary, has pretended to trace

from the aspects of the heavenly bodies, not merely their laws and motions, but the vicissitudes of human fate; and chemistry has had its poetic visions of an elixir of life and of the philosopher's stone; while, on the other [182
hand, mere imagination has quite as often attempted to erect, out of the airiest things, a philosophic realm of her own, and to deduce into positive sciences the bumps upon the human skull, the freaks of Nature in the conformation of the features, and even the whimsical diversities of people's handwriting. From all these have been set up grave methods of arriving at a knowledge of men's faculties and characters.

It is surprising that, among these fantastic systems of physiognomy, that easy and natural one should never have been set on foot, which might connect the structural efforts of individuals with the cast of their minds and feelings. To do this would be especially easy in new countries, where nearly every one is compelled to build his own abode, and where, for the most part, there is so little of architectural solidity that habitations seldom last for above a generation, and even he who inherits a house inherits but a ruin. Thus the simplicity of Patrick Henry's habits and tastes might be inferred from the primitiveness of his dwelling. You might have guessed his unambitiousness from the absence about his home of any thing that betrayed a longing for grandeur. All was plain, substantial, good; nothing ostentatious or effeminate. The master's personal desires coveted nothing beyond rural abundance and comforts—such blessings as are quite enough to make private life happy and preserve it uncorrupt. In all this you might discern the public man who cherished, as a politician, no visions, no novelties; sought, of course, to build up for his fellow-citizens no other nor better happiness than such as crowned all his own wishes; believed little in pomp and greatness; loved our old hereditary laws, manners, liberties, victuals; and dreaded French principles and dishes as alike contaminating [183
and destructive.

Man, as we have already intimated, is a constructive animal. He alone is properly such. For the inferior creatures that build do so upon a single, instinctive, invariable method, always using the same material; he, rationally and inventively, as outward circumstances may require, or as, when these constrain him little, his individual fancy, desires, or judgment may prompt. In the nomadic state a tent of skins, a lodge of bark, are the sole structures for shelter that fit his wandering life; and the rudeness of these invites to no decoration, while convenience itself forbids all diversity of contrivance for him, who, paying no ground-rent, may decamp to-morrow; and, bound by no leasehold, may carry his tenement with him, like that travelling landlord, Master Snail, or abandon it like that lodger by the season, Dame Bird. In short, he comes not under the terms of zoological or botanical description, as having a *habitat*; under the line he lives, as did father Adam and mother Eve (whose housekeeping in Eden, Milton so well relates), in a bower of rose and myrtle; at the pole, he burrows beneath the snow or makes his masonry of ice; in Idumea, he dwells, like its lions, in a cavern; on the Maranon, he perches his house in a tree-top, and his young ones—plumeless bipeds though they be—nestle among the feathered denizens of the mid-air; in certain mining regions, he is born and dies hundreds of fathoms under ground, and perhaps never sees the light of day; in Naples, he lives, as do the dogs and cats of Constantinople, in the streets. Thus, whatever idea, whatever purpose, whatever need, whatever fancy, predominates in him when he builds, it takes shape, it finds expression, it embodies itself, forthwith, in fitting [184
material, fittingly contrived, and is, according to his habitative wish, his taste in a tabernacle, possibly a pig-sty, possibly a palace; for his range of invention stretches over every thing that lies between the two.

The founders of the great commonwealths of antiquity—the Grecian statesmen and warriors, the Roman consuls—lived at home, during the most glorious period of their several states, in an extreme simplicity; content with a truly noble penury, while they built up the grandeur of their country. The constructive propensity of the Athenian instead of a private direction towards his personal gratification, took the generous form of a passion for public monuments; that of the Roman turned itself, until the decline of the Republic began, upon the rearing of trophies and triumphal arches, rather than of lordly mansions; and dictators sometimes, consuls often, were called from the cot and the plough to the supreme trusts of war and peace. But this was all in the spirit of ages and institutions, when the citizen lived in the state and sought his private, in the public greatness and happiness. Modern times present few individual instances of the like. In those ancient politics, the state leaned on the citizen; in our modern, the citizen leans on the state. Then, public life was much, private life was little; now, it is reversed, the citizen wants not to help the state, but wants the state to help him. Now, over-civilization has so multiplied the conveniences of life, and habit has rendered its indulgences so necessary, that he who, being great, can live without and above them, has need to be of a rare elevation, an inherent grandeur of soul.

The statesman whose mansion and whose habits in retreat we are about to describe, without being altogether of that heroical cast of mind which graced the character of a Washington, a Henry, or a Clay, had yet much of [185
that elevated simplicity which marks the highest strain of greatness. Mr. Madison, when he laid down what he had so worthily and wisely worn as to have disarmed all previous reproach and hostility—the supreme dignity of the Union—returned quietly to his hereditary abode, resumed the unaffected citizen, and seemed to be as glad to forget his past greatness as to escape from the anxieties and envy that attend power as shadows do the sun. He went back, after his stormy but successful presidency of eight years, to his father's seat, Montpelier, where, but for the accident—the same which befell a hero of Irish song, Denis Brulgruddery—of his mother's being on a visit to her mamma at the time, he would certainly have been born. There, like a sensible man, and a good fellow to boot (as he was), he sat down on a fine plantation, in a good old-fashioned house, with a fine old cellar of old-fashioned wines under it, and the best old Virginian servants in it, to spend the rest of his days upon that wise plan which King Pyrrhus proposed to himself, but, postponing too long, did not live to execute. He (that is, Mr. Madison, not Pyrrhus) sat down like an actor who has played out his part with applause, calmly to look at the rest of the piece, no further concerned in its business, but not affecting (as others have done) the uninterested spectator of the performance. He did not assume the philosophic sage; he did not bury himself in a monastic gloom like Charles V.; nor, like the same discrowned prince and Mr. Jefferson, betake himself to mending watches; nor, like Dioclesian, to cultivating cabbages; but in the bosom of that pleasant retreat, which had witnessed his youthful preparation for public toils, sought the repose from [186
them which he had fairly earned; and sweetening it with all that could give it zest, in the companionship of the amiable wife who had shared with him and adorned public honors, and in the society of the many personal

friends that his virtues and talents drew about him, passed the evening of his days in gentlemanly and genial ease and hospitality.

Montpelier, the residence to which, as an only child, he had succeeded at his father's death, is a plain but ample, and rather handsome habitation of brick, around which spreads out, in such undulations of gently-waving swells and irregular plains as pleasantly diversify the view, a fertile domain of some two thousand six hundred acres; a part of it well cultivated, but a still larger part yet in all the wildness of nature. The region is one where she has shed, in great beauty, the softest picturesque of hill and dale, forest and glade. At hand, in the rear, rises, as if to adorn the prospect with bolder contrasts, the gracefully wavering chain of the southwest mountain, to fence on one side the vale of Orange and Albemarle, on whose southeastern edge of nodding woods and green fields Montpelier lies embosomed and embowered; while on the other side, in the airy distance beyond that vale, tower in fantastic line the blue peaks of the long Appalachian ridge, breaking the horizon, as if to form another and a more fanciful one. The wide scene, caught in glimpses through the mantling trees, or opening out in the larger vista of farm beyond farm, or shining in loftier prospect above the tree-tops and the low hills, offers to the ranging eye, many a charming view,—sweet spots of pastoral beauty; jutting capes and copses, or nodding old groves of woodlands; the rich and regular cultivation of spreading plantations, amidst which glisten now a stately mansion, and now a snug farm-house, each decorated with its [187
peculiar growth of trees for shade or fruit; and far away, mountain regions, whose heights, and whose rude and massy but undefined forms, suggest to the fancy the savage grandeur of that remoter landscape which the eye knows to be there, though it mocks the sight with what is so different. All these are, at frequent points, the aspects of that fine country from Orange court-house up to Charlottesville; they are nowhere seen in greater perfection or abundance than just around Montpelier. At almost every turn, one discovers a new pleasure of the landscape; at nearly every step, there is a surprise. It looks like a realm of pictures; you would almost think that not nature had placed it there, but that the happiest skill of the painter had collected and disposed the scenes.

The house, we have said, is plain and large. Its size and finish bespeak gentlemanly but unpretending ease and fortune. It has no air of assumed lordliness or upstart pretension. No foreign models seem to have been consulted in its design, no proportions of art studied; yet it wants not symmetry as well-planned convenience, comfort, and fitness lend, as if without intention. A tall, and rather handsome columned portico, in front, is the only thing decorative about it; but is not enough so to be at all out of keeping. It is of the whole height of the central building, of two stories, and covers about half its length of some forty-five feet. Broad steps, five in number, support and give access along its entire front. Its depth is about one-third its width. The main building itself is a parallelogram, near half as deep as it is long. At each flank, a little receding, is a single-storied wing of about twenty feet, its flat roof surmounted by a balustrade. The house stands on a gently-rising [188
eminence. A wide lawn, broken only here and there by clumps of trees, stretches before it. On either side are irregular masses of these, of different shapes and foliage, evergreen and deciduous, which thicken at places into a grove, and half screen those dependencies of a handsome establishment—stables, dairies and the like—which, left openly in sight, look very ill, and can be made to look no otherwise, even by the trying to make them look genteel: for they are disagreeable objects, that call up (attire them as you will) ideas not dainty. As, therefore, the eye should not miss them altogether—for their absence would imply great discomfort and inconvenience—the best way is to half-veil them, as is done at Montpelier.

In the rear of the house lies a large and well-tended garden. This was, of course, mainly the mistress's care; while the master's was, as far as his bodily feebleness permitted, directed towards his agricultural operations. In the Virginia economy of the household, where so much must be ordered with a view to entertaining guests all the while, the garden plays an important part. Without ample supplies from it, there would be no possibility of maintaining that exuberant good cheer with which the tables continually groan, in all those wealthier habitations where the old custom of a boundless hospitality is still reverently observed. In such—and there are yet many, although the Jeffersonian "Law of Descents," and the diffusion of the trading spirit are thinning them out every day, as rum and smallpox are dispeopling our Indian tribes—there is little pause of repletion. Every guest must be feasted: if a stranger, because strangers ought to be made to pass their time as agreeably as possible; if a friend, because nothing can be too good for one's friends. Where such social [189
maxims and such a domestic policy prevail, there will seldom, according to Adam Smith's principle of "Demand and Supply," be any very serious lack of guests. Indeed, the condition is one hard to avoid, and so pleasant, withal, that we have known persons of wit and breeding to adopt it as their sole profession, and benevolently pass their lives in guarding their friends, one after another, from the distresses of a guestless mansion. But, to return to the garden of Montpelier; there were few houses in Virginia that gave a larger welcome, or made it more agreeable, than that over which Queen Dolly—the most gracious and beloved of all our female sovereigns—reigned; and, wielding as skilfully the domestic, as she had done worthily and popularly the public, sceptre, every thing that came beneath her immediate personal sway—the care and the entertainment of visitors, the government of the menials, the whole policy of the interior—was admirably managed, with an equal grace and efficiency. Wherefore, as we have said, the important department of the garden was excellently well administered, both for profit and pleasure, and made to pour forth in profusion, from its wide and variously-tended extent, the esculents and the blooms, herb, fruit, flower, or root, of every season. Nor was the merely beautiful neglected for the useful only; her truly feminine tastes delighted in all the many tinted children of the parterre, native and exotic; and flowers sprang up beneath her hand, as well as their more substantial sisters, the vegetables. In a word, her garden was rich in all that makes one delightful; and so of all the other less sightly but needful departments of her large and well-ordered establishment.

We should, however, slight one of its most pleasing features, were we to omit mentioning the peculiar purpose [190
to which was consecrated one of those low wings of the building which we have briefly described. There dwelt, under the most sacred guard of filial affection, yet served in her own little separate household by servants set apart to her use, the very aged and infirm mother of Mr. Madison; a most venerable lady, who, after the death of her husband, thus lived under the tender guardianship of her son and of her daughter-in-

law, down to near her hundredth year, enjoying whatever of the sweets of life the most affectionate and ingenious solicitude can bestow upon extreme decrepitude. Here she possessed without the trouble of providing them, all the comforts and freedom of an independent establishment; and tended by her own gray-haired domestics, and surrounded at her will by such younger relatives as it gratified her to have about her, she passed her quiet but never lonely days, a reverent and a gentle image of the good and indeed elevated simplicity of elder times, manners, and tastes. All the appointments of her dwelling bespoke the olden day; dark and cumbrous old carved furniture, carpets of which the modern loom has forgotten the patterns; implements that looked as if Tubal Cain had designed them; upholstery quaintly, if not queerly venerable. In short, all the objects about her were in keeping with her person and attire. You would have said that they and she had sat to Sir Godfrey Kneller for a family picture; or that you yourself had been suddenly transported back to Addison's time, and were peeping by privilege into the most secluded part of Sir Roger de Coverley's mansion. Indeed, to confirm the illusion, you would probably find her reading the Spectator in the large imprint and rich binding of its own period, or thumbing—as our degenerate misses do a novel of the Dickens [191
or Sue school—the leaves of Pope, Swift, Steele, or some other of those whom criticism alone (for the common people and the crowd, of what is now styled literature, know them not) still recalls as "the wits of Queen Anne's day." These were the learning of our great-grandmothers; need we wonder if they were nobler dames than the frivolous things of the fancy boarding-school, half-taught in every thing they should not study, made at much pains and expense to know really nothing, and just proficient enough of foreign tongues to be ignorant of their own? The authors we have mentioned, their good contemporaries, and their yet greater predecessors, who gave to our language a literature, and are still all that holds it from sinking into fustian and slipslop, a tag-rag learning and a tatterdemalion English, were those that lay around this ancient lady, and beguiled her old age as they had formed and delighted the youth of her mind and heart. If you made her refer to them, as the favourite employment of her infirmity-compelled leisure, it was pleasant to hear her (as in that other instance which we have given of Patrick Henry's sisters) talk of them as if they had been dear and familiar personal friends. Perhaps, however, authors were then better loved and more respected by their readers than they are nowadays; and possibly this was because they deserved to be so; or indeed there may be a double decline, and readers as much worse than the writers. Not that either of these is the fact, or even a conjecture which we ourselves entertain. We merely mention it *en passant*, as a bare possibility. The opinion would be unpopular, and should not be admitted in a democracy; of which it is the very genius to have no opinions but such as are popular; and therefore to think no thoughts that might betray one into an opinion not [192
that of the majority.

Such books then, and, when her old eyes grew weary, the almost equally antiquated occupation of knitting, habitually filled up the hours of this old-time lady; the hours, we mean, which pain or feebleness remitted her for occupation. As to those sadder moments of suffering, or of that sinking of the bodily powers which presses at times upon far-advanced age, she bore them with the cheerfullest patience, and even treated them as almost compensated by the constant delight of the affections which the pious care of her children gave her all the while. Nothing could exceed their watchfulness to serve her, soothe her, minister to her such enjoyments as may be made by lovingness to linger around even the last decline of a kindly and well-spent life. In all such offices, her son bore as much part as his own frail health and the lesser aptitude of men for tending the sick permitted; but no daughter ever exceeded in the tender and assiduous arts of alleviation, the attentions which Mrs. Madison gave to her husband's infirm parent. Reversing the order of nature, she became to her (as the venerable sufferer herself was accustomed fondly to say) the mother of her second childhood. Mistress as she was of all that makes greatness pleasing and sheds a shining grace upon power, Mrs. Madison never appeared in any light so worthy or so winning, as in this secret one of filial affection towards her adopted mother.

It was a part, however, of her system of happiness for the ancient lady, at once to shut out from her (what she could ill sustain) the bustle of that large establishment, and the gayeties of the more miscellaneous guests that often thronged it, and yet to bring to her, in special favor towards them, such visitors as could give her [193
pleasure and break the monotony of her general seclusion. These were sometimes old and valued friends; sometimes their hopeful offspring; and occasionally personages of such note as made her curious to see them. All such she received, according to what they were, with that antique cordiality or amenity which belonged to the fine old days of good-breeding, of which she was a genuine specimen. To the old, her person, dress, manners, conversation, recalled, in their most pleasing forms, the usages, the spirit, the social tone of an order of things that had vanished; an elevated simplicity that had now given way to more affected courtesies, more artificial elegancies. To the young, she and her miniature household were a still more singular spectacle. They had looked upon their host and hostess as fine old samples of the past, and the outer, the exoteric Montpelier, with its cumbrous furniture and rich but little modish appointments, as a sort of museum of domestic antiquities; but here, hidden within its secret recesses, were a personage, ways, objects, fashions, that carried them back to the yet more superannuated elegance of days when what now struck them as obsolete must have been regarded as the frivolous innovations of an impertinent young generation.

We have already described the house, and glanced at its appointments, but may add that the former seemed designed for an opulent and an easy hospitality, and that the latter, while rich, was plainly and solidly so. No expedients, no tricks of show met the eye; but all was well set forth with a sort of nobleness, yet nothing of pomp. The apartments were of ample size; the furniture neither scanty nor (as now seems the mode) huddled [194
together, as if the master were a salesman. Nothing seemed wanting, nothing too much. A finished urbanity and yet a thorough cordiality reigned in every thing: all the ways, all the persons, all the objects of the place were agreeable and even interesting. You soon grew at your ease, if at arriving you had been otherwise: for here was, in its perfection, that happiest part and surest test of good-breeding—the power of at once putting every one at ease. The attentions were not over-assiduous, not slack; but kept, to great degree, out of sight, by making a body of thoroughly-trained and most mannerly servants their ministrants, so that the hosts performed in person little but the higher rites of hospitality, and thus seemed to have no trouble and much pleasure in entertaining you. Accordingly, there has seldom, even in the hilarious land of old Virginia, been a house kept—especially by elderly people—at which it was pleasanter to be a sojourner. They always made you

glad to have come, and sorry that you must go.

Such was the main interior life of Montpelier. Its business seemed but the giving pleasure to its guests, of whom a perpetual succession came and went. Little was seen of the working machinery of the fine, and on the whole, well-managed estate, that poured forth its copious supplies to render possible all this lavish entertainment, this perennial flow of feasting. For here, be it observed, as elsewhere in the rural hospitalities of Virginia, it was not single visitors that were to be accommodated, but families and parties. Nor did these arrive unattended, for each brought with it a retinue of servants, a stud of horses, and all were to be provided for. Meantime, the master was seen little to direct in person the husbandry of his domain; and indeed, he was [195 known to be too feeble to do so. Nevertheless, the tillage of Montpelier was productive and its soil held in a state of progressive improvement. Indeed, capable of every thing he had engaged in, except arms (in which the Jeffersonian dynasty, except Monroe, must be confessed not to have excelled)—wise, attentive, and systematic, he had established his farming operations upon a method so good and regular, that they went on well, with only his occasional inspection, and the nightly reports of his head men of the blacks. The mildest and humanest of masters, he had brought about among his slaves, by a gentle exactness, and the care to keep them happy while well-governed, great devotion to him and their duties, and a far more than usual intelligence. Every night he received an account of the day's results, and consulted freely with his managers, on the morrow's business. All was examined and discussed as with persons who had and who deserved his confidence. Thus encouraged to think, the inert and unreflecting African learnt forecast, skill, self-respect, and zeal to do his duty towards the master and mistress who were so good to him. We do not say that the like could be done to the same extent every where. Montpelier was cultivated merely to support itself, and not for profit; which is necessarily the ruling end on the plantations generally, and perhaps compels more enforced methods; which, indeed, can scarcely be expected to cease, as long as fanatical interference from without, between the master and the slave, shall only serve to breed discontent on the one part and distrust on the other, and driving the threatened master to attend to the present security of his property, instead of occupying himself with its future amelioration. Men of any sense abroad should surely have perceived, by this [196 time, that the method of driving the Southern States into Emancipation does not answer; but, on the contrary, is, so far as the temper of that region is concerned, only postponing it, and meanwhile aggravating the condition of both classes.

Thus gentle, genial, kindly, liberal, good and happy, passed the life of Montpelier. Public veneration shed all its honors; private friendship and communion all their delights upon it. Even those dignities which, in this country of party spirit, beget for the successful more of reproach than fame, had left the name of Madison without a serious stain. His Presidency past, the wise and blameless spirit of his official administration came speedily to be acknowledged on all sides, and envy and detraction, left without an aim, turned to eulogy. An ample fortune, the greatest domestic happiness, and a life prolonged, in spite of the original feebleness of his body, to the unusual age of eighty-five, gave him in their full measure, those singular blessings which the goodness of God deservedly dealt to him and the admirable partner of his existence. A philosophic, and yet not a visionary ruler, he should stand among ours as next to Washington, though separated from him by a great interval. The Jeffersons and the Jacksons come far after him, for

> "He was more
> Than a mere Alexander; and, unstained
> With household blood and wine, serenely wore
> His sovereign virtues: still we Trajan's name adore."

Jay. [197

[198

Tuesday Ev.g 15 April 1794

My dear Sally

I was this Ev.g fav.d with yours of the 14 p.r post – It is now between 8 & 9 oC.k and I am just returned from Court – I am uninformed whether the Miss allone are arrived.

I expect my dear Sally to see you sooner than we expected – there is here a serious Determination to send me to England, if possible to avoid a War. + + + + +

– a thousand Reflections crowd into my mind, and a thousand Emotions into my Heart – I must remember my motto Deo Duce perseverandum – the Knowledge I have of your Sentiments on these Subjects affords me consolation.

If the nomination sh.d take place it will be in the Course of a few Days, and then it will appear in the papers – in the mean Time say nothing on the Subject, for it is not impossible that the Business may take another Turn, tho' I confess I do not expect it will – + + + +

If it should please God to make me instrumental to the continuance of peace and in preventing the Effusion of Blood and other Evils and Miseries incident to war we shall both have Reason to rejoice. Whatever may be the Event, the Endeavour will be virtuous and consequently consolatory – Let us repose unlimited Trust in our Maker – It is our Business to adore and to obey – My Love to the Children

with very sincere and tender affection I am
my Dear Sally ever Yours John Jay

[199

Jay's Residence, Bedford, N.Y.

JAY.

Although the City of New-York claims the honor of being the birth-place of John Jay, it cannot properly be regarded as the home of his early years. Not far from the time of his birth, on the 12th of December, 1745, his father, Peter Jay, who, by honorable assiduity in the mercantile vocation, had accumulated a handsome

fortune, purchased an estate in Rye, about twenty-five miles from the city, with the intention of making it his future residence. This town, situated on the southeastern corner of Westchester County, ranks among the [200
most delightful summer resorts that adorn the northern shores of Long Island Sound. The village proper stands about a mile and a half from the Sound, on the turn-pike road between New-York and Boston. From the hills extending along its northern limits, the Mockquams (Blind Brook) a perennial stream, flows southwardly through it, adding much to the beauty of its scenery. On the outskirts are many elegant villas, the favorite haunts of those who rejoice to exchange the cares of business and the dust and heat of the neighboring metropolis for its grateful seclusion and the refreshing breezes that visit it from the ocean.

For the description of the Jay estate at Rye, in the absence of personal knowledge, we shall, in the main, rely upon the account furnished by Bolton, in his excellent History of Westchester County, adhering principally to his own language.

The situation of the estate is very fine, embracing some of the most graceful undulations of a hilly district, highly diversified with rocks, woods, and river scenery. Contiguous to the southern portion of it and bordering the Sound is Marle's Neck and the neighboring islands of Pine and Hen-hawk. The curious phenomenon of the Mirage is frequently witnessed from these shores, when the land on the opposite coast of Long Island appears to rise above the waters of the Sound, the intermediate spaces seeming to be sunk beneath the waves.

The family residence is situated near the post-road leading to Rye, at a short distance from the river. The building is a handsome structure of wood, having a lofty portico on the north. The south point commands a [201
beautiful and charming view of the Sound and Long Island. Some highly interesting family portraits adorn the walls of the hall and dining-room, among which are the following: Augustus Jay, who emigrated to this country in 1686, a copy from the original by Waldo; Anna Maria Bayard, wife of Augustus Jay, by Waldo; Peter Augustus Jay, as a boy, artist unknown; an old painting upon oak panel, supposed to represent Catherine, wife of the Hon. Stephen Van Cortlandt, of Cortlandt, South Holland. This lady appears habited in a plain black dress, wearing a high neck-ruffle, and, in her hand, holds a clasped Bible. In one corner of the picture is inscribed "ætat. 64, 1630." In the library is the valuable cabinet of shells, amounting to several thousands, of which the collector, John C. Jay, M.D., has published a descriptive catalogue. Noticeable among the family relics is the gold snuff-box, presented by the Corporation of New-York with the freedom of the city to "his Excellency, John Jay," on the 4th of October, 1784, not long after his return from diplomatic service in Spain and at Paris. An old French Bible contains the following memoranda: "Auguste Jay, est né a la Rochelle dans la Royaume de France le 23/13 Mars, 1665. Laus Deo. N. York, July ye 10th, 1773, this day at 4 o'clock in ye morning dyed Eva Van Cortlandt, was buried ye next day ye 12 en ye voute at Mr. Stuyvesant's about six and seven o'clock."

In the opening of a wood on the southeast of the mansion is the family cemetery, where are interred the remains of the ancestors of the Jays. Over the grave of the Chief Justice is the following inscription, written by his son, Peter Augustus Jay:

IN MEMORY OF [202
JOHN JAY,
EMINENT AMONG THOSE WHO ASSERTED THE LIBERTY
AND ESTABLISHED THE INDEPENDENCE
OF HIS COUNTRY,
WHICH HE LONG SERVED IN THE MOST
IMPORTANT OFFICES,
LEGISLATIVE, EXECUTIVE, JUDICIAL, AND DIPLOMATIC,
AND DISTINGUISHED IN THEM ALL BY HIS
ABILITY, FIRMNESS, PATRIOTISM, AND INTEGRITY,
HE WAS IN HIS LIFE, AND IN HIS DEATH,
AN EXAMPLE OF THE VIRTUES,
THE FAITH AND THE HOPES
OF A CHRISTIAN.

BORN, *Dec.* 12, 1745,

DIED, *May* 17, 1829.

According to his expressed desire, the body of Mr. Jay was not deposited in the family vault, but committed to the bosom of the earth. He always strenuously protested against what he considered the heathenish attempt to rescue the worthless relics of mortality from that dissolution, which seems to be their natural and appropriate destination. Within the same cemetery are also memorials to Sir James Jay, Peter Jay Munroe, Peter Jay, Goldsborough Banyar, Harriet Van Cortlandt, and other members of the family.

Pierre Jay, to whom the Jays of this country trace their origin, was one of those noble and inflexible Huguenots who were driven from France by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, a measure which deprived that kingdom of more than one-fourth of the most industrious and desirable class of its population. His [203
descendants, settling in this country, retained the characteristics which had distinguished their forefathers, and became among its most respectable and prosperous inhabitants. Peter Jay, the grandson of Pierre Jay, and, like him, engaged in mercantile pursuits, was married in the year 1728 to Mary, the daughter of Jacobus Van Cortlandt, and was the father of ten children, of whom John was the eighth. Seldom has a son been more fortunate in his parents. "Both father and mother," we are told by the biographer, "were actuated by sincere and fervent piety; both had warm hearts and cheerful tempers, and both possessed, under varied and severe trials, a remarkable degree of equanimity. But in other respects they differed widely. He possessed strong and masculine sense, was a shrewd observer and accurate judge of men, resolute, persevering and prudent, an affectionate father, a kind master, but governing all under his control with mild but absolute sway. She had a cultivated mind and a fine imagination. Mild and affectionate in her temper and manners, she took delight in

the duties as well as in the pleasures of domestic life; while a cheerful resignation to the will of Providence during many years of sickness and suffering bore witness to the strength of her religious faith."

Under the tutelage of such a mother was John Jay educated till his eighth year, and from her he learned the rudiments of English and Latin grammar. Even at this tender age, the gravity of his disposition, his discretion and his fondness for books were subjects of common remark. When eight years old, he was committed to the care of Mr. Stoope, a French clergyman and keeper of a grammar-school at New Rochelle, with whom he remained for about three years. This gentleman being unfitted by reason of his oddities and improvidence for [204 the efficient supervision of the establishment, left the young pupils, for the most part, to the tender mercies of his wife, a woman of extremely penurious habits; by whom, we are told, they were "treated with little food and much scolding." Every thing about the house under the management of this ill-assorted pair went to ruin, and the young student was often obliged, in order to protect his bed from the drifting snow, to close up the broken panes with bits of wood. Various other inconveniences fell to the lot of young Jay, but it is probable that the rigid discipline of Mrs. Stoope was not without its advantages. It had the effect of throwing its subject on his own resources, and taught him to disregard those thousand petty annoyances which, after all, are the chief causes of human misery, and which often disturb the tranquillity of the strongest minds.

From Mr. Stoope he was transferred to a private tutor, and in his fifteenth year entered King's, now Columbia College, at that time in its infancy. Here, as might have been supposed, his conduct, exemplary character and scholarship won him the esteem and respect of all. Beside the improvement and expansion of his intellect, and the opportunity of measuring himself with companions of the same age and the same studies, he received other advantages from these four years of college training. His attention being called to certain deficiencies which might impede his future success, he at once set himself at work to remedy them. An indistinct articulation and a faulty pronunciation of the letter L, he was able by the constant study and practice of the rules of elocution entirely to remove. Special attention was also paid to English composition, by which he [205 attained that admirable style, which in purity and classical finish was afterwards not surpassed by that of any other contemporary statesman, a style polished but not emasculate, and of such flexibility as to adapt itself equally well to the vehemence of patriotic appeal, the guarded precision of diplomatic correspondence, or to the grave and authoritative judgments of the bench. He also adopted Pope's plan of keeping by his bedside a table supplied with writing materials, in order to record at the moment of its suggestion any idea which might occur to him in waking.

During his senior year, the young student had occasion to display that decision and firmness which at a later period shone so conspicuously in affairs of greater moment. Certain mischief-making classmates, perhaps to avenge themselves on the steward, undertook to break the table in the college hall. The noise produced by this operation reaching the ears of Dr. Cooper, the President, that arbitrary personage suddenly pounced upon them without leaving them a chance of escape. The young men were at once formed in a line and two questions—"Did you break the table? Do you know who did?"—were each answered by an emphatic "No," until they were put to Jay, the last but one in the line, who had indeed been present at the disturbance but took no part in it; to the first question he replied in the negative, to the second his answer was "Yes, sir," and to the further inquiry—"Who was it?"—he promptly said, "I do not choose to tell you, sir." The remaining student followed Jay's example. The two young men, after resisting the expostulations of the President, were summoned before the Faculty for trial, where Jay appeared for the defence. To the allegation that they had been guilty of violating their written promise, on their admission, of obedience to the college statutes, Jay [206 responded that they were not required by those statutes to inform against their companions, and that therefore his refusal to do so was not an act of disobedience. Reasonable as this defence might appear, it, of course, failed to satisfy judges, clothed with executive powers, and anxious to punish the least disregard of their own authority, and the two delinquents were at once rusticated. At the termination of his sentence Jay returned to college, where his reception by the instructors proved that he had suffered no loss of their esteem. On the 15th of May, 1764, he was graduated with the highest collegiate honors.

On leaving college, Jay entered the office of Benjamin Kissam, in the city of New-York, as a student at law. Between this gentleman and himself a degree of familiarity and mutual respect existed, quite remarkable considering their relative positions and their disparity of years. For two years in the office of Mr. Kissam, he was the fellow student of the celebrated grammarian, Lindley Murray, with whom he formed an enduring friendship, and who, in a posthumous memoir of himself, thus alludes to his companion: "His talents and virtues gave, at that period, pleasing indications of future eminence; he was remarkable for strong reasoning powers, comprehensive views, indefatigable application, and uncommon firmness of mind. With these qualifications added to a just taste in literature, and ample stores of learning and knowledge, he was happily prepared to enter on that career of public virtue by which he was afterward so honorably distinguished, and made instrumental in promoting the good of his country." Murray was a tall, handsome man, the son of Robert Murray, a venerable quaker of New-York, the location of whose farm at the lower part of the city is still [207 pointed out by the antiquarian. Mr. Jay was admitted to the bar in 1768, and in the pursuit of his profession so extended his reputation that he was soon after appointed secretary of the commission named by the king to determine the disputed boundary between the States of New-York and New Jersey. In 1774 he was married to Sarah, the youngest daughter of William Livingston, an eminent supporter of the American cause during the Revolution, and afterwards for many years governor of New Jersey.

The limits to which we are confined allow us to take but a brief notice of Mr. Jay's numerous and most valuable public services, extending over a period of twenty-eight years, and terminating with his retirement in 1801 from the office of governor of his native State. In no one of the colonies had the cause of resistance to the mother country less encouragement than in New-York, and in no other could Great Britain number so many influential allies, yet, on the receipt of the news of the enforcement of the Boston Port Bill, Mr. Jay took a decided stand on the side of the patriots. At a meeting of the citizens of New-York, May 16, 1774, we find him on a committee of fifty appointed "to correspond with the sister colonies on all matters of moment." Young as he was, he was required to draft the response to the proposal of the Boston committee for a Congress of deputies from "the colonies in general." In the first Congress in the same year, he was a member

of some of the most important committees. The "Address to the People of Great Britain," the distinguishing act of that Congress, was drafted by Mr. Jay. This eloquent document was pronounced by Jefferson, then ignorant of its author, to be "the production certainly of the finest pen in America," and Mr. Webster considered it as [208 standing "at the head of the incomparable productions of that body [the first Congress], productions which called forth the decisive commendation of Lord Chatham, in which he pronounced them not inferior to the finest productions of the master minds of the world."

In the interim between the close of the first, and the opening in May 1775 of the second Congress, Jay was incessantly engaged in the service of his country; and when the delegates had reassembled, his pen was again employed in the preparation of the two addresses to the inhabitants of Jamaica and of Ireland. Some reluctance being shown on the part of wealthy and influential citizens to serve in a military capacity, he, without hesitation, sought and accepted a commission as colonel of a regiment of the new militia; but his legislative ability and eloquence were too highly valued to allow of his absence from Congress, and he never actually joined his company. A second address of Congress to the king having been treated with insult, and all hope of accommodation being abandoned, he became one of the foremost advocates of warlike measures; and, while on a committee for that purpose, devised a series of plans for crippling the resources of England, which were adopted by Congress in March 1776, nearly three months previous to the formal act of severance in the Declaration of Independence. At the adoption of this measure, in consequence of his election to the Provincial Congress of New-York in April of that year, Jay was unable to affix his signature to that instrument, but, as chairman of the committee to whom the subject had been referred, he reported a resolution, pledging that [209 State to its support. Shortly after came the most gloomy period of the revolutionary cause in New-York; a hostile army was invading the State from the north, inspired by the defeat of the American forces on Long Island, the city was in possession of the enemy, and what was worse, treachery and despair existed among the people themselves. A committee of public safety was appointed by the Provincial Congress, clothed with dictatorial powers, of which Jay acted as chairman. At this juncture also, Mr. Jay, by appointment, put forth the thrilling address of the convention to their constituents, an appeal written in the most exalted strain of patriotic eloquence, in which he rebukes the defection and stimulates the flagging hopes of the people with the zeal and indignant energy of an ancient prophet.

In 1777, Jay, from a committee appointed the year before, drafted a State Constitution, which received the sanction of the legislature. There were certain provisions which he desired to introduce in that instrument, and which he thought more likely to be adopted when proposed in the form of amendments than if they should be incorporated into the first draft; but a summons to the side of his dying mother prevented the realization of his wishes. One of the amendments which he intended to urge, was a provision for the gradual abolition of slavery within the limits of the State. Under the new constitution, having been appointed to the office of Chief Justice, he was ineligible by that instrument to any other post, except on a "special occasion," but, in consequence of a difficulty arising between his own, and the neighboring State of Vermont, the legislature took advantage of the exception, and elected him delegate to Congress. Without vacating, therefore, his [210 judicial seat, he complied with their appointment, and soon after his entrance in Congress became its presiding officer. The impossibility, however, of doing full justice to both his judicial and legislative duties, induced him to resign his seat on the bench. Congress now employed his pen in writing the circular letter to the States, urging them to furnish additional funds for the war. This statesmanlike exposition of the government's financial condition closes with a noble appeal to the national honor.

"Rouse, therefore, strive who shall do most for his country; rekindle that flame of patriotism, which, at the mention of disgrace and slavery, blazed throughout America and animated all her citizens. Determine to finish the contest as you began it, honestly and gloriously. Let it never be said that America had no sooner become independent than she became insolvent, or that her infant glories and growing fame were obscured and tarnished by broken contracts and violated faith, in the very hour when all the nations of the earth were admiring and almost adoring the splendor of her rising."

In 1779, accompanied by his wife, he sailed for Spain, as minister plenipotentiary, in order to secure the concurrence of that kingdom in the treaty with France, recognizing the independence of the United States; and though his diplomatic negotiations were conducted in the most honorable spirit, and with consummate prudence and ability, the object of his mission was finally frustrated by the selfish policy of the Spanish government, in requiring America to surrender the right of navigating on the Mississippi. It was during his residence at the Spanish court, that the desperate financial embarrassments of Congress prompted a measure [211 equally unjust to their representative abroad and hazardous to the national credit. Presuming upon the success of his mission, they had empowered their treasurer to draw on Mr. Jay bills payable at six months, for half a million of dollars. As these bills came in, the minister was placed in a situation of extreme perplexity, but his regard for his country's reputation overcame all private considerations; he adopted the patriotic but desperate expedient of making himself personally responsible for their payment, and his acceptances had exceeded one hundred thousand dollars before any relief came to hand. Mr. Jay's residence in Spain also subjected him to other trials, only less severe than the one just mentioned; the vexatious obstacles placed in way of his negotiations by the Spanish government; the insufficiency of his salary at the most expensive court in Europe; the frequent removal of the court from place to place, at the royal pleasure, involving the absence of his wife, whom, for pecuniary reasons, he was unable to take with him; the death of his young child, and his anxiety for the family whom he had left at home, exposed to the dangers of war, and from whom, for more than a year, not a line had been received, might well have harassed a less sensitive nature than his. The fortitude with which he sustained these annoyances may be seen in a letter written by him about this time to his friend, Egbert Benson, of New-York. It commences thus:

"Dear Benson:

"When shall we again, by a cheerful fire, or under a shady tree, recapitulate our juvenile pursuits or pleasures, or look back on the extensive field of politics we once have trodden? Our plans of life have, within [212 these few years past, been strangely changed. Our country, I hope, will be the better for the alterations. How

far we individually may be benefited is more questionable. Personal considerations, however, must give way to public ones, and the consciousness of having done our duty to our country and posterity, must recompense us for all the evils we experience in their cause."

From Spain, by order of Congress, Jay proceeded to Paris to arrange, in conjunction with Franklin, Adams, Jefferson, and Laurens, the Definitive Treaty of Peace with England,—the most important diplomatic act of the eighteenth century; and we have the testimony of Mr. Fitzherbert, then the English minister resident in Paris, that "it was not only chiefly but SOLELY through his means that the negotiations of that period between England and the United States were brought to a successful conclusion." Mr. Oswald had arrived in Paris with a commission, in which the United States were mentioned under the designation of "colonies," but Jay, although his associates did not participate in his scruples, refused to begin negotiations without a preliminary recognition on the part of England of the Independence of the United States; and owing to his firmness a new commission was obtained from the king, in which that most essential point (as the sequel proved) was gained. Declining the appointment now tendered him by Congress of commissioner to negotiate a commercial treaty with England, Jay returned to his country. On arriving at New-York he was welcomed by a most enthusiastic public reception, and was presented by the corporation of New-York with the freedom of the city in a gold box. The office of Secretary for foreign affairs, which, for the want of a suitable incumbent, had been vacant [213
for two years, was at this time urged by Congress upon his acceptance, and he did not feel at liberty to refuse his services. He was now virtually at the head of public affairs. The whole foreign correspondence of the government, the proposal of plans of treaties, instructions to ministers abroad, and the submission of reports on all matters to which Congress might call his attention, came within the scope of his new duties.

Mr. Jay was among the first of our statesmen to perceive the defects of the confederation, and to urge the necessity of a new and more efficient system of government. Besides his contributions to the Federalist, he wrote an address to the people of New-York, then the very citadel of the opposition to the proposed Constitution, which had no unimportant effect in securing its adoption. In the State Convention, which had assembled with only eleven out of fifty-seven members in its favor, Jay took a most influential part, and mainly owing to his exertions was it finally ratified. At the commencement of the administration of Washington, he was invited by that great man to select his own post in the newly-formed government. He was accordingly appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and well did he justify, in his new capacity, the glowing eulogium of Webster, that "when the spotless ermine of the judicial robe fell on John Jay it touched nothing less spotless than itself." In the performance of his duties as the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, much was accomplished by him in organizing the business of the court, expounding the principles of its decisions, and in commending them to a confederacy of sovereign States, already sufficiently jealous of its [214
extensive but beneficent jurisdiction. His decision in the novel case of a suit instituted against the State of Georgia by a citizen of another State, is a memorable instance of his firmness and judicial ability.

The year 1794 opened with every prospect of a disastrous war between Great Britain and the United States. The Revolution did not terminate without leaving in the minds of Americans a strong and perhaps an unreasonable antipathy to the mother country, which was stimulated by the unwise interference of Genet, the French minister, in our politics, and by the exertions of a large class of British refugees, who had escaped to our country still smarting under the oppressions which they had experienced at home, and who were extremely desirous of plunging the American government into the contest which was then raging between France and England. There were also certain substantial grievances universally admitted by our citizens, which would give some countenance to such a measure on the part of America. Among these were enumerated the detention in violation of the treaty of the posts on our western frontier by British garrisons, thereby excluding the navigation by Americans of the great lakes, the refusal to make compensation for the negroes carried away during the war by the British fleet, the exclusion and capture of American vessels carrying supplies to French ports, and the seizure of our ships in the exercise of the pretended right of search. These, and other outrages, were justified by Great Britain, on the ground of certain equivalent infractions of the treaty by the American nation. Washington however could not be induced to consent to hazard the national interests, by transgressing that neutrality so necessary to a young republic only just recovering from [215
the severe experience of a seven years' war, and he saw no other honorable means of averting the impending danger than the appointment of a special envoy, empowered to adjust the matters in dispute. For this purpose, on his nomination, Mr. Jay was confirmed on the 20th of April, 1794, by the Senate, as Minister to England, at which country he arrived in June of that year. The treaty was signed in November following, and the negotiations of the two ministers, Lord Grenville and Mr. Jay, were greatly facilitated by their mutual esteem and the good understanding existing between them; and their correspondence, which was characterized by signal ability on both sides, affords an instance of diplomatic straightforwardness and candor almost without a parallel in history. It as not consistent with the plan of our sketch to speak of the provisions of the treaty thus secured: it was not, in all respects, what Jay, or the country desired; but in view of the immense advantages to our commerce obtained by it, the complicated and delicate questions adjusted, and the disasters which would have befallen the nation had it been defeated, it will challenge comparison with any subsequent international arrangement to which the United States have been a party. Yet, incredible as would seem, the abuse and scurrility with which both it and its author were loaded, discloses one of the most disgraceful chapters in the records of political fanaticism. By an eminent member of the opposing party, he was declared to have perpetrated "an infamous act," an act "stamped with avarice and corruption." He himself was termed "a damned arch-traitor," "sold to Great Britain," and the treaty burned before his door. Enjoying the confidence of the illustrious Washington, and of the wisest and best men of his country, in his course, and [216
above all, the inward assurance of his unswerving rectitude, Jay might well forgive these ebullitions of party spleen and await the sanction which has been conferred on his actions by the impartial voice of posterity.

But no statesman of that time had, on the whole, less reason to complain of popular ingratitude than Jay; before he reached his native shore, a large majority of the people of New-York had expressed their approbation of his conduct by electing him to the office of Governor. While in this office, the appropriate close of his public career, besides suggesting many useful measures in regard to education and internal

improvements, the benefits of which are experienced to this day, he had the happiness of promoting and witnessing the passage by the Legislature of the act for the gradual abolition of slavery in his native State. Of this measure he was one of the earliest advocates, having served as the first President of the Society of Manumission, which had been organized in 1786 by a number of the most respectable gentlemen in New-York, and to whose disinterested exertions the success of the anti-slavery cause was mainly due. On accepting the seat tendered to him in the Supreme Court, Jay, fearing that the presidency of the society might prove an embarrassment in the decision of some questions which might come before him, resigned the office and was succeeded by Hamilton, who continued to discharge its duties till the year 1793.

At the expiration of his second gubernatorial term in 1801, Jay, contrary to the importunities of his friends, retired from public life, having, for twenty-seven years, faithfully served his country in every department of legislative, diplomatic, and judicial trust. Declining the office of Chief Justice, which was again pressed by the [217
President upon his acceptance, he prepared to enjoy that congenial seclusion under the shade of his patrimonial trees, which, through all the varied and agitating scenes of political life, had been the object of his most ardent desires. In accordance with this design, he had built a substantial house at Bedford, about forty-four miles from New-York, on an estate embracing some eight hundred acres, which had come to him by inheritance. Here, in one of the most delightful localities in the fertile county of Westchester, in the care of his family and estates, in the society of his friends and his books, in the discharge of the duties of neighborly benevolence, and in the preparation for those immortal scenes which he had reason to suppose would soon open upon him, he passed the tranquil remainder of his days. But his enjoyments were not destined to exempt him from those bitter but universal visitations, which, at times, overthrow the happiness and frustrate the most pleasing anticipations of our race. In less than twelve months after his retirement, the partner of his joys and sorrows, who, by her accomplishments, her unobtrusive virtues and solicitous affection, had been at once his delight and support, was taken from him. At the final hour, Jay, as the biographer tells us, stood by the bedside "calm and collected," and when the spirit had taken its departure, led his children to an adjoining room, and with "a firm voice but glistening eye" read that inspiring and wonderful chapter in which Paul has discussed the mystery of our future resurrection.

Considering its natural advantages and its connection by railway with the great metropolis, Bedford, the ancient half shire town of Westchester County, can hardly be praised on the score of its "progressive" [218
tendencies. At the time of Jay's residence there, the mail-coach from New-York, employing two long days in the journey, visited the town once a week, and even now the locomotive which thunders through it perhaps a dozen times a day, hardly disturbs its rural quietude. It may, however, claim considerable distinction in the annals of Indian warfare, for, within its limits, on the southern side of Aspetong Mountain, is still pointed out the scene of a bloody conflict between the savages and the redoubtable band of Captain Underhill, in which the latter coming suddenly at night on a village of their foes, slaughtered them without mercy to the number of five hundred; "the Lord," as the record goes, "having collected the most of our enemies there, to celebrate some festival." Bedford was formerly under the jurisdiction of Connecticut, and the apparent thrift and independent bearing of its farming population are decided indications of their New England descent. Its situation is uncommonly pleasant and healthful, and although the surface of the country is somewhat rocky and uneven, the soil is excellently adapted for agricultural purposes. The higher grounds display an abundant growth of all varieties of oak, elm, ash, linden, chestnut, walnut, locust, and tulip trees, while its fertile valleys and its sunny hillside exposures furnish ample spaces for pasturage or cultivation. A number of beautiful streams water the meadows, of which the two largest, the Cisco or Beaver Dam, and Cross River, after flowing for a long distance separately, just before leaving the town, wisely conclude to unite their forces and bear a generous tribute to the waters of the Croton. The Beaver Dam derives its name from having once been [219
the favorite haunt of the beavers, who in former times found a plentiful sustenance in the bark of the willows, maples and birches which still linger on its banks.

The traveller who wishes to survey the mansion of "the good old governor," as Mr. Jay is still called by those villagers who remember his liberality and benevolent interest in their welfare, leaves the Harlem railroad at Katona, the northwest portion of the town, so called from the name of the Indian chief, who formerly claimed dominion of this part of the country, and proceeds in a southeasterly direction along a road somewhat winding and hilly, tiresome enough certainly to the pedestrian, but occasionally relieving him with exhilarating prospects on either side of farmhouses with well-stored and ample barns, wooded hills with green intervales, waving fields of grain, and pastures of well-fed, contemplative cattle, who shake their heads as if their meditations were a little disturbed by his presence. Every thing about the farms has the aspect of good order and thrift, and nothing mars the general impression except the occasional sight of some happy family of swine, who appear to exercise a sort of right of eminent domain among the weeds and roots on the roadside. A snow-white sow with thirty snow-white young, according to an ancient poet, was the immediate inducement to Æneas in selecting the site of his future city; whether such an attraction would prove equally potent in our own times, is more questionable. As one approaches the estate of Jay, the marks of superior taste and cultivation are apparent; the stone walls are more neatly and compactly built, and the traveller is refreshed by the grateful shade of the long rows of maples and elms which were planted along the road by Jay and his descendants, some of whom still make their summer residence in Bedford. After proceeding for two or three [220
miles from the railroad station, we turn up a shaded avenue on the left, which winds round the southern slope of the hill, at the top of which stands the modest mansion of John Jay. This is a dark brown wooden two-storied building, facing the southwest, with an addition of one story at each end, the main building having a front of forty-five feet, along which is extended a porch of ample dimensions. Passing through the hall we find in the rear a background of magnificent woods, principally oak and chestnut, though nearer the house are a number of gigantic willows still flourishing in the strength and verdure of youth. Concealed in the foliage of these woods, a little to the west, is the small school-house of stone erected by Jay for his children, and on the other side of the mansion, towards the northeast, are the barns, carriage-house, and the farm-house, occupied by a tenant, who has supervision of the estate. These tenements are almost screened from view by a grove of locust trees, for which Jay showed a special partiality, and whose snow-white robe of blossoms in the latter part of spring affords a pleasing contrast with the light green of the tasselled chestnuts, and the dark and

glossy shade of the oak and walnut foliage behind. In front of the barn, on the eastern side of the house, is the garden, which, though not making any pretension to superiority in its extent or its cultivation, displays an excellent variety of fruits and flowers, for the most part, such as thrive easily in that soil, and are most useful and appropriate to the wants of an American household. Jay, though for his period uncommonly versed in horticultural matters, did not, in his old-fashioned simplicity, choose to waste much time in transplanting [221
those contumacious productions of foreign countries which "never will in other climates grow." Ascending the hill a short distance, we come again to the house, immediately in front of which, without obstructing the view, stands a row of four handsome lindens. Before the dwelling, which is nearly half a mile from the main road, stretches the green lawn irregularly diversified with groups of trees, and beyond is seen the sightly ridge of "Deer's Delight," once the resort of the beautiful animal from which it takes its designation; and certainly the choice of such a delectable locality would have done credit to creatures far more reasonable. This spot is crowned with the elegant country-seat of Mr. John Jay, a grandson of the Chief Justice, who, in taking advantage of its natural beauties, and adapting it to the purposes of his residence, has shown a degree of taste which has rarely been surpassed. On the western slope, which is somewhat more abrupt than the others, is the orchard, and from a thatched arbor on the brink of the descent, the eye surveys a large part of that circle of hills in which Bedford appears to be almost inclosed. A most enchanting rural landscape is here spread out, embracing a wide extent of country dotted with thriving farms and villages, graceful declivities wandered over by numerous herds of cattle, valleys and pellucid streams, glimmering at intervals from thick and overshadowing foliage. Further towards the west is the long line of hills just shutting off the view of the Hudson, and overlooked by the still loftier range of the highlands on the other side of the river, conspicuous among which towers the Dunderberg or bread-tray mountain. From this spot the magnificent variations of sunset are seen to great advantage. No man endowed with the least susceptibility to the charm of outward [222
nature, can contemplate without enthusiasm the broad suffusion of crimson blazing along those western hills, gradually passing into orange and purple; and finally closing with a deep glowing brown, while the clear brilliant sky above pales and darkens at the almost imperceptible coming on of night.

The interior arrangements of the house have not been essentially varied since the lifetime of its first illustrious occupant. They all bear marks of that republican simplicity and unerring good taste which were among his distinguishing characteristics. The furniture, though of the best materials, was obviously chosen more for use than ornament, and is noticeable chiefly for an air of antique respectability and comfort, which, in spite of the perpetually changing fancies in such matters, can never go out of fashion. On the right of the hall, as one enters, is the dining-room, an apartment of perhaps some twenty feet square; in this and in the parlor opposite, which has about the same dimensions, are several interesting family portraits, the works mostly of Stewart and Trumbull, among which are those of Egbert Benson, Judge Hobart, Peter Jay, John Jay, and Augustus Jay, the first American ancestor of the family, the artist of which is unknown. Passing through the parlor, we enter the small room at the west end of the house, occupied as a library, and containing a well-assorted but not extensive supply of books. Here were the weighty folios of Grotius, Puffendorf, Vattel, and other masters of the science of international law, besides a number of standard theological and miscellaneous works, with the classic authors of antiquity, among whom Cicero appears to have been his special favorite. In the library hangs a portrait of Governor Livingston, the father-in-law of Jay; a vigorous manly boy, the [223
characteristics of whose youthful features have been retained with singular distinctness in those of his descendants. He is represented as dressed in the full-sleeved coat and elaborate costume of his time, and with a sword hanging at his side, an outfit hardly in accordance with so tender an age. The oaken press and strong-bound chest of cherry wood are also in this room, the latter the receptacle perhaps of Jay's important papers; —these ancient heirlooms are presumed to have crossed the ocean more than a century and a half ago.

Notwithstanding the infirmities of the last twenty years of his life, Jay enjoyed an old age of remarkable tranquillity and happiness. He set an example of undeviating punctuality; the hour and the man always came together, and in his habits he was extremely regular. In order to assist him in rising early, an aperture, shaped like the crescent moon, was made in the solid oaken shutter of his apartment, by which a glimpse might be caught of the first rays of the uprising dawn. The reading of prayers was succeeded by breakfast, after which the greater part of the day was commonly spent in attending to the affairs of his extensive farm. Most of the time when thus engaged, he rode on the back of a favorite sorrel mare, of the famous Narraganset breed, now extinct. This faithful creature died in 1819, after a service of twenty-three years. Two of the same stock belonging to Mr. Jay had died in succession previously, the grandam having been given by his father in 1765. It was probably of the latter animal that he wrote from Europe in 1783, under the apprehension that she might have fallen into the hands of the enemy.

"If my old mare is alive, I must beg of you and my brother to take good care of her. I mean that she should be [224
well fed and live idle, unless my brother Peter should choose to use her. If it should be necessary to advance money to recover her, I am content you should do it even to the amount of double her value."

At half-past one came the dinner hour, after which he was wont to indulge moderately in smoking. A few of his long clay pipes are still preserved. They were imported for him from abroad, and were considered in their time an unusually select and valuable article. His evenings were devoted to reading and the company of his family and neighbors. Once or twice a year, Judge Benson, Peter Jay, Monroe, or some other old friend, would take a journey to his hospitable home to pass a week in living over, in conversation, their long and varied experience, and occasionally some stranger from foreign lands, attracted by his wide-spread reputation, would receive at his hands a cordial yet unostentatious welcome. Though possessed of a large landed property from which he enjoyed a respectable income, his family expenses and the management of his estate were regulated by a judicious and liberal economy. Remarkably affectionate in his disposition and solicitous for the welfare of his children, his demeanor towards them was marked with unvarying equability and decision. An extract from a letter to Mrs. Jay, dated London, 5th Dec., 1794, illustrates his views on this head:

"I hope N—— will amuse herself sometimes with her spinning-wheel. God only knows what may one day be her situation. Polite accomplishments merit attention, useful knowledge should not be neglected. Let us do the best we can with, and for our children, and commit them to the protection and guidance of Providence."

By his servants, his poorer neighbors, and all who were in any way dependent on him, he was reverenced and [225
loved. He promptly and liberally responded to all movements calculated to promote the general good. In one instance of this kind, he showed an adroitness in his beneficence which is somewhat amusing. The townspeople were about to erect a school-house, and it was apprehended that from mistaken considerations of economy, the building would be less substantial in its construction than was desirable. When, therefore, the subscription list was presented to Jay, he put down a liberal sum against his name "if of wood, if of stone, *double*." Another example occurs in his dealings with his less fortunate neighbors, evincing the union of austere and inflexible regard for public justice with the most sensitive sympathy with individual suffering, which is cited in Professor McVicar's appreciative and eloquent sketch of Jay's life. The case referred to is that of "a poor blacksmith in his neighborhood, who had encroached with his building on the public highway, and refused to recede; Jay prosecuted him to the extreme rigor of the law, and having duly punished the *offender*, proceeded to make it up tenfold to the *poor man* by deeding to him an acre or two of ground from his own farm, in order that his necessities might be no plea for any further breach of the law."

A pleasing reminiscence of Jay has been told by the son of the recipient of his bounty, a poor widow, whose utmost exertions were barely sufficient for the support of her family. Some time after the Governor's death, she received a note from Mr. William Jay, the occupant of the old mansion, requesting her to visit him as he had some pleasant news for her. In great perplexity as to the nature of the promised communication, the good [226
woman complied, and on arriving at the house, was thus addressed by that gentleman: "My father, before he died, requested to be buried in the plainest manner; 'by so doing,' said he, 'there will be a saving of about two hundred dollars which I wish you to give to some poor widow whom you and your sister may consider most worthy, and I wish you to get the silver money and count it out now,' and," continued Mr. Jay, "my sister and I have selected you and here is the money." The gratitude of the widow found no answer but in tears as she bore away the treasure to her dwelling. The recollection of deeds like these is the imperishable inheritance which Jay has left to his descendants, and it is a distinction besides which mere heraldic honors fade into insignificance, that, from the beginning to this day, the great name of Jay has been inseparably linked with the cause of the neglected and oppressed against the encroachments of unscrupulous power.

The personal appearance of Jay, at the age of forty-four, is thus described by Mr. Sullivan: "He was a little less than five feet in height, his person rather thin but well formed. His complexion was without color, his eyes black and penetrating, his nose aquiline, and his chin pointed. His hair came over his forehead, was tied behind and lightly powdered. His dress black. When standing, he was a little inclined forward, as is not uncommon with students long accustomed to bend over a table." With the exception of the mistake as to the color of his eyes, which were blue and not black, this is probably an accurate picture. But it gives no idea of the blended dignity and courtesy which were apparent in his features and his habitual bearing, to a degree, says a venerable informant, never witnessed in any other man of that time. His general appearance of reserve [227
was sometimes misconstrued by those who were little acquainted with him into haughtiness. This was undoubtedly native, in some measure, to his character, but much, we have reason to suppose, existed more in appearance than in reality, and was the unavoidable expression of one long and intensely engaged in affairs of great moment,

> "Deep on whose front engraved
> Deliberation sat, and public cares."

Not without a keen sense of the ludicrous, he rarely indulged in jocose remarks; yet he is said, at times, when much importuned for certain information or opinions which he did not care to reveal, to have shown a peculiarly shrewd humor in his replies, which baffled without irritating the inquirer. Perhaps a delicate piece of advice was never given in more skilfully worded and unexceptionable phraseology than in his answer to a confidential letter from Lord Grenville, inquiring as to the expediency of removing Mr. Hammond, the British Minister at Washington, who, for some reason or other, had become extremely distasteful to the government there. As Mr. Hammond was a personal friend to Jay, the inquiry was naturally embarrassing, but he still deemed it his duty to advise the minister's recall. Accordingly, in his reply, after first declaring his friendship for Mr. Hammond and his entire confidence in that gentleman's ability and integrity, he refers to the unhappy diplomatic difficulties of that gentleman, and concludes by saying, "Hence I cannot forbear wishing that Mr. Hammond *had a better place*, and that a person well adapted to the existing state of things was sent to [228
succeed him."

As William Penn said of George Fox, Mr. Jay was "civil beyond all forms of breeding;" the natural refinement and purity of his disposition were expressed in his appearance and manners, and perhaps we might apply with propriety the remainder of Penn's description:—"He was a man whom God endowed with a clear and wonderful depth,—a discoverer of other men's spirits and very much the master of his own. The reverence and solemnity of his demeanor and the fewness and fulness of his words often struck strangers with admiration." In his character, the qualities of wisdom, decision, truthfulness, and justice held a supreme and unquestioned sway. Under their direction, he was often led into measures which seemed at first to hazard his own interests, as when at Paris he violated his congressional instructions for the benefit of his country; but these measures were adopted with such deliberation, and pursued with so unhesitating perseverance that their results invariably justified the course he had taken. The three most important concessions ever gained by America from foreign countries, the concessions which now our country most values and would be least willing to surrender, namely, the Navigation of the Mississippi, the Participation in the British Fisheries and the Trade with the West Indies, are due almost solely to the foresight, the diplomatic ability and the firmness of John Jay. When we consider the comparative insensibility of Congress at that time, and the country at large, to the incalculable value of these rights, we may feel assured that had America sent abroad an agent of different character, the wily diplomatists of Europe would have found little difficulty in wresting them from us. Jay was [229
moreover a man of deep and fervent piety—not that merely occasional ecstasy of devotional feeling, which, although perfectly sincere, is compatible with an habitual violation of all laws human and divine, but a constant sense of responsibility to a Supreme Being for every action of his life, under which he labored

"As ever in the Great Taskmaster's eye."

It was this combination of attributes, "inviting confidence, yet inspiring respect," setting him apart from other men, yet drawing the multitude after him, that accounts for the constantly recurring demands upon his public services. The people felt that they could trust a man whose patriotism was not a temporary passion, but a well-defined and immovable principle, and they were never disappointed. In the complete harmony of his moral and intellectual qualities, so wholly free from the disturbing influence of painful and dangerous eccentricities and the considerations of self, he approached nearer than any other statesman of his age to the majesty character of Washington, and on no one of his illustrious coadjutors did that great man place so uniform and so unhesitating a reliance.

Jay had already exceeded the longest period allotted by the psalmist to the life of man, in the enjoyment of all those satisfactions which comfortable outward circumstances, the affection of friends and kindred, and the honor and reverence of a country whose vast and still enlarging prosperity were so much due to his exertions, can supply, when he received the unmistakable premonitions of his end. On the 17th of May, 1828, having previously summoned the numerous members of the family to his bedside, and having bestowed on each his parting advice and benediction, he resigned his soul to the care of its Maker; and now, in the quiet grave-yard at Rye, near the spot where he passed the early years of his life, repose the august remains of John Jay. [230

Hamilton. [231

[233

Ball Hughes' Statue of Hamilton.

HAMILTON.

We have not the means of presenting a sketch of Hamilton's birth-place, or of the incidents of his early life before he became a resident in this country; and so much of his subsequent life was spent in the camp and in the service of his country, wherever that service required him to be, that he can hardly be said to have had a "Home" until a few years before his splendid career was so suddenly and mournfully closed.

He was born in the year 1756, in the Island of St. Nevis, one of the British West Indian possessions, whither his father, a native of Scotland, had gone with the purpose of engaging in mercantile pursuits; and he was himself at the early age of twelve, placed in the counting-house of an opulent merchant, in one of the neighboring islands. But such a situation was ill suited to his disposition; and his ambition, even at that early period of his life, strongly developed, could not find in those narrow colonies a sufficient field for its exercise. The wishes of his friends favored his own inclinations, and he was sent to New-York, that he might avail himself of the more ample facilities for acquiring an education which that place and its vicinity afforded. [234

He went through with the studies preparatory to entering college at a school in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, which was under the patronage of Governor Livingston and Mr. Boudinot, in the former of whose families he resided. He soon qualified himself for admission to King's (now Columbia) College, and was then permitted to pursue a course of study which he had marked out for himself, without becoming a member of any particular class. At this early period he evinced those traits of character which afterwards conducted him to such high distinction, and which marked his career throughout. He brought to his tasks not only that diligence which is often exhibited by more ordinary minds, but that enthusiastic devotion of the soul, which was perhaps the most marked trait of his character.

It was while he was yet in college, that the disputes between the colonies and the mother country, just preliminary to the breaking out of hostilities, arose; but they even then engaged his earnest attention. It is probable that the tendency of his mind at that time, as in the later period of his life, was towards conservative [235

views; and indeed he has himself said "that he had, at first, entertained strong prejudices on the ministerial side." But a mind so investigating and a spirit so generous as his would not be likely to entertain such prejudices long; and having made a visit to Boston and become excited by the tone of public feeling in that city, he directed his attention to the real merits of the controversy, and this, aided perhaps by the natural order of his temperament, produced in him a thorough conviction of the justice of the American cause. With his characteristic earnestness, he threw himself at once into the contest, and while but eighteen years of age he addressed a public meeting upon the subject of the wrongs inflicted by the mother country, and acquitted himself in a manner which amazed and delighted his hearers, and drew to him the public attention.

A meeting of the citizens of New-York had been called to consider upon the choice of delegates to the first Congress. A large concourse of people assembled, and the occasion was long remembered as "the great meeting in the fields." Hamilton was then, of course, comparatively unknown, but some of his neighbors having occasion to remark his contemplative habits and the vigor and maturity of his thoughts, urged him to address the multitude, and after some hesitation he consented.

"The novelty of the attempt, his slender and diminutive form, awakened curiosity and arrested attention. Overawed by the scene before him, he at first hesitated and faltered, but as he proceeded almost unconsciously to utter his accustomed reflections, his mind warmed with the theme, his energies were [236
recovered; and after a discussion, clear, cogent, and novel, of the great principles involved in the controversy, he depicted in glowing colors the long continued and long endured oppressions of the mother country. He insisted on the duty of resistance, pointed out the means and certainty of success, and described the waves of rebellion sparkling with fire and washing back upon the shores of England the wrecks of her power, her wealth, and her glory. The breathless silence ceased as he closed, and the whispered murmur—'it is a collegian, it is a collegian,' was lost in expressions of wonder and applause at the extraordinary eloquence of the young stranger."[13]

About the same time he published anonymously two pamphlets in reply to publications emanating from the ministerial party, and in vindication of the measures of the American Congress. The powerful and eloquent manner in which the topics in controversy were discussed, excited great attention. The authorship of the pamphlets was attributed by some to Governor Livingston and by others to John Jay, and these contributed to give to those gentlemen, already distinguished, an increased celebrity; and when it was ascertained that the youthful Hamilton was the author of them, the public could scarcely credit the fact.

Upon the actual breaking out of hostilities, Hamilton immediately applied himself to the study of military science, and obtained from the State of New-York a commission as captain of a company of artillery. His conduct at once attracted the observing eye of Washington, who soon invited him to become one of his staff with the commission of Lieutenant Colonel. [237

Hamilton accepted the offer, and for the space of four years remained in the family of Washington, enjoying his unlimited confidence, carrying on a large portion of his correspondence, and aiding him in the conduct of the most important affairs. A hasty word from the latter led to a rupture of this connection, and Hamilton left the staff and resumed his place as an officer in the line; but Washington's confidence in him was not in the least impaired, and their friendship continued warm and sincere until the death of the latter.

In thus separating himself from the family of the Commander-in-Chief, Hamilton was influenced by other motives than displeasure at the conduct of Washington. He knew that great man too well, and loved him too well, to allow a hasty word of rebuke to break up an attachment which had begun at the breaking out of the war, and which a familiar intercourse of four years, an ardent love of the cause, and a devotion to it common to them both had deepened and confirmed. But the duties of a secretary and adviser, important as they then were, were not adequate to call forth all his various powers, and the performance of them, however skilful, was not sufficient to satisfy that love of glory which he so fondly cherished. He was born to act in whatever situation he might be placed a first rate part. He longed to distinguish himself in the battles as well as in the councils of the war. He felt that his country had need of his arm as well as of his pen; and thus the dictates of patriotism, which he never in the course of his life allowed to stand separate from the promptings of his high ambition, pointed out to him the course he took. He would not, of his own motion, leave the immediate services of Washington; but when the opportunity was presented by the latter, he at once embraced it, and [238
would not be persuaded by any considerations to return to his former place.

A short time previous to his leaving the family of Washington he had formed an engagement with the second daughter of Gen. Philip Schuyler, of New-York, to whom he was married on the 14th of December, 1780, at the residence of her father at Albany, and thus became permanently established in New-York. His union with this lady was one of unbroken happiness, and at a venerable age she still survives him.

His rank in the army was soon after advanced, and an opportunity for exhibiting his military skill and prowess, which he had so ardently wished for, was shortly presented. The falling fortunes of the British army in the south, under Lord Cornwallis, invited an attack in that quarter. The combined French and American forces were fast closing up every avenue of retreat, and the British commander finding that to avoid a general engagement was impossible, at last intrenched himself at Yorktown with the determination of making a final stand against the victorious progress of the American arms. In the decisive battle which succeeded, Hamilton signalized himself by a most brilliant achievement. Two redoubts in the fortifications of the enemy were to be carried in face of a most destructive fire. The attack upon one of them was assigned to a detachment of the French troops, and that upon the other to a division of the American forces. The command of the latter, at his earnest request, was given to Hamilton. At the appointed signal he "gave the order to advance at the point of the bayonet, pushed forward, and before the rest of the corps had ascended the abatis, mounted over it, stood for a moment on the parapet with three of his soldiers, encouraging the others to follow, and sprung into the [239
ditch. The American infantry, animated by the address and example of their leader, pressed on with muskets unloaded and fixed bayonets. They soon reached the counterscarp under a heavy and constant fire from the redoubt, and, surmounting the abatis, ditch, and palisades, mounted the parapet and leaped into the work.

Hamilton, who had pressed forward, followed by the rear-guard under Mansfield, was for a time lost sight of, and it was feared he had fallen; but he soon reappeared, formed the troops in the redoubt, and as soon as it surrendered gave the command to Major Fish.

"The impetuosity of the attack carried all before it, and within nine minutes from the time the abatis was passed the work was gained."[14] This brilliant exploit received the decisive commendation of Washington. "Few cases," said he, "have exhibited greater proofs of intrepidity, coolness, and firmness than were shown on this occasion."

The battle of Yorktown decided the event of the war of the Revolution. The profession of a soldier could no longer give sufficient scope to the restless activity of Hamilton; although then occupying a distinguished place among the most illustrious of his countrymen, and yielding, though not without regret, his arms for the *toga*, he selected for his future employment the profession of the law—a pursuit for which his general studies and the character of his mind, as well as his inclination, eminently fitted him.

From the period of his admission to the bar until the assembling of the convention which framed the constitution under which we now live, his time and labors were divided between the practice of his profession [240
and the service of the public in various capacities. Of the convention he was chosen a member, and he brought to the performance of his duties in that body the purest patriotism, and abilities unsurpassed, if indeed equalled, in that assembly of illustrious men. He took from the outset a most conspicuous part in its deliberations, throwing upon every important subject which was discussed, the blended lights of his genius, experience, and learning. As the sessions of the convention were held in secret, we have but an imperfect knowledge of its proceedings; and the meagre and fragmentary reports which we possess of the speeches which were delivered in it give us a very inadequate notion of the masterly efforts of Hamilton. But the testimony of his associates in the convention, and the imperfect records we have of its deliberations, join in ascribing to him a foremost place; and an impartial student of our constitution and history, himself a profound statesman and philosopher, M. Guizot, has said that there is in our political system scarcely an element of order and durability for which we are not in a great measure indebted to the genius of Hamilton. Indeed he was the very first to point out the radical defects in the old confederation, and the absolute necessity of a government based upon a different foundation, and invested with more ample powers. The restoration of the public credit, the creation of a currency, the promotion of commerce, the preservation of the public faith with foreign countries, the general tranquillity—these were topics which he had discussed in all their relations long before the meeting of the convention, and he had early arrived at the conclusion that these great ends were to be reached in no other way than by the establishment of a National Government, emanating directly from the [241
people at large, sovereign in its own sphere, and responsible to the people alone for the manner in which its powers were executed. In the Constitution, when it was presented for adoption, Hamilton saw some objectionable features. These he had opposed in the convention; but finding that such opposition was likely to throw obstacles in the way of any final agreement, and reorganizing in the instrument proposed to be adopted the essential features of his own plan, and wisely regarding it as the best scheme that could unite the varying opinions of men, he patriotically withdrew his opposition and gave it his hearty assent.

Hamilton was chosen a member of the convention which met at Poughkeepsie to consider the question of ratifying it, and he urged the adoption of it in a series of masterly speeches, which powerfully contributed to its final ratification. At the same time, in conjunction with Madison and Jay, he was engaged in the composition of those immortal papers, which, under the name of the "Federalist," exercised at the time such a potent influence, and which have even since been received as authoritative commentaries upon the instrument, the wisdom and expediency of which they so eloquently and successfully vindicated. In view of the extraordinary exertions of Hamilton in behalf of the Constitution, both with his tongue and pen, and of the fact that if New-York had rejected it, it would probably have failed to receive the sanction of a sufficient number of States, we think that it may without injustice to others be said, that for the ratification of our Constitution we are more indebted to the labors of Hamilton than to those of any other single man. [242

When the new government went into operation with Washington at its head, Hamilton was called to fill what was then the most important place in the cabinet, that of Secretary of the Treasury. He then addressed himself to the task of carrying out the great purpose for which the Constitution was adopted—a task, the successful accomplishment of which rested more in the skilful administration of the Treasury department than that of any office under government; for upon this hung the great issues of the currency and the public credit. With what ability he executed his great trust in the face of a powerful and most virulent opposition, the event has fully shown. The system of finance which he concocted and applied has been adhered to without substantial change throughout the subsequent history of the government, and well justifies the magnificent eulogy which Webster has bestowed upon its author. "He smote the rock of the national resources, and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth. He touched the dead corpse of the Public Credit, and it sprung upon its feet. The fabled birth of Minerva from the brain of Jove was hardly more sudden or more perfect than the financial system of the United States, as it burst forth from the conceptions of Alexander Hamilton."[15]

From the Treasury department he returned to the practice of his profession, and the calmer walks of private life; but his love for his country and the anxiety he felt for her welfare would not permit him to relinquish the prominent place he held as the leader of the Federal party. He regarded with great distrust and apprehension [243
the principles and the practices of the rapidly increasing Democratic party. Many of its leaders he believed to be destitute of principle, and he spared no exertions in opposing them, and in endeavoring to stay the progress of radical opinions, and to infuse a spirit of moderation and wisdom into the politics of the nation.

He was now in the prime of life. A practice in his profession at that time without parallel in extent and importance, afforded him an abundant income, and held out a prospect of a competent fortune. He therefore retired from the city, purchased a beautiful spot in the upper part of the island of New-York, and there built the tasteful residence of which an engraving is prefixed to this sketch, and which of the many places where he resided may most appropriately be called his "Home." It is, we believe, the only house in New-York, in which

he lived, that is now standing. Of the one in the island of St. Nevis, in which he was born, we have never seen any representation or description. During a small portion of his college life, he resided with Mr. Hercules Mulligan in Water-street; but the house was long since torn down.

After the close of the war, and during the first years of his practice at the bar, Hamilton occupied a house in Wall-street, nearly opposite the "Federal Hall," the site of the present Custom House. It was on the outer balcony of Federal Hall that Washington took the oath of inauguration upon his first election, and Hamilton, with a party of his friends, witnessed that imposing ceremony from the balcony of his own house. This building has, with most others of its time, been taken down, and a new one erected in its place to accommodate that [244
mighty march of commercial enterprise which is fast sweeping away the last vestiges which mark the dwelling-places of the last generation.

The spot which Hamilton selected for his "Home," and to which he gave the name of "Grange," from that of the residence of his grandfather in Ayrshire, Scotland, was chosen with taste and judgment, both on account of its natural beauty, and the interesting and inspiring recollections which its vicinity suggested. It was, at that time, completely in the country, without an object to remind one of the neighborhood of the town; and even now the population of the city, so prodigiously expanded, has not much encroached upon its original limits. It is situated upon the old King's Bridge road, about eight miles from the heart of the city, and something less than a mile above the ancient village of Manhattan, and is about midway between the Hudson River on the one side and the Harlem on the other. The west side, which lies on the King's Bridge road, is adorned by a fine growth of large shade trees. From these it extends with gentle undulations to a declivity, at the base of which lie the Harlem commons. The grounds are simply but tastefully laid out, chiefly with a view to take advantage of and display the natural features of the place. The house is situated nearly in the centre of the grounds, and is reached by a gently-winding carriage-way. The stable is placed in the rear of the house and at a distance from it, and is concealed by a thick growth of trees. A gravelled walk winds among the shade trees along the road, and thence across the grounds and along the other side. The space in front and on the left of the house is laid out in a fine lawn, in which the uneven surface of the ground is preserved, dotted here [245
and there with fine trees, the natural growth of the spot. Near the house and on the left are thirteen flourishing gum trees, said to have been left by Hamilton himself when clearing the spot, as an emblem of the thirteen original States.

Residence of Alexander Hamilton, near Manhattanville, N.Y.

The house itself is in form nearly square, of moderate size and well proportioned. The front is on the southern side; it is two stories in height, exclusive of the basement, and would have been at the time it was built a handsome and expensive one. The basement is used for culinary purposes, and the first story, which contains the parlors, is reached by a short flight of steps. You enter a commodious hall of a pentagonal form. On either side is a small apartment, of which the one on the right was the study, and contained the library of Hamilton. At the end of the hall are the doors, one on the right and the other on the left, which open into the parlors. These are of moderate size and connected by doors, by opening which they are thrown into one large room. The one on the right as you enter the house, is now, and probably was when Hamilton occupied it, used as a dining-room. The other parlor is furnished for the drawing-room. It is an octagon in form, of which three sides are occupied by doors, leading to the hall in front, the dining-room, and to a hall in the rear. In two of the opposite sides are windows reaching to the floor, and opening upon the lawn on the easterly side of the house. The three doors before mentioned are faced with mirrors, and being directly opposite the windows, they throw back the delightful landscape which appears through the latter with a pleasing effect. The story above is commodious, and divided into the usual apartments. On the north the prospect is interrupted by higher ground, and on the south by trees. On the west a view is caught of the beautiful shore of New Jersey, on the [246
opposite side of the Hudson. From the eastern side, and especially from the balcony which extends in front of the windows of the drawing-room, a magnificent prospect is presented. The elevation being some two hundred feet above the surrounding waters, a complete view of the lower lands and of the country in the distance is commanded. Harlem with its river, the East River and Long Island Sound now dotted with a thousand sails, the fertile county of Westchester, and Long Island stretching away to the horizon, with its lovely and diversified scenery, are all in full view.

This spot has, and probably had for Hamilton, its attractions in another respect. In its immediate neighbourhood were the scenes of some of the memorable and interesting events of the Revolution. He had passed directly over it with the American army in its retreat from New-York, after the disastrous battle of Long Island. Within a short distance from it are the Harlem Heights, where by his bravery and address, while yet but a boy, he had attracted the eye of Washington, and enjoyed his first interview with him. A little further towards the north is Fort Washington, in which the continental army made its last stand upon the island, and the loss of which sealed the fate of New-York for the war. It was this fort which, in the ardor of his youthful enthusiasm and burning with chagrin at its capture, he promised Washington he would retake, if he would place a small and select detachment under his command—an enterprise which the Commander-in-Chief thought too hazardous. Just across the river on the Jersey side is Fort Lee, which fell into the hands of the enemy soon after the capture of Fort Washington; and a short distance above, in the King's Bridge road, is the [247
house which after the death of Hamilton became the residence of his bitter and fatal antagonist, Aaron Burr.

When he had fixed his residence in this beautiful and attractive spot he was in the prime of life, in excellent health, and in prosperous circumstances. He had been most fortunate in his domestic relations, and had around him a happy family to which he was fondly devoted. His unrivalled natural powers had been exercised and improved by a training of thirty years in the camp, the forum, the senate and the cabinet. He was almost worshipped by his friends and his party, and regarded by all as one of the very pillars of the State. Every thing in his situation and circumstances seemed auspicious of a still long career of happiness and honor to himself, of usefulness and honor to his country. But in the midst of all this, he was suddenly cut off by the melancholy and fatal duel with Col. Burr.

The public and private character of Burr, Hamilton had long known and despised. He regarded him as a dangerous man, and one wholly unfit to fill any office of trust or emolument. And this opinion, although avoiding open controversy with Burr himself, he had not scrupled to express privately to his own political friends, for the purpose of dissuading them from giving any support to one so little to be depended on. He recognized himself no other claim to political distinction than honesty of purpose, the ability and the will to serve the country, united with what he deemed to be sound political principles, neither of which recommendations could he discover in Aaron Burr.

Burr had, on the other hand, few ends in life save his own advancement, and he scrupled at no means by [248
which this object might be compassed; but in his most deeply laid schemes, he saw that the vigilant eye of Hamilton was upon him, and after his defeat in 1804 as a candidate for governor of the State of New-York, stung with mortification at his overthrow, and justly deeming the influence of Hamilton as one of the most potent causes of it, he resolved to fix a quarrel upon him. Seizing upon an expression which was contained in a letter, published during the recent political contest, but which had been forgotten by every one save himself, he dragged it before Hamilton's attention, tortured it into an imputation upon his personal honor, demanded of Hamilton an explanation which it was impossible for him to give, and made his refusal the pretext for a peremptory challenge.

In accepting the challenge of Burr, Hamilton was but little under the influence of those motives which are commonly uppermost in such contests. To the practice of duelling he was sincerely and upon principle opposed, and had frequently borne his testimony against it. His reputation for personal courage had been too often tried, and too signally proved to be again put at risk. His passions, though strong, were under his control, and that sensitiveness on the score of personal honor, which a man of spirit naturally cherishes, and which the habits of a military life rendered prompt and delicate, was in him satisfied by a conscious integrity of purpose. His disposition was forgiving and gentle to a fault, and made it impossible for him to feel any personal ill will even towards such a man as Burr. The manifold obligations which as an honest and conscientious man he was bound to regard—his duties to a loved and dependent family, and his country, which held almost an equal place in his affections, united to dissuade him from meeting his adversary. And yet [249
these latter, viewed in connection with his peculiar position, with popular prejudices, and the circumstances of the times, were what impelled him to his fatal resolution. His theoretic doubts respecting a republican form of government, while they did not in the least diminish his preference for our political system, yet made him painfully anxious in regard to its success. He thought that every thing depended upon keeping the popular mind free from the corruption of false principles, and the offices of trust and honor out of the hands of bad men. To these ends he had been, and still was, employing all his energy and influence. He could not bear the thought of losing or weakening by any step, however justifiable in itself, that influence which he had reason to think was not exerted in vain. These were the large and unselfish considerations which governed him; and though a cool observer removed from the excitement and perplexities of the time may pronounce them mistaken, still if impartial he must regard them as sincere. They were what Hamilton himself, in full view of the solemnity of the step he was about to take, and of the possible event of it, declared to be his motive. "The ability," said he in the last paper he ever wrote, "to be in future useful, whether in resisting mischief or effecting good in those crises of our public affairs which seem likely to happen, would probably be inseparable from a conformity with prejudice in this particular."

After some fruitless endeavors on the part of Hamilton to convince Burr of the unreasonableness of the request which the latter had made, all explanations were closed, and the preliminaries for the meeting were [250
arranged. Hamilton having no wish to take the life of Burr, had come to the determination to throw away his first shot,—a course too which approved itself to his feelings for other reasons.

The grounds of Weehawk, on the Jersey shore opposite New-York, were at that time the usual field of these single combats, then chiefly by the inflamed state of political feeling of frequent occurrence, and very seldom ending without bloodshed. The day having been fixed, and the hour appointed at seven o'clock in the morning, the parties met, accompanied only by their servants. The bargemen, as well as Dr. Hosack, the surgeon mutually agreed upon, remained as usual at a distance, in order, if any fatal result should occur, not to be witnesses. The parties having exchanged salutations, the seconds measured the distance of ten paces, loaded the pistols, made the other preliminary arrangements, and placed the combatants. At the appointed signal,

Burr took deliberate aim and fired. The ball entered Hamilton's side, and as he fell, his pistol too was unconsciously discharged. Burr approached him, apparently somewhat moved, but on the suggestion of his second, the surgeon and bargemen already approaching, he turned and hastened away, Van Ness coolly covering him from their sight by opening an umbrella. The surgeon found Hamilton half lying, half sitting on the ground, supported in the arms of his second. The pallor of death was on his face. "Doctor," he said, "this is a mortal wound;" and, as if overcome by the effort of speaking, he swooned quite away. As he was carried across the river the fresh breeze revived him. His own house being in the country, he was conveyed at once to the house of a friend, where he lingered for twenty-four hours in great agony, but preserving his composure [251
and self-command to the last.[16]

The melancholy event of the duel affected the whole country, and New-York in particular, with the deepest indignation and grief. The avenues to the house where Hamilton was carried before he expired, were thronged with anxious citizens. His funeral was celebrated by a mournful pageant, and an oration in Trinity Church by Governeur Morris, which stirred up the people like the speech of Antony over the corpse of Caesar, to a "sudden flood of mutiny." Burr, with an indictment for murder hanging over him, fled secretly from the city to the South, where he remained until the excitement had in a measure subsided. His wretched end, and the place which history has assigned to him, leave room at present for no other emotions save those of regret and pity. In the deep gloom which the death of Hamilton occasioned, his political opponents almost equally shared. In contemplating his character they seemed to catch some portion of his own magnanimity, and the animosities of which he had been so conspicuous an object, were swallowed up in the conviction that a great and irreparable loss had fallen equally upon all.

There was not, we think, at that time, a life which might not have been better spared than that of Hamilton. Certainly no man represented so well as he, the character and the principles of Washington; and no man was gifted with an array of qualities which better fitted him either as a magistrate or a man to control aright the opinions and the actions of a people like that of the United States. He was a man "built up on every side." He had received from nature a most capacious and admirable intellect, which had been exercised and developed [252
by deep study and large experience in the practical conduct of affairs. His education was like that which Milton describes as "fitting to a man to perform justly, skilfully and magnanimously, all the offices, both public and private, of peace and war." His opinions were definite and fixed; were held with the confidence which is the result of complete conviction; and came from him recommended by a powerful eloquence, and a persuasive fairness and magnanimity. The strength of his passions gave him an almost unbounded influence over the minds of others, which he never perverted to selfish purposes or unworthy ends.

A lofty integrity was one of the most prominent traits of his character. It was not, as in his great contemporary Jay, clothed with the appearance of austerity, nor did it, perhaps, so much as in the latter spring from a constant and habitual sense of responsibility to a Supreme Being; but it was rather a rare and noble elevation of soul, the spontaneous development of a nature which could not harbor a base or unworthy motive, cherished indeed and fortified by a firm faith and a strong religious temperament. It was this which enabled him to spend so long a period of his life in the public service in the exercise of the most important public trusts—among them that of the Treasury department, with the whole financial arrangements of the country under his control, and come from it all without a stain or a suspicion. His character for uprightness might be presented as an example in illustration of the fine precept of Horace:

> ——Hic murus aheneus esto
> Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa.

Political hostility and private malice explored every corner of his life with the hope of fixing a stain upon his [253
official integrity; but these miserable attempts had no other effect than to bring defeat and disgrace on the authors of them. His honesty was as conspicuous in his private as in his public career, and was indeed sometimes carried to an extent which we fear might seem in our times like an absurd refinement. When about to enter upon his duties as Secretary of the Treasury, he was applied to by some friends engaged in monetary transactions for information with respect to the policy which he proposed to pursue, the disclosure of which would perhaps promote their interests, and not injure those of the public. But this he utterly refused to give, holding it as inconsistent with his duty as a public servant, to make his office even the indirect means of contributing to the emolument of friends by imparting to them information which was not open to all alike. While at the bar, and practising only as counsellor, he was associated with the Messrs. Ogden, who were then leading members of the profession in New-York city, and he received only the retaining and trial fees, though his reputation brought to the office a large proportion of all the important suits which arose. It was proposed to him to form a connection with other attorneys, by which engagement he might receive a portion of the attorney's fees in addition; but this offer he at once rejected, saying that he could not consent to receive any compensation for services not his own, or for the character of which he was not responsible.

In his disposition he was one of the most amiable and attractive of men; and though capable of strong indignation, which made him always respected and sometimes feared by his adversaries, he was yet of such a [254
mild and placable temper that no man could be long and sincerely his enemy. In person he was rather below the average height, his form was well proportioned, and his manner dignified and conciliating. The lower features of his countenance were regular and handsome, and beaming with the warm affections and generous sentiments of his heart. His brow and forehead were of a massive cast, expressive of the commanding intellect which lay behind. He was fond of society, full of the most lively and various conversation, which made him the delight and ornament of every circle he entered. During his time the Supreme Court used to hold its terms at New-York and Albany alternately, and the bar was then obliged to follow it back and forth between those cities, the journey occupying at that time three or four days. Of course this was a season of hilarity, and upon such occasions Hamilton was the life of the party, sometimes charming the whole company by his ingenious and eloquent discussions of the various subjects of conversation, and at others calling forth shouts of laughter by his pointed and genial wit. An anecdote has been related to us by one who was present on the occasion,

which well illustrates the power which lay in his fascinating manner and conversation. During the hostilities between France and England, which succeeded the revolution in the former country, a French man of war having on board Jerome Bonaparte, the brother of Napoleon, and afterwards king of Westphalia, was chased into the harbor of New-York by two English frigates. It was during the visit which Jerome was thus compelled to make to this country, that he became acquainted with and married the beautiful Miss Patterson, of Baltimore. The genius and the fortunes of Napoleon were then for the first time astonishing the world, and [255
caused Jerome to be received with the most extraordinary marks of attention in the different cities of the United States. While he was in New-York Hamilton made a dinner party for him, to which a number of the chief personages of the time were invited. He was then living at "Grange," and, as it happened, upon the very day of the party was engaged in the argument of an important cause in the city, which detained him there until after the hour for which his guests were invited. A long delay ensued after the company had assembled, and the embarrassment of Mrs. Hamilton may be imagined. There was evidently a feeling of uneasiness and discontent springing up in the minds of the guests, and especially was this the case with the distinguished brother of the First Consul. He was affected with the usual sensitiveness of a *novus homo* upon the point of etiquette, and it seemed to pass his comprehension how a man of Hamilton's private and official eminence should be engaged in any of the ordinary pursuits of life, and especially that such concerns, or any concerns whatever, should be allowed to detain him a single moment from the society of his guests, one of whom had the honor to be no less a person than Jerome Bonaparte. At a late hour, after the quality of the dinner and the temper of the guests had become about equally impaired, Hamilton arrived. He was met by his desponding wife, and informed of the distressing predicament which his delay had occasioned. After making a hasty toilet, he entered the drawing-room, and found that the affair indeed wore a most perilous aspect. The appearance of the distinguished Frenchman was especially unpromising. But Hamilton was quite equal to the emergency. [256
Gracefully apologizing for his tardiness, he at once entered into a most animated and eloquent conversation, drew out his different guests with admirable dexterity, and enlisted them with one another, and especially recommended himself to the late Miss Patterson by a lively chat in French, of which language he was a master. The discontented features of the Bonaparte began to relax, and it soon became evident that he was in the most amiable mood, and one of the most gratified of the party. The dinner passed off admirably, and it seemed to be generally conceded that the delay in the beginning was amply atoned for by the delightful entertainment which followed.

We should do injustice to one of the most amiable traits of Hamilton's character if we omitted particularly to notice the strength and tenderness of his friendships. Incapable of treachery, free from all disguise, and imbued with the largest sympathies, he drew to himself the esteem and affection of all who knew him; and such was his admiration for noble and generous qualities, that he could not see them displayed without clasping their possessors to his heart. He was a general favorite in the army, and between some of the choicest spirits in it and himself, there was an almost romantic affection. Those that knew him best loved him most. The family of Washington were as dear to him as if they were kindred by blood. Meade, McHenry, Tilghman, the "Old Secretary," Harrison, and the generous and high-souled Laurens, were in every change of fortune his cherished and bosom friends. The following extract from a letter to Laurens, shows the nature of Hamilton's attachment. "Cold in my professions, warm in my friendships, I wish my dear Laurens it were in [257
my power, by actions rather than by words, to convince you that I love you. I shall only tell you that till you bid us adieu, I hardly knew the value you had taught my heart to set upon you. Indeed, my friend, it were not well done. You know the opinion I entertain of mankind; and how much it is my desire to preserve myself free from particular attachments, and to keep my happiness free from the caprices of others. You should not have taken advantage of my sensibility to steal into my affections, without my consent." The openness of his heart and the flexibility of his manners made him a great favorite with the French officers. Lafayette loved him as a brother, and in one of his letters to him thus writes: "I know the General's (Washington's) friendship and gratitude for you, my dear Hamilton; both are greater than you perhaps imagine. I am sure he needs only to be told that something will suit you, and when he thinks he can do it, he certainly will. Before this campaign I was your friend, and very intimate friend, agreeably to the ideas of the world; since my second voyage, my sentiment has increased to such a point the world knows nothing about. To show *both*, from want and from scorn of expression, I shall only tell you, adieu." Talleyrand, the celebrated minister of Napoleon, whatever may be said of the character of his diplomacy, had a heart that was capable of friendship, and while in this country conceived a particular fondness for Hamilton, and on his departure for France he took from the house of the latter, without permission, a miniature belonging to Mrs. Hamilton of her husband. When fairly out of reach he addressed a note to Mrs. Hamilton confessing the larceny, and excusing it on the ground that he wanted a [258
copy of it, but knew that she would not let him take the original away to be copied if he had made the request. He had an excellent copy of the miniature taken upon Sevres china, which he always kept in a conspicuous place in his apartment until late in life, when he presented it with a lock of his hair to a son of Hamilton, James A. Hamilton Esq., of Dobb's Ferry, N.Y., who still retains it. The indignation of Talleyrand at the conduct of Burr in bringing about the melancholy duel was unbounded; and when Burr, subsequently to that event, was on a visit to France, he wrote a note to Talleyrand, requesting the privilege of paying him a visit. Of course the French minister could not refuse this favor to a man who had been Vice-President of the United States, and in other respects so eminent a person; but his answer was something like this: "The Minister of Foreign Affairs would be happy to see Col. Burr at—(naming the hour); but M. Talleyrand thinks it due to Col. Burr to state, that he always has the miniature of General Hamilton hanging over his mantel-piece."

In contemplating the life of Hamilton, it is of course impossible not to feel the deepest regret that so much genius, so much usefulness, and so much promise, should have been so prematurely cut off. Great as was his actual performance, it is natural and reasonable to suppose that the results of his youth and early manhood would have been far eclipsed by those of his splendid maturity. But as it is, "he lived long enough for glory." The influence of his presence and manners, the excitements in which he mingled when alive—every thing [259
which tends to give a fictitious importance to present greatness, have passed away. But his reputation, which some have thought to rest upon these very circumstances, stands unaffected by their decay,—a fact which sufficiently attests the enduring nature of his fame.

Monument To Hamilton, Trinity Church-yard, N.Y.

Marshall.

[261

[262

Philadelphia Jan^{y} 16.th 1800

Sir

Accept my sincere thanks for a copy of the ora-
tion delivered at New Rochelle on the 1st of Jan^{y}.
which has reached me to day.

I have read it with that melancholy pleasure
which is inspired by well merited & well executed
eulogies on those whose death we greatly la-
ment, & whose memory is most dear to us.

To the friends of the departed patriot whose
talents & virtues you have so justly & so justly
celebrated, & to the friends of the American character,
the deep & universal grief which has been every where
manifested, & the impressive orations which have
flowed from that grief, constitute some consolation
for the inestimable loss our country has sustained.

With very much respect
I am Sir your Obed^{t} Serv^{t}
J Marshall

[263

Marshall's House at Richmond, Va.

MARSHALL.

John Marshall, son of Colonel Thomas Marshall, a planter of moderate fortune, was born in Germantown, Fauquier County, Virginia, on the twenty-fourth of September, 1755. When twenty-one years of age, he was commissioned as a lieutenant in the continental service, and marching with his regiment to the north, was appointed captain in the spring of 1777, and in that capacity served in the battles of Brandywine, Germantown, and Monmouth; was at Valley Forge during the winter of 1778, and was one of the covering [264 party at the assault of Stoney Point, in June, 1779. Having returned to his native State at the expiration of the enlistment of the Virginia troops, in 1780 he received a license for the practice of the law, and rapidly rose to distinction in that profession. In 1782 he was chosen a representative to the legislature, and afterward a member of the executive council In January, 1783, he married Mary Willis Ambler, of York, in Virginia, with whom he lived for fifty years in the tenderest affection. He was a delegate to the convention of Virginia which met on the second of June, 1788, to take into consideration the new constitution, and in conjunction with his friend, Mr. Madison, mainly contributed to its adoption, in opposition to the ardent efforts of Henry, Grayson, and Mason. His name first became generally known throughout the nation by his vindication, in the legislature of the State, of the ratification of Jay's treaty by President Washington. No report of that speech remains, but the evidence of its ability survives in the effects which it produced on the legislature and the country. He continued in the practice of the law, having declined successively the offices of Attorney General of the United States and Minister to France, until 1797, when with General Pinkney and Mr. Gerry, he was sent on a special mission to the French republic. The manner in which the dignity of the American character was maintained against the corruption of the Directory and its ministers is well known. The letters of the seventeenth of January and third of April, 1798, to Talleyrand, the Minister of Foreign Relations, have always been attributed to Marshall, and they rank among the ablest and most effective of diplomatic communications. Mr. Marshall arrived in New-York on the seventeenth of June, 1798, and on the nineteenth entered [265 Philadelphia. At the intelligence of his approach the whole city poured out toward Frankford to receive him, and escorted him to his lodgings with all the honors of a triumph. In after years, when he visited Philadelphia, he often spoke of the feelings with which, as he came near the city on that occasion, with some doubts as to the reception which he might meet with in the existing state of parties, he beheld the multitude rushing forth to crowd about him with every demonstration of respect and approbation, as having been the most interesting and gratifying of his life.

On his return to Virginia, at the special request of General Washington, he became a candidate for the House of Representatives, and was elected in the spring of 1799. His greatest effort in Congress was his speech in opposition to the resolutions of Edward Livingston relative to Thomas Nash, alias Jonathan Robbins. Fortunately we possess an accurate report of it, revised by himself. The case was, that Thomas Nash, having committed a murder on board the British frigate Hermione, navigating the high seas under a commission from the British king, had sought an asylum within the United States, and his delivery had been demanded by the British minister under the twenty-seventh article of the treaty of amity between the two nations. Mr. Marshall's argument first established that the crime was within the jurisdiction of Great Britain, on the general principles of public law, and then demonstrated, that under the constitution the case was subject to the disposal of the executive, and not the judiciary. He distinguished these departments from one another with an acuteness of discrimination and a force of logic which frustrated the attempt to carry the judiciary out [266 of its orbit, and settled the political question, then and for ever. It is said that Mr. Gallatin, whose part it was to reply to Mr. Marshall, at the close of the speech turned to some of his friends and said, "*You* may answer that if you choose; *I* cannot." The argument deserves to rank among the most dignified displays of human intellect. At the close of the session, Mr. Marshall was appointed Secretary of War, and soon after Secretary of State. During his continuance in that department our relations with England were in a very interesting condition, and his correspondence with Mr. King exhibits his abilities and spirit in the most dignified point of view. "His despatch of the twentieth of September, 1800," says Mr. Binney, "is a noble specimen of the first order of state papers, and shows the most finished adaptation of parts for the station of an American

Secretary of State." On the thirty-first of January, 1801, he was appointed Chief Justice of the United States, in which office he continued until his death. In 1804 he published the Biography of Washington, which for candor, accuracy, and comprehension, will for ever be the most authentic history of the Revolution. He died in Philadelphia on the sixth of July, 1835.

Mr. Marshall's career as Chief Justice extended through a period of more than thirty-four years, which is the longest judicial tenure recorded in history. To one who cannot follow his great judgments, in which, at the same time, the depths of legal wisdom are disclosed and the limits of human reason measured, the language of just eulogy must wear an appearance of extravagance. In his own profession he stands for the reverence of the wise rather than for the enthusiasm of the many. The proportion of the figure was so perfect, that the [267
sense of its vastness was lost. Above the difficulties of common minds, he was in some degree above their sympathy. Saved from popularity by the very rarity of his qualities, he astonished the most where he was best understood. The questions upon which his judgment was detained, and the considerations by which his decision was at last determined, were such as ordinary understandings, not merely could not resolve, but were often inadequate even to appreciate or apprehend. It was his manner to deal directly with the results of thought and learning, and the length and labor of the processes by which these results were suggested and verified might elude the consciousness of those who had not themselves attempted to perform them. From the position in which he stood of evident superiority to his subject, it was obviously so easy for him to describe its character and define its relations, that we sometimes forgot to wonder by what faculties or what efforts he had attained to that eminence. We were so much accustomed to see his mind move only in the light, that there was a danger of our not observing that the illumination by which it was surrounded was the beam of its own presence, and not the natural atmosphere of the scene.

The true character and measure of Marshall's greatness are missed by those who conceive of him as limited within the sphere of the justices of England, and who describe him merely as the first of lawyers. To have been "the most consummate judge that ever sat in judgment," was the highest possibility of Eldon's merit, but was only a segment of Marshall's fame. It was in a distinct department, of more dignified functions, almost of an opposite kind, that he displayed those abilities that advance his name to the highest renown, and shed [268
around it the glories of a statesman and legislator. The powers of the Supreme Court of the United States are such as were never before confided to a judicial tribunal by any people. As determining, without appeal, its own jurisdiction, and that of the legislature and executive, that court is not merely the highest estate in the country, but it settles and continually moulds the constitution of the government. Of the great work of constructing a nation, but a small part, practically, had been performed when the written document had been signed by the convention: a vicious theory of interpretation might defeat the grandeur and unity of the organization, and a want of comprehension and foresight might fatally perplex the harmony of the combination. The administration of a system of polity is the larger part of its establishment. What the constitution was to be, depended on the principles on which the federal instrument was to be construed, and they were not to be found in the maxims and modes of reasoning by which the law determines upon social contracts between man and man, but were to be sought anew in the elements of political philosophy and the general suggestions of legislative wisdom. To these august duties Judge Marshall brought a greatness of conception that was commensurate with their difficulty; he came to them in the spirit and with the strength of one who would minister to the development of a nation; and it was the essential sagacity of his guiding mind that saved us from illustrating the sarcasms of Mr. Burke about paper constitutions. He saw the futility of attempting to control society by a metaphysical theory; he apprehended the just relation between opinion and life, between the forms of speculation and the force of things. Knowing that we are wise in respect to nature, [269
only as we give back to it faithfully what we have learned from it obediently, he sought to fix the wisdom of the real and to resolve it into principles. He made the nation explain its constitution, and compelled the actual to define the possible. Experience was the dialectic by which he deduced from substantial premises a practical conclusion. The might of reason by which convenience and right were thus moulded into union, was amazing. But while he knew the folly of endeavoring to be wiser than time, his matchless resources of good sense contributed to the orderly development of the inherent elements of the constitution, by a vigor and dexterity as eminent in their kind as they were rare in their combination. The vessel of state was launched by the patriotism of many: the chart of her course was designed chiefly by Hamilton: but when the voyage was begun, the eye that observed, and the head that reckoned, and the hand that compelled the ship to keep her course amid tempests without, and threats of mutiny within, were those of the great Chief Justice. Posterity will give him reverence as one of the founders of the nation; and of that group of statesmen who may one day perhaps be regarded as above the nature, as they certainly were beyond the dimensions of men, no figure, save ONE alone, will rise upon the eye in grandeur more towering than that of John Marshall.

The authority of the Supreme Court, however, is not confined to cases of constitutional law; it embraces the whole range of judicial action, as it is distributed in England, into legal, equitable, and maritime jurisdictions. The equity system of this court was too little developed to enable us to say what Marshall would have been as a chancellor. It is difficult to admit that he would have been inferior to Lord Eldon: it is impossible to conceive [270
that he could at all have resembled Lord Eldon. But undoubtedly the native region and proper interest of a mind so analytical and so sound, so piercing and so practical, was the common law; that vigorous system of manly reason and essential right, that splendid scheme of morality expanded by logic and informed by prudence. Perhaps the highest range of English intelligence is illustrated in the law; yet where, in the whole line of that august succession, will be found a character which fills the measure of judicial greatness so completely as Chief Justice Marshall? Where, in English history, is the judge, whose mind was at once so enlarged and so systematic, who so thoroughly had reduced professional science to general reason, in whose disciplined intellect technical learning had so completely passed into native sense? Vast as the reach of the law is, it is not an exaggeration to say that Marshall's understanding was greater, and embraced the forms of legal sagacity within it, as a part of its own spontaneous wisdom. He discriminated with instinctive accuracy between those technicalities which have sprung from the narrowness of inferior minds, and those which are set by the law for the defence of some vital element of justice or reason. The former he brushed away like cobwebs, while he yielded to the latter with a respect which sometimes seemed to those "whose eyes were"

not "opened," a species of superstition. In his judicial office the method of Marshall appeared to be, first to bow his understanding reverently to the law, and calmly and patiently to receive its instructions as those of an oracle of which he was the minister; then to prove these dictates by the most searching processes of reason, and to deliver them to others, not as decrees to be obeyed, but as logical manifestations of moral truth. [271
Undoubtedly he made much use of adjudged cases; but he used them to give light and certainty to his own judgment, and not for the vindication or support of the law. He would have deemed it a reproach alike to his abilities and his station, if he should have determined upon precedent what could have been demonstrated by reason, or had referred to authority what belonged to principle. With singular capacity, he united systematic reason with a perception of particular equity: too scrupulous a regard for the latter led Lord Eldon, in most instances, to adjudicate nothing but the case before him; but Marshall remembered that while he owed to the suitors the decision of the case, he owed to society the establishment of the principle. His mind naturally tended, not to suggestion and speculation, but to the determination of opinion and the closing of doubts. On the bench, he always recollected that he was not merely a lawyer, and much less a legal essayist; he was conscious of an official duty and an official authority; and considered that questions might be discussed elsewhere, but came to be settled by him. The dignity with which these duties were discharged was not the least admirable part of the display. It was wisdom on the seat of power, pronouncing the decrees of justice.

Political and legal sense are so distinct from one another as almost to be irreconcilable in the same mind. The latter is a mere course of deduction from premises; the other calls into exercise the highest order of perceptive faculties, and that quick felicity of intuition which flashes to its conclusions by a species of mental sympathy rather than by any conscious process of argumentation. The one requires that the susceptibility of [272
the judgment should be kept exquisitely alive to every suggestion of the practical, so as to catch and follow the insensible reasonings of life, rather than to reason itself: the other demands the exclusion of every thing not rigorously exact, and the concentration of the whole consciousness of the mind in kindling implicit truth into formal principles. The wonder, in Judge Marshall's case, was to see these two almost inconsistent faculties, in quality so matchless, and in development so magnificent, harmonized and united in his marvellous intelligence. We beheld him pass from one to the other department without confusing their nature, and without perplexing his own understanding. When he approached a question of constitutional jurisprudence, we saw the lawyer expand into the legislator; and in returning to a narrower sphere, pause from the creative glow of statesmanship, and descend from intercourse with the great conceptions and great feelings by which nations are guided and society is advanced, to submit his faculties with docility to the yoke of legal forms, and with impassible calmness to thread the tangled intricacies of forensic technicalities.

There was in this extraordinary man an unusual combination of the capacity of apprehending truth, with the ability to demonstrate and make it palpable to others. They often exist together in unequal degrees. Lord Mansfield's power of luminous explication was so surpassing that one might almost say that he made others perceive what he did not understand himself; but the numerous instances in which his decisions have been directly overthrown by his successors, and the still greater number of cases in which his opinions have been silently departed from, compel a belief that his judgment was not of the truest kind. Lord Eldon's judicial [273
sagacity was a species of inspiration; but he seemed to be unable not only to convince others; but even to certify himself of the correctness of his own greatest and wisest determinations. But Judge Marshall's sense appeared to be at once both instinctive and analytical: his logic extended as far as his perception: he had no propositions in his thoughts which he could not resolve into their axioms. Truth came to him as a revelation, and from him as a demonstration. His mind was more than the faculty of vision; it was a body of light, which irradiated the subject to which it was directed, and rendered it as distinct to every other eye as it was to its own.

The mental integrity of this illustrious man was not the least important element of his greatness. Those qualities of vanity, fondness for display, the love of effect, the solicitation of applause, sensibility to opinions, which are the immoralities of intellect, never attached to that stainless essence of pure reason. He seemed to men to be a passionless intelligence; susceptible to no feeling but the constant love of right; subject to no affection but a polarity toward truth.

As has already been stated, the great chief justice was married when twenty-eight years of age, to Miss Ambler, of York, in Virginia; there have been few such unions in every respect more fortunate and delightful; the wife died but a short time before the husband, who, not more than two days previous to his own decease, directed that his body should be laid with hers, and that the plain stone to indicate the place of their rest should have only this simple inscription:

> "John Marshall, son of Thomas and Mary Marshall, was born on the 24th of September, 1755, intermarried with Mary Willis Ambler on the 3d of January, 1783, and departed this life the —— day of —— 18—."

With no other alteration than the filling of the blanks, this is engraved on the modest white marble which is [274
over their remains in the beautiful cemetery on Shoccoe Hill, of Richmond.

The chief justice always lived in a style of singular simplicity; when Secretary of State at Washington, he resided in a brick building hardly larger than most of the kitchens now in use, and his house in Richmond, to which he soon after removed, was characteristically unostentatious. From Richmond he frequently walked out three or four miles to his farm in the county of Henrico; and once a year he made a protracted visit to his other farm, near his birth-place, in Fauquier.

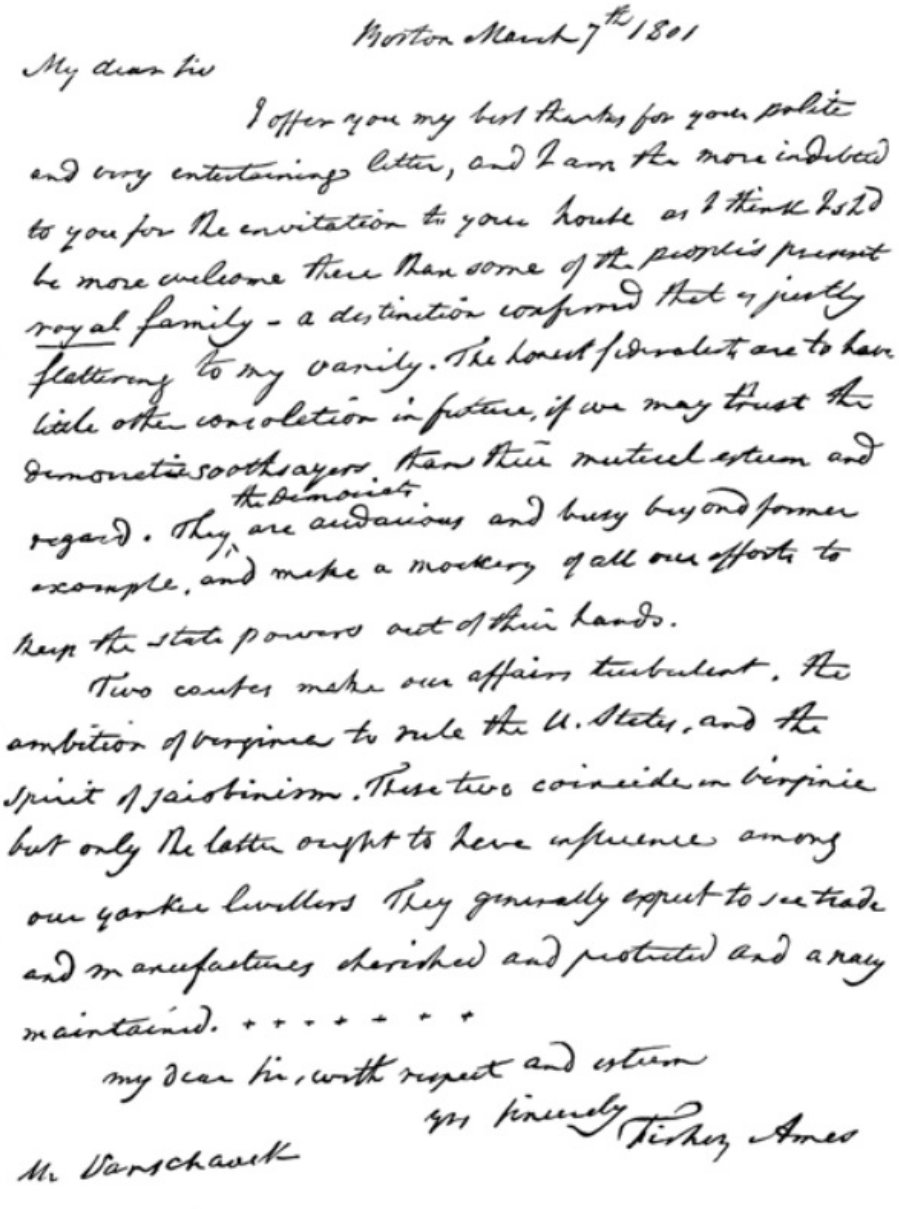
No man had a keener relish for social and convivial enjoyments, and numerous anecdotes are told in illustration of this trait in his character. Nearly all the period of his residence in Richmond, he was a member of a club which met near the city once a fortnight to pitch quoits, and mingle in relaxing conversation; there was no one more punctual in his attendance at its meetings, or who contributed more to their pleasantness; and such was his skill in the manly game he practised, that he would hurl his iron ring, weighing two pounds, with rarely erring aim, fifty-five or sixty feet, and when he or his partner made any specially successful

exhibition of skill, he would leap up and clap his hands with the light-hearted enthusiasm of boyhood.

Ames.

[275

[276



Boston March 7th 1801

My dear Sir

I offer you my best thanks for your polite and very entertaining letter, and I am the more indebted to you for the invitation to your house as I think I should be more welcome there than some of the people's present royal family - a distinction conferred that is justly flattering to my vanity. The honest democrats are to have little other consolation in future, if we may trust the democratic soothsayers, than their mutual esteem and regard. They, the democrats, are audacious and busy but former example, and make a mockery of all our efforts to keep the state powers out of their hands.

Two causes make our affairs turbulent. The ambition of Virginia to rule the U. States, and the spirit of jacobinism. These two coincide in Virginia but only the latter ought to have influence among our yankee levellers. They generally expect to see trade and manufactures cherished and protected and a navy maintained. + + + + + + +

my dear Sir, with respect and esteem

yrs sincerely Fisher Ames

Mr Vanschaack

AMES.

[277

The house in which Fisher Ames was born was pulled down somewhere about 1818. It used to stand on the main street of Dedham, a little to the northeast, and over the way from where the court-house now stands. It was a roomy, two-story, peaked-roofed old building, with its end to the street; the oldest part having an addition of more modern construction on the front, or what, with reference to the street, was the end. The rooms were low, the windows small, and the lower floor was sunken a little below the ground. A large buttonwood overshadowed it in front, and from behind an elm, the latter still standing. There was no fence between the house and the street, and the intervening space was covered with grass of that thick and stubbed growth peculiar to such localities. Behind was a large barn, while on both sides, and back for fifty or sixty rods, to the Charles River, stretched a broad field of irregular surface. Just across the street was the "Front Lot," a piece of unoccupied land, including that on which the court-house now stands, and extending east nearly as far as the post-office. On the corner of this lot, directly in front of the house stood, subsequently,—

[278

that is, to the year 1776, when it was erected,—a stone pillar supporting a column, surmounted by a wooden head of Pitt, the same having been set up by the "Sons of Liberty," a brother of Fisher Ames among the number, on the repeal of the Stamp Act. This structure, after testifying to America's gratitude for a number of years, and furnishing to the corner on which it stood, the name of "Pitt's Head," was eventually overthrown. The stone pillar with its glowing inscription, after lying awhile by the roadside, and offering a seat to chatting children, and a place, in the spaces of the letters, for cracking nuts, was at length set up in its old place, on the erection of the court-house some twenty-five years since, where it still stands. But of the fate of the column and the head we have no account. This wooden head, intended by its enthusiastic raisers, without a doubt, to be "ære perennius," lay kicking about the street; and perhaps found refuge at last from the vicissitudes of the weather and the wasting jack-knife of the schoolboy, in the wood-box or the garret of some

hospitable patriot.

The old house was long kept as an inn, both by Dr. Nathaniel Ames, the father of Fisher, and, after his death, by his wife. Innkeeping in those days was not so engrossing an occupation as at present, and Dr. Ames, by no means mainly a Boniface, found time for the care of his farm, for the practice of his profession, for the study of mathematics, astronomy, and kindred subjects; and for the application of the knowledge thus acquired, in the making of almanacs; a business which he carried on for forty years. In their veracious pages, besides indicating the doings and intentions of the heavenly bodies, and predicting storms with all the accuracy of which the case was susceptible, Dr. Ames used to portray the exciting events of the time in verse, more patriotic and vivid, perhaps, than poetic. He was, in truth, a man of no small consideration in Dedham, of much natural ability, of wit and spirit. [279

He showed these last qualities once on a time, when the colonial judges decided some law case against him. He thought they had disregarded the law, and their Reverences were soon seen, sketched on a sign-board in front of the tavern, in full bottomed wigs, tippling, with their *backs* to the volume labelled "The Province Law." The authorities at Boston taking umbrage at this, dispatched some officers to Dedham to remove the sign. But Dr. Ames was too quick for them; and the baffled tipstaves on reaching the house found nothing hanging but a board, on which was inscribed, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh for a sign, but no sign shall be given them."

Dr. Ames died in 1764, when his son Fisher, the youngest child, was six years old; having besides him, a son of his own name and profession, who was afterwards a violent democrat and opponent of Fisher Ames, two other sons and a daughter. Of these, Fisher was the only one who left descendants. Mrs. Ames continued to keep the inn, and married again. She was a very shrewd and sensible woman, of a strong and singular cast of mind. She took a hearty interest in politics, and hated the Jacobins devoutly. Innkeeping was a favorite occupation with her, and she carried matters with a high hand. We have heard her compared to Meg Dods, the landlady in St. Ronan's Well. She outlived her son Fisher some ten years or more.

Fisher Ames was a delicate child, and the pet of his mother, whose maiden name he bore. He had such an extravagant fondness for books, devouring all that fell within his reach, and showed, in other ways, to the fond perception of his parent, such unmistakable signs of genius, that she early determined to make a lawyer of him, and put him to the study of Latin at six. The little fellow worked bravely at his lessons for six years, reciting sometimes to the school-teacher, when that functionary happened to be more than usually learned, sometimes to old Mr. Haven the minister, with whom he early made friends, and to various other persons. In 1770, twelve years old, he was admitted to Harvard College. Here he spent four years with credit and success, acquiring greater distinction in the study of the languages and in oratory, than in the abstract sciences. He was conspicuous, even at this early age, as a speaker, being one of the leading members of a society for improvement in eloquence, then newly established. This society, under the style of "The Institute of 1770," is still flourishing at Cambridge, and turns out annually as many orators, perhaps, as any similar body in our country. The writer of this remembers to have heard there, in his own college days, a great deal of sublime elocution. Fisher Ames's name occurs on the records a number of times, as a speaker, and a critic, and once as follows: "June, 1, 1773.—Voted, that Ames, Clarke, and Eliot, be fined 4 pence for tardiness." Young Ames passed through college with unblemished morals. "Happily," in the elegant phrase of his biographer, "he did not need the smart of guilt to make him virtuous, nor the regret of folly to make him wise." [280

In the summer of 1774, he returned to his mother's house. Notwithstanding her predilection for law, he had some idea of studying medicine or divinity. But, the year of the Boston Port Bill was no good time for deciding upon a course of life, or beginning it when determined on. Besides, Fisher Ames was but sixteen, and his mother was poor. For a short time, therefore, he engaged in teaching school; and, after a few years spent in desultory but unceasing study and reading, he began law in the office of Wm. Tudor, of Boston. [281

During this time the contest was going on in which his country's liberties were involved, and young Ames was a watchful and anxious observer of its progress. It was at his mother's house that the good men of Dedham used to meet, to see what they and the country were to do. Only a month or two after his return from college, a convention from all the towns of Suffolk county, of which Dedham was then a part, met here to deliberate. We can imagine the heart of our boy of sixteen burning within him, and his eye flashing as he heard the outraged citizens of Boston tell their grievances, and as he longed to be a man, that he might take a part with those determined patriots in their resolution to try the issue with Great Britain, if need be, at the point of the sword. Dedham sent some brave soldiers to the service, and Fisher Ames, young as he was, went out in one or two short expeditions.

In 1781 we find him entered upon the practice of law at Dedham, where he soon became distinguished as an advocate. In those days the manners of the bench were very rough. The road to eminence in law seemed often to lie between rows of semi-barbarous judges, who hurled at aspiring barristers every missile of abuse. There is always much, it is true, in the deportment of young lawyers to vex the temper of a judge, and perhaps in those days of callow independence there may have been more than common. There appears to be something about that great science to which, in the language of Hooker, "all things in heaven and earth do homage, the least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her bounty," that breathes unusual dignity into its servants, especially its young ones. In its various duties, the giving of counsel, the questioning of witnesses, and the frequent display of capacity before courts and juries, the seeds of vanity find propitious soil and start into rank growth. From this or whatever cause, the judges of old times were crusty and abusive; and old Judge Paine, besides being all this, was moreover deaf, and used to berate counsel roundly at times for what was no fault of theirs. "I tell you what," said Fisher Ames, as he came out of court one day, "a man, when he enters that court-room, ought to go armed with a speaking trumpet in one hand and a club in the other." At another time, Ames expressed a rather derogatory opinion of the intelligence of the court. He was arguing a case before a number of county justices, and having finished, turned to leave the room. "Ain't you going to say any thing more, Mr. Ames?" anxiously whispered his client. "No," rejoined Ames; "you might as well argue a case to a row of skim-milk cheeses!" Perhaps his dislike to these dignitaries may have been an inheritance. [282

May not the old Doctor, in his indignation about the Province Law matter, like another Hamilcar, have made his son, a youthful Hannibal, swear eternal hatred to his foes?

Mr. Ames was now a rapidly rising man. Various essays on political subjects from his pen appeared in the newspapers, and contributed to draw public attention to him. When quite young, he was sent to a convention held at Concord, to consider the depreciated state of the currency, where he made an eloquent speech. In [283
1788, he was a member of the convention for ratifying the federal constitution. Here he added much to his fame by a number of excellent speeches. One on the biennial election of representatives was considered the best, and is the only one given in his works. It is lucid, statesmanlike, and eloquent. The occasion of it was an inquiry by Samuel Adams, why representatives were not made elective annually. To this Ames alludes in the closing paragraph: "As it has been demanded why annual elections were not preferred to biennial, permit me to retort the question, and to inquire, in my turn, what reason can be given why, if annual elections are good, biennial elections are not better?" Adams professed himself entirely satisfied. This same year Ames represented Dedham in the legislature.

In 1789, Suffolk county sent him as her first representative to Congress, in opposition to Samuel Adams. He was in Congress eight years, during the whole of Washington's administration, and was one of the most prominent leaders of the federal party, giving to the President uniform and important support. In this period, he acquired a reputation for candor, integrity, ability, and eloquence, second to that of no man in Congress. At times, particularly towards the end of his term, ill-health compelled his absence; yet he examined with care every important question that presented itself, and spoke upon almost every one. But of his numerous efforts in Congress, only two are printed among his works, one on certain resolutions of Madison's for imposing additional duties on foreign goods, delivered in 1794, and the speech on Jay's treaty, two years later, his most brilliant effort, "an era," says his biographer, "in his political life." This speech was written out from memory [284
by Judge Smith and Samuel Dexter, receiving a revision from Ames. It is thus alluded to by Hildreth: "He (Ames) had been detained from the House during the early part of the session, by an access of that disorder which made all the latter part of his life one long disease. Rising from his seat, pale, feeble, hardly able to stand or to speak, but warming with the subject, he delivered a speech which, for comprehensive knowledge of human nature and of the springs of political action, for caustic ridicule, keen argument, and pathetic eloquence, even in the imperfect shape in which we possess it, has very seldom been equalled on that or any other floor." The question was to have been taken that same day, but one of the opposition moved that it be postponed till the next, that they should not act under the influence of an excitement of which their calm judgment might not approve.

After reducing the question to one of breaking the public faith, the speaker adds: "This, sir, is a cause that would be dishonored and betrayed, if I contented myself with appealing only to the understanding. It is too cold, and its processes are too slow for the occasion. I desire to thank God that, since he has given me an intellect so fallible, he has impressed upon me an instinct that is sure. On a question of shame and dishonor, reasoning is sometimes useless, and worse. I feel the decision in my pulse; if it throws no light upon the brain, it kindles a fire at the heart." It is the spirit that breathes in this splendid burst that stirred the minds of the hearers, wearied and disgusted with a discussion of nearly two months, so that, in the blunt language of John Adams— "there wasn't a dry eye in the House, except some of the jackasses that occasioned the necessity of [285
the oratory."

Ames's speeches show great clearness of mind and power of reasoning, and have about them an air of candor that induces conviction. He brought to every subject on which he was to speak, that thorough understanding of it, in which, if we may believe Socrates, lies the secret of all eloquence. It appears to have been customary with him to wait till a question had undergone some discussion, that he might the better appreciate the arguments on both sides. He would then rise, and disperse, as with the wand of Prospero, the mists of prejudice and sophistry that had gathered over the question in the course of debate, while he placed the subject before the House with convincing eloquence and precision. His well-stored mind poured forth illustrations at every step, and his imagination illuminated each point on which he touched. Now and then it would light up into a pure and steady blaze as he dwelt on some topic that stirred his deepest emotions, and transfigured it in apt and nervous language. In this union of imagination and feeling, making every period glow with life, with logical power, Ames resembled Chatham.

He was not in the habit of trusting to notes, but used to think out a sketch of what he was to say, and trust for the rest to the inspiration of the occasion. At first his manner was slow and hesitating, like one in reflection; but as he went on, his thoughts and his language flowed fast, and his face beamed with expression. We have heard his manner characterized by one who had frequent opportunities of hearing him, in the words of Antenor's description of Ulysses:

[286

"But when Ulyssus rose, in thought profound,
His modest eyes he fixed upon the ground,
As one unskilled, or drunk, he seemed to stand,
Nor raised his head nor stretched his sceptred hand;
But when he speaks, what elocution flows!
Soft as the fleeces of descending snows,
The copious accents fall, with easy art;
Melting they fall and sink into the heart!"

His voice is described as rich and melodious. His personal appearance is thus given by Wm. Sullivan: "He was above middle stature, and well-formed. His features were not strongly marked. His forehead was neither high nor expansive. His eyes blue, and of middling size; his mouth handsome; his hair was black, and short on the forehead, and in his latter years unpowdered. He was very erect, and when speaking he raised his head; or rather his chin was the most projected part of his face." Before a jury he was very effective. There was nothing bitter or sarcastic in his manner; but mild, cool, and candid, it made a jury, as we heard it expressed,

"want to give him the case, if they could." He is contrasted with his friend Samuel Dexter, as preferring to illustrate by a picture, while Dexter would explain by a diagram.

Mr. Ames was the author of the "Address of the House of Representatives to Washington," on his signifying his intention to withdraw from office. His own health had been, and was still so feeble, that he could not stand for re-election. Accordingly, he retired to Dedham in March, 1797, intending to devote himself, as far as possible, to the practice of his profession and the enjoyment of domestic happiness.

In July 1792, Mr. Ames had married Miss Worthington, of Springfield. This marriage was an exceedingly happy one. Mrs. Ames was much beloved and respected by her neighbors, and, in her sphere, was considered [287
as remarkable as her husband. She was a woman of gentle and retiring disposition, devoted to her family, kind, motherly and sensible. Mr. Ames seems to have found in her a companion who called forth and appreciated all those amiable qualities which were a part of his character. She took a good deal of interest in public affairs, and was a woman of cultivated mind. She survived her husband, and died some sixteen years since, at the age of seventy-four. They had seven children, six sons and a daughter. The daughter died young and unmarried, of consumption. Three of the sons are now living, one in Dedham, one in Cambridge, and another somewhere at the West. All the children however survived their father.

Previous to his marriage Mr. Ames had lived with his mother. After that event he moved to Boston and took a house on Beacon Street, next to Governor Bowdoin's. He appears to have lived here about two years, when he returned to Dedham, and began the building of a new house. This house was finished and occupied by the winter of 1795; during the interval Mr. Ames lived in a house opposite the old mansion now occupied by the Dedham Gazette. This new house of Ames's is still standing in Dedham, externally much the same as of old; a large square-built, two-story house, flat-roofed, simple and substantial. Internally, however, together with the ground about it, it has undergone many alterations. Formerly it had not the piazza now in front of it, and the various chimneys were then represented by one fat, old-fashioned, solid structure in the middle. It passed out of the hands of the family about 1835, and is at present owned by Mr. John Gardiner.

Mr. Ames seems to have inherited most of the old homestead, to the extent of twenty-five acres, on which he [288
built his house, facing the south, a little to the east, and back of his mother's. He employed himself a good deal henceforth in the cultivation of his farm. The "Front Lot" was surrounded with a rail fence and a row of Lombardy poplars, and was used at different times as a mowing lot, a cornfield, and a pasture for the cows. On the east side of the house, extending in length from the street to the river, and in width from directly under the windows, far enough to include a street and a row of small houses, since constructed, was a pasture and orchard including seven or eight acres, and stocked with the best fruit. Directly back of the house was the garden, a long and rather barren strip of land, of peculiar surface. Two straight walks went from the house the whole length of it. At the farther end of it was a low oval space, with a walk running around it, and a pond in the middle. All this part of the garden was low, and surrounded at the sides and end with a bank, in the form of an amphitheatre. Three or four terraces lay between it and the higher ground. These and the oval space with its walk, still remain, but the fence between the garden and the orchard has been removed, and the two straight walks somewhat changed, to suit the modern appetite for grace. The place is still full of the fruit-trees that Fisher Ames planted, some crossgrained pear-trees, and venerable cherries being the chief. The boys used to look over in this orchard and garden, at the big pears, weighing down the trees and covering the ground, as if it were the very garden of the Hesperides, and the dragon were asleep. Once in a while the
gates would be thrown open to these hungry longers, and they helped themselves; when winter came too the [289
pond afforded them a capital skating place. A large shed ran out from the back of the house, on the west end, used, among other purposes, as a granary. To the west and back of this, was the barn of the old house, and a large new one built by Mr. Ames, and behind the latter, the ice-house, in those days quite a novelty. Back of this was an open field. On the west side of the house, a flight of steps led from one of the lower windows down the bank, with an old pear-tree growing through it.

The house stood about two rods from the street; a semi-elliptical walk led up to the door, and two horse-chestnuts grew in the yard. There were but few trees near the house, for Mr. Ames liked the light and the fresh air. He planted a great many shade trees however on the street, and some of the fine old elms about the common were set out with his own hands. The front door opened into a large room, which took up the whole southwestern end, used as a hall, and on occasion of those large dinner parties so common among men of Mr. Ames's class, in those days, as a dining-room. At such times this was thrown into one with the adjoining front room, a large apartment, with a big fireplace, commonly used as a parlor. Back of this was the library overlooking the garden. The southeastern end was Mr. Ames's favorite one. His chamber, that in which he died, was here, on the second story. Below stairs, was a cellar kitchen, and a dairy; this last quite a magnificent matter, with marble flagging, and ice bestowed around in summer, for coolness.

From the bank at the end of the garden, Mr. Ames's land covered with fruit-trees, sloped gracefully to the
water. Charles River is here only twenty or thirty feet wide, and winds with a tranquil current through a [290
narrow meadow; not as broad, but brighter and clearer than where at Cambridge it calls forth the admiring apostrophe of the poet. It is only a short way below this where Mother Brook issues from the Charles, flowing towards the east, and joining it with the Neponset, and making an island of all the intervening region, which embraces Boston, Roxbury, and Dorchester. This singular stream, though its banks are wooded with venerable trees, and it is in all respects like one of nature's own, is nevertheless an artificial course of water. And what is very remarkable, it was constructed by the Puritan settlers, only three years after their arrival in 1639, when there could not have been a hundred men in the place. They were in want of a flow of water for mill purposes, and accordingly dug a canal a mile in length, from the Charles eastwardly. Here the land descended, and the water, left to its own course, wound in graceful curves to the Neponset. There are still a number of mills on this stream. This achievement of Young America, considering his extreme youth at the time, amounting in fact to infancy, was not unworthy of his subsequent exploits.

After returning from Congress, Mr. Ames passed a life of almost unbroken retirement. In 1798 he was appointed commissioner to the Cherokees, an office he was obliged to refuse. In 1800 he was a member of the

Governor's Council, and in the same year delivered a eulogy on Washington, before the Legislature. He was chosen in 1805, President of Harvard College, but ill health, and a disinclination to change his habits of life, led him to decline the honor.

He had also resumed the practice of his profession with ardor, but the state of his health compelled him gradually to drop it; and towards the close of his life, he was glad to throw it aside altogether. Mr. Ames was [291
not much of a traveller, though getting back and forth between Dedham and Philadelphia, which he used to do in his own conveyance, was no small matter in those days. He visited among his acquaintances in the neighborhood, at Christopher Gore's in Waltham, at George Cabot's in Brookline, and at Salem, where Timothy Pickering and others of his friends resided. He was also in the habit of driving to Boston in his gig two or three times a week, when his health permitted, and passing the day. But he took few long journeys. We hear of him at Newport in 1795, in Virginia visiting the mineral springs for his health, in the following year, and in Connecticut in 1800; and he speaks in one of his letters of "jingling his bells as far as Springfield" as a matter of common occurrence. His wife's relations lived there, among others the husband of her sister, Mr. Thomas Dwight, at whose house Mr. Ames was a frequent guest.

Ames, like so many of the best statesmen of that time, and of all time, appears to have always had a relish for farming. In a letter written at Philadelphia in 1796, while groaning over his ill health, which makes him "the survivor of himself, or rather the troubled ghost of a politician compelled to haunt the field of battle where he fell," he says, "I almost wish Adams was here, and I at home sorting squash and pumpkin seeds for planting." The latter part of the wish was soon to be realized, but not till this survivor of himself had outdone all the efforts of his former life, and risen like a Phœnix in his splendid speech on the Treaty. He frequently wrote essays on agricultural subjects, and into many of his political articles similes and illustrations found their way, [292
smelling of the farm. He had an especial fondness for raising fruit trees, and for breeding calves and pigs. All the best kinds of fruit were found in his orchard, experiments were tried on new kinds of grass, and improvements undertaken in the cultivation of crops. A piggery was attached to the barn, conducted on scientific principles, and furnished with the best stock. New breeds of cattle were introduced, and cows were kept with a view both to the sale of milk, and to the sale of their young. The produce of the farm used to be sent to Boston in a market wagon. For the carrying on of this establishment, Mr. Ames kept some half a dozen men. He himself was able to do but little active service. His disease was called by the physicians marasmus, a wasting away of the vital powers, a sort of consumption, not merely of the lungs, but of the stomach and every thing else. This, while it produced fits of languor and depression, and had something to do probably with his excessive anxiety on political subjects, never seemed to take from the cheerfulness of his manners. He was obliged to practise a rigid system of temperance, and to take a good deal of exercise, in horseback riding and other ways. Besides the society of his family, a constant source of happiness, he used to solace himself with the company of his friends, with writing letters, and with reading his favorite authors. History and poetry he was especially fond of. Shakspeare, Milton, and Pope's Homer he read throughout his life, and during his last year, re-read Virgil, Tacitus and Livy, in the original, with much delight.

His friends were frequently invited out to partake of his "farmer's fare," and rare occasions those must have been, when such men as Theophilus Parsons, and Pickering, and Gore, and Samuel Dexter, and George Cabot [293
were met together, with now and then one from a greater distance. Hamilton or Gouverneur Morris, or Sedgwick, or Judge Smith; while at the head of the table sat Fisher Ames himself, delighting every one by his humor, and his unrivalled powers of conversation. In conversation, he surpassed all the men of his time; even Morris, who was celebrated as a talker, used to be struck quite dumb at his side. His quick fancy and exuberant humor, his brilliant power of expression, his acquaintance with literature and affairs, and his genial and sunny disposition, used to show themselves on such occasions to perfection. His conversation, like his letters, was mainly upon political topics, though now and then, agriculture or literature, or the common news of the day was introduced. When dining once with some Southern gentlemen in Boston, General Pinckney among the number, after an animated conversation at the table, just as Ames was leaving the room, somebody asked him a question. Ames walked on until he reached the door, when, turning round and resting his elbow on the sideboard, he replied in a strain of such eloquence and beauty that the company confessed they had no idea of his powers before. Judge Smith, his room-mate in Philadelphia, stated, that when he was so sick as to be confined to his bed, he would sometimes get up and converse with friends who came to see him, by the hour, and then go back to his bed completely exhausted. His friends in Boston used to seize upon him when he drove in town, and "tire him down," as he expressed it, so that when he got back to Dedham, he wanted to roll like a tired horse.

Ames wrote a good many newspaper essays. This was a habit which he always kept up, particularly after his [294
retirement. About 1800, on the election of Jefferson, he was very active in starting a Federal paper in Boston, the Palladium, and wrote for it constantly. He had great fears for his country from the predominance of French influence, and deemed it the duty of a patriot to enlighten his countrymen on the character and tendency of political measures. His biographer informs us that these essays were the first drafts, and they appear as such. The language is appropriate and often very felicitous, but they are diffuse and not always systematic. There is considerable argument in them, but more of explanation, appeal and ornament. He wrote to set facts before the people, and to urge them to vigilance and activity; and his essays are in fact so many written addresses. They cost him no labor in their composition, being on subjects that he was constantly revolving in his mind. They used to be written whenever he found a spare moment and a scrap of paper, while stopping at a tavern, at the printing office in Boston, or while waiting for his horse; and are apparently expressed just as they would have been if he were speaking impromptu. We have heard him characterized by one of his old friends as essentially a poet; but it would be more correct to say, that he was altogether an orator. He had indeed the characteristics of an orator in a rare degree, and these show themselves in every thing he does. While his mind was clear and his powers of reasoning were exceedingly good, imagination, the instinctive perception of analogies, and feeling predominated. His writings do not justify his fame; yet viewed as what they really are, the unlabored transcripts of his thoughts, they are remarkable. The flow of language, [295
the wit, the wealth and aptness of illustration, the clearness of thought, show an informed and superior mind.

They have here and there profound observations, that show an acquaintance with the principles of government and with the human heart, and are full of testimonials to the purity of the author's patriotism, and the goodness of his heart.

Besides the essays that are published among his works, he wrote many others perhaps equally good, as well as numerous short, keen paragraphs, adapted to the time, but not suitable for republication. He also wrote verses occasionally, among others "an Ode by Jefferson" to the ship that was to bring Tom Paine from France, in imitation of Horace's to the vessel that was to bear Virgil from Athens.

He wrote a great many letters, and it is in these that we are presented with the finest view of his character. They are full of sensible remarks on contemporary news and events, and sparkle with wit of that slipshod and easy sort, most delightful in letters, while in grace of style they surpass most of the correspondence of that period. The public has already been informed that the correspondence of Fisher Ames, together with other writings, and some notice of his life, is in course of publication by one of his sons, Mr. Seth Ames of Cambridge. But few of his letters were published in his works, as issued in 1809; a few more appeared in Judge Smith's life, and some twenty in Gibbs's "Administration of Washington and Adams," but these bear but a very small proportion to his whole correspondence. Within a short time as many as one hundred and fifty letters have been found in Springfield, written to Mr. Dwight, of various dates from 1790 to 1807. A large [296
number are said to have disappeared, that were in the hands of George Cabot, and some were burned among the papers of President Kirkland. For a delightful specimen of Mr. Ames' familiar letters, the reader is referred to page 89 of that capital biography, the "Life of Judge Smith."

Mr. Ames was a man of great urbanity among his neighbors. It was his custom to converse a good deal with ignorant persons and those remote from civil affairs. He was desirous to see how such persons looked at political questions, and often found means in this way of correcting his own views. He was a great favorite among the servants, and used to sit down in the kitchen sometimes and talk with them.

He attended the Congregational church at Dedham, and took a good deal of interest in its affairs. On one occasion he invited out a number of friends to attend an installation. But about 1797, on the minister's insisting upon certain high Calvinistic doctrines, Mr. Ames left, and always went, after that, to the Episcopal church. A certain good old orthodox lady remarked to him one day, after he left their church, that she supposed, if they had a nice new meeting-house, he would come back. "No, madam," rejoined Ames, "if you had a church of silver, and were to line it with gold, and give me the best seat in it, I should go to the Episcopal." Though a man of strong religious feelings, he was nothing of a sectarian, and did not fully agree with the Episcopal views. He was a friend of Dr. Channing, who visited him in his last illness, and he ought probably to be reckoned in the same class of Christians with that eminent clergyman. He was very fond of the Psalms, and used to repeat the beautiful hymn of Watts, "Up to the hills I lift mine eyes." The Christmas of 1807, the year before his death, he had his house decked with green, a favourite custom with him. [297

He died at the age of fifty, on the fourth of July 1808, at five o'clock in the morning, leaving to his family a comfortable property. The news of his death was carried at once to Boston, and Andrew Ritchie, the city orator for that day, alluded to it in this extempore burst: "But, alas! the immortal Ames, who, like Ithuriel, was commissioned to discover the insidious foe, has, like Ithuriel, accomplished his embassy, and on this morning of our independence has ascended to Heaven. Spirit of Demosthenes, couldst thou have been a silent and invisible auditor, how wouldst thou have been delighted to hear from his lips, those strains of eloquence which once from thine, enchanted the assemblies of Greece!" Ames' friends in Boston requested his body for the celebration of funeral rites. It was attended by a large procession from the house of Christopher Gore to King's Chapel, where an oration was pronounced by Samuel Dexter. It was afterwards deposited in the family tomb at Dedham, whence it was removed a few years since, and buried by the side of his wife and children. A plain white monument marks the spot, in the old Dedham grave-yard, behind the Episcopal church, with the simple inscription "Fisher Ames."

John Quincy Adams. [299

[300

Mrs Louisa Catherine Adams.

Washington 27 June 1832
Friday.

My dearest Friend,

My poor hand!— as if it was not already crippled enough— I must needs disable it still more, by a rap upon my own knuckles in speaking some day last week— I was so unconscious of it at the time that I did not feel the blow; but I think I have cracked one of the small bones— Mary writes you that I could not write, and now after ten days, I am still all but deprived of the use of my hand.

I have been chained to my seat in the House nearly three weeks upon my Tariff Bill (as they called it) from ten in the morning till 7— 8— 9— 10 at night and yesterday afternoon, after a speech of three hours against it, the Bill passed the House, by a majority to my astonishment of more than two to one— 132 to 65.— Mr Appleton, Gen. Dearborn and Mr Reed of the Massachusetts Delegation voted with me for the Bill— The rest of the Delegation against it— They and the Southern nullifiers could not swallow it— The administration party fought inch by inch against every amendment, most of which were carried against them— and at last they voted for the bill— It is now before the Senate and what will become of it there, who can tell?— It goes to them like wormwood— I hope they will not send back to the House, gall— It is in spite of all you have heard about it—a very good bill— and so think and say a small number of those who voted against it— + + + + +

We have passed a Resolution to adjourn Monday the 9th of July— but it will probably be a week later— I long intensely to be with you. + + + + +

We are well— Ever affectionately yours J. Q. Adams.

[301

Birth-place of John Quincy Adams.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

John Quincy Adams was fortunate in the home of his birth and childhood. It was a New England farm, descended from ancestors who were never so poor as to be dependent upon others, nor so rich as to be exempted from dependence upon themselves. It was situated in the town of Quincy, then the first parish of the town of Braintree, and the oldest permanent settlement of Massachusetts proper.[17] The first parish became a town by its present name, twenty-five years after the birth of Mr. Adams, viz. in 1792. It was named in honor [302 of John Quincy, Mr. Adams's maternal great-grandfather, an eminent man. His death, and the transmission of his name to his great-grandson, are thus commemorated by the latter:

"He was dying when I was baptized, and his daughter, my grandmother, present at my birth, requested that I should receive his name. The fact, recorded by my father at the time, has connected with that portion of my name a charm of mingled sensibility and devotion. It was filial tenderness that gave the name. It was the name of one passing from earth to immortality. It has been to me a perpetual admonition to do nothing unworthy of

it."

The farm-house stands at the foot of an eminence called Penn's Hill, about a mile south of Quincy village. It is an old-fashioned dwelling, having a two-story front, and sloping far away to a single one in the rear. This style is peculiar to the early descendants of the Puritan fathers of America. Specimens are becoming rarer every year; and being invariably built of wood, must soon pass away, but not without "the tribute of a sigh" from those, who associate with them memories of the wide old fireplaces, huge glowing backlogs, and hospitable cheer.

With this modest material environment of the child, was coupled an intellectual and moral, which was golden. [303
His father, the illustrious John Adams, was bred, and in his youth labored, on the farm. At the birth of his son, he was still a young man, being just turned of thirty, but ripe both in general and professional knowledge, and already recognized as one of the ablest counsellors and most powerful pleaders at the bar of the province.

The mother of John Quincy Adams was worthy to be the companion and counsellor of the statesman just described. By reason of slender health she never attended a school. As to the general education allowed to girls at that day, she tells us that it was limited "in the best families to writing, arithmetic, and, in rare instances, music and dancing;" and that "it was fashionable to ridicule female learning." From her father, a clergyman, from her mother, a daughter of John Quincy, and above all from her grandmother, his wife, she derived liberal lessons and salutary examples. Thus her education was entirely domestic and social. Perhaps it was the better for the absence of that absorbing passion of the schools, which for the most part rests as well satisfied with negative elevation by the failure of another, as with positive elevation by the improvement of one's self. The excellent and pleasant volume of her letters, which has gone through several editions, indicates much historical, scriptural, and especially poetical and ethical culture. In propriety, ease, vivacity and grace, they compare not unfavorably with the best epistolary collections; and in constant good sense, and occasional depth and eloquence, no letter-writer can be named as her superior. To her only daughter, mother of the late Mrs. De Wint, she wrote concerning the influence of her grandmother as follows:

"I have not forgotten the excellent lessons which I received from my grandmother, at a very early period of [304
life. I frequently think they made a more durable impression upon my mind than those which I received from my own parents. Whether it was owing to a happy method of mixing instruction and amusement together, or from an inflexible adherence to certain principles, which I could not but see and approve when a child, I know not; but maturer years have made them oracles of wisdom to me. Her lively, cheerful disposition animated all around her, whilst she edified all by her unaffected piety. I cherish her memory with a holy veneration, whose maxims I have treasured, whose virtues live in my remembrance—happy if I could say they have been transplanted into my life."

The concluding aspiration was more than realized, because Mrs. Adams lived more than the fortunate subject of her eulogy, and more than any American woman of her time. She was cheerful, pious, compassionate, discriminating, just and courageous up to the demand of the times. She was a calm adviser, a zealous assistant, and a never failing consolation of her partner, in all his labors and anxieties, public and private. That the laborers might be spared for the army, she was willing to work in the field. Diligent, frugal, industrious and indefatigable in the arrangement and details of the household and the farm, the entire management of which devolved upon her for a series of years, she preserved for him amidst general depreciation and loss of property, an independence, upon which he could always count and at last retire. At the same time she responded to the numerous calls of humanity, irrespective of opinions and parties. If there was a patriot of the Revolution who merited the title of *Washington of women*, she was the one. [305

It is gratifying to know that this rare combination of virtue and endowments met with a just appreciation from her great husband. In his autobiography, written at a late period of life, he records this touching testimony, that "his connection with her had been the source of all his felicity," and his unavoidable separations from her, "of all the griefs of his heart, and all that he esteemed real afflictions in his life." Throughout the two volumes of letters to her, embracing a period of twenty-seven years, the lover is more conspicuous than the statesman; and she on her part regarded him with an affection unchangeable and ever fresh during more than half a century of married life. On one of the anniversaries of her wedding she wrote from Braintree to him in Europe:

"Look at this date and tell me what are the thoughts which arise in your mind. Do you not recollect that eighteen years have run their circuit, since we pledged our mutual faith, and the hymeneal torch was lighted at the altar of love? Yet, yet it burns with unabating fervor. Old ocean cannot quench it; old Time cannot smother it in this bosom. It cheers me in the lonely hour."

The homely place at Penn's Hill was thrice ennobled, twice as the birth-place of two noble men—noble before they were Presidents; and thirdly as the successful rival of the palaces inhabited by its proprietors at the most splendid courts of Europe, which never for a moment supplanted it in their affections. Mrs. Adams wrote often from Paris and London in this strain: "My humble cottage at the foot of the hill has more charms for me than the drawing-room of St. James;" and John Adams still oftener thus: "I had rather build wall on Penn's Hill than [306
be the first prince of Europe, or the first general or first senator of America."

Such were the hearts that unfolded the childhood of John Quincy Adams.

Of all the things which grace or deform the early home, the principles, aims and efforts of the parents in conducting the education of the child are the most important to both. The mutual letters of the parents, in the present case, contain such wise and patriotic precepts, such sagacious methods, such earnest and tender persuasions to the acquisition of all virtue, knowledge, arts and accomplishments, that can purify and exalt the human character, that they would form a valuable manual for the training of true men and purer patriots.

Although the spot which has been mentioned was John Quincy Adams's principal home until he was nearly eleven, yet he resided at two different intervals, within that time, four or five years in Boston; his father's

professional business at one time, and his failing health at another, rendering the alternation necessary. The first Boston residence was the White House, so called, in Brattle-street. In front of this a British regiment was exercised every morning by Major Small, during the fall and winter of 1768, to the no little annoyance of the tenant. But says he, "in the evening, I was soothed by the sweet songs, violins and flutes of the serenading Sons of Liberty." The family returned to Braintree in the spring of 1771. In November, 1772, they again removed to Boston, and occupied a house which John Adams had purchased in Queen (now Court) street, in which he also kept his office. From this issued state papers and appeals, which did not a little to fix the [307
destiny of the country. The ground of that house has descended to Charles Francis Adams, his grandson. In 1774 Penn's Hill became the permanent home of the family, although John Adams continued his office in Boston, attended by students at law, until it was broken up by the event of April 19th, 1775.

Soon after the final return to Quincy, we begin to have a personal acquaintance with the boy, now seven years old. Mrs. Adams writes to her husband, then attending the Congress in Philadelphia:

"I have taken a very great fondness for reading Rollin's Ancient History since you left me. I am determined to go through with it, if possible, in these my days of solitude. I find great pleasure and entertainment from it, and I have persuaded Johnny to read me a page or two every day, and hope he will, from a desire to oblige me, entertain a fondness for it."

In the same year the first mention is made of his regular attendance upon a teacher. The person selected in that capacity was a young man named Thaxter, a student at law, transferred from the office in Boston, to the family in Quincy. The boy seems to have been very much attached to him. Mrs. Adams assigned the following reasons for preferring this arrangement to the public town school.

"I am certain that if he does not get so much good, he gets less harm; and I have always thought it of very great importance that children should be unaccustomed to such examples as would tend to corrupt the purity of their words and actions, that they may chill with horror at the sound of an oath, and blush with indignation at an obscene expression."

This furnishes a pleasing coincidence with a precept of ancient prudence:—

[308

> Let nothing foul in speech or act intrude,
> Where reverend childhood is.

There is no disapprobation of public schools to be inferred from this. These are indispensable for the general good; but if from this narrative a hint should be taken for making them more and more pure, and worthy of their saving mission, such an incident will be welcome.

Of the next memorable year we have a reminiscence from himself. It was related in a speech at Pittsfield, Massachusetts, in 1843.

"In 1775 the minute men, from a hundred towns in the Provinces, were marching to the scenes of the opening war. Many of them called at our house, and received the hospitality of John Adams. All were lodged in the house whom the house would contain, others in the barns, and wherever they could find a place. There were then in my father's house some dozen or two of pewter spoons; and I well recollect seeing some of the men engaged in running those spoons into bullets. Do you wonder that a boy of seven years of age, who witnessed these scenes, should be a patriot?"

He saw from Penn's Hill the flames of Charlestown, and heard the guns of Bunker Hill and Dorchester Heights.

In one of her letters from France, Mrs. Adams remarks that he was generally taken to be older than his sister (about two years older than he), because he usually conversed with persons older than himself—a remarkable proof of a constant aim at improvement, of a wise discernment of the means, and of the maturity of acquisitions already made. Edward Everett remarks in his eulogy, that such a stage as boyhood seems not to have been in the life of John Quincy Adams. While he was under ten, he wrote to his father the earliest [309
production of his pen which has been given to the public. It is found in Governor Seward's Memoir of his life, and was addressed to his father.

BRAINTREE, June 2d, 1777.

Dear Sir:—I love to receive letters very well, much better than I love to write them. I make but a poor figure at composition. My head is much too fickle. My mind is running after bird's eggs, play and trifles, till I get vexed with myself. Mamma has a troublesome task to keep me a studying. I own I am ashamed of myself. I have but just entered the third volume of Rollin's History, but I designed to have got half thro' it by this time. I am determined this week to be more diligent. Mr. Thaxter is absent at Court. I have set myself a stent this week to read the third volume half out. If I can keep my resolution, I may again, at the end of a week, give a better account of myself. I wish, sir, you would give me in writing some instructions in regard to the use of my time, and advise me how to proportion my studies and play, and I will keep them by me, and endeavor to follow them.

With the present determination of growing better, I am, dear sir, your son,

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

P.S. Sir, if you will be so good as to favor me with a blank-book, I will transcribe the most remarkable passages I meet with in my reading, which will serve to fix them on my mind.

Soon after the evacuation of Boston by Lord Howe, Mrs. Adams announces that "Johnny has become post-rider from Boston to Braintree." The distance was nine miles, and he was nine years old. In this hardy enterprise, [310

and in the foregoing letter, we may mark the strong hold which the favourite maxims of the parents had taken of their child's mind. Among those maxims were these:

To begin composition very early by writing descriptions of natural objects, as a storm, a country residence; or narrative of events, as a walk, ride, or the transactions of a day.

To transcribe the best passages from the best writers in the course of reading, as a means of forming the style as well as storing the memory.

To cultivate spirit and hardihood, activity and power of endurance.

Soon after this, the lad ceased to have a home except in the bosom of affection, and that was a divided one. On the 13th of February, 1778, he embarked for France with his father, who had been appointed a commissioner, jointly with Dr. Franklin and Arthur Lee, to negotiate treaties of alliance and commerce with that country. From the place of embarcation his father wrote: "Johnny sends his duty to his mamma, and love to his sister and brothers. *He behaves like a man.*"

When they arrived in France, after escaping extraordinary perils at sea, they found the treaty of alliance already concluded. The son was put to school in Paris, and gave his father "great satisfaction, both by his assiduity to his books and his discreet behavior," all which the father lovingly attributes to the lessons of the mother. He calls the boy "the joy of his heart."

He was permitted to tarry but three months, when he was commissioned to negotiate treaties of independence, peace, and commerce with Great Britain. He embarked for France in the month of November, [311
accompanied by Francis Dana as secretary of legation, and by his two oldest sons, John and Charles.[18] The vessel sprung a leak and was compelled to put into the nearest port, which proved to be Ferrol, where they landed safe December seventh. One of the first things was to buy a,dictionary and grammar for the boys, who "went to learning Spanish as fast as possible." Over high mountains, by rough and miry roads, a-muleback, and in the depth of winter, they wound their toilsome way, much of the time on foot, from Ferrol to Paris, a journey of a thousand miles, arriving about the middle of February, 1780. On this occasion, it is to be presumed, Master Johnny must have derived no small benefit from the service he had seen as "post-rider."

At Paris he immediately entered an academy, but in the autumn accompanied his father to Holland, who had received superadded commissions to negotiate private loans, and public treaties there. For a few months the son was sent to a common school in Amsterdam, but in December he was removed to Leyden, to learn Latin and Greek under the distinguished teachers there, and to attend the lectures of celebrated professors in the University. The reasons of this transfer are worth repeating, as they mark the strong and habitual aversion which John Adams felt and inculcated, to every species of littleness and meanness.

"I should not wish to have children educated in the common schools of this country, where a littleness of soul is notorious. The masters are mean-spirited wretches, pinching, kicking and boxing the children upon every turn. There is a general littleness, arising from the incessant contemplation of stivers and doits. Frugality and [312
industry, are virtues every where, but avarice and stinginess are not frugality."

In July, 1781, the son accompanied to St. Petersburgh Mr. Francis Dana, who had been appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the court of Russia. The original purpose was study, observation, and general improvement, under the guidance of a trusty and accomplished friend. The youth was not, as has been stated, appointed secretary of the Minister at the time they started; but by his readiness and capability he came to be employed by Mr. Dana as interpreter and secretary, difficult and delicate trusts, probably never before confided to a boy of thirteen.

In October, 1782, the youth left St. Petersburgh, and paying passing visits to Sweden, Denmark, Hamburg, and Bremen, reached the Hague in April, 1783, and there resumed his studies. Meantime his father, having received assurances that Great Britain was prepared to treat for peace on the basis of independence, had repaired to Paris to open the negotiation. He found that Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jay, two of his colleagues on the same commission, had commenced the business first with informal agents, and afterwards with a commissioner of his majesty, George the Third. The Definitive Treaty was signed September the third, 1783, at which act John Quincy Adams was summoned by his father to be present, and to assume the duties of secretary. In that capacity he made one of the copies of the treaty. The father on this occasion wrote: "Congress are at such grievous expense that I shall have no other secretary but my son. He, however, is a very good one. He writes a good hand very fast, and is steady at his pen and books."

In this autumn the two made a trip to London, partly for the health of the elder, which had been seriously [313
impaired by incessant labor, and partly for the benefit of the younger, as it was expected then that both would bid adieu to Europe and embark for America in the ensuing spring. John Adams had the satisfaction of hearing the King announce to the Parliament and people from the throne, that he had concluded a Treaty of Peace with the United States of America.

In January, 1784, the father and son proceeded to Holland to negotiate a new loan for the purpose of meeting the interest on the former one. There they remained until the latter part of July, when a letter came communicating the arrival of Mrs. Adams and her daughter in London. John Adams despatched his son to meet them, and wrote to his wife:

"Your letter of the twenty-third has made me the happiest man upon earth. I am twenty years younger than I was yesterday. It is a cruel mortification to me that I cannot go to meet you in London; but there are a variety of reasons decisively against it, which I will communicate to you here. Meantime I send you a son, who is one of the greatest travellers of his age, and without partiality, I think as promising and manly a youth, as is in the whole world. He will purchase a coach, in which we four must travel to Paris; let it be large and strong. After spending a week or two here you will have to set out with me for France, but there are no seas between; a good road, a fine season, and we will make moderate journeys, and see the curiosities of several cities in our

way,—Utrecht, Breda, Antwerp, Brussels, &c. &c. It is the first time in Europe that I looked forward to a journey with pleasure. Now I expect a great deal. I think myself made for this world."

John Quincy Adams reached London the thirtieth of July. "When he entered," says Mrs. Adams, "we had so [314
many strangers that I drew back, not really believing my eyes, till he cried out, 'O my mamma, and my dear sister!' Nothing but the eyes appeared what he once was. His appearance is that of a man, and in his countenance the most perfect good-humor. His conversation by no means denies his station. I think you do not approve the word *feelings*. I know not what to substitute in lieu, nor how to describe mine." The son was then seventeen, and the separation had continued nearly five years.

Notwithstanding that the husband's letter had forbidden hope of his participating in this re-union, he did so after all, practising a surprise charmingly delicate and gallant. It was a blissful meeting not only of happy friends, but of merit and reward, a beautiful and honorable consummation of mutual sacrifices and toils. Seldom does the cup of joy so effervesce.

Independence predicted in youth, moved and sustained with unrivalled eloquence in manhood, at home—confirmed and consolidated by loans, alliances, ships, and troops—obtained, in part or all, by him, abroad—Washington nominated Chief of the army—the American Navy created—peace negotiated—this, this (if civic virtues and achievments were honored only equally with martial) would have been the circle of Golden Medals, which John Adams might have laid at the feet of his admirable wife!

Five months after this, as if too full for earlier utterance, she wrote to her sister: "You will chide me, perhaps, for not relating to you an event which took place in London, that of unexpectedly meeting my long absent friend; for from his letters by my son, I had no idea that he would come. But you know, my dear sister, that [315
poets and painters wisely draw a veil over scenes which surpass the pen of the one and the pencil of the other."

The family reached Paris in the latter part of August, and established their residence at Auteuil, four miles from the city. The son pursued his studies, his mother, by his particular desire, writing her charming letters to American friends by his fireside. Sometimes he copied them in his plain and beautiful hand, always equal to print, and made her think, as she gayly remarks, that they were really worth something. The circle of familiar visitors included Franklin, Jefferson and his daughter, La Fayette and his wife; of formal, all the ministers domestic and foreign, and as many of the elite of fashion and of fame as they chose. But Mrs. Adams was always a modest and retiring woman. Of Franklin she wrote: "His character, from my infancy, I had been taught to venerate. I found him social, not talkative; and when he spoke, something useful dropped from, his tongue."

Of Jefferson, "I shall really regret to leave Mr. Jefferson. He is one of the choice ones of the earth. On Thursday I dine with him at his house. On Sunday he is to dine with us. On Monday we all dine with the Marquis."

In the spring of 1785 John Adams received the appointment of Minister Plenipotentiary to Great Britain, the first from the United States of America. A new separation ensued. He, his wife and daughter departed for London, but not the son, as has been stated. He departed for Harvard University, where, in the following March, he entered the Junior Class, and graduated with distinguished honor in 1787. He studied law at [316
Newburyport in the office of Theophilus Parsons, afterwards the eminent Chief Justice. He entered upon the practice of the law in Boston in 1790, and boarded in the family of Dr. Thomas Welsh. He continued thus four years, gradually enlarging the circle of his business and the amount of his income. Meantime, great and exciting public questions arose, and in discussing them he obtained a sudden and wide distinction. A tract from his pen in answer to a portion of Paine's Rights of Man, and expressing doubts of the ultimate success of the French Revolution, appeared in 1791, was republished in England and attributed to John Adams. This was at a time when the enthusiasm for the great French movement was at its height in this country. Events too soon showed that the writer had inherited his father's sagacity.

Another publication of his, which appeared in 1793, maintained the right, duty and policy of our assuming a neutral attitude towards the respective combatants in the wars arising from the French Revolution. This publication preceded Washington's Proclamation of Neutrality. In the same year Mr. Adams reviewed the course of Genet, applying to it and the condition of the country the principles of public law.

These writings attracted the attention of Washington, and he is supposed to have derived essential aid from them in some of the most difficult conjunctures of his administration. Upon the recommendation of Jefferson, made as he was about to retire from the office of Secretary of State, Washington determined to appoint John Quincy Adams Minister Resident in Holland. An intimation from Washington to the Vice-President, in order that he might give his wife timely notice to prepare for the departure of her son, was the first knowledge that [317
any member of the family had, that such an appointment was thought of. Mr. Adams repaired to his post, and remained there till near the close of Washington's administration, with the exception of an additional mission to London in 1795, to exchange ratifications of Jay's treaty, and agree upon certain arrangements for its execution.

On this occasion he met, at the house of her father, the American consul in London, Miss Louisa Catherine Johnson, who afterwards became his wife. In consequence of a rumor of his intending to resign, Washington wrote to the Vice-President:

"Your son must not think of retiring from the path he is in. His prospects, if he pursues it, are fair; and I shall be much surprised, if, in as short a time as can well be expected, he is not at the head of the Diplomatic Corps, be the government administered by whomsoever it may."

Subsequently Washington expressed himself still more strongly, aiming to overcome the scruples of President Adams about continuing his son in office under his own administration. Just before his retirement, Washington

appointed him Minister Plenipotentiary to Portugal. This destination was changed by his father to Berlin. Before assuming the station, he was married in London to Miss Johnson.

While in Prussia he negotiated an important commercial treaty, and wrote letters from Silesia, which were published in the portfolio, and passed through some editions and translations in Europe. In 1801 he was recalled by his father, to save, as it is said, Mr. Jefferson from the awkwardness of turning out the son of his old friend, whose appointment he had recommended. If such was the motive of the recall, it was a [318
miscalculation, for Jefferson did not hesitate to remove him from the small office of commissioner of bankruptcy, to which he had been appointed by the district judge of Massachusetts upon his return from abroad. Mr. Jefferson defended himself from censure for this little act, by alleging that he did not know when he made the removal, nor who the incumbent of the office was; an excuse more inexcusable than the act itself.

Mr. Adams re-established himself with his family in Boston. He occupied a house in Hanover-street, not now standing, and another which he purchased at the corner of Tremont and Boylston streets, now used for stores, and owned by his only surviving son.

In 1802 he was elected to the Senate of Massachusetts from Suffolk county.

In 1803, to the Senate of the United States.

In 1806, Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory in Harvard University, but in subordination to his duties in Congress.

In 1808 he resigned his seat in the Senate, the Legislature of his State having instructed him to oppose the restrictive measures of Jefferson, and he having given a zealous support to the embargo.

In 1809 he was appointed by Madison Minister Plenipotentiary to Russia; and resigned his professorship in the University.

In 1811 he was nominated by Madison and unanimously confirmed by the Senate, as judge of the Supreme Court of the United States. Mr. Adams having declined this office, Judge Story was appointed.

In 1814 he was appointed first commissioner at Ghent to treat with Great Britain for peace.

In 1815, Minister Plenipotentiary to Great Britain.

In 1817, Secretary of State. [319

In 1825, elected President of the United States.

Mr. Adams, released from the toils of thirty-five years of unintermitted public service, now sought a home which remains to be described.

John Adams, while yet minister in England, purchased a seat in Quincy of Mr. Borland, an old friend and neighbor, descended from the Vassals, a considerable family in the town and province: this was in 1786. On his return from Europe in 1788, the purchaser took possession with his family; and with the exception of two terms as Vice-President, and one as President of the United States, he never left it until his death on the fourth of July, 1826. This estate descended to his son, as did also that at Penn's Hill.

It is situated about half a mile north of Quincy village, on the old Boston road, where massive mile-stones, erected before the birth of John Adams, may still be seen. The farm consists of one hundred acres, now productive, though in a rude state when acquired. Mrs. John Adams described her husband in 1801 as "busy among his haymakers, and getting thirty tons on the spot, which eight years before yielded only six."

The house is supposed to be a hundred and fifty years old. It is built of wood, quite unpretending, yet from association or other cause, it has a distinguished and venerable aspect. Approached from the north or city side, it presents a sharp gable in the old English style of architecture. The opposite end is very different, and has a hipped or gambrel gable. The length may be some seventy feet, the height thirty, consisting of two stories, and a suit of attic chambers, with large luthern windows. A piazza runs along the centre of the [320
basement in front. The south or gambrel-roofed section of the edifice, was built by John Adams. The principal entrance is at the junction of this section with the main building. It opens into a spacious entry with a staircase on the right, and busts of Washington and John Quincy Adams on the left. At the foot of the stairs is the door of the principal apartment, called the Long Room. It is plainly finished, and about seven feet in height. It contains portraits of John Adams and his wife by Stewart, John Quincy Adams and his wife by the same; Thomas Jefferson in French costume, taken in France by Browne. He appears much handsomer than in most of his portraits. Over the fireplace is a very old and curious picture of a child, supposed by John Quincy Adams to be his great-grandfather, John Quincy. There are several other portraits of less note. The chairs are of plain mahogany, with stuffed seats and backs, and hair-cloth coverings. They belonged to Mrs. Adams. Opposite to the door of this room, on the left side of the entry, is the door of the dining-room, called the Middle Room. This is within the original building. It contains a number of portraits; the most conspicuous is that of Washington in his uniform. It was painted by Savage, and was purchased by the elder Adams. It has a more solemn and concentrated look than Stewart's Washington—more expressive, but not so symmetrical. It resembles Peale's Pater Patriæ. John Quincy Adams considered it a better likeness than the popular portraits. It is said to have been taken when Washington had lost his teeth, and had not substituted artificial ones. The lips appear much compressed, the visage elongated and thinner than in Stewart's picture. By its side is Mrs. [321
Washington, painted by the same artist. There is a fine engraving of Copley's picture of the Death of Chatham. It is a proof copy, presented by the painter to John Adams. Passing from the Middle Room through another but small front entry, we reach the north basement room, called the Keeping Room. This is finished with considerable luxury for a provincial parlor of its time. It is panelled from floor to ceiling with mahogany. The effect is somewhat heavy, to obviate which the elder Mrs. Adams, a votary of all cheerfulness, had it painted white. It has now been restored, and presents an antique and rich appearance. Nearly all the furniture of this

as well as the Middle Room, including the Turkey carpet of the latter, still bright and substantial, was John Adams's. All these apartments are connected by a longitudinal passage in the rear, which communicates with the kitchen.

The Library is in the second story over the Long Room. This chamber was constantly occupied by the Elder President, both for a sitting and sleeping room during his latter years. Here the writer saw him at the age of nearly ninety, delighted with hearing Scott's novels, or Dupuis' Origine de tous les Cultes, or the simplest story-book, which he could get his grandchildren to read to him. He seemed very cheerful, and ready to depart, remarking that "he had eat his cake." When his son came home from Washington, he converted this room into a library. Of course his books are very miscellaneous both as to subjects and languages; but they are not all here. Some are arranged on the sides of passage-ways and in other parts. A portion of them compose in part a library at his son's town residence. John Adams in his lifetime gave his library—a very [322
valuable one—to the town of Quincy, together with several tracts of land for the erection of an academy or classical school, to which his library is ultimately to attach. The entire library of John Quincy Adams comprises twelve thousand volumes. To this must be added a chest full of manuscripts, original and translated, in prose and poetry. They show unbounded industry. From his boyhood to the age of fifty, when he took the Department of State, he was an intense student. In this chest are many of the earlier fruits, such as complete versions of a large number of the classics, of German and other foreign works.

The garden lies on the north, contiguous to the house, and connects with a lawn, narrow in front of the house, but widening considerably south of it. The whole is inclosed on the roadside by a solid wall of Quincy granite, some six feet high, except the section immediately before the house, which is a low stone wall, surmounted by a light wooden fence of an obsolete fashion, with two gates in the same style, leading to the two front doors. The whole extent does not much exceed an acre. It embraces an ornamental and kitchen garden, the former occupying the side near the road, and the latter extending by the side and beyond the kitchen and offices to an open meadow and orchard. The principal walk is through the ornamental portion of the garden, parallel with the road, and terminates at a border of thrifty forest trees, disposed, as they should be, without any regard to order. From the walk above-mentioned another strikes out at a right angle, and skirts the border of trees, till it disappears in the expanse of meadow. Most of the trees were raised by John Quincy Adams from the seeds, which he was in the habit of picking up in his wanderings. The most particular interest attaches to [323
a shagbark, which he planted more than fifty years ago. It stands near the angle of the two alleys. In this tree he took a particular satisfaction, but he was an enthusiast in regard to all the trees of the forest, differing in this respect from his father, who, as an agriculturist of the Cato stamp, was more inclined to lay the axe to them than to propagate them. From this plantation Charles Francis Adams was supplied with a great number and variety of trees to embellish a residence, which he built in his father's lifetime on the summit of a high hill, west of the old mansion. This is called President's Hill. It affords one of the finest sea landscapes which can be found. John Adams used to say that he had never seen, in any part of the world, so fine a view. It comprises a wide range of bays, islands and channels seaward, with seats and villages on the intervening land. This prospect lies eastward, and includes Mount Wollaston, situated near the seashore, and remarkable as the first spot settled in the town and State, and as giving its name for many of the first years to the entire settlement. This belonged to the great-grandfather, John Quincy, and is now a part of the Adams estate.

The meeting-house is half a mile south of the old mansion. The material is granite, a donation of John Adams. It has a handsome portico, supported by beautiful and massive Doric pillars, not an unfit emblem of the donor. Beneath the porch, his son constructed, in the most durable manner, a crypt, in which he piously deposited the remains of his parents; and in the body of the church, on the right of the pulpit, he erected to their sacred memories a marble monument surmounted by a bust of John Adams, and inscribed with an affecting and noble epitaph.

After leading "a wandering life about the world," as he himself calls it—a life of many changes and many [324
labors, John Quincy Adams, at sixty-two, sought the quiet and seclusion of his father's house. He was yet, for his years, a model of physical vigor and activity; for, though by nature convivial as his father was, and capable, on an occasion, of some extra glasses, he was by habit moderate in meat and drink, never eating more than was first served on his plate, and consequently never mixing a variety of dishes. He used himself to attribute much of the high health he enjoyed to his walks and his baths. Early every morning, when the season admitted, he sought a place where he could take a plunge and swim at large. A creek, with a wharf or pier projecting into it, called Black's Wharf, about a quarter of a mile from his house, served these purposes in Quincy. At Washington he resorted to the broad Potomac. There, leaving his apparel in charge of an attendant, (for it is said that it was once purloined!) he used to buffet the waves before sunrise. He was an easy and expert swimmer, and delighted so much in the element, that he would swim and float from one to two or three hours at a time. An absurd story obtained currency, that he used this exercise in winter, breaking the ice, if necessary, to get the indispensable plunge! This was fiction. He did not bathe at all in winter, nor at other times from theory, but for pleasure.

He bore abstinence and irregularity in his meals with singular indifference. Whether he breakfasted at seven or ten, whether he dined at two, or not at all, appeared to be questions with which he did not concern himself. It is related that having sat in the House of Representatives from eight o'clock in the morning till after midnight, a friend accosted him, and expressed the hope that he had taken refreshment in all that time; he [325
replied that he had not left his seat, and held up a *bit of hard bread*. His entertainments of his friends were distinguished for abundance, order, elegance, and the utmost perfection in every particular, but not for extravagance and luxury of table furniture. His accomplished lady, of course, had much to do with this. He rose very early, lighting the fire and his lamp in his library, while the surrounding world was yet buried in slumber. This was his time for writing. Washington and Hamilton had the same habit.

He was unostentatious and almost always walked, whether for visiting, business or exercise. At Quincy he used to go up President's Hill to meet the sun from the sea, and sometimes walked to the residence of his son in Boston before breakfast. Regularly, before the hour of the daily sessions of Congress, he was seen wending

his quiet way towards the Capitol, seldom or never using, in the worst of weather, a carriage. He stayed one night to a late hour, listening to a debate in the Senate on the expunging resolution. As he was starting for home in the face of a fierce snow-storm, and in snow a foot deep, a gentleman proposed to conduct him to his house. "I thank you, sir, for your kindness," said he, "but I do not need the service of any one. I am somewhat advanced in life, but not yet, by the blessing of God, infirm, or what Dr. Johnson would call 'superfluous;' and you may recollect what old Adam says in 'As you Like it'—

> "'For in my youth I never did apply
> Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood.'"

While he was President, the writer was once sitting in the drawing-room of a highbred lady in Boston. A hat [326
not very new glanced under the window sill. The owner rung at the door; and not finding the gentleman at home, continued his walk. A servant entered and presented the card of John Quincy Adams. "I do wonder," exclaimed the lady, "that the President of the United States will go about in such a manner!"

His apparel was always plain, scrupulously neat, and reasonably well worn. It was made for the comfort of the wearer, who asked not of the fashions.

When he retired from the Presidency, he resolved to pass the remainder of his days under the paternal roof and the beloved shades. He anticipated and desired nothing but quiet, animated by the excitements of intellectual and rural occupations. He had before him the congenial task, to which he had long aspired, of dispensing the treasures of wisdom contained in the unwritten life and unpublished writings of his father. He was ready to impart of his own inexhaustible wealth of experience, observation and erudition, to any one capable of receiving. It takes much to reconcile a thoughtful mind to the loss of what would have been gained by the proposed employment of his leisure. And we had much.

Had the record of his public life, ample and honorable as it was, been now closed, those pages on which patriots, philanthropists and poets will for ever dwell with gratitude and delight, would have been wanting. Hitherto he had done remarkably well what many others, with a knowledge of precedents and of routine and with habits of industry, might have done, if not as well, yet acceptably. He was now called to do what no other man in the Republic had strength and heart to attempt.

He was endowed with a memory uncommonly retentive. He could remember and quote with precision, works [327
which he had not looked at for forty years. Add to this his untiring diligence and perseverance, and the advantages of his position and employment at various capitals in the old world, and the story of his vast acquisitions is told. His love lay in history, literature, moral philosophy and public law. With the Greek, Latin, French, German, and Italian languages and principal writers he was familiar. His favorite English poet was Shakspeare, whom he commented upon and recited with discrimination and force, surpassing, it is said, in justness of conception, the great personators of his principal characters. Among the classics, he especially loved Ovid, unquestionably the Shakspeare of the Romans. Cicero was greatly beloved, and most diligently studied, translated, and commented upon. For many of his latter years he never read continuously. He would fall asleep over his book. But to elucidate any subject he had in hand, he wielded his library with wakefulness and execution lively enough.

He was fond of art in all its departments, but most in the pictorial. In his "Residence at the Court of London," Mr. Rush has drawn an attractive sketch of him at home.

"His tastes were all refined. Literature and art were familiar and dear to him. At his hospitable board I have listened to disquisitions from his lips, on poetry, especially the dramas of Shakspeare, music, painting and sculpture, of rare excellence and untiring interest. A critical scholar in the dead languages, in French, German and Italian, he could draw at will from the wealth of these tongues to illustrate any particular topic. There was
no fine painting or statue, of which he did not know the details and the history. There was not even an opera, [328
or a celebrated composer, of which or of whom he could not point out the distinguishing merits and the chief compositions. Yet he was a hard-working and assiduous man of business; and a more regular, punctual, and comprehensive diplomatic correspondence than his, no country can probably boast."

Mr. Adams was generally regarded as cold and austere. The testimony of persons who enjoyed an intimacy with him is the reverse of this. Mr. Rush says that "under an exterior of at times repulsive coldness, dwelt a heart as warm, sympathies as quick, and affections as overflowing as ever animated any bosom." And Mr. Everett, that "in real kindness and tenderness of feeling, no man surpassed him." There is an abundance of like evidence on this head.

He was taciturn rather than talkative, preferring to think and to muse. At times his nature craved converse, and delighted in the play of familiar chat. Occasionally he threw out a lure to debate. If great principles were seriously called in question, he would pour out a rapid and uninterrupted torrent.

The poets had been the delight of his youth. He read them in the intervals of retirement at Quincy with a youthful enthusiasm, and tears and laughter came by turns, as their sad and bright visions passed before him. Pope was a favorite, "and the intonations of his voice in repeating the 'Messiah,'" says an inmate of the family, "will never cease to vibrate on the ear of memory." He was a deeply religious man, and though not taking the
most unprejudiced views of divinity, what he received as spiritual truths were to him most evident and [329
momentous realities, and he derived from them a purifying and invigorating power. "The dying Christian's Address to his Soul" was replete with pathos and beauty for him. He is remembered to have repeated it one evening with an intense expression of religious faith and joy; adding the Latin lines of Adrian, which Pope imitated. He was thought by some to have a tendency to Calvinistic theology, and to regard Unitarianism as too abstract and frigid. Thus he used sometimes to talk, but it was supposed to be for the purpose of putting Unitarians upon a defence of their faith, rather than with a serious design to impair it.

On one occasion he conversed on the subject of popular applause and admiration. Its caprice, said he, is equalled only by its worthlessness, and the misery of that being who lives on its breath. There is one stanza of Thomson's Castle of Indolence, that is worth whole volumes of modern poetry; though it is the fashion to speak contemptuously of Thomson. He then repeated with startling force of manner and energy of enunciation, the third stanza, second canto, of that poem.

"I care not, fortune, what you me deny;
You cannot rob me of free nature's grace,
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
Through which Aurora shows her brightening face;
You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
The woods and lawns by living streams at eve:
Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,
And I their toys to the great children leave;
Of Fancy, Reason, Virtue, nought can me bereave."

He did not much admire the poetry of Byron. One objection which he is recollected to have made to the poet was the use of the word "rot." There is some peculiarity in Byron in this respect; thus in Childe Harold:— [330

"The Bucentaur lies *rotting* unrestored,
Where meaner relics must not dare to *rot*."

This, if a sound objection, which it is not, was narrow for so great a man. The cause of this distaste lay deeper. Mr. Adams, though a dear lover of Shakspeare, was of the Johnsonian school of writers. His diction is elaborate, stately, and in his earlier writings verbose, but always polished, harmonious, and sustained. He liked unconsciously Latin English better than Anglo-Saxon. Byron, in common with a large and increasing class of moderns, loved to borrow the force of familiar and every-day language, and to lend to it the dignity and beauty of deep thought and high poetic fancy. Not improbably, the moral obliquities of the poet had their influence in qualifying the opinion formed of his writings, by a man of such strict rectitude as Mr. Adams.

He was fond of Watts's Psalms and Hymns, and repeated them often, sometimes rising from his seat in the exaltation of his feelings. Among favorite stanzas was this one:

Sweet fields, beyond the swelling flood,
Stand dressed in living green;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.

Until his private letters shall be published, no adequate conception can be formed of the devotion he paid to his mother. This may give an inkling of it. A young friend inquired of him, when he was once at Hingham on their annual fishing party in his honor, in which of his poems a certain line was to be found, viz.— [331

"Hull—but that name's redeemed upon the wave,"

referring to the surrender of General Hull, so soon followed (only three days after, August 16-19, 1812) by the capture of the Guerriere by Captain Hull. "I do not," he replied, "but I have been often struck by the coincidence. I think, however, the line occurs in a poem *addressed to my mother*."

The best saying of Mr. Adams was in reply to the inquiry, What are the recognized principles of politics?

Mr. Adams. There are none. There are recognized precepts, but they are bad, and so not PRINCIPLES.

But is not this a sound one, "The greatest good of the greatest number?"

Mr. Adams. No, that is the worst of all, for it looks specious, while it is ruinous; for what is to become of the minority? This is the only principle—THE GREATEST GOOD OF ALL.

It must be admitted that much tyranny lurks in this favorite democratic tenet, not half as democratic, however, as Mr. Adams's amendment. Wrongs and outrages the most unmerciful, have been committed by majorities. It may even happen where the forms of law are maintained; but what shall be said when the majority resolves itself into a mob? When rivers of innocent blood may (as they have) run from city gates. The tyranny of majorities is irresponsible, without redress, and without punishment, except in the ultimate iron grasp of "the higher law."

Mr. Adams's view, so much larger than the common one, may, with a strong probability, be traced to the mother. In her letters to him, she insists again and again upon the duty of universal kindness and benevolence. Patriot as she was, she pitied the Refugees. She said to him,

"Man is bound to the performance of certain duties, all which tend to the happiness and welfare of society, and are comprised in one short sentence expressive of universal benevolence: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' [332

"Remember more, the Universal Cause
Acts not by partial, but by general laws;
And makes what happiness we justly call,
Subsist, not in the good of one, but ALL.'"

In other letters she illustrated observations in the same spirit by these quotations:

"Shall I determine where his frowns shall fall,
And fence my grotto from the lot of ALL?"

"Prompt at every call,
Can watch and weep and pray and feel for ALL.

One evening, at his house in F street in Washington, he spoke of Judge Parsons, of his depth and subtlety, and the conciseness of his language. "Soon after I entered his office he said to us students—'Lord Bacon observes that "reading makes a full man, conversation a ready man, writing a correct man." Young gentlemen, my advice to you is, that you study to be full, ready and correct.' I thought," said Mr. Adams, "that I never heard good advice so well conveyed."

He was asked by the writer whether he had ever received any acknowledgment of his services, any mark of gratitude from the colored people of the District? "None," said he—"except that I now and then hear, *in a low tone*, a hearty GOD BLESS YOU! That is enough."

It was enough; enough for recompense and for justification, since we are in the sad pass that justification is needed—since

[333

"Virtue itself of Vice must pardon beg,
And pray for leave to do him good."

So then, in this Republic there are millions of human hearts, which are not permitted to love a benefactor, and dare not utter for him an invocation, kindred to their devotion to God, except "in a low tone!"

When in 1846 Mr. Adams was struck the first time with palsy, he was visited by Charles Sumner, who sat much by his bedside. As he became better, he said one day to his visitor: "You will enter public life; you do not want it, but you will be drawn into the current, in spite of yourself. Now I have a word of advice to give you. *Never accept a present.* While I was in Russia, the Minister of the Interior, an old man, whose conscience became more active as his bodily powers failed, grew uneasy on account of the presents he had received. He calculated the value of them, and paid it all over to the Imperial treasury. This put me to thinking upon the subject, and I then made a resolution never to accept a present while I remained in the public service; and I never have, unless it was some trifling token, as a hat or cane."

A neighboring clergyman, to whom this conversation was related, exclaimed—"A hat! That cannot be, for he never had any but an old one." It was a tradition in Cambridge that Mr. Adams, while Professor in the University, was noted for indifference to personal appearance, and his well-worn hat was particularly remembered.

In the relation of husband Mr. Adams showed the same fidelity and devotedness which characterized him in every other. He was united to a woman whose virtues and accomplishments blessed and adorned his home. In a letter written shortly after his noble vindication of the character of woman, and the propriety and utility of [334 their intervention in public affairs, he said:

"Had I not, by the dispensation of Providence, been blessed beyond the ordinary lot of humanity in all the domestic relations of life, as a son, a brother, and a husband, I should still have thought myself bound to vindicate the social rights and the personal honor of the petitioners, who had confided to me the honorable trust of presenting the expression of their wishes to the legislative councils of the nation. But that this sense of imperious duty was quickened within my bosom by the affectionate estimate of the female character impressed upon my heart and mind by the virtues of the individual woman, with whom it has been my lot to pass in these intimate relations my days upon earth, I have no doubt."

In 1840 he had a severe fall, striking his head against the corner of an iron rail, which inflicted a heavy contusion on his forehead, and rendered him for some time insensible. His left shoulder was likewise dislocated. This occurred at the House of Representatives after adjournment. Fortunately several members were within call, and gave him the most tender and assiduous assistance. He was carried to the lodgings of one of them, and a physician called. With the united strength of four men, it took more than an hour to reduce the dislocation. "Still," says a witness of the scene, "Mr. Adams uttered not a murmur, though the great drops of sweat which rolled down his furrowed cheeks, or stood upon his brow, told but too well the agony he suffered." At his request he was immediately conveyed to his house; and the next morning, to the astonishment of every one, he was found in his seat as usual. He was accustomed to be the first to enter the [335 House and the last to leave it. Mr. Everett tells us that he had his seat by the side of the veteran, and that he should not have been more surprised to miss one of the marble pillars from the hall than Mr. Adams.

That this painful accident did not impair the vigor of his mind is evident from the fact that he subsequently argued the Amistad case, and sustained the fierce contest of three days on the expulsion resolution in the House. It was three years later also that he made the journey for the benefit of his health, which turned out an improvised and continuous ovation. He had designed merely to visit Lebanon Springs. He was so much pleased with his journey thus far into the State of New-York, that he concluded to prolong it to Quebec, Montreal, and Niagara Falls, and return to Massachusetts through the length of the empire State. This return was signalized by attentions and homage on the part of the people so spontaneous and unanimous, that nothing which has occurred since the progress of La Fayette, has equalled it. "Public greetings, processions, celebrations, met and accompanied every step of his journey." Addresses by eminent men, and acclamations of men, women, and children, who thronged the way, bore witness of the deep hold which the man, without accessories of office and pageantry of state, had of their hearts. Of this excursion he said himself towards the

close of it, "I have not come alone, the whole people of the State of New-York have been my companions." In the autumn of the same year he went to Cincinnati to assist in laying the foundation of an observatory. This journey was attended by similar demonstrations. At a cordial greeting given him at Maysville, Kentucky, after [336
an emphatic testimony to the integrity of Mr. Clay, he made that renewed and solemn denial of the charges of "bargain and corruption."

He suffered a stroke of paralysis in November, 1846, but recovered, and took his seat at the ensuing session of Congress. He regarded this as equivalent to a final summons, and made no subsequent entry in his faithful diary except under the title of "posthumous." After this he spoke little in the House.

In November, 1847, he left his home in Quincy for the last time. On the twentieth of February he passed his last evening at his house in Washington. He retired to his library at nine o'clock, where his wife read to him a sermon by Bishop Wilberforce on Time. The next morning he rose early and occupied himself with his pen as he was wont. With more than usual spryness and alacrity he ascended the stairs of the Capitol. In the House a resolution for awarding thanks and gold medals to several officers concerned in the Mexican war was taken up. Mr. Adams uttered his emphatic *No!* on two or three preliminary questions. When the final question was about to be put, and while he was in the act of rising, as it was supposed, to address the House, he sunk down. He was borne to the speaker's room. He revived so far as to inquire for his wife, who was present. He seemed desirous of uttering thanks. The only distinct words he articulated were, "This is the end of earth. I am content." He lingered until the evening of the twenty-third, and then expired.

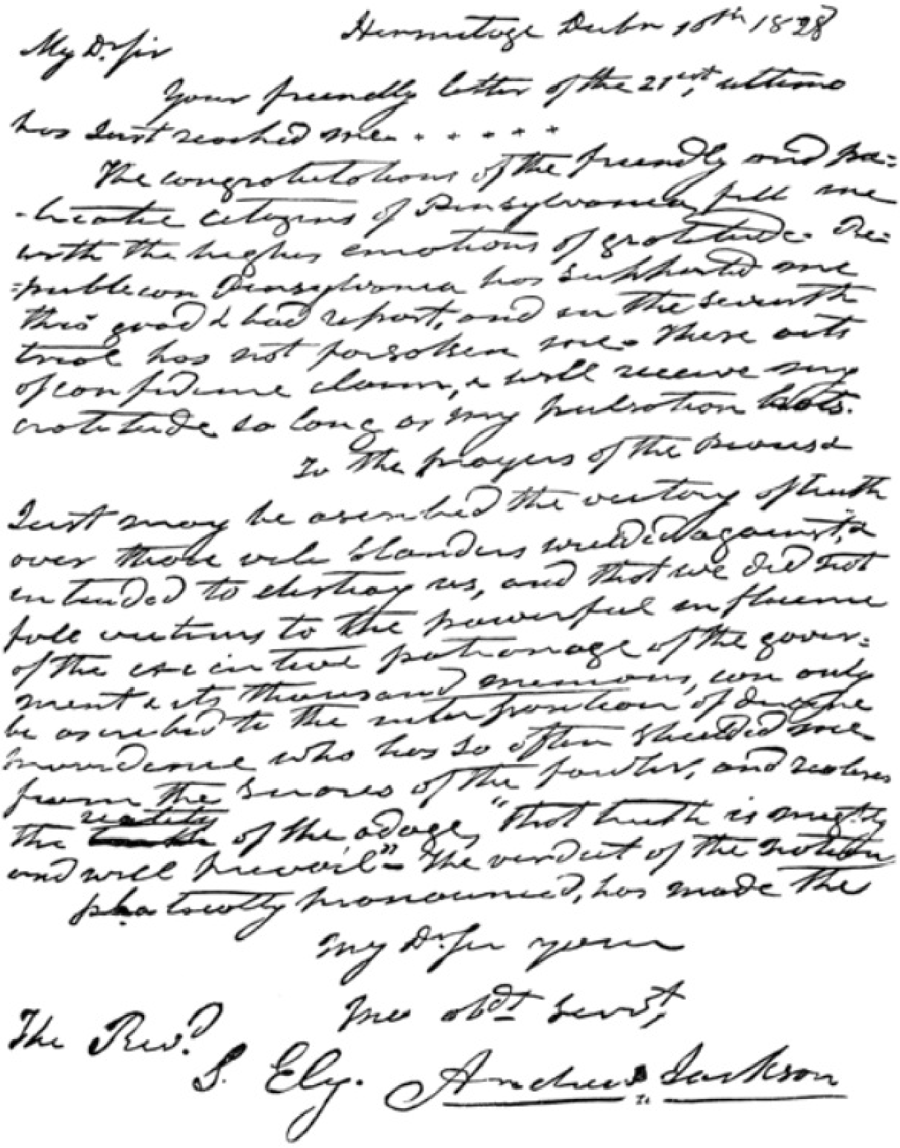
Thus he fell at his post in the eighty-first year of his age, the age of Plato. With the exception of Phocion there is no active public life continued on the great arena, with equal vigor and usefulness, to so advanced an age. Lord Mansfield retired at eighty-three; but the quiet routine of a judicial station is not as trying as the varied [337
and boisterous contentions of a political and legislative assembly. Ripe as he was for heaven; he was still greatly needed upon earth. His services would have been of inestimable importance in disposing of the perilous questions, not yet definitively settled, which arose out of unhallowed war and conquest.

There is not much satisfaction in dwelling upon the general effusions of eloquence, or the pageantry which ensued. A single glance of guileless love from the men, women and children, who came forth from their smiling villages to greet the virtuous old statesman in his unpretending journeys, was worth the whole of it. The hearty tribute of Mr. Benton, so long a denouncer, has an exceptional value, the greater because he had made honorable amends to the departed during his life. That he was sincerely and deeply mourned by the nation, it would be a libel on the nation to doubt. His remains rested appropriately in Independence and Faneuil Halls on the way to their final resting place, the tomb he had made for those of his venerated parents. There he was laid by his neighbors and townsmen, sorrowing for the friend and the MAN. His monument is to stand on the other side of the pulpit.

Happy place which hallows such memories, and holds up such EXAMPLES.

Jackson. [339

[340



Hermitage Decbr 10th 1828

My D. Sir

Your friendly letter of the 21st ultimo has just reached me. * * * *

The congratulations of the friendly and [illegible] citizens of Pennsylvania fill me with the highest emotions of gratitude. Republican Pennsylvania has supported me thro good & bad report, and in the severest trial has not forsaken me. These acts of confidence claim, & will receive my gratitude so long as my pulsation beats.

To the prayers of the pious just may be ascribed the victory of truth over those vile slanders waged against, & intended to destroy us, and that we did not fall victims to the powerful influence of the executive patronage of the government & its thousand minions, can only be ascribed to the interposition of divine providence who has so often shielded me from the snares of the fowler, and realises the reality of the adage "that truth is mighty and will prevail". The verdict of the nation so emphatically pronounced, has made the

My D. Sir yours

[illegible] obt. servt.

The Revd. S. Ely. Andrew Jackson

[341

Hermitage, Residence of Jackson.

JACKSON.

The events of Jackson's life, even in their chronological order, dispose themselves into a number of combinations, which a skilful pen, guided by the hand of a poet, might easily work up into a series of impressive and contrasted pictures. We have not the ability, had we the space here, to undertake this labor, but we see no reason why we should not present some outlines of it, for the benefit of future more competent artists.

In such a series, we should first see the flaxen-haired, blue-eyed son of Irish emigrants, driven from their home by a sense of British oppression, opening his young eyes in South Carolina, amid the stormy scenes of our Revolution. Around him, his friends and neighbors are training for the battle, and preparing to defend [342 their homes from an invading foe; his eldest brother Hugh, is brought back dead from the fatigues of active service; the old Waxhaw meeting-house, a temporary hospital, through which he wanders, is crowded with the wounded and dying, whose condition moves him to tears, and fills him with melancholy impressions of the horrors of war, coupled with a deepening sense of English cruelty and oppression, of which he had before heard in the tales of his mother and her kindred about the old country from which they had fled; while, finally, he himself, but little more than thirteen years of age, in company with a brother Robert, takes up arms, is made a prisoner, suffers severely from wounds and the smallpox of the jail, loses first his brother by that disease, and then his mother by a fever caught on board a prison-ship, whither she had gone to nurse some captive friends, and is thus left alone in the world, the only one of all his family spared by the enemy.

We should next see the friendless, portionless orphan wending his solitary way through the immense forests of the Far West, (now the State of Tennessee), where the settlements were hundreds of miles from each other, while every tree and rock sheltered an enemy in the shape of some grisly animal, or the person of a more savage Indian. But he succeeds in crossing the mountains, he reaches the infant villages on the Cumberland River, he studies and practises the rude law of those distant regions, takes part in all the wild vicissitudes of frontier life, repels the red man, fights duels with the white, encounters in deadly feuds the turbulent spirits of a half-barbarous society, administers justice in almost extemporized courts, helps to frame a regular State constitution, marries a wife as chivalric, noble, and fearless as himself, and at last, when society is reduced to [343 some order, is chosen a representative of the backwoods in the Congress at Washington.

Arrived at the seat of government, a tall, thin, uncouth figure, with no words to express himself in, and apparently without ambition,—he yet shows himself, with all his wild western coarseness, a man of insight and decision. He made no speeches, he drew up no reports, he created no sensation in the committee-room, or the lobbies,—he was not at all known, as a leader or a prominent individual, but he was one of the twelve democrats of the House, who dared to oppose returning an answer to Washington's last address, when the fame and the personal influence of that exalted man were almost omnipotent. He doubtless estimated the services and the character of Washington as highly as any member, but the measures of the administration his judgment did not approve, and he voted as he thought—a silent uncultivated representative,—odd in his dress and look, but with grit in him, not appalled even by the stupendous greatness of Washington! On the other hand, he saw in Jefferson a man for the times; became his friend, voted for him, and helped his State to vote for him as the second President.

In the next phases of his life we discover Jackson, as the dignified and impartial judge, asserting the law in the face of a powerful combination of interested opponents; as the retired and prosperous planter, gathering together a large estate, which he surrounds with the comforts and luxuries of a refined existence, but sells at once when a friend's misfortunes involves him in debt, and retires to a primitive log cabin to commence his fortunes once more; as an Indian fighter achieving amid hardships of all kinds—the want of funds, the [344 inclemency of the season, the ravages of disease, the unskilfulness of superiors, the insubordination of troops —a series of brilliant victories that made his name a terror to the Creeks and all their confederates. His campaign in the Floridas broke the power of the Indians, secretly in league with the British, forced them into a treaty, and wrested Pensacola from the possession of the Spanish governor, who had basely violated his neutrality, and who, when he wished to negotiate, was answered by Jackson, "My diplomacy is in the mouths of my cannon."

But a different foe and a wider theatre awaited the display of his military genius at New Orleans. Worn down with sickness and exhaustion, with raw and undisciplined troops—many of them the mere rabble of the wharves, and some of them buccaneers from neighboring islands—scantily supplied with arms and ammunition, in the midst of a mixed population of different tongues, where attachment to his cause was doubtful, continually agitated by gloomy forebodings of the result, though outwardly serene, he was surrounded by the flower of the British army, led by its most brave and accomplished generals. The attack commenced: from his breastwork of cotton bales his unerring rifles poured a continuous flame of fire. The enemy quailed: its leaders were killed or wounded; and the greatest victory of the war crowned the exertions of Jackson as the greatest military genius of his time. A universal glow of joy and gratitude spread from the liberated city over the whole land; *Te deums* were sung in the churches; children robed in white strewed his way with flowers; the nation jubilantly uttered its admiration and gratitude. It was thus the desolated orphan of the Carolinas avenged the wrongs of his family, and asserted the rights of his country, to the lasting [345 dishonor of Great Britain.

Years pass on, and we see the successful General the President of the People, engaged once more in a fearful struggle; this time not against a foreign foe, but with an internal enemy of vast power and tremendous means of mischief. He is fighting the monster bank—another St. George gallantly charging another dragon—and, as usual, comes out of the contest victorious. The innumerable army of money-changers, wielding a power as formidable, though unseen, as that of an absolute monarch, is routed amid a horrible clangor of metal and rancorous hisses. The great true man, sustained by an honest people, was greater than the power of money. He wrought the salvation of his country from a hideous corruption—from bankruptcy, disgrace, and long years of political subjection. His near posterity has recognized the service, and placed him among the most illustrious of statesmen.

Finally, we see the patriot soldier and civilian, a bowed and white-haired old man, in his secluded Hermitage, which is situated near the scenes of his earliest labors and triumphs. The companion of his love, who had shared in his struggles, but was not permitted to share in his latest glory, is with him no more; children they had none; and he moves tranquilly towards his grave alone. No! not alone: for travellers from all lands visit his retreat, to gaze upon his venerable form; his countrymen throng his doors, to gather wisdom from his sayings, —his friends and neighbors almost worship him, and an adopted family bask in the benignant goodness of his

noble heart—his great mind, too, "beaming in mildest mellow splendor, beaming if also trembling, like a great sun on the verge of the horizon, near now to its long farewell." Thus, the orphan, the emigrant, the Indian [346
fighter, the conquering General, the popular President, the venerated Patriarch, goes to the repose of the humble Christian.

What were the sources of Jackson's pre-eminent greatness, of his invariable success, of his resistless personal influence, of his deep hold upon the minds of his fellows? He was no orator, he was no writer, he had in fact no faculty of expression, he was unsustained by wealth, he never courted the multitude, he relied upon no external assistances. What he did, he achieved for himself, without aid, directly, and by the mere force of his own nature. Neither education, nor family, nor the accidents of fortune, nor the friendship of the powerful, helped to raise him aloft, and push him forward in his career. The secret of his elevation, then, was this,—that he saw the Right and loved it, and was never afraid to pursue it, against all the allurements of personal ambition, and all the hostility of the banded sons of error. There have been many men of a larger reach and compass of mind, and some of a keener insight and sagacity, but none, of a more stern, inflexible, self-sacrificing devotion to what they esteemed to be true. He carried his life in his hand, ready to be thrown away at the call of honor or patriotism, and it was this unswerving integrity, which commended him so strongly to the affections of the masses. Whatever men may be in themselves, their hearts are always prone to do homage to honesty. They love those whom they can trust, or only hate them, because their justice and truth stands in the way of some cherished, selfish object.

Jackson's will was imperious; the report does not follow the flash more rapidly than his execution of a deed followed the conception of it; or rather his thought and his act were an instinctive, instantaneous, inseparable [347
unity. Like a good marksman, as soon as he saw his object he fired, and generally with effect. This impulsive decision gave rise to some over-hasty and precipitate movements, but, in the main, was correct. What politicians, therefore, could only accomplish if at all by a slow and cunning process of intrigue, what diplomatists reached by long-winded negotiations, he marched to, without indirection, with his eye always on the point, and his whole body following the lead of the eye. We do not mean that he was utterly without subtlety,—for some subtlety is necessary to the most ordinary prudence, and is particularly necessary to the forecast of generalship,—but simply that he never dissimulated, never assumed disguise, never carried water on both shoulders, as the homely phrase has it, and never went around an obstacle, when he could level it, or push it out of the way. The foxy or feline element was small in a nature, into which so much magnanimity, supposed to be lionlike, entered.

The popular opinion of Jackson was, that he was an exceedingly irascible person, his mislikers even painting him as liable to fits of roaring and raving anger, when he flung about him like a maniac; but his intimate friends, who occupied the same house with him for years, inform us that they never experienced any of these strong gusts; that, though sensitive to opposition, impatient of restraint, quick to resent injuries, and impetuous in his advance towards his ends, he was yet gentle, kindly, placable, faithful to friends and forgiving to foes, a lover of children and women, only unrelenting when his quarry happened to be meanness, fraud or tyranny. His affections were particularly tender and strong; he could scarcely be made to believe any [348
thing to the disadvantage of those he had once liked, while his reconciliations with those he had disliked, once effected, were frank, cordial and sincere. Colonel Benton, who was once an enemy, but afterwards a friend of many years, gives us this sketch of some of his leading characteristics:

"He was a careful farmer, overlooking every thing himself, seeing that the fields and fences were in good order, the stock well attended, and the slaves comfortably provided for. His house was the seat of hospitality, the resort of friends and acquaintances, and of all strangers visiting the State—and the more agreeable to all from the perfect conformity of Mrs. Jackson's disposition to his own. But he needed some excitement beyond that which a farming life could afford, and found it for some years in the animating sports of the turf. He loved fine horses—racers of speed and bottom—owned several—and contested the four mile heats with the best that could be bred, or bought, or brought to the State, and for large sums. That is the nearest to gaming that I ever knew him to come. Cards and the cock-pit have been imputed to him, but most erroneously. I never saw him engaged in either. Duels were usual in that time, and he had his share of them, with their unpleasant concomitants; but they passed away with all their animosities, and he has often been seen zealously pressing the advancement of those, against whom he had but lately been arrayed in deadly hostility. His temper was placable, as well as irascible, and his reconciliations were cordial and sincere. Of that, my own case was a signal instance. There was a deep-seated vein of piety in him, unaffectedly showing itself in his reverence for divine worship, respect for the ministers of the Gospel, their hospitable reception in his house, and constant [349
encouragement of all the pious tendencies of Mrs. Jackson. And when they both afterwards became members of a church, it was the natural and regular result of their early and cherished feelings. He was gentle in his house, and alive to the tenderest emotions; and of this I can give an instance, greatly in contrast with his supposed character, and worth more than a long discourse in showing what that character really was. I arrived at his house one wet, chilly evening in February, and came upon him in the twilight, sitting alone before the fire, a lamb and a child between his knees. He started a little, called a servant to remove the two innocents to another room, and explained to me how it was. The child had cried because the lamb was out in the cold, and begged him to bring it in—which he had done to please the child, his adopted son, then not two years old. The ferocious man does not do that! and though Jackson had his passions and his violences, they were for men and enemies—those who stood up against him—and not for women and children, or the weak and helpless, for all of whom his feelings were those of protection and support. His hospitality was active as well as cordial, embracing the worthy in every walk of life, and seeking out deserving objects to receive it, no matter how obscure. Of this I learned a characteristic instance, in relation to the son of the famous Daniel Boone. The young man had come to Nashville on his father's business, to be detained some weeks, and had his lodgings at a small tavern, towards the lower part of the town. General Jackson heard of it—sought him out—found him, took him home to remain as long as his business detained him in the country, saying, 'Your father's dog should not stay in a tavern while I have a house.' This was heart! and I had it from the young man himself, [350
long after, when he was a State Senator of the General Assembly of Missouri, and as such nominated me for

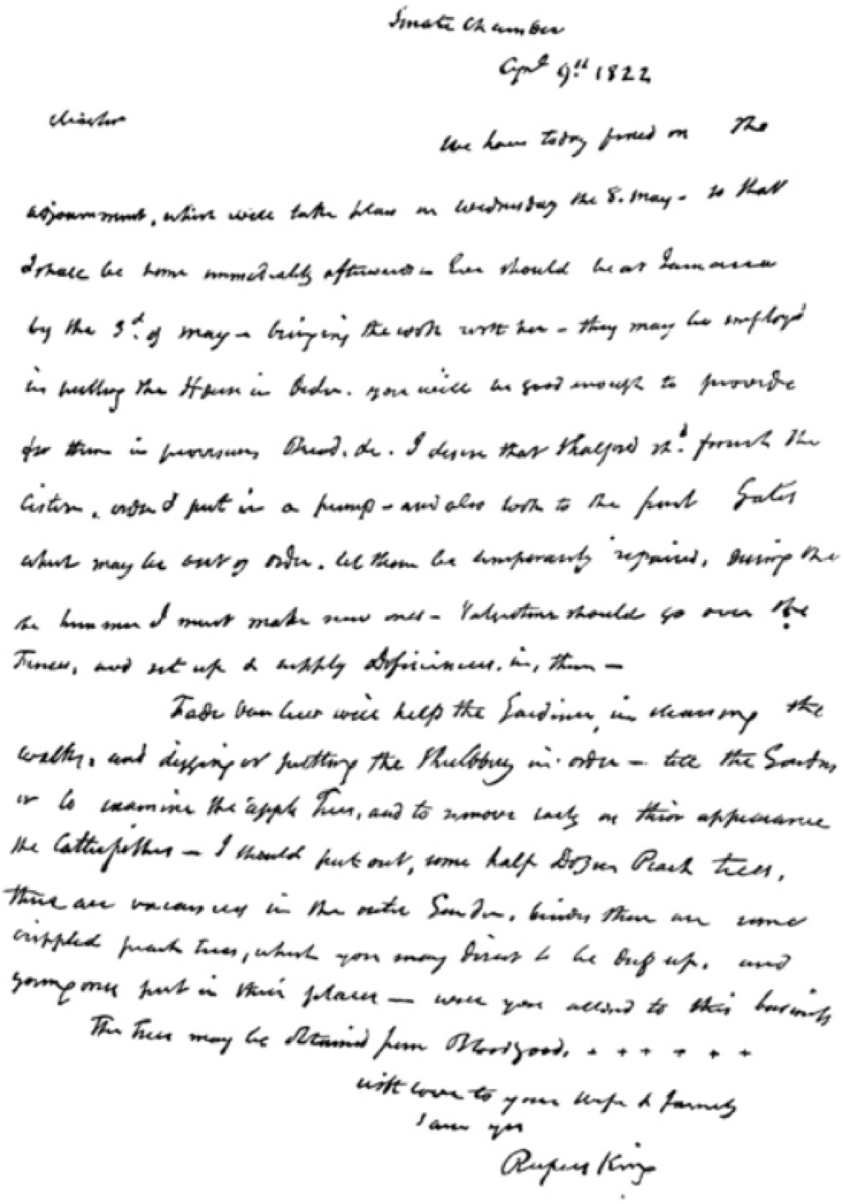
the United States Senate at my first election in 1820—his name was Benton Boone, and so named after my father. Abhorrence of debt, public and private, dislike of banks and love of hard money—love of justice, and love of country, were ruling passions with Jackson; and of these he gave constant evidences in all the situations of his life."

The same distinguished authority has drawn a picture of Jackson's retirement from the Presidency, with which we close our remarks:

"The second and last term of General Jackson's presidency expired on the 3d of March, 1837. The next day at twelve he appeared with his successor, Mr. Van Buren, on the elevated and spacious eastern portico of the capitol, as one of the citizens who came to witness the inauguration of the new President, and no way distinguished from them, except by his place on the left hand of the President-elect. The day was beautiful: clear sky, balmy vernal sun, tranquil atmosphere; and the assemblage immense. On foot, in the large area in front of the steps, orderly without troops, and closely wedged together, their faces turned to the portico—presenting to the beholders from all the eastern windows the appearance of a field paved with human faces—this vast crowd remained riveted to their places, and profoundly silent, until the ceremony of inauguration was over. It was the stillness and silence of reverence and affection, and there was no room for mistake as to whom this mute and impressive homage was rendered. For once the rising was eclipsed by the setting sun. [351
Though disrobed of power, and retiring to the shades of private life, it was evident that the great ex-President was the absorbing object of this intense regard. At the moment that he began to descend the broad steps of the portico to take his seat in the open carriage that was to bear him away, the deep, repressed feeling of the dense mass broke forth, acclamations and cheers bursting from the heart and filling the air, such as power never commanded, nor man in power ever received. It was the affection, gratitude, and admiration of the living age, saluting for the last time a great man. It was the acclaim of posterity breaking from the bosoms of contemporaries. It was the anticipation of futurity—unpurchasable homage to the hero-patriot who, all his life, and in all the circumstances of his life—in peace and in war, and glorious in each—had been the friend of his country, devoted to her, regardless of self. Uncovered and bowing, with a look of unaffected humility and thankfulness, he acknowledged in mute signs his deep sensibility to this affecting overflow of popular feeling. I was looking down from a side window, and felt an emotion which had never passed through me before. I had seen the inauguration of many presidents, and their going away, and their days of state, vested with power, and surrounded by the splendors of the first magistracy of a great republic; but they all appeared to me as pageants, brief to the view, unreal to the touch, and soon to vanish. But here there seemed to be a reality—a real scene—a man and the people: he, laying down power and withdrawing through the portals of everlasting fame; they, sounding in his ears the everlasting plaudits of unborn generations. Two days after I saw the [352
patriot ex-President in the car which bore him off to his desired seclusion: I saw him depart with that look of quiet enjoyment which bespoke the inward satisfaction of the soul at exchanging the cares of office for the repose of home.

King. [353

[354



Senate Chamber
Apl 9th 1822

Charles

We have today fixed on the adjournment, which will take place on Wednesday the 8. May - so that I shall be home immediately afterwards - Lee should be at Jamaica by the 3d. of May - bringing the work with her - they may be employed in putting the House in Order. you will be good enough to provide for them in provisions Bread, &c. I desire that Shalford sd. finish the Cistern, and put in a pump - and also look to the front Gates which may be out of order. let them be temporarily repaired, during the summer I must make new ones - Valentine should go over the Fences, and set up & supply deficiencies in them -

Jade Van Liew will help the Gardiner, in cleaning the walks, and digging or putting the Shrubbery in order - tell the Gardiner to examine the apple Trees, and to remove early on their appearance the Catterpillars - I should put out, some half Dozen Peach trees, there are vacancies in the outer Garden, besides there are some crippled peach trees, which you may direct to be dug up, and young ones put in their places - will you attend to this business

The trees may be obtained from Mootgood, + + + + + +

with love to your wife & family
I am yr
Rufus King

[355

Rufus King's House, Near Jamaica, L.I.

RUFUS KING.

When in the year 1803, after having served his native country with distinguished ability for more than seven years as Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States at the Court of St. James, Rufus King returned to New-York, the city of his adoption, he found his political friends in a hopeless minority, and the rule of party

absolute, exclusive, and even vindictive. Mr. King had trained himself from early life to the duties of a Statesman, and to that end neglected no study, and above all, no self-discipline that might qualify him for the career he desired to pursue. After serving several years as a Delegate from Massachusetts in the Continental [356
Congress (from 1785 to 1789), and having, as a member of the Convention called for the purpose, been actively instrumental in forming the Constitution of the United States, Mr. King became in 1788 a resident of the city of New-York, where he had married two years before, MARY, the only child of JOHN ALSOP, a retired merchant of that city. Mr. King was much known in New-York, for the Continental Congress during his term of service held its sessions there; and the character he had established for himself on the score of talent and capacity, may be estimated by the fact, that he, with General Schuyler for a colleague, was selected as one of the first Senators of the United States from the State of New-York, under the new constitution.

His services proved so acceptable, that on the expiration of his first term, in 1795, he was re-elected, and it was in the second year of his second term—in 1796, that he was appointed by Washington Minister to England.

In that post Mr. King continued throughout the residue of General Washington's administration, through the whole of that of John Adams, and, at the request of President Jefferson, through two years of his administration, when, having accomplished the negotiations he had in hand, Mr. King asked to be, and was, recalled.

During this long residence abroad, remote from the scene of the angry partisan politics which disturbed the close of Washington's term, and the whole of that of Mr. Adams, and which resulted, in 1800, in the entire overthrow of the old Federal party, and the success of Mr. Jefferson and the Republican party—Mr. King had devoted his labors, his time and his talents, to the service of his whole country, and was little prepared, [357
therefore, either by taste or temper, for participation in the angry broils which, on his return home, he found prevailing throughout the Union. Adhering, as he did to the end, to the political principles of his early life, he never doubted, nor saw occasion to change the faith which had made him a Federalist, when the name included the Telfairs and Habershams of Georgia, the Pinkneys and Rutledges of South Carolina, the Davieses and the Sitgreaves of North Carolina, the Washingtons and the Marshalls of Virginia, the Carrolls and the Hindmans of Maryland, the Bayards and the Kearnys of Delaware, the Tilghmans and the Binghams of Pennsylvania, the Patersons and the Stocktons of New Jersey, the Jays and Hamiltons of New-York, the Woolcots and the Johnsons of Connecticut, the Ellerys and Howells of Rhode Island, the Adamses and Otises of Massachusetts, the Smiths and Gilmans of New Hampshire, the Tichenors and Chittendens of Vermont. But that faith was now in "dim eclipse." The popular air was in another direction, and Mr. King was of too lofty a character to trim his bark to the veering breeze. Having acquired, or rather confirmed by his residence in England (where country life is better understood and more thoroughly enjoyed, probably, than any where else) a decided taste for the country Mr. King soon determined to abandon the city, where—having no professional pursuits nor stated occupation—he found few attractions, and make his permanent abode in the country. After looking at many points on the Hudson River and on the Sound, he finally established himself at the village of Jamaica, in Queens county, Long Island, distant about twelve miles from the city of New-York. In comparison with some of the places which he had examined on the waters of the Sound and the North River, [358
Jamaica offered few inducements of scenery or landscape. But it did offer what to him, and especially to his wife, were all-important considerations—proverbial healthiness, and ready access to church, schools and physicians. Mrs. King's health was already drooping, and from the quiet, regular life of the country, its pure air, and the outdoor exercise to which it leads, and of which she was so fond, the hope was indulged that she might be completely restored. The property purchased by Mr. King, consisting of a well-built, comfortable and roomy house, with about ninety acres of land, is situated a little to the west of the village, on the great high road of the Island from west to east. It is a dead level, of a warm and quick soil, readily fertilized, the ridge or back-bone of Long Island bounding it on the north. He removed his family thither in the spring of 1806, and at once commenced those alterations and improvements which have made it what it now is—a very pretty and attractive residence for any one who finds delight in fine trees, varied shrubbery, a well cultivated soil, and the comforts of a large house, every part of which is meant for use, and none of it for show.

When Mr. King took possession of his purchase, the house, grounds and fences were after the uniform pattern, then almost universal in the region. He soon changed and greatly improved all. The house, fronting south, was in a bare field, about one hundred yards back from the road, and separated from it by a white picket fence. A narrow gravel path led in a straight line from a little gate, down to the door of the house, while further to the east was the gate, through which, on another straight line, running down by the side of the house, was the entrance for carriages and horses. Two horse-chestnut trees, one east and the other west of [359
the house, and about thirty feet from it, were, with the exception of some old apple trees, the only trees on the place; and the blazing sun of summer, and the abundant dust of the high road at all seasons, had unobstructed sweep over the house and lawn, or what was to become a lawn. Not a shrub or bush was interposed between the house and the fence, to secure any thing like privacy to the abode. On the contrary, it seemed to be the taste of the day to leave every thing open to the gaze of the wayfarers, and in turn to expose those wayfarers, their equipages, and their doings, to the inspection of the inmates of all roadside houses. Mr. King, who had cultivated the study of Botany, and was a genuine admirer of trees, soon went to work in embellishing the place which was to be his future home, and in this he was warmly seconded by the taste of Mrs. King. The first step was, to change the approach to the house, from a straight to a circular walk, broad and well rolled; then to plant out the high road. Accordingly, a belt of from twenty to thirty feet in width along the whole front of the ground, was prepared by proper digging and manuring, for the reception of shrubs and trees; and time and money were liberally applied, but with wise discrimination as to the adaptedness to the soil and climate, of the plants to be introduced. From the State of New Hampshire, through the careful agency of his friend, Mr. Sheaffe of Portsmouth, who was vigilant to have them properly procured, packed, and expedited to Jamaica, Mr. King received the pines and firs which, now very large trees, adorn the grounds. They were, it is believed, among the first, if not the first trees of this kind introduced into this part of Long Island, and none of the sort were then to be found in the nurseries at Flushing. Some acorns planted near the house in 1810, are [360

now large trees. Mr. King indeed planted, as the Romans builded—"for posterity and the immortal gods," for to his eldest son, now occupying the residence of his father, he said, in putting into the ground an acorn of the red oak—"If you live to be as old as I am, you will see here a large tree;" and, in fact, a noble, lofty, well-proportioned red oak now flourishes there, to delight with its wide-branching beauty, its grateful shade, and more grateful associations, not the children only, but the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of him who planted the acorn. Mr. King possessed, in a remarkable degree, all the tastes that fit one for the enjoyment of country life. He had a large and well selected library, particularly rich in its books relating to the Americas, and this library remains unbroken. With these true, tried, unwavering and unwearying friends—and such good books are—Mr. King spent much time; varying, however, his studious labors with outdoor exercise on horseback, to which he was much addicted; and in judgment of the qualities, as well as in the graceful management of a horse, he was rarely excelled. He loved, too, his gun and dog; was rather a keen sportsman, and good shot; though often, when the pointer was hot upon the game, his master's attention would be diverted by some rare or beautiful shrub or flower upon which his eye happened to light, and of which—if not the proper season for transplanting it into his border—he would carefully mark the place and make a memorandum thereof, so as to be enabled to return at the fitting time, and secure his prize. In this way he had collected in his shrubberies all the pretty flowering shrubs and plants indigenous to the neighborhood, adding thereto such strangers as he could naturalize; so that during a visit made to him many years after he [361
began his plantation, by the *Abbé Corréa*, then Minister from Portugal to this Government, but even more distinguished as a man of letters, and particularly as a botanist—the learned Abbé said he could almost study the *Flowers* and the *Trees* of the central and eastern portion of the United States in these grounds. Mr. King loved, too, the song of birds—and his taste was rewarded by the number of them which took shelter in this secure and shady plantation, where no guns were ever allowed to be fired, nor trap nor snare to be set. The garden and the farm also came in for their share of interest and attention; and nowhere did care judiciously bestowed, and expenditure wisely ordered, produce more sure or gratifying results.

About the year 1817 Mr. King turned his attention to the importation of some cattle of the North Devon breed. In the preceding year he received as a token of a friendship contracted during his residence in England, from Mr. Coke of Holkham (the great English Commoner, and warm friend of America in the revolutionary contest, and always interested in whatever might promote the welfare of the people in whose early struggle for their rights he had sympathized), two beautiful cows of the North Devon breed, as being particularly adapted, as Mr. Coke supposed, to the light, level soil of the southern slope of Long Island,—similar in these qualities to that of his own magnificent domain at Holkham, in Norfolk. Mr. King was so much pleased with these animals, so beautiful in themselves, of a uniform mahogany color, with no white marks, finely limbed almost as deer, with regularly curved and tapering horns, of extreme docility, and easily kept, that in 1817 he imported [362
several more, and was thus enabled to preserve the race in purity, and measurably to supply the demand for the pure stock, which is now widely scattered throughout the country.

While thus enjoying with the real zest of a cultivated mind, and of a disposition keenly alive to the aspect, the voices and the beauties of nature, the pleasures of a country life; Mr. King was not unmindful of, nor indifferent to the great and interesting contemporaneous drama of politics, which, although mainly played out in Europe, swept our republic too at last into its vortex. His early training, early instruction, and early and eminent successes in public life, made it alike unsuitable and impossible for him to withdraw himself wholly from the scene. And accordingly, although never in the whole course of his life seeking office, or putting himself forward, Mr. King was frequently appealed to, in his retirement, by political friends, sometimes consulted by political opponents,—while he was in the habit of receiving with elegant and cordial hospitality at Jamaica, distinguished visitors, both of his own country, and from abroad. Among such visitors was the Abbé Corréa, as already stated, about the period when, as Secretary of State to President Monroe, John Quincy Adams was asserting in his correspondence with the English Minister the right of the United States to the free navigation of the St. Lawrence. After discussing with Mr King in the library, the points of international law brought up by this claim,—in the course of which, somewhat to the surprise of the Abbé, Mr. King evinced entire familiarity with the analogous points brought up and settled, as regards European rivers, in the then recently held Congress of Vienna; and maintained the position, that what was law between states [363
in Europe conterminous to great navigable streams, must be law here; and that what Great Britain had assented to, and had joined in requiring others to assent to, in respect to the Rhine, she must assent to in respect to the St. Lawrence,—the Abbé proposed a walk in the grounds, and once there, laying aside politics, diplomacy, and international law, the two statesmen were soon very deep in botany and the system of Linnæus, and agriculture, and in all the cognate questions of climate, soils, manures, &c., and seemed quite as eager in these pursuits, as in those grave and more solemn questions of state policy, which occupy, but do not, in the same degree, innocently and surely reward the attention and interest of public men. It was on occasion of this visit, that the Abbé Corréa expressed his gratification at finding in the plantation of Mr. King so large a collection of the plants and shrubs indigenous to that part of our country,—a gratification enhanced, as he added, by the previous discussions in the library, in the course of which he had such demonstration of Mr. King's varied and comprehensive, yet minute knowledge of the great public questions which had agitated Europe, and of the more recent, as well as more ancient expositions of international law applicable thereto.

Previously to this period, however, Mr. King had been recalled to public life. At the commencement of the war of 1812 with Great Britain, Mr. King, though disapproving both of the time of declaring, and of the inefficiency in conducting, the war, and reposing little confidence either in the motives or the abilities of the administration, did nevertheless feel it his duty, the sword being drawn, to sustain, as best he might, the cause of his country. Among the first, and for a time most discouraging results of the war, was the stoppage of [364
specie payments by all the banks south of New England. The panic in New-York unavoidably was very great; and very much depended upon the course to be taken by its banks and its citizens, as to the effect to be produced upon the national cause and the national arm, by the suspension of payments. In this emergency, appealed to by his former fellow-citizens, Mr. King went to the city, and at the Tontine Coffee House, at a general meeting called to deliberate on the course to be taken by the community in regard to the banks, and in general in regard to the rights and duties alike, of creditors and debtors under the circumstances, he made

a speech to the assembled multitude, in which, after deploring the circumstances which had forced upon the banks the necessity of suspension, he went on to show that it was a common cause, in which all had a part, and where all had duties. That the extreme right of the bill-holder, if enforced to the uttermost against the banks, would aggravate the evil to the public, although possibly it might benefit a few individuals; while, on the other hand, good to all, and strength and confidence to the general cause, would result from a generous forbearance, and mutual understanding that, if the banks on their part would restrict themselves within the limits as to issues and credits recognized as safe previous to the suspension, the community at large on their part, might, and possibly would continue to receive and pass the bills of the banks as before, and as though redeemable in coin. He urged with great power and earnestness the duty of fellow-citizens to stand shoulder to shoulder in such an emergency,—when a foreign enemy was pressing upon them, and when, without entering into the motives or causes which led to the war, about which men differ,—all Americans should feel it [365
as their first and foremost obligation to stand by their country. The particular province of those he addressed was not so much to enlist in the armed service of the country, as to uphold its credit, and thus cherish the resources which would raise and reward armies; and if New-York should on this occasion be true to her duty—which also he plainly showed to be her highest interest—the clouds of the present would pass away, and her honor and her prosperity, with those of the nation of which she formed part and parcel, would be maintained and advanced. The effect of this address was decisive, and to an extent quite unprecedented in any commercial community under such circumstances; confidence was restored, and the course of business went on almost unruffled and undisturbed.

In 1813, Mr. King, after a lapse of seventeen years from his former service as a Senator of the United States, was again chosen by the Legislature of the State of New-York, as one of its Senators in Congress; and from the moment he resumed his seat in the Senate, he took leave, for the remainder of his life, of the undisturbed enjoyments of his rural abode; for a large portion of his time was necessarily spent at Washington, it being part of his notion of duty, never to be remiss in attendance upon, or in the discharge of, any trust committed to him. Still, his heart was among his plantations and his gardens, and even when absent, he kept up a constant correspondence with his son and his gardener, and always returned with fond zest to this quiet home.

In 1819, Mrs. King, whose health had been long declining, died, and was buried with all simplicity in the yard of the village church; where together they long had worshipped, and which stood on ground originally forming [366
part of Mr. King's property. At the time of her death, all the children had left the paternal roof, and settled in life with their own families around them; and solitude, therefore, embittered the loss to Mr. King of such a companion. And she was eminently fitted by similarity of tastes and acquirements, to share with her husband the cares and the pleasures of life, as well as its weightier duties. She was in an especial manner a lover of the country, and had cultivated the knowledge which lends additional charms to the beauties and the wonders of the vegetable creation. Over all these beauties, her death cast a pall; and although he repined not, it was easy to see how deep a sorrow overshadowed his remaining years. Yet he nerved himself to the discharge of his public duties with unabated zeal and fidelity; and when re-elected in 1820 to the Senate, was punctual as always at his post, and earnest as ever in fulfilling all its requirements. His own health, however, before so unshaken, began to fail; and at the closing session of 1825, Mr. King, in taking leave of the Senate, announced his purpose of retiring from public life; having then reached the age of seventy years, of which more than one half had been spent in the service of his country, from the period when he entered the Continental Congress in 1784, to that in which he left the Senate of the United States in 1825. But John Q. Adams, who had become President, pressed upon Mr. King the embassy to England. His enfeebled health and advanced age induced him at once to decline, but Mr. Adams urged him to refrain from any immediate decision, and to take the subject into consideration after he should return home, and then determine. Recalling with lively and pleasant [367
recollection the years of his former embassy to England, and hoping assuredly to be able—if finding there the same fair and friendly reception before extended to him—to benefit his country by the adjustment of some outstanding and long-standing points of controversy between the two nations; influenced too, in a great degree, by the opinion, of eminent physicians, that for maladies partaking of weakness, such as he was laboring under, a sea-voyage could hardly fail to be beneficial, Mr. King, rather in opposition to the wishes of his family, determined to accept the mission,—first stipulating, however, that his eldest son, John A. King, should accompany him as Secretary of Legation. It is proof of the strong desire of the then administration to avail of Mr. King's talents and character, and of the hope of good from his employment in this mission, that an immediate compliance with this request was made; and the gentleman who had been previously nominated to, and confirmed by, the Senate, as Secretary of Legation, having been commissioned elsewhere, Mr. John A. King was appointed Secretary of Legation to his father.

The voyage, unhappily, aggravated rather than relieved the malady of Mr. King; his health, after he reached England, continued to decline, and he therefore, after a few months' residence in London, asked leave to resign his post and come home. He returned accordingly, but only to die. He languished for some weeks, and finally, having been removed from Jamaica to the city for greater convenience of attendance and care, he died in New-York, on the 29th of April, 1827.

As with Mrs. King, so with him—in conformity with the unaffected simplicity of their whole lives—were the funeral rites at his death. Borne to Jamaica, which for more than twenty years had been his home, the body [368
was carried to the grave by the neighbors among whom he had so long lived,—laid in the earth by the side of her who had gone before him, to be no more separated for ever; and a simple stone at the head of his grave, records—and the loftiest monument of art could do no more—that a great and a good man, having finished his course in faith, there awaits the great Judgment. Children, and grandchildren, have since been gathered in death around these graves, which lie almost beneath the shadow of trees planted by Mr. King, and within sight of the house in which he lived.

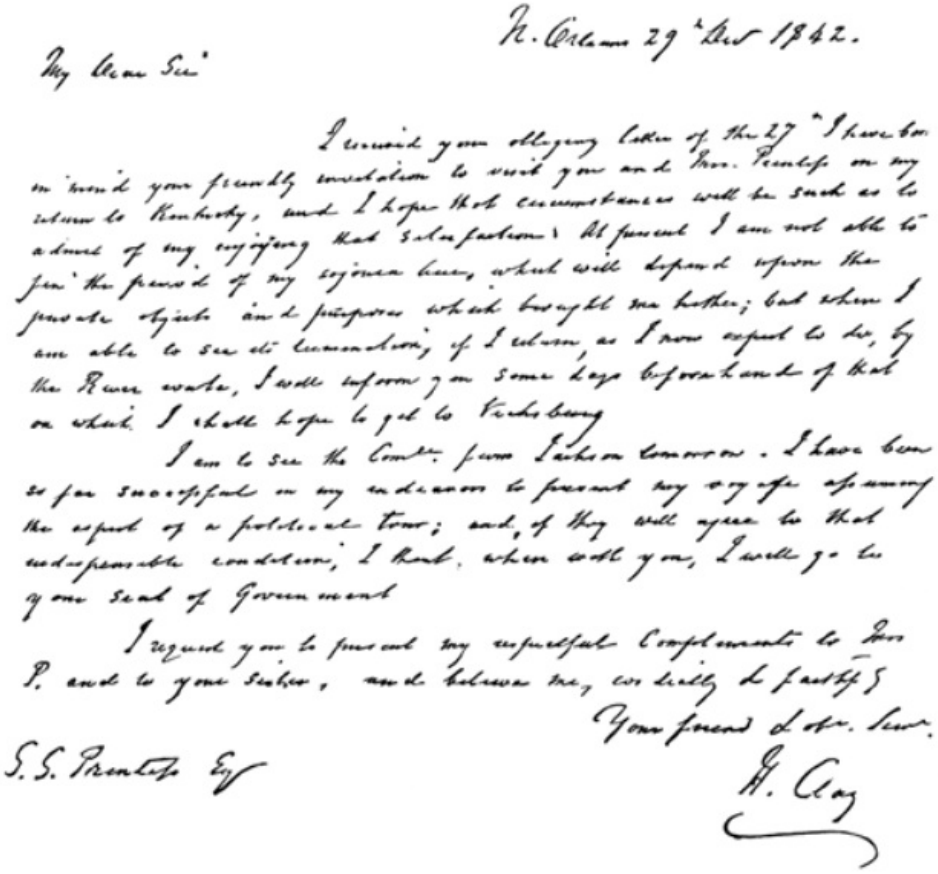
It was desired, if possible, to introduce a glimpse of the pretty village church into the engraving, but the space was wanting.

Mr. John A. King, the eldest son of Rufus King, now occupies the residence of his father, and keeps up, with filial reverence and inherited taste, its fine library, and its fine plantations. The engraving presents very accurately the appearance of the house; the closely shaven lawn in its front, and the noble trees which surround it, could find no adequate representation in any picture.

Clay.

[369

[370



New Orleans 29th Dec 1842.

My dear Sir

I received your obliging letter of the 27th I have borne in mind your friendly invitation to visit you and Mrs. Prentiss on my return to Kentucky, and I hope that circumstances will be such as to admit of my enjoying that satisfaction. At present I am not able to form the precise of my movements here, which will depend upon the precise objects and purposes which brought me hither; but when I am able to see my way clear, if I return, as I now expect to do, by the River route, I will inform you some days beforehand of that on which I shall hope to get to Vicksburg

I am to see the Comdr. from Jackson tomorrow. I have been so far successful in my endeavors to prevent my trip here assuming the aspect of a political tour; and, if they will agree to that indispensable condition, I think, when with you, I will go to your seat of Government

I request you to present my respectful Compliments to Mrs P. and to your Sister, and believe me, very truly & faithfully

Your friend & obt. Servt.

H. Clay

S. S. Prentiss Esq

[371

Ashland, Residence of Henry Clay

CLAY.

The Dryads are plainly no American divinities. A reverence for trees and groves, for woods and forests, is not an American passion. As our fathers and many of ourselves have spent the best of our strength in wrestling with, prostrating, using up the leaf-crowned monarchs, gray with the moss of age ere Columbus set foot on Cat Island, to expect us to love and honor their quiet majesty, their stately grace, were like asking Natty

Bumpo or Leather-stocking to bow down to and worship Pontiac or Brandt, as the highest ideal of Manhood. An uncouth backwoodsman lately stated our difficulty with immediate reference to another case, but the [372
principle is identical: "When I was a boy," said he, plaintively, "it was the rule to love rum, and hate niggers; now they want us to hate rum, and love niggers: For my part, I stick to the old discipline." And so it were unreasonable to expect the mass of Americans now living, to go into heroics over the prospect of a comely and comfortable mansion, surrounded by a spacious lawn or "opening" of luxuriant grass, embracing the roots and lightly shaded by the foliage of thrifty and shapely trees.

Why is it, then, that the American's pulse beats quicker, and his heart throbs more proudly as, walking slowly and thoughtfully up a noble avenue that leads easterly from Lexington,—once the capital and still the most important inland town in Kentucky,—he finds the road terminating abruptly in front of a modest, spacious, agreeable mansion, only two stories in height, and of no great architectural pretensions, and remembers who caused its erection, and was for many years its owner and master?

That house, that lawn, with the ample and fertile farm stretching a mile or more in the distance behind them, are hallowed to the hearts of his countrymen by the fact, that here lived and loved, enjoyed and suffered, aspired and endured, the Orator, the Patriot, the Statesman, the illustrious, the gifted, the fiercely slandered, the fondly idolized Henry Clay.

A friend who visited Ashland as a stranger in May, 1845, thus writes of the place and its master:

"I have at last realized one of my dearest wishes, that of seeing Mr. Clay at Ashland. I called on him with a friend this morning, but he was absent on his farm, and Charles, his freed slave, told us he would not be at home till afternoon; so we returned to Lexington, and, at five P.M., we retraced our steps to Ashland. Mr. Clay [373
had returned; and meeting us at the door, took hold of our hands before I could even present a letter of introduction, and made us welcome to his home. His manners completely overcame all the ceremonies of speech I had prepared. We were soon perfectly at home, as every one must be with Henry Clay, and in half an hour's time we had talked about the various sections of the country I had visited the past year, Mr. Clay occasionally giving us incidents and recollections of his own life; and I felt as though I had known him personally for years.

"Mr. Clay has lived at Ashland forty years. The place bore the name when he came to it, as he says, probably on account of the ash timber, with which it abounds; and he has made it the most delightful retreat in all the West. The estate is about six hundred acres large, all under the highest cultivation, except some two hundred acres of park, which is entirely cleared of underbrush and small trees, and is, to use the words of Lord Morpeth, who staid at Ashland nearly a week, the nearest approach to an English park of any in this country. It serves for a noble pasture, and here I saw some of Mr. Clay's fine horses and Durham cattle. He is said to have some of the finest in America; and if I am able to judge I confirm that report. The larger part of his farm is devoted to wheat, rye, hemp, &c., and his crops look most splendidly. He has also paid great attention to ornamenting his land with beautiful shade trees, shrubs, flowers, and fruit orchards. From the road which passes his place on the northwest side, a carriage-road leads up to the house, lined with locust, cypress, cedar, and other rare trees, and the rose, jasmine, and ivy, were clambering about them, and peeping through [374
the grass and the boughs, like so many twinkling fairies, as we drove up. Mr Clay's mansion is nearly hidden from the road by the trees surrounding it, and is as quiet and secluded, save to the throng of pilgrims continually pouring up there to greet its more than royal possessor, as though it were in the wilderness."

Here let the house, the lawn, the wood, the farm, pass, if they will, from the mind. They are all well in their way, and were doubtless well adapted in his time to smooth the care-worn brow, and soothe the care-fraught breast of the lofty, gallant, frank, winning statesman, who gave and still gives them all their interest. Be our thoughts concentrated on him who still lives, and speaks, and sways, though the clay which enrobed him has been hid from our sight for ever, rather than on the physical accessories which, but for him, though living to the corporal sense, are dead to the informing soul.

For it was not here, in this comfortable mansion, beneath those graceful, hospitable, swaying trees, that The Great Commoner was born and reared; but in a rude, homely farm-house,[19] which had any man given five hundred dollars for, he would have been enormously swindled, unless he paid in Continental money,—in a primitive, rural, thinly peopled section of Hanover County (near Richmond), Virginia; where his father, Rev. John Clay, a poor Baptist preacher, lived, and struggled, and finally died, leaving a widow and seven young children, with no reliance but the mother's energies and the benignant care of the widow's and orphan's God. This was in 1782, near the close of the Revolutionary War, when so much of the country as had not been ravaged by the enemy's forces, had been nearly exhausted by our own, and by the incessant exactions of a [375
protracted, harassing, desolating, industry-paralyzing civil war. The fifth of these seven children was Henry, born on the 12th of April, 1777, who remained in that humble home until fourteen years of age, when his mother, who had married a second time, being about to remove to Kentucky, placed him in a store at Richmond, under the eye of his oldest brother, then nearly or quite of age, but who died very soon afterwards, leaving Henry an orphan indeed. He was thus thrown completely on his own exertions, when still but a child, and without having enjoyed any other educational advantages than such as were fitfully afforded by occasional private schools, in operation perhaps two or three months in a year, and kept by teachers somewhat ruder than the log tenement which circumscribed their labors. Such was all the "schooling" ever enjoyed by the ragged urchin, whose bright summer days were necessarily given to ploughing and hoeing in the corn-fields, barefoot, bareheaded, and clad in coarse trowsers and shirt, and whose daily tasks were diversified by frequent rides of two or three miles to the nearest grist-mill, on a sorry cob, bestrode with no other saddle than the grain-bag; whence many of his childhood's neighbors, contrasting, long afterward, the figure he cut in Congress, at Ghent, in Paris or London, with that which they had seen so often pass in scanty garb, but jocund spirits, on these family errands, recalled him to mind in his primitive occupation as *The Mill-Boy of the Slashes*, by which *sobriquet* he was fondly hailed by thousands in the pride of his ripened renown.

Forty-five years after his childish farewell to it, Henry Clay stood once more (in 1840), and for the last time, in

the humble home of his fathers, and was rejoiced to find the house where he was born and reared, still [376
essentially unchanged. Venerable grandames, who were blooming matrons in his infancy, had long since indicated to their sons and daughters the room wherein he was born; and the spring whence the family had drawn their supplies of water wore a familiar aspect, though the hickory which formerly shaded it, and was noted for the excellence of its nuts, had passed away. Over the graves of his father and grandparents the plough had passed and repassed for years, and he only fixed their position by the decaying stump of a pear-tree, which had flourished in his childhood, and often ministered to his gratification. Beyond these, nothing answered to the picture in his memory, and he would not have recognized the spot, had he awoke there unconscious of the preceding journey. Familiar groves and orchards had passed away, while pines which he left shrubs, just dotting with perennial green the surface of the exhausted "old fields," unhappily too common throughout the Southern States, had grown up into dense and towering forests, which waved him a stately adieu, as he turned back refreshed and calmed, to the heated and dusty highway of public life.

The boy Henry, spent five years in Richmond,—only the first in the store where his mother had placed him; three of the others in the office of Mr. Clerk-in-Chancery Peter Tinsley; the last in that of Attorney-General Brooke. From Mr. Tinsley, he learned to write a remarkably plain, neat, and elegant hand,—more like a schoolmistress's best, than a great lawyer and politician, and this characteristic it retained to the last. From Mr. Tinsley, Mr. Brooke, and perhaps still more from the illustrious Chancellor Wythe, who employed him as his amanuensis, and repaid him with his friendship and counsel, young Clay derived his knowledge of the [377
principles of Common Law, whereof he was, all his life, a devoted champion. At length, in November, 1797, when still lacking some months of his legal majority, he left Richmond and Virginia, for the location he had chosen—namely, the thriving village of Lexington, in the then rapidly growing Territory of Kentucky—the home of his eventful adult life of more than half a century. How he here was early recognized and honored as a Man of the People, and rapidly chosen (1803) member of the Legislature, once (1806) appointed to fill a vacancy in the United States Senate, and soon after (1809) elected out of, and by the legislature, to fill another and longer vacancy in that same dignified body; chosen in 1811 a Member of the more popular branch of Congress, and, immediately on his appearance on its floor, elected its Speaker—probably the highest compliment ever paid to a public man in this country—appointed thence (1814) a Plenipotentiary to Göttingen (afterwards changed to Ghent), to negotiate a Treaty of Peace with Great Britain, which was signed near the close of that year; re-elected, immediately on his return, to a seat in the House, and to the Speakership, which he retained thenceforth (except during a temporary retirement from public life, rendered necessary by heavy pecuniary losses as an indorser), down to March 3d, 1825, when he finally retired from the House on being appointed Secretary of State by President John Q. Adams; quitting this station for private life on the Inauguration of President Jackson in 1829, returning to the Senate in 1831, and continuing one of its most eminent and influential members till 1842, when he retired, as he supposed for ever; but was [378
returned, by an unanimous vote of the Legislature, in 1849, and dying a Senator in Washington on the 29th of June, 1852, aged more than seventy-five years, of which more than half had been spent in the public service, and nearly all, since his majority, in active, ardent, anxious familiarity with public men and public measures,—this is no place to set forth in detail. The merest glance is all we can give to the public, official career of Henry Clay.

For our business is not here with Tariffs, Banks, Vetoes, and Presidential contests or aspirations. Our theme is the *man* Henry Clay,—what he was intrinsically, and in his daily dealings with, and deportment toward, his fellow-beings. If there be a better mode of developing his character than Plutarch's, we have not now time to ascertain and employ it, so we must e'en be content with that.

A tall, plain, poor, friendless youth, was young Henry, when he set up his Ebenezer in Lexington, and, after a few months' preliminary study, announced himself a candidate for practice as an attorney. He had not even the means of paying his weekly board. "I remember," he observed in his Lexington speech of 1842, "how comfortable I thought I should be, if I could make £100 Virginia money, per year; and with what delight I received my first fifteen shilling fee. My hopes were more than realized. I immediately rushed into a lucrative practice."

Local tradition affirms that the Bar of Lexington, being unusually strong when Mr. Clay first appeared thereat, an understanding had grown up among the seniors, that they would systematically discountenance the advent of any new aspirants, so as to keep the business remunerating, and preserve each other from the peril of [379
being starved out. It was some time, therefore, before young Clay obtained a case to manage in Court; and when he did appear there, the old heads greeted the outset of his argument with winks, and nods, and meaning smiles, and titters, intended to disconcert and embarrass him. So they did for a few minutes; but they soon exasperated and roused him. His eyes flashed, and sentence after sentence came pouring rapidly out, replete with the fire of eloquence and genius. At length, one of the old heads leaned across the table and whispered to another, "*I think we must let this young man pass.*" Of course they must!—the case was as plain as the portliest of noses on the most rubicund of faces. Henry Clay passed, *nem. con.*, and his position and success at that Bar were never more disputed nor doubted.

General Cass, in his remarks in the Senate on the occasion of Mr. Clay's death, has the following interesting reminiscence:

"It is almost half a century since he passed through Chilicothe, then the seat of government of Ohio, where I was a member of the Legislature, on his way to take his place in this very body, which is now listening to this reminiscence, and to a feeble tribute of regard from one who then saw him for the first time, but who can never forget the impression he produced by the charms of his conversation, the frankness of his manner, and the high qualities with which he was endowed."

That an untaught, portionless rustic, reared not only in one of the rudest localities, but in the most troublous and critical era of our country, when the general poverty and insecurity rendered any attention to personal culture difficult, almost impossible, and graduating from a log school-house, should have been celebrated for the union in his manners, of grace with frankness, ease with fascination, is not unworthy of remark. Of the [380

fact, those who never knew Mr. Clay personally, may have abundant attestations, which none others will need.

While in Europe as a negotiator for Peace with Great Britain, Mr. Clay was brought into immediate and familiar contact, not only with his associates, the urbane and cultivated John Quincy Adams, whose life had been divided between seminaries and courts; the philosophic Gallatin and the chivalric Bayard, but also with the noble and aristocratic Commissioners of Great Britain, and with many others of like breeding and position, to whom the importance of their mission, its protracted labors and its successful result, commended our Plenipotentiaries. A single anecdote will illustrate the impression he every where produced. An octogenarian British Earl, who had retired from public life because of his years, but who still cherished a natural interest in public men and measures, being struck by the impression made in the aristocratic circles of London by the American Commissioners, then on their way home from Ghent, requested a friend to bring them to see him at his house, to which his growing infirmities confined him. The visit was promptly and cheerfully paid, and the obliging friend afterwards inquired of the old Lord as to the impression the Americans had made upon him. "Ah!" said the veteran, with the "light of other days" gleaming from his eyes, "I liked them all, but *I liked the Kentucky man best*." It was so every where.

One specimen has been preserved of Mr. Clay's felicity of repartee and charm of conversation, as exhibited while in Paris, immediately after the conclusion of Peace at Ghent. He was there introduced to the famous Madame de Stael, who cordially addressed him with—"Ah, Mr. Clay! I have been in England, and have been [381
battling your cause for you there." "I know it, madame; we heard of your powerful interposition, and are grateful and thankful for it." "They were much enraged against you," said she: "so much so, that they at one time thought seriously of sending the Duke of Wellington to command their armies against you!" "I am very sorry, madame," replied Mr. Clay, "that they did not send his Grace." "Why?" asked she, surprised. "Because, madame, if he had beaten us, we should have been in the condition of Europe, without disgrace. But, if we had been so fortunate as to defeat him, we should have greatly added to the renown of our arms."

At his next meeting with "Corinne," at her own house, Mr. Clay was introduced by her to the conqueror at Waterloo, when she related the above conversation. The Duke promptly responded that, had it been his fortune to serve against the Americans, and to triumph over them, he should indeed have regarded that triumph as the proudest of his achievements.

Mr. Clay was in London when the tidings of Waterloo arrived, and set the British frantic with exultation. He was dining one day at Lord Castlereagh's, while Bonaparte's position was still uncertain, as he had disappeared from Paris, and fled none knew whither. The most probable conjecture was that he had embarked at some little port for the United States, and would probably make his way thither, as he was always lucky on water. "If he reaches your shores, Mr. Clay," gravely inquired Lord Liverpool (one of the Ministers), "will he not give you a great deal of trouble?" "Not the least," was the prompt reply of the Kentuckian; "we shall be [382
very glad to receive him; to treat him with all hospitality, and very soon make him a good democrat." A general laugh here restored the hilarity of the party.

The magnetism of Mr. Clay's manner and conversation have perhaps received no stronger testimony than that of Gen. Glascock, a political antagonist, who came into Congress from Georgia, during the fierce struggle which followed the removal of the Deposits. "Gen. Glascock," said a mutual friend, at a party one evening, "shall I make you acquainted with Mr. Clay?" "No, Sir!" was the prompt and stern response; "I choose not to be fascinated and moulded by him, as friend and foe appear to be, and I shall therefore decline his acquaintance."

Mr. Clay had a natural repugnance to caucuses, conventions, and the kindred contrivances whereby great men are elaborated out of very small materials, and was uniformly a candidate for Congress "on his own hook," with no fence between him and his constituents. Only once in the course of his long Representative career was he obliged to canvass for his election, and he was never defeated, nor ever could be, before a public that he could personally meet and address. The one searching ordeal to which he was subjected, followed the passage of the "Compensation Act" of 1816, whereby Congress substituted for its own per diem a fixed salary of $1,500 to each Member. This act raised a storm throughout the country, which prostrated most of its supporters. The hostility excited was especially strong in the West, then very poor, especially in money: $1,500 then, being equal to $4000 at present. John Pope (afterward Gen. Jackson's Governor of Arkansas), one of the ablest men in Kentucky, a federalist of the old school, and a personal antagonist of Mr. Clay, took the [383
stump as his competitor for the seat, and gave him enough to do through the canvass. They met in discussion at several local assemblages, and finally in a pitched battle at Higbie; a place central to the three counties composing the district, where the whole people collected to hear them. Pope had the district with him in his denunciation of the Compensation Bill, while Clay retorted with effect, by pressing home on his antagonist the embittered and not very consistent hostility of the latter to the war with Great Britain, recently concluded, which uniformly had been very popular in Kentucky. The result was decisive: Mr. Clay was re-elected by about six hundred majority.

That excited canvass was fruitful of characteristic incidents like the following:

While traversing the district, Mr. Clay encountered an old hunter, who had always before been his warm friend, but was now opposed to his re-election on account of the Compensation Bill. "Have you a good rifle, my friend?" asked Mr. Clay. "Yes." "Did it ever flash?" "Once only," he replied. "What did you do with it—throw it away?" "No, I picked the flint, tried it again, and brought down the game." "Have *I* ever flashed but upon the Compensation Bill?" "No!" "Will you throw me away?" "No, no!" exclaimed the hunter with enthusiasm, nearly overpowered by his feelings; "I will pick the flint, and try you again!" He was afterward a warm supporter of Mr. Clay.

An Irish barber in Lexington, Jerry Murphy by name, who had always before been a zealous admirer and active supporter of Mr. Clay, was observed during this canvass to maintain a studied silence. That silence was [384
ominous, especially as he was known to be under personal obligation to Mr. Clay for legal assistance to rescue

him from various difficulties in which his hasty temper had involved him. At length, an active and prominent partisan of the speaker called on the barber, with whom he had great influence, and pressed him to dispel the doubt that hung over his intentions by a frank declaration in favor of his old favorite. Looking his canvasser in the eye, with equal earnestness and shrewdness, Murphy responded; "I tell you what, docthur; I mane to vote for the man *that can put but one hand into the Treasury*." (Mr. Pope had lost one of his arms in early life, and the humor of Pat's allusion to this circumstance, in connection with Mr. Clay's support of the Compensation Bill, was inimitable.)

Mr. Clay was confessedly the best presiding officer that any deliberative body in America has ever known, and none was ever more severely tried. The intensity and bitterness of party feeling during the earlier portion of his Speakership cannot now be realized except by the few who remember those days. It was common at that time in New England town-meetings, for the rival parties to take opposite sides of the broad aisle in the meeting-house, and thus remain, hardly speaking across the line separation, from morning till night. Hon. Josiah Quincy, the Representative of Boston, was distinguished in Congress for the ferocity of his assaults on the policy of Jefferson and Madison; and between him and Mr. Clay there were frequent and sharp encounters, barely kept within the limits prescribed by parliamentary decorum. At a later period, the eccentric and distinguished John Randolph, the master of satire and invective; and who, though not avowedly [385
a Federalist, opposed nearly every act of the Democrat Administrations of 1801-16, and was the unfailing antagonist of every measure proposed or supported by Mr. Clay, was a thorn in the side of the Speaker for years. Many were the passages between them in which blows were given and taken, whereof the gloves of parliamentary etiquette could not break the force: the War, the Tariff, the early recognition of Greek and South American Independence, the Missouri Compromise, &c. &c., being strenuously advocated by Mr. Clay and opposed by Mr. Randolph. But of these this is no place to speak. Innumerable appeals from Mr. Clay's decisions, as Speaker, were made by the orator of Roanoke, but no one of them was ever sustained by the House. At length, after Mr. Clay had left Congress, and Mr. Randolph been transferred to the Senate, a bloodless duel between them grew out of the Virginian's unmeasured abuse of the Kentuckian's agency in electing J.Q. Adams to the Presidency; a duel which seems to have had the effect of softening, if not dissipating Randolph's rancor against Mr. Clay. Though evermore a political antagonist, his personal antipathy was no longer manifested; and one of the last visits of Randolph to the Capitol, when dying of consumption, was made for the avowed purpose of hearing in the Senate the well-known voice of the eloquent Sage of Ashland.

On the floor of the House, Mr. Clay was often impetuous in discussion, and delighted to relieve the tedium of debate, and modify the sternness of antagonism by a sportive jest or lively repartee. On one occasion, Gen. Alexander Smythe of Virginia, who often afflicted the House by the verbosity of his harangues and the multiplicity of his dry citations, had paused in the middle of a speech which seemed likely to endure for ever, [386
to send to the library for a book from which he wished to note a passage. Fixing his eye on Mr. Clay, who sat near him, he observed the Kentuckian writhing in his seat as if his patience had already been exhausted. "You, sir," remarked Smythe addressing the Speaker, "speak for the present generation; but I speak for posterity." "Yes," said Mr. Clay, "and you seem resolved to speak until the arrival of *your* auditory."

Revolutionary pensions were a source of frequent passages between eastern and western members; the greater portion of those pensions being payable to eastern survivors of the struggle. On one occasion when a Pension Bill was under discussion, Hon. Enoch Lincoln (afterwards Governor of Maine) was dilating on the services and sufferings of these veterans, and closed with the patriotic adjuration, "Soldiers of the Revolution! live for ever!" Mr. Clay followed, counselling moderation in the grant of pensions, that the country might not be overloaded and rendered restive by their burden, and turning to Mr. Lincoln with a smile, observed—"I hope my worthy friend will not insist on the very great duration of these pensions which he has suggested. Will he not consent, by way of a compromise, to a term of nine hundred and ninety-nine years instead of eternity?"

A few sentences culled from the remarks in Congress elicited by his death, will fitly close this hasty daguerreotype of the man Henry Clay.

Mr. Underwood (his colleague) observed in Senate that "his physical and mental organization eminently qualified him to become a great and impressive orator. His person was tall, slender and commanding. His temperament, ardent, fearless, and full of hope. His countenance, clear, expressive, and variable—indicating [387
the emotion which predominated at the moment with exact similitude. His voice, cultivated and modulated in harmony with the sentiment he desired to express, fell upon the ear with the melody of enrapturing music. His eye beaming with intelligence and flashing with coruscations of genius. His gestures and attitudes graceful and natural. These personal advantages won the prepossessions of an audience even before his intellectual powers began to move his hearers; and when his strong common sense, his profound reasoning, his clear conceptions of his subject in all its bearings, and his striking and beautiful illustrations, united with such personal qualities, were brought to the discussion of any question, his audience was enraptured, convinced and led by the orator as if enchanted by the lyre of Orpheus.

"No man was ever blessed by his Creator with faculties of a higher order than Mr. Clay. In the quickness of his perceptions, and the rapidity with which his conclusions were formed, he had few equals and no superiors. He was eminently endowed with a nice discriminating taste for order, symmetry, and beauty. He detected in a moment every thing out of place or deficient in his room, upon his farm, in his own or the dress of others. He was a skilful judge of the form and qualities of his domestic animals, which he delighted to raise on his farm. I could give you instances of the quickness and minuteness of his keen faculty of observation, which never overlooked any thing. A want of neatness and order was offensive to him. He was particular and neat in his handwriting and his apparel. A slovenly blot or negligence of any sort met his condemnation; while he was so [388
organized that he attended to, and arranged little things to please and gratify his natural love for neatness, order, and beauty, his great intellectual faculties grasped all the subjects of jurisprudence and politics with a facility amounting almost to intuition. As a lawyer, he stood at the head of his profession. As a statesman, his

stand at the head of the Republican Whig party for nearly half a century, establishes his title to pre-eminence among his illustrious associates.

"Mr. Clay was deeply versed in all the springs of human action. He had read and studied biography and history. Shortly after I left college, I had occasion to call on him in Frankfort, where he was attending court, and well I remember to have found him with Plutarch's Lives in his hands. No one better than he knew how to avail himself of human motives, and all the circumstances which surrounded a subject, or could present themselves with more force and skill to accomplish the object of an argument.

"Bold and determined as Mr. Clay was in all his actions, he was, nevertheless, conciliating. He did not obstinately adhere to things impracticable. If he could not accomplish the best, he contented himself with the nighest approach to it. He has been the great compromiser of those political agitations and opposing opinions which have, in the belief of thousands, at different times, endangered the perpetuity of our Federal Government and Union.

"Mr. Clay was no less remarkable for his admirable social qualities, than for his intellectual abilities. As a companion, he was the delight of his friends; and no man ever had better or truer. No guest ever thence [389
departed, without feeling happier for his visit."

Mr. Hunter of Virginia (a political antagonist) following, observed: "It may be truly said of Mr. Clay, that he was no exaggerator. He looked at events through neither end of the telescope, but surveyed them with the natural and the naked eye. He had the capacity of seeing things as the people saw them, and of feeling things as the people felt them. He had, sir, beyond any other man whom I have ever seen, the true mesmeric touch of the orator,—the rare art of transferring his impulses to others. Thoughts, feelings, emotions, came from the ready mould of his genius, radiant and glowing, and communicated their own warmth to every heart which received them. His, too, was the power of wielding the higher and intenser forms of passion, with a majesty and an ease, which none but the great masters of the human heart can ever employ."

Mr. Seward of New-York, said: "He was indeed eloquent—all the world knows that. He held the key to the hearts of his countrymen, and he turned the wards within them with a skill attained by no other master.

"But eloquence was nevertheless only an instrument, and one of many, that he used. His conversation, his gestures, his very look, were magisterial, persuasive, seductive, irresistible. And his appliance of all these was courteous, patient, and indefatigable. Defeat only inspired him with new resolution. He divided opposition by the assiduity of address, while he rallied and strengthened his own bands of supporters by the confidence of success, which, feeling himself, he easily inspired among his followers. His affections were high, and pure, [390
and generous; and the chiefest among them was that one which the great Italian poet designated as the charity of native land. In him, that charity was an enduring and overpowering enthusiasm, and it influenced all his sentiments and conduct, rendering him more impartial between conflicting interests and sections, than any other statesman who has lived since the Revolution. Thus, with great versatility of talent, and the most catholic equality of favor, he identified every question, whether of domestic administration or foreign policy, with his own great name, and so became a perpetual Tribune of the People. He needed only to pronounce in favor of a measure or against it, here, and immediately popular enthusiasm, excited as by a magic wand, was felt, overcoming and dissolving all opposition in the Senate Chamber."

In the House, about the same time, Mr. Breckenridge of Kentucky (democrat), spoke as follows:

"The life of Mr. Clay, sir, is a striking example of the abiding fame which surely awaits the direct and candid statesman. The entire absence of equivocation or disguise in all his acts, was his master-key to the popular heart; for while the people will forgive the errors of a bold and open nature, he sins past forgiveness who deliberately deceives them. Hence Mr. Clay, though often defeated in his measures of policy, always secured the respect of his opponents without losing the confidence of his friends. He never paltered in a double sense. The country never was in doubt as to his opinions or his purposes. In all the contests of his time, his position on great public questions was as clear as the sun in the cloudless sky. Sir, standing by the grave of this great [391
man, and considering these things, how contemptible does appear the mere legerdemain of politics! What a reproach is his life on that false policy which would trifle with a great and upright people! If I were to write his epitaph, I would inscribe as the highest eulogy, on the stone which shall mark his resting-place, 'Here lies a man who was in the public service for fifty years, and never attempted to deceive his countrymen.'"

Let me close this too hasty and superficial sketch, with a brief citation from Rev. C.M. Butler, Chaplain of the Senate, who, in his funeral discourse in the Senate Chamber, said:

"A great mind, a great heart, a great orator, a great career, have been consigned to history. She will record his rare gifts of deep insight, keen discrimination, clear statement, rapid combination, plain, direct, and convincing logic. She will love to dwell on that large, generous, magnanimous, open, forgiving heart. She will linger with fond delight on the recorded or traditional stories of an eloquence that was so masterful and stirring, because it was but himself struggling to come forth on the living words—because, though the words were brave and strong, and beautiful and melodious, it was felt that, behind them, there was a soul braver, stronger, more beautiful, and more melodious, than language could express."

Such was the master of Ashland, the man Henry Clay!

After this article was in type, we received from a Western paper the following notice of the sale of the Ashland estate.

"We are glad to learn that Ashland, the home of Henry Clay, which was sold September 20th, at public [392
auction, was purchased by James B. Clay, eldest son of the deceased statesman. The Ashland homestead contained about 337 acres. It lies just without the limits of the city of Lexington. The country immediately surrounding it, is justly regarded as the garden spot of the West, and Ashland, above all others, as the most

beautiful place in the world. The associations about it are of the most interesting character. When Kentucky was, in fact, the 'dark and bloody ground,' the country around Lexington was the only oasis—every where else, the tomahawk and the rifle were more potent than laws. How many incidents of these terrible days are garnered in the minds of the descendants of the old families of Kentucky! In those thrilling days, Ashland belonged to Daniel Boone, whose name is connected with many of the daring tragedies enacted in the then Far West. It passed from his hands into those of Nathaniel Hart, who fell, gloriously fighting, in the battle at the River Raisin, where so many Kentuckians offered up their lives in defence of their country. Henry Clay married Lucretia Hart, to whom the demesne of Ashland descended.

"There is so much of the Arab in the habits of the Americans,—there is so much migratoriness, and so little love for old homesteads,—we were afraid the children of Henry Clay would allow classic Ashland to pass into other and alien hands. But our fears are to gladness changed; and Ashland is still the dwelling-place of the Clays.

"Mr. Clay was thoroughly versed in agricultural matters, and was never better contented (as the editor of the Ohio Journal truly remarks), than when surrounded by his neighbors, many of whom knew and loved him [393
when he was quite young and obscure, and afterwards rejoiced at his fame, and followed his fortunes through every phase of a long and eventful career. The residence does not present any imposing appearance, but is of a plain, neat, and rather antique architectural character, and the grounds immediately surrounding it are beautifully adorned, and traversed by walks; not in accordance with the foolish and fastidious taste of the present day, for this, in every thing connected with the place has been neglected, and the only end seems to have been to represent Nature in its proudest and most imposing grandeur. Many of the walks are retired, and are of a serpentine character, with here and there, in some secluded spot along their windings, a rude and unpolished bench upon which to recline. The trees are mostly pines of a large growth, and stand close together, casting a deep and sombre shade on every surrounding object. The reflections of one on visiting Ashland are of the most interesting character. Every object seems invested with an interest, and although the spirit with whose memory they are associated, has fled, one cannot repel the conviction, that while reposing under its silent and sequestered shades, he is still surrounded by something sublime and great. Old memories of the past come back upon him, and a thousand scenes connected with the life and history of Henry Clay, will force themselves upon you. The great monarchs of the forest that now stretch their limbs aloft in proud and peerless majesty, have all, or nearly all been planted by his hand, and are now not unfit emblems of the towering greatness of him who planted them.

"The walks, the flowers, the garden and the groves, all, all are consecrated, and have all been witnesses of his [394
presence and his care. In the groves through which you wander, were nursed the mighty schemes of Statesmanship, which have astonished the world and terrified the tyrant, beat back the evil counsels for his country's ruin, and bound and fettered his countrymen in one common and indissoluble bond of UNION."

Clay's Birth-place

Calhoun.

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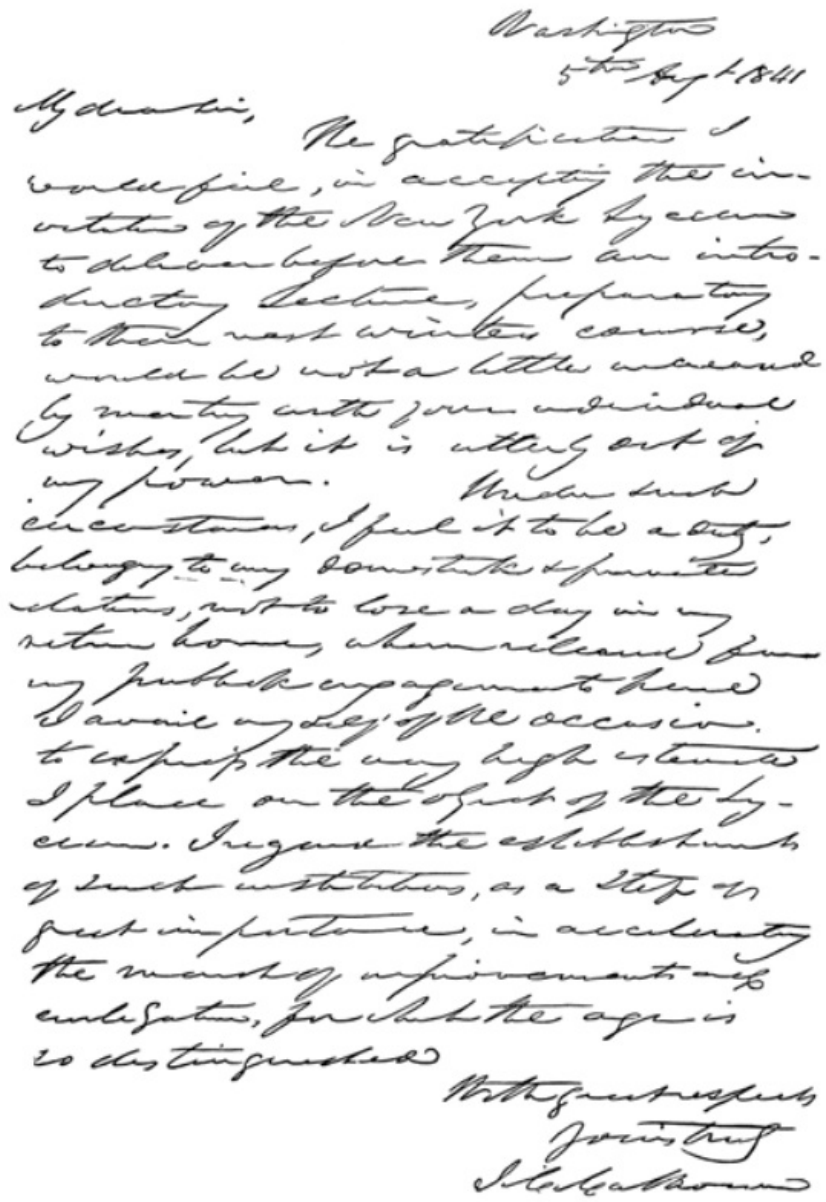

[397

CALHOUN.

In writing the lives of our American Statesmen, we might say of almost any of them, "that he was born in such a year, that he was sent to the common school or to college, that he studied law, that he was chosen, first a member of the State Legislature, and then of the National Congress, that he became successively, a Senator, a foreign Ambassador, a Secretary of State, or a President, and that finally he retired to his paternal acres, to pass a venerable old age, amid the general respect and admiration of the whole country." This would be a true outline in the main, of the practical workings and doings of nine out of ten of them: but in filling in the details of the sketch, in clothing the dry skeleton of facts with the flesh and blood of the living reality, it would be found that this apparent similarity of development had given rise to the utmost diversity and individuality of character, and that scarcely any two of our distinguished men, though born and bred under the same influence, bore even a family resemblance. It is said by the foreign writers, by De Tocqueville especially, that very little originality and independence of mind can be expected in a democracy, where the force of the majority crushes all opinions and characters into a dead and leaden uniformity. But the study of our actual [398
history rather tends to the opposite conclusion, and leads us to believe that the land of Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, Patrick Henry, the Adamses, Clay, Webster and Calhoun, is favorable to the production of distinct, peculiar, and decided natures. At least we may be sure, that our annals are no more wanting than those of other nations, in original, self-formed, and self-dependent men.

Among these, there was no one more peculiar or more unlike any prototype, than John C. Calhoun, of South Carolina. In the structure of his mind, in the singular tenacity of his purposes, in the rare dignity and elevation of his character, and in the remarkable political system to which he adhered, he was wholly *sui generis*, standing out from the number of his forerunners and contemporaries in bold, positive and angular relief. He could only have been what he was, in the country, and during the times, in which he flourished: he was a natural growth of our American society and institutions: had formed himself by no models ancient or modern; and the great leading principles of his thought faithfully rendered in all his conduct, were as much an individual possession as the figure of his body or the features of his face. In seeing him, in hearing him speak, or in reading his books, no one was ever likely to confound him with any second person.

Mr. Calhoun was born in the Abbeville District of South Carolina, on the 18th of March, 1782. His parents on

both sides were of Irish extraction, who had first settled in Pennsylvania, and then in Virginia, whence they were driven by the Indians, at the time of Braddock's defeat, to South Carolina. The father appears to have been a man of the most resolute and energetic character, equally ready to defend his home against the [399
incursions of the savages, and his rights as a citizen against legislative encroachments. On one occasion, he and his neighbors went down to within thirty miles of Charleston, armed, to assert a right of suffrage which was then disputed; and he always steadily opposed the Federal Constitution, because it allowed other people than those of South Carolina to tax the people of South Carolina. "We have heard his son say," writes a friend of the latter, "that among his earliest recollections was one of a conversation when he was nine years of age, in which his father maintained that government to be best, which allowed the largest amount of individual liberty compatible with social order and tranquillity, and insisted that the improvements in political science would be found to consist in throwing off many of the restraints then imposed by law, and deemed necessary to an organized society. It may well be supposed that his son John was an attentive and eager auditor, and such lessons as these must doubtless have served to encourage that free spirit of inquiry, and that intrepid zeal for truth, for which he has been since so distinguished. The mode of thinking which was thus encouraged may, perhaps, have compensated in some degree the want of those early advantages which are generally deemed indispensable to great intellectual progress. Of these he had comparatively few. But this was compensated by those natural gifts which give great minds the mastery over difficulties which the timid regard as insuperable. Indeed, we have here another of those rare instances in which the hardiness of natural genius is seen to defy all obstacles, and developes its flower and matures its fruit under circumstances apparently the most unpropitious.

"The region of the country in which his family resided was then newly settled, and in a rude frontier State. [400
There was not an academy in all the upper part of the State, and none within fifty miles, except one at about that distance in Columbia county, Georgia, which was kept by his brother-in-law, Mr. Waddell, a Presbyterian clergyman. There were but a few scattered schools in the whole of that region, and these were such as are usually found on the frontier, in which reading, writing and arithmetic were imperfectly taught. At the age of thirteen he was placed under the charge of his brother-in-law to receive his education. Shortly after, his father died; this was followed by the death of his sister, Mrs. Waddell, within a few weeks, and the academy was then discontinued, which suspended his education before it had fairly commenced. His brother-in-law, with whom he was still left, was absent the greater part of the time, attending to his clerical duties, and his pupil thus found himself on a secluded plantation, without any white companion during the greater portion of the time. A situation apparently so unfavorable to improvement turned out, in his case, to be the reverse. Fortunately for him, there was a small circulating library in the house, of which his brother-in-law was librarian, and, in the absence of all company and amusements, that attracted his attention. His taste, although undirected, led him to history, to the neglect of novels and other lighter reading; and so deeply was he interested, that in a short time he read the whole of the small stock of historical works, contained in the library, consisting of Rollin's Ancient History, Robertson's Charles V., his South America, and Voltaire's Charles XII. After dispatching these, he turned with like eagerness to Cook's Voyages (the large edition), a small volume of essays by Brown, and Locke on the Understanding, which he read as far as the chapter on [401
Infinity. All this was the work of but fourteen weeks. So intense was his application that his eyes became seriously affected, his countenance pallid, and his frame emaciated. His mother, alarmed at the intelligence of his health, sent for him home, where exercise and amusement soon restored his strength, and he acquired a fondness for hunting, fishing, and other country sports. Four years passed away in these pursuits, and in attention to the business of the farm while his elder brothers were absent, to the entire neglect of his education. But the time was not lost. Exercise and rural sports invigorated his frame, while his labors on the farm gave him a taste for agriculture, which he always retained, and in the pursuit of which he finds delightful occupation for his intervals of leisure from public duties."

It is not our purpose, however, to enter into any detail of the life of Mr Calhoun. Suffice it to say that he was educated, under Dr. Dwight, at Yale College, that he studied law at Litchfield in Connecticut, that he was for two sessions a member of the Legislature, that from 1811 to 1817 during the war with Great Britain, and the most trying times that followed it, he was a member of the lower House of Congress. That he was then appointed Secretary of War, under Madison, when he gave a new, thorough, and complete organization to his department. That he was chosen Vice-President in 1825, and subsequently served his country as Senator of the United States, and Secretary of State, until the year 1850, when he died. During the whole of this long period his exertions were constant, and he took a leading part in all the movements of parties. Acting for the most of the time with the Democratic party, he was still never the slave of party, never guilty of the low arts or [402
petty cunning of the mere politician, always fearless in the discharge of his duties, and though ambitious, ever sacrificing his ambition to his clearly discerned and openly expressed principles. Mr. Webster, who, during nearly the whole of his legislative career, and on nearly all questions of public concern, had been an active opponent, in an obituary address to the Senate, bore this testimony to his genius and his greatness.

"Differing widely on many great questions respecting our institutions and the government of the country, those differences never interrupted our personal and social intercourse. I have been present at most of the distinguished instances of the exhibition of his talents in debate. I have always heard him with pleasure, often with much instruction, not unfrequently with the highest degree of admiration.

"Mr. Calhoun was calculated to be a leader in whatsoever association of political friends he was thrown. He was a man of undoubted genius and of commanding talents. All the country and all the world admit that. His mind was both perceptive and vigorous. It was clear, quick, and strong.

"Sir, the eloquence of Mr. Calhoun, or the manner in which he exhibited his sentiments in public bodies, was part of his intellectual character. It grew out of the qualities of his mind. It was plain, strong, terse, condensed, concise: sometimes impassioned, still always severe. Rejecting ornament, not often seeking far for illustration, his power consisted in the plainness of his propositions, in the closeness of his logic, and in the earnestness and energy of his manner. These are the qualities, as I think, which have enabled him through such a long course of years to speak often, and yet command attention. His demeanor as a Senator is known [403

to us all, is appreciated, venerated, by us all. No man was more respectful to others; no man carried himself with greater decorum, no man with superior dignity. I think there is not one of us, when he last addressed us from his seat in the Senate, his form still erect, with a voice by no means indicating such a degree of physical weakness as did in fact possess him, with clear tones, and an impressive, and, I may say, an imposing manner, who did not feel that he might imagine that we saw before us a Senator of Rome, while Rome survived.

"Sir, I have not, in public, nor in private life, known a more assiduous person in the discharge of his appropriate duties. I have known no man who wasted less of life in what is called recreation, or employed less of it in any pursuits not connected with the immediate discharge of his duty. He seemed to have no recreation but the pleasure of conversation with his friends. Out of the chambers of Congress, he was either devoting himself to the acquisition of knowledge pertaining to the immediate subject of the duty before him, or else he was indulging in those social interviews in which he so much delighted.

"My honorable friend from Kentucky[20] has spoken in just terms of his colloquial talents. They certainly were singular and eminent. There was a charm in his conversation not often equalled. He delighted especially in conversation and intercourse with young men. I suppose that there has been no man among us who had more winning manners, in such an intercourse and such conversation, with men comparatively young, than Mr. [404
Calhoun. I believe one great power of his character, in general, was his conversational talent. I believe it is that, as well as a consciousness of his high integrity, and the greatest reverence for his talents and ability, that has made him so endeared an object to the people of the State to which he belonged.

"Mr. President, he had the basis, the indispensable basis of all high character; and that was, unspotted integrity and unimpeached honor. If he had aspirations, they were high, and honorable, and noble. There was nothing grovelling, or low, or meanly selfish, that came near the head or the heart of Mr. Calhoun. Firm in his purpose, perfectly patriotic and honest, as I am sure he was, in the principles that he espoused, and in the measures which he defended, aside from that large regard for the species of distinction that conducted him to eminent stations for the benefit of the republic, I do not believe he had a selfish motive or selfish feeling. However he may have differed from others of us in his political opinions or his political principles, those principles and those opinions will now descend to posterity under the sanction of a great name. He has lived long enough, he has done enough, and he has done it so well, so successfully, so honorably, as to connect himself for all time with the records of his country. He is now an historical character. Those of us who have known him here, will find that he has left upon our minds and our hearts a strong and lasting impression of his person, his character, and his public performances, which, while we live, will never be obliterated. We shall hereafter, I am sure, indulge in it as a grateful recollection, that we have lived in his age, that we have been his contemporaries, that we have seen him, and heard him, and known him. We shall delight to speak of [405
him to those who are rising up to fill our places. And, when the time shall come that we ourselves must go, one after another, to our graves, we shall carry with us a deep sense of his genius and character, his honor and integrity, his amiable deportment in private life, and the purity of his exalted patriotism."

The event in Mr. Calhoun's political life which will give him the greatest distinction in our history, was the bold and perilous course he took on the subject of nullification. It brought him and his native State directly in conflict with the powers of the Federal government, and but for the compromise of the Tariff question, out of which the controversy grew, would have ended in civil war. We shall not undertake to narrate the origin or the purpose of this most fearful crisis, referring our readers to the regular memoirs of Mr. Calhoun for the details, but we cannot refrain from expressing our high admiration of the gallant bearing of the great South Carolinian during the whole of the protracted and embarrassing dispute. The energy with which he pursued his ends, the originality with which he defended them, the boldness of his position, the devotion to his friends, the formidable objects that he had to encounter, the calm, earnest self-reliance with which he encountered them, and, in the end, the graceful concessions on both sides, by which the difficulties of the juncture were avoided, are brilliant illustrations both of the lofty energies of his spirit, and of the happy, peaceful working of our national institutions. In any other country, and under any other government, if it had been possible for such a conflict to arise, it could only have terminated in bloodshed or war. Either the reigning authority would [406
have been overturned, or the chief agent in the insurrection would have been executed as a traitor. Under the benign and conciliatory genius of our constitution, by that pacific legislation, which knows how to temper the rigid and inflexible exercise of law by the spirit of concession, the struggle ended in compromise.

It was in his domestic life that Mr. Calhoun won the warmest homage of the heart. Miss Bates, who was for many years a governess in his family, and who enjoyed the finest opportunities for observing him, has given us the following record of his private virtues and peculiarities.

"In Mr. Calhoun were united the simple habits of the Spartan lawgiver, the inflexible principles of the Roman senator, the courteous bearing and indulgent kindness of the American host, husband, and father. This was indeed a rare union. Life with him was solemn and earnest, and yet all about him was cheerful. I never heard him utter a jest; there was an unvarying dignity and gravity in his manner; and yet the playful child regarded him fearlessly and lovingly. Few men indulge their families in as free, confidential, and familiar intercourse as did this great statesman. Indeed, to those who had an opportunity of observing him in his own house, it was evident that his cheerful and happy home had attractions for him superior to those which any other place could offer. Here was a retreat from the cares, the observation, and the homage of the world. In few homes could the transient visitor feel more at ease than did the guest at Fort Hill. Those who knew Mr. Calhoun only by his senatorial speeches, may suppose that his heart and mind were all engrossed in the nation's councils; but there were moments when his courtesy, his minute kindnesses, made you forget the statesman. The [407
choicest fruits were selected for his guest; and I remember seeing him at his daughter's wedding take the ornaments from a cake and send them to a little child. Many such graceful attentions, offered in an unostentatious manner to all about him, illustrated the kindness and noble simplicity of his nature. His family could not but exult in his intellectual greatness, his rare endowments, and his lofty career, yet they seemed to lose sight of all these in their love for him. I had once the pleasure of travelling with his eldest son, who related to me many interesting facts and traits of his life. He said he had never heard him speak impatiently to

any member of his family. He mentioned, that as he was leaving that morning for his home in Alabama, a younger brother said, 'Come soon again, and see us, brother A—, for do you not see that father is growing old? and is not father the dearest, best old man in the world!'

"Like Cincinnatus, he enjoyed rural life and occupation. It was his habit, when at home, to go over his grounds every day. I remember his returning one morning from a walk about his plantation, delighted with the fine specimens of corn and rice which he brought in for us to admire. That morning—the trifling incident shows his consideration and kindness of feeling, as well as his tact and power of adaptation—seeing an article of needlework in the hands of sister A—, who was then a stranger there, he examined it, spoke of the beauty of the coloring, the variety of the shade, and by thus showing an interest in her, at once made her at ease in his presence.

"His eldest daughter always accompanied him to Washington, and in the absence of his wife, who was often [408
detained by family cares at Fort Hill, this daughter was his solace amid arduous duties, and his confidant in perplexing cases. Like the gifted De Staël, she loved her father with enthusiastic devotion. Richly endowed by nature, improved by constant companionship with the great man, her mind was in harmony with his, and he took pleasure in counselling with her. She said, 'Of course, I do not understand as he does, for I am comparatively a stranger to the world, yet he likes my unsophisticated opinion, and I frankly tell him my views on any subject about which he inquires of me.'

"Between himself and his younger daughter there was a peculiar and most tender union. As by the state of her health she was deprived of many enjoyments, her indulgent parents endeavored to compensate for every loss by their affection and devotion. As reading was her favorite occupation, she was allowed to go to the letter-bag when it came from the office, and select the papers she preferred. On one occasion, she had taken two papers, containing news of importance which her father was anxious to see, but he would allow no one to disturb her until she had finished their perusal.

"In his social as well as in his domestic relations he was irreproachable. No shadow rested on his pure fame, no blot on his escutcheon. In his business transactions he was punctual and scrupulously exact. He was honorable as well as honest. Young men who were reared in his vicinity, with their eyes ever on him, say that in all respects, in small as well as in great things, his conduct was so exemplary that he might well be esteemed a model.

"His profound love for his own family, his cordial interest in his friends, his kindness and justice in every [409
transaction, were not small virtues in such a personage.

"He was anti-Byronic. I never heard him ridicule or satirize a human being. Indeed he might have been thought deficient in a sense of the ludicrous, had he not by the unvarying propriety of his own conduct proved his exquisite perception of its opposites. When he differed in opinion from those with whom he conversed, he seemed to endeavor by a respectful manner, to compensate for the disagreement. He employed reason, rather than contradiction; and so earnestly would he urge an opinion and so fully present an argument, that his opponent could not avoid feeling complimented rather than mortified. He paid a tribute to the understandings of others by the force of his own reasoning, and by his readiness to admit every argument which he could, although advanced in opposition to one he himself had just expressed.

"On one occasion I declined taking a glass of wine at his table. He kindly said, 'I think you carry that a little too far. It is well to give up every thing intoxicating, but not these light wines.' I replied, that wine was renounced by many for the sake of consistency, and for the benefit of those who could not afford wine. He acknowledged the correctness of the principle, adding, 'I do not know how temperance societies can take any other ground,' and then defined his views of temperance, entered on a course of interesting arguments, and stated facts and statistics. Of course, were all men like Mr. Calhoun temperance societies would be superfluous. Perhaps he could not be aware of the temptations that assail many men—he was so purely intellectual, so free from self-indulgence. Materiality with him was held subject to his higher nature. He did [410
not even indulge himself in a cigar. Few spent as little time, and exhausted as little energy in mere amusements. Domestic and social enjoyments were his pleasures—kind and benevolent acts were his recreations.

"He always seemed willing to converse on any subject which was interesting to those about him. Returning one day from Fort Hill, I remarked to a friend, 'I have never been more convinced of Mr. Calhoun's genius than to-day, while he talked to us of a flower.' His versatile conversation evinced his universal knowledge, his quick perception, and his faculty of adaptation. A shower one day compelled him to take shelter in the shed of a blacksmith, who was charmed by his familiar conversation, and the knowledge he exhibited of the mechanic arts. A naval officer was once asked, after a visit to Fort Hill, how he liked Mr. Calhoun. 'Not at all,' said he—'I never like a man who knows more about my profession than I do myself.' A clergyman wished to converse with him on subjects of a religious nature, and after the interview remarked, that he was astonished to find him better informed than himself on those very points wherein he had expected to give him information. I had understood that Mr. Calhoun avoided an expression of opinion with regard to different sects and creeds, or what is called religious controversy; and once, when urged to give his views in relation to a disputed point, he replied, 'That is a subject to which I have never given my attention.'

"Mr. Calhoun was unostentatious, and ever averse to display. He did not appear to talk for the sake of exhibition, but from the overflowing of his earnest nature. Whether in the Senate or in conversation with a single listener, his language was choice, his style fervid, his manner impressive. Never can I forget his gentle [411
earnestness when endeavoring to express his views on some controverted subject, and observing that my mind could hardly keep pace with his rapid reasoning, he would occasionally pause and say, in his kind manner, 'Do you see?'

"He did not seek to know the opinion of others with regard to himself. Anonymous letters he never read, and his daughters and nieces often snatched from the flames letters of adulation as well as censure, which he had

not read. Although he respected the opinions of his fellow-men, he did not seek office or worldly honor. A few years since, one to whom he ever spoke freely, remarked to him that some believed he was making efforts to obtain the presidency. At that moment he had taken off his glasses, and was wiping them, and thus he replied: 'M——, I think when a man is too old to see clearly through his glasses, he is too old to think of the presidency.' And recently he said to her, 'They may impute what motives they please to me, but I do not seek office.' So much did he respect his country, that he might have been gratified by the free gift of the people; so much did he love his country, that he might have rejoiced at an opportunity to serve it; but would he have swerved one iota from his convictions to secure a kingdom? Who, that knew him, believes it?"

Mr. Calhoun was an author as well as a statesman, and in the dissertations on the constitution and on government published since his death, has bequeathed us the ripened fruits of his life-long study. They are works of the rarest penetration and sagacity, of subtle logic, of earnest conviction, of profound observation of men and things, and of unquestionable genius. The particular conclusions at which the writer arrives, as to [412 the nature and limits of government, and as to the amendments that ought to be made in the constitution of the United States, will not be adopted by large classes of readers; but none of them will arise from a perusal of his pages, without an additional admiration of the keenness and force of his intellect, the ardor of his patriotism, and the purity of his character.

Clinton.

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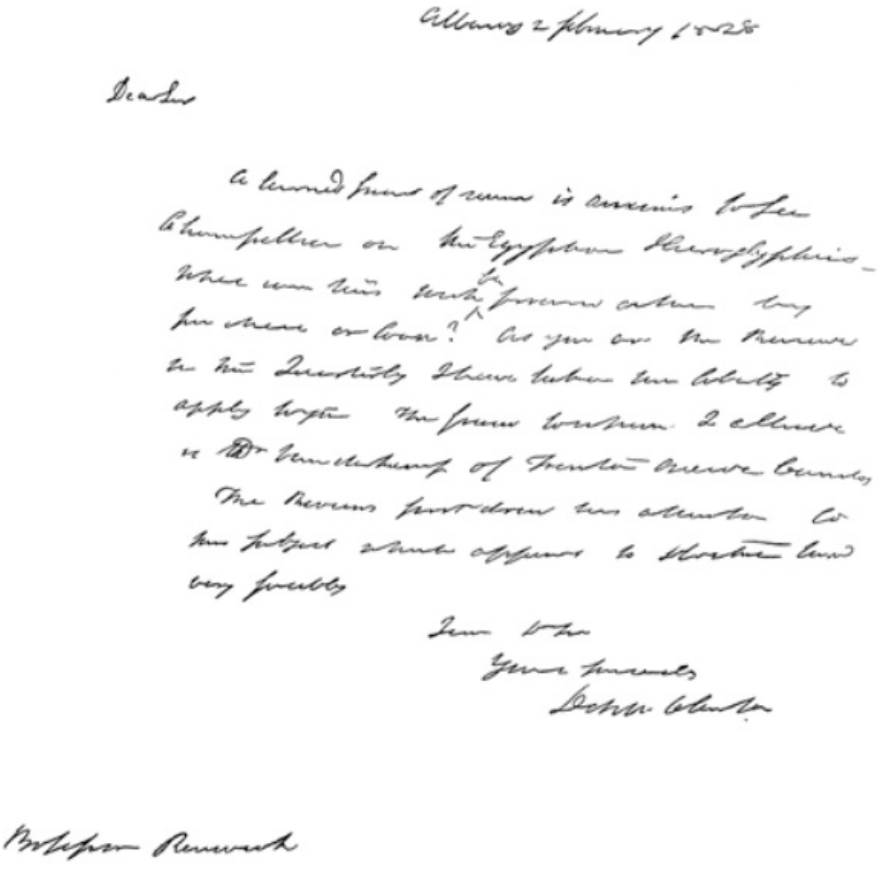

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Clinton's Residence, Maspeth, L.I.

CLINTON.

The Academy of Sciences at Dijon recently asked of their municipality, that all houses in the commune which deserved to be historical, might be marked by commemorative inscriptions. The Council, we are told, readily acceded to the request, and among the birth-places and residences thus designated are those of Buffon, Crebillon, Guyton De Morveau, and the Marshal Tavennes.

We in this country, whether fortunately or unfortunately, live in too progressive an age to allow us to ask for similar remembrances. Unless a statesman happens to be reared in a rural district, the house of his birth [416 seldom survives his youth, possibly his manhood. New structures arise, and the succeeding generation know little or nothing of what preceded.

In the instance of DeWitt Clinton, the difficulty is increased by the diversity of statements that are made relative to his birth-place. He was the son of James Clinton, a gallant soldier in both of the now classic wars of this country. Commissioned as an ensign in the war of 1756, Mr. Clinton served during most of its campaigns. The Continental Congress, in 1775, appointed him colonel of one of the New-York regiments; and after particularly distinguishing himself at Fort Montgomery and Yorktown, he retired from the army of the Revolution with the rank of major-general.

It was after the close of the French War that Mr. Clinton was married to Mary DeWitt. She is represented as having been beautiful in her youth—an only sister, with nine brothers. To them four sons were born, of whom DeWitt was the second. The date of his birth is well settled—being the year 1769;—not so the place. Many of his biographers unite in stating that this was Little Britain, in Orange County, where his father resided. Some assert that he was born at New Windsor, in the same county, in a house still standing, and which can be seen from the river; while others relate the tradition that his parents were on a visit to the fort at Minisink, then under the command of Colonel DeWitt, a brother of Mrs. Clinton; that a severe and long-continued snow-storm occurred, and that the mother was there confined.

On his education it is scarcely necessary to dwell, farther than to trace its influence on his subsequent career. [417 His parents bestowed on him that inestimable gift—the best education that the State could afford—first at Kingston Academy, and subsequently at Columbia College. The professors' chairs were filled by eminent men, who appear to have appreciated the talents of their pupil. He was the first graduate after the Revolution.

At the age of seventeen he commenced the study of the law with the elder Samuel Jones, whose eminence as an advocate, and honesty as a high state officer, still linger amongst our earliest reminiscences.

Thus prepared, as well by preliminary instruction as by earnest self-improvement, he was about entering on the profession of the law, with elders and contemporaries equal to any bar in the Union, when his destiny was at once and permanently changed. He was the nephew of George Clinton, the governor of the young State of New-York; distinguished by his civil and military talents; admirably qualified to guide the rising republic through its forming stages, although possibly too tenacious of his peculiar opinions, and, unfortunately, too long opposed to the adoption of the Constitution.

The parties that from time to time controlled the destinies of the country were now in active collision. In the State of New-York, Jay and Hamilton were the leaders and guides of the Federalists, and Governor Clinton needed all the intellectual aid that could be brought to bear on the contest. He selected his nephew as his private secretary, and the sagacity, at least, of the choice has never been disputed. Several papers on subjects of public and permanent interest, known to have emanated from the pen of DeWitt Clinton, are still preserved.

We are told that he remained in this station until 795—the close of the long administration (continued by re- [418 elections) of his uncle.

In 1797, he was elected a member of the Assembly from the city of New-York, and the next year, of the

Senate. The tenure of the first of these was annual, and of the last for four years. From the above date to the hour of his death, with short intervals, he continued to be chosen in succession to the Senate, and as lieutenant-governor and governor. He was for the space of two years a member of the United States Senate. From 1803 to 1807, and from 1808 to 1815, he served as mayor of the city of New-York. This is a brief outline of the situations he held, and it is only necessary to fill up the sketch with notices of what he proposed and accomplished, to complete the picture.

His "homes," with the brief exception of two winters at Washington, were, of course, mainly in New-York and Albany.

In the former, his town residence was at the lower end of Broadway—then the fashionable part of the city, and where wealthy bankers, and merchants, and distinguished professional men loved to fix their dwellings. At a short distance from the Bowling-green and the Battery, the breezes from the ocean occasionally found their way and shed their influences. Commerce has commanded the removal of most of these private residences, and she has been rigidly obeyed. The merchandise of the Old and of the New World needs still increasing depositories.

While remaining in New-York, he owned a country-seat at Maspeth, on Long Island, to which he frequently resorted, and where he indulged in his favorite pursuits of angling and hunting. He was greatly attached to these, until in after life an unfortunate accident rendered active exercise too laborious. [419

Of Albany, the place in which a large portion of his mature life was spent, we feel some constraint in giving, what we consider, a just account. By many, even intelligent travellers, it is only known as a place of transfer from steamboats and railroads—as excessively hot in summer, and as the capital of the State, where the Legislature holds its sessions during the winter.

But its antiquities—if antiquities are to be spoken of in this country—are of some interest. Here an American Congress once assembled, of which Franklin was a member. Whenever England and France contended for mastery on this continent, many of the officers and troops of the former halted here for a while, or passed on for the finally accomplished object of the conquest of Canada. Here for a time were Howe and Abercrombie, Amherst and Sir William Johnson; while, to the French, it seems to have been the limit, which, though they burnt Schenectady and ravaged the western part of the State, they seemed scarcely able to reach.

Passing over intermediate occurrences, during the war of 1812 there was here concentrated a large portion of the military force of the United States, which went forth in all the pomp and circumstance of war to its mingled career of defeat and success.

Two dwellings still remain in Albany dear to Revolutionary memory—the residences of General Philip Schuyler and General Abraham Ten Broeck. The latter was distinguished as a brave and capable militia officer. The services and talents of the former are not as yet sufficiently appreciated. The wise man—the trusted of Washington—the able statesman—who early pointed out the way to internal improvement in the State of New-York, only needs an impartial and well-instructed biographer to be duly known. [420

It is a matter of satisfaction that both of these residences—crowning heights north and south of the city—are in excellent preservation, owned by wealthy persons, and destined, we may hope, to a long existence.

Governor Clinton occupied during his residence in Albany (part of the time he was out of office) two different houses, which possess an interest only inferior to those we have just mentioned. One of them, formerly almost a country residence,—built by Peter W. Yates, an eminent counsellor at law, and now owned by another of the same name,—was, for a series of years, the dwelling-place of governors of the State of New-York. Here Tompkins dispensed his hospitality, while he wielded, in a manner but partially understood, the destinies of the nation during the war of 1812; and from this beautiful seat he departed, in an evil hour to himself, to be Vice-President of the United States. Clinton succeeded. In this house he met with a severe accident,—a fracture of the knee-pan from a fall; after a slow recovery he was enabled to use the limb with but slight indication of the injury. Still it prevented him from taking exercise on horseback, to which he had been much accustomed, and it probably led to an increased fulness of habit, in the later years of his life.

Subsequently to this he occupied a house (it was that in which he died) in Pearl-street, built by Goldsboro Banyer, one of the last deputy Secretaries of State of the Colony of New-York. It was bequeathed to his son's widow, a daughter of Governor Jay, and on her removal to New-York, was taken as a governor's residence. [421

It would scarcely be proper to conclude these sketches, without briefly enumerating the services of DeWitt Clinton to his State and country. Most of these were thought of, developed and produced ready for adoption, within the sacred precincts of his "home."

As mayor of New-York, he was at that time head of the judicial department of the city. Subsequently that officer has been relieved of these duties, and several local courts have been found necessary, to dispose of the cases which the tangled relations of commerce are constantly bringing forth. Some records of his ability both as a civil and a criminal judge still remain. A Catholic priest had been called upon to disclose what had been communicated to him at the confessional. In his opinion, Mr. Clinton sustained the sacred nature of the secret thus imparted, and subsequent legislation, doubtless founded on this case, extended the exemption not only to the clergyman, but also to the physician. He also aided with great energy in putting down and punishing riots, caused by excited political feelings. Nor should we omit to say, that before him was tried the peculiar case of Whistelo, in which the wit of Counsellor Sampson, and the peculiarities of Dr. Samuel Latham Mitchill were equally conspicuous.

As a member of the Senate of New-York, he became *ex officio* also a member of the highest court in the State—the court for the trial of impeachments, and the correction of errors in the inferior courts. Several of his decisions are to be found in the volumes of New-York State Reports. He grappled with the subjects of insurance law, of libel, the power of committing for contempt, the construction of the Habeas Corpus Act, and [422

the effect of foreign admiralty decisions. "Some of these," says Chancellor Kent, "are models of judicial and parliamentary eloquence, and they all relate to important questions, affecting constitutional rights and personal liberty. They partake more of the character of a statesman's discussions, than that of a dry technical lawyer, and are therefore more interesting to the general scholar."

As a legislator, it is quite sufficient to refer to the long list of laws drawn up and supported by him, as it is given in the eighth chapter of Professor Renwick's life, to appreciate the high class of subjects to which he applied his best efforts. We select only a portion. An act respecting a digest of the public laws of the State. An act to enlarge the powers of and to endow the Orphan Asylum society,—to amend the insolvent laws, to prevent the inhuman treatment of slaves, for the support of the quarantine establishment, to revise and amend the militia law, to incorporate the society for the relief of poor widows with small children, for promoting medical science, for the further encouragement of free schools, for securing to mechanics and others, payment for their labor and materials in the city of New-York. It has been urged that others by their efforts, or their votes, have been as useful as was Mr. Clinton, in procuring the passage of these and similar laws. Be it so. It is not even attempted to deny this. It would be treason to the great interests of humanity to claim exclusive honor for a single man. But he knows little of practical legislation, who is not perfectly aware how efficient and important it is to have one individual, eminent in talents, high in power, who is willing to [423
initiate useful measures—propose their adoption, and support them with his best abilities.

In the matter of the Canals of New-York, this is his high honor; this his crowning glory. Even during life, he gave due credit to all who suggested or supported the work; but his pre-eminent merit is, that he adopted the canal policy as his own party policy. It has been said, in words which cannot be bettered, that "in the great work of internal improvement, he persevered through good report and through evil report, with a steadiness of purpose that no obstacle could divert; and when all the elements were in commotion around him, and even his chosen associates were appalled, he alone, like Columbus, on the wide waste of waters, in his frail bark with a dis-heartened and unbelieving crew, remained firm, self-poised and unshaken."

Heaven in its goodness allowed life till the great work was completed.

Of Governor Clinton's devotion to science and to literature, of his patronage and support of societies and institutions, for their diffusion, all are knowing; but it is not sufficiently understood, that these were amateur pursuits, followed during hours that he could scarcely spare from his legitimate duties. Whatever of imperfection or of crudeness may therefore be found in them, should be charitably considered.

His domestic habits were simple and unobtrusive. He was industrious through life—the earliest riser in the house—frequently, if not generally, making his office fire in the winter, and dispatching most of his voluminous correspondence before the breakfast hour.

In his family, he was every thing that became a man—a kind and faithful husband; an affectionate, indeed [424
indulgent father; a warm, devoted, and often self-sacrificing friend. What wonder is it, that his memory should continue to be cherished with sincere love and ever increasing esteem.

H.K. Brown's Statue of Clinton.

Story.

[425

[426

Salem Oct 23. 1824

My dear Sir

I beg the favour of introducing to your acquaintance Messrs Denison, Stanley, Wortley & Labouchere, who are about to visit the Western States to gratify their curiosity & acquire useful knowledge of our Country. They are all English Gentlemen of distinction, & the three first are members of Parliament & of the most respectable families. Their visit to Boston & its vicinity has afforded all of us the most unaffected gratification; + + + + + + I shall consider it the highest personal favour, if you will give them all the information in your power necessary for the accomplishment of their objects in the best manner, & will furnish them with letters of introduction to your friends on their route. I have an anxious desire, that they should see America, as it really is, & to meet with our distinguished citizens in every part of the Union.

I have the honour to remain
your obliged friend
Joseph Story

The Honourable
Mr Justice Todd
Frankfort. Kentucky.

[427

Story's House at Cambridge, Mass.

STORY.

It is a common saying among lawyers, that in proportion to the labor which their profession exacts, and the degree of distinction which success confers upon them during their lifetime, their fate is a hard one in the struggle for immortality. They are accustomed to say in a tone of half complaint, that the zeal and ability which would earn for them a cheap celebrity in some other pursuit, is expended upon the establishing of some

nice distinction, or the solving of some intricate problem which no one but themselves can appreciate, and in which no one but themselves (and their clients) take any interest. There is some truth in all this. The whole [428
community stands ready to read the last production of the literary man, so only that he make it worth reading, and often without requiring even so much; whereas, the neatest point that a lawyer could take is constitutionally repulsive to one-half of creation, and dry and unmeaning to the greater part of the remainder. Even those whose names are on the lips of men, owe their good fortune often to something other than their law. If Blackstone were not among the most classical writers of the English language, we should not have lived to see twenty-one English editions of his Commentaries. He was probably a less profound lawyer than several sergeants who practised before him in the Court of Common Pleas, whose names would escape an insertion in the most Universal Biographical Dictionary. So the successful lawyer must content himself with his worldly prosperity,—if in his lifetime he receives his good things, that must be his comfort, and in truth it is no small one.

But the nature of a lawyer's employment, even if he combine with it the kindred one of politics and legislation, is not apt to invest his home with that attraction to the stranger which the home of the literary man possesses. We are at once interested to know who the author is, who has charmed us by the quaintness of his conceits, or the freshness and purity of his style. We want to see the house and the room, where those intricate plots are matured, or those lifelike characters are first conceived. But Coke upon Littleton, seems pretty much the same, whether read upon the green slope of a country hill, or in the third story of an office down town. Besides, the author is at liberty to seek the most secluded spots, and dwell amongst the most romantic scenery, and surround himself with all that makes life beautiful to contemplate; and it is for his interest to do [429
this, in order that his mind may be kept open to impressions, his spirits elevated and serene, and his whole life calm and happy. The lawyer on the other hand, must seek communion, not with nature, but with men; he must dwell among large communities, and rail even there where merchants most do congregate.

The home of the distinguished lawyer and statesman whose name is placed at the head of these lines, is an exception from the homes of others of his peers; if it be true that it is the fate of a lawyer's home to be an object of interest to its inmates alone. There was something in his frank, enthusiastic and generous nature, which made him always susceptible to the influences of home, and always fitted to awake and to wield those enchantments with which a home is invested. The secluded peninsula of Marblehead, with its long firm beach upon one side, and its rocky precipitous shore upon the other, begirt on three sides by the ever-changing Atlantic, is considered by his biographer to have had its effect in moulding the character of the boy; and in the quiet, tame inland beauty of Cambridge, with its academical proprieties, and its level streets, and its spacious marshes, through which the winding Charles "slips seaward silently;" many remain outside of the family circle, to testify to the magical attraction which once hung about the narrow brick house where he lived, and the cordial greeting which the visitor received at the hands of its former occupant.

Judge Story was born in the antiquated, primeval fishing town of Marblehead; a town presenting such a rocky and barren surface, that when Whitfield entered it for the first time, he was fain to inquire, "Pray, where do they bury their dead?" Story himself speaks of his birth-place as "a secluded fishing town, having no general [430
connection with other towns, and, not being a thoroughfare, without that intercourse which brings strangers to visit it, or to form an acquaintance with its inhabitants." In fact it could not well be a thoroughfare, since it leads only from Salem to the sea, and the inhabitants of the latter town have a sufficiently ready access of their own. But though Marblehead with its scanty soil, and its isolated position, is neither an Eden nor a thoroughfare, it is at least a stout old place where men are grown; where an entire regiment was furnished for the cause of American Independence, completely officered and manned by brave men, to whom the dangers of war were but a continuation of previous lives of peril, and who supplied besides more privateers than history has recorded, to harass the enemy upon an element with which they were more familiar.

The town of Marblehead is supported by the fishery business. A large portion of its inhabitants are simple fishermen, whose manhood is passed in voyages to the Great Banks, and voyages back; a constant succession of those perils which are incident to the sea, with long winter evenings of sailors' yarns and ghost stories, in one monotonous round, till they finally depart

> "On that drear voyage from whose night
> The ominous shadows never lift."

It was among a population of this kind, and at a time when a long and disastrous war had crippled their resources, that the youthful Story began with his accustomed enthusiasm to acquire that education whose root is bitter when grown in the most favorable soil. Without advantages of good schooling, or a plentiful [431
supply of books, he did what thousands of others, great and small, have done and are doing; that is, he acquired an education without the modern improvements on which our boys rely, and whose value their parents and teachers are so apt to over-estimate. In the shop of the Marblehead barber, the village great men assembled to hear the news, and to hold forth upon the condition and prospects of the young republic, as well as to have their ambrosial locks powdered and their beards removed. Here, in place of the modern lecture room, our young hero resorted, and listened reverently to oracular utterances from wise mouths in the intervals of the shaving brush and the razor. The village barber himself, endowed with an easy garrulity, more natural and professional than the stately reserve of his metropolitan brother, could, at his leisure, retail the wisdom of his many councillors, diluted to the point where it admitted of the mental digestion of a child.

This, together with the usual toils and discouragements of the classics, and the hopes and fears which a college examination inspires, made up a boy's life in Marblehead before this century began. The old Judge, late in life recalling these early Marblehead times, speaks of other influences, some of whose effect is, we imagine, derived from the fact that he is viewing them in his maturity, as they then appear, softened as seen down the long vista of nearly forty years. "My delight," he says, "was to roam over the narrow and rude territory of my native town; to traverse its secluded beaches and its shallow inlets; to gaze upon the sleepless ocean; to lay myself down on the sunny rocks, and listen to the deep tones of the rising and the falling tides;

to look abroad when the foaming waves were driven with terrific force and uproar against the barren cliffs or [432
the rocky promontories, which every where opposed their immovable fronts to resist them; to seek, in the midst of the tremendous majesty of an eastern storm, some elevated spot, where, in security, I could mark the mountain billow break upon the distant shore, or dash its broken waters over the lofty rocks which here and there stood along the coast, naked and weather-beaten. But still more was I pleased in a calm, summer day, to lay myself down alone on one of the beautiful heights which overlook the harbor of Salem, and to listen to the broken sounds of the hammers in the distant ship-yards, or to the soft dash of the oar of some swift-moving boat, or to the soft ripple of the murmuring wave; or to gaze on the swelling sail, or the flying bird, or the scarcely moving smoke, in a revery of delicious indolence."

When Story left Marblehead and entered Harvard College in 1795, he was brought in contact with somewhat different circumstances and different temptations from those which there await the youthful student in these days. Coming from a small and tolerably illiterate fishing town, into the midst of such literary shades, being in daily converse with young men at an age when the mind is lively, and full of the easy self-confidence which the mutual flattery of a College begets, his enthusiasm was quickened anew, and his generous nature attacked on its weakest side. "I seemed," he says, "to breathe a higher atmosphere, and to look abroad with a wider vision and more comprehensive powers. Instead of the narrow group of a village, I was suddenly brought into a large circle of young men engaged in literary pursuits, and warmed and cheered by the hopes of future eminence." There is, perhaps, no impropriety in saying, that at fifteen, we look abroad with a wider vision and more [433
comprehensive powers than we do at twelve, and such young men as Channing, his friendly rival in College, and Tuckerman, his chum, might well be warmed and cheered by the hopes of future eminence. The students in those days enjoyed as much seclusion as now, with perhaps a little less general culture and a little more dissipation. But, as we have intimated, in some respects the changes were greater. The anti-republican system of "fagging" had not then become quite obsolete and forgotten, but existed at least in oral tradition, whereas now, its less rigorous substitute has recently fallen into disuse. In those days there was not even an unsuccessful attempt, to render the intercourse between the Professors and the students in any sense parental, but the formal and unconfiding manners of the old school were preached, as well as practised. The line of division between the College and the town was sharply drawn and unhesitatingly maintained on the part of the former, and the opportunities for social intercourse with Boston were comparatively limited, when omnibuses were unknown, and the bridge regarded as a somewhat hazardous speculation. Now the students are to be seen in Washington street on Saturdays, and there is scarce an evening's entertainment in Boston, without young representatives from Cambridge. And the old town itself has added so many new houses to its former number, that a great change is coming over the face of Cambridge society. The term "the season" is beginning to have its proper significance, the winter months being pretty well filled with the customary social observances. It is true that the College is still the controlling element. Festivities are mostly suspended during the first two months of the year, which is the time of the winter vacation, and revive again with the return of [434
the spring and the students. But from faint symptoms which may be detected by the anxious observer, there is reason to fear that it may not be long before the great body of the students will have cause on their part, to complain of that exclusiveness which they have exercised as their prerogative for more than two centuries.

The four short years of Story's undergraduate existence were passed free, alike from this species of social pleasure and social anxiety. He was naturally fond of company, and had a healthy, youthful taste for conviviality; but he shrank instinctively from excesses, and was, fortunately, also ambitious to win a high rank for scholarship. His companions were of his own age, and those divinities who people the inner chambers of a young man's fancy at the age of nineteen, were not upon the spot to distract overmuch his attention from his studies. He left his home within the College walls before he had arrived at manhood, and returned again some thirty years after in the maturity of his powers, to repay to his foster mother the debt which he owed for his education, by imparting to her younger children the results of his experience. Cambridge is to be considered as his home; it was there that he won his greatest fame, it was there that he fondly turned to refresh himself after his labors on the full bench and the circuit; this was the home of his affections and his interests, and there his earnest and active life was brought to its calm and peaceful close.

In Brattle-street, a little distance on the road from the Colleges to Mount Auburn, there stands a narrow brick house, with its gable end to the street, facing the east, and a long piazza on its southern side. It is situated [435
just at the head of Appian Way—not the Queen of Ways, leading from Rome to Brundusium, over which Horace journeyed in company with Virgil, and Paul's brethren came to meet him as far as Appii Forum and The Three Taverns, but a short lane, boasting not many more yards than its namesake miles; leading from Cambridge Common to Brattle-street, journeyed over by hurrying students with Horace and Virgil under their arms, without a single tavern in it, and hardly long enough to accommodate three. The external appearance of the house would hardly attract or reward the attention of the passer by. It stands by itself, looking as much too high for its width as an ordinary city residence in New-York, that has sprung up in advance of the rest of its block. The street in which it stands is flat and shady, but wonderfully dusty nevertheless, for Cambridge is a town

"Where dust and mud the equal year divide."

The old inhabitants may be supposed to be reconciled to that dust, of which they are made, and to which they naturally expect in a few years to return. Thus Lowell finds it in his heart to sing the praises of Cambridge soil,

"Dear native town! whose choking elms each year
With eddying dust before their time turn gray,
Pining for rain,—to me thy dust is dear;
It glorifies the eve of Summer day."

But, however native Cantabs may feel, the temporary resident hails the friendly watering-cart, which appears

at intervals in the streets, since the old town has changed itself into a city.

A flower-garden on the south side, separates Judge Story's house from the village blacksmith, who has had the [436
rare happiness of being celebrated in the verses of his two fellow-townsmen, the poets Longfellow and Lowell;

"Under a spreading chestnut tree,
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands,
And the muscles of his brawny arm
Are strong as iron bands.

"His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan,
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whatever he can,
And looks the whole world in the face
For he owes not any man.

"Week in, week out, from morn to night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell
When the evening sun is low.

"And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing floor."

Among the children who thus looked in upon the old smith in former days, was Lowell himself, who has embodied this juvenile reminiscence in a few lines, which may be appropriately inserted here, and the curious reader may contrast the image they contain, with the parallel one in the concluding lines from Longfellow, [437
quoted above.

"How many times prouder than King on throne,
Loosed from the village school-dame's A's and B's,
Panting have I the creaky bellows blown,
And watched the pent volcano's red increase,
Then paused to see the ponderous sledge brought down
By that hard arm voluminous and brown,
From the white iron swarm its golden vanishing bees."

The village blacksmith is dead now; the fires which he lighted in the forge have gone out, and an unknown successor wields the sledge, which may still be heard as ever, from the piazza of his neighbor's house, and down the road on the other side, as far as the row of lindens which overshadow a mansion once inhabited by the worthy old Tory, Brattle, who has given his name to the street.

The external appearance of Judge Story's house does not add much to the poetry of its surroundings. It runs back in an irregular way, a long distance from the street, and at its furthermost end, in the second story, is, or used to be, the library, commanding the same view which constituted such a recommendation to Dick Swiveller's house, namely, the opposite side of the way. There is not, therefore, an opportunity for much romance to cluster about it, nor is its attractiveness increased, when the reader is reminded that the story beneath answered the purposes of a woodshed. But the house which witnessed the daily labors of such a man, need not covet or pretend to those outside attractions which it unquestionably lacks.

Judge Story removed to Cambridge, for the purpose of taking charge of the Law-school connected with the [438
University. This institution had just received an endowment from Nathan Dane, which, together with the labors and reputation of the new Professor, were the prime causes of its establishment upon such a durable foundation, that the number of its students was increased five fold. From this period, his time was divided among Washington, during the sitting of the Supreme Court, the first circuit in the New-England States, and Cambridge, which henceforward was his home. The Law-school he regarded as his favorite and most important field of labor, and always recurred to his connection with it, with pleasure and pride; and a word concerning this Institution may, with propriety, be coupled with a description of his personal habits, so that both together will furnish, better than any thing else, a correct picture of the daily life of the man.

At the time that Story accepted the Dane Professorship in the Law-school in Cambridge he had already achieved the labor of a lifetime. A lucrative business at the bar, was quitted for a seat upon the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States. He began his political life as a democrat and stanch supporter of Jefferson, when there were not many such in Massachusetts; but in later life he became a whig. The natural effect of a judicial station upon a mind like his, was to make him cautious and conservative; and he finally seemed a little distrustful of even the party with which he was associated. In the convention of 1820, which formed the existing constitution of Massachusetts, he took an active part with such men as Webster, Parker,

Quincy and Prescott, and many of our important mercantile statutes and bankrupt laws were drawn by him, nearly, or quite in the form in which they were finally passed by Congress. He had been for about eighteen [439
years an associate Justice of the Supreme Court, when, without resigning that position, he assumed the almost equally onerous duties of a Professor of Law. This new field of activity was entered upon with earnestness and zeal, and it is not necessary to state the success with which his efforts were attended. Towards the students his manner was familiar and affectionate. He was fond of designating them as "my boys," and without assuming any superiority, or exacting any formal respect, he participated so far as he was able in their success and failure; and extended beyond the narrow period of the school, far into active life, that interest in their behalf which he had contracted as their teacher. His lectures upon what are commonly considered the dry topics of the law, were delivered with enthusiasm, and illustrated with copious anecdotes from the store-house of his memory and his experience, and filled with episodes which were suggested to his active mind at almost every step. Indeed, if one were disposed to point out his prominent fault as a legal writer, he would probably select that diffuseness of style and copiousness of illustration, which, though it contributes somewhat to fulness and perspicuity, does it nevertheless at the cost of convenient brevity; which can more easily be dispensed with in a poem than in a law-book. But that characteristic which might perhaps be considered as a blemish in his legal treatises, only rendered him better, qualified for a successful oral lecturer. A printed volume admits of the last degree of condensation, because repeated perusals of one page will effect every thing which could be expected from a prolonged discussion over many; and to text-books of law, the student or the practitioner resort principally for a statement of results, with the addition of only so much general reasoning as may render the results intelligible. In an oral lecture on the other hand, as the [440
attention cannot be arrested; or time taken to overcome difficulties, repetition and reiteration, so far from being a blemish, is a merit. To these qualifications Story added engaging manners, and a personal presence, which gave him extraordinary influence over the young men who crowded to receive the benefit of his instructions. His zeal was contagious, and awakened similar feelings in his hearers, and the enthusiasm of the speaker and the audience acted and reacted upon each other. Many anecdotes are related to show the interest in the study of the law, which, under his magical influence, was awakened, not only among the few who are naturally studious, but among the whole body of the students almost without exception.

Saturday is a day of rest in Cambridge by immemorial usage. To force upon the undergraduates a recitation on Saturday afternoon, would outrage their feelings to such an extent, as to justify in their opinion a resort to the last appeal, namely, a rebellion. Yet under Story's ministrations the law-students were eager to violate the sacredness of Saturday, to which the Judge assented, animated by a zeal superior to their own. So that the whole week was devoted to lectures, and the conducting in moot courts of prepared cases. "I have given," says the Judge in a letter to a friend, "nearly the whole of last term, when not on judicial duty, two lectures every day, and even broke in upon the sanctity of the *dies non juridicus*, Saturday. It was carried by acclamation in the school; so that you see we are alive." One of the pupils describes a similar incident; a case was to be adjourned, and Saturday seemed the most convenient time, "the counsel were anxious to argue it; but [441
unwilling to resort to that extreme measure. Judge Story said—Gentlemen, the only time we can hear this case, is Saturday afternoon. This is *dies non*, and no one is obliged or expected to attend. I am to hold Court in Boston until two o'clock. I will ride directly out, take a hasty dinner, and be here by half-past three o'clock, and hear the case, if you are willing. He looked round the school for a reply. We felt ashamed, in our own business in which we were alone interested, to be outdone in zeal and labor by this aged and distinguished man, to whom the case was but child's play, a tale twice told and who was himself pressed down by almost incredible labors. The proposal was unanimously accepted." The same interesting communication describes the scene which took place when the Judge returned to Cambridge in the winter from Washington. "The school was the first place he visited after his own fireside. His return, always looked for, and known, filled the library. His reception was that of a returned father. He shook all by the hand, even the most obscure and indifferent; and an hour or two was spent in the most exciting, instructive, and entertaining descriptions and anecdotes of the events of the term. Inquiries were put by the students from different States, as to leading counsel, or interesting causes from their section of the country; and he told us as one would have described to a company of squires and pages, a tournament of monarchs and nobles on fields of cloth of gold:—how Webster spoke in this case, Legaré or Clay, or Crittenden, General Jones, Choate or Spencer, in that; with anecdotes of the cases and points, and all the currents of the heady fight."

Judge Story's gracious and dignified demeanor upon the bench is too well known, and not closely enough [442
connected with an account of his home life, to justify a description here. All who have spoken upon the subject, have borne witness to the kindness and courtesy with which he treated the bar, particularly the younger members, who most need, and best appreciate such consideration. No lawyer was provoked by captious remarks, or mortified by inattention or indifference, or that offensive assumption of superiority which places the counsel at such disadvantage with the judge, and lowers his credit with his clients and the spectators. With novices at the bar his manner was patient and encouraging, with the leaders whose position was nearly level with his own, attentive, cordial, at times even familiar, but always dignified. Among the prominent lawyers upon the Maine circuit, was his classmate in college, and intimate friend, Hon. Stephen Longfellow, the father of the poet, of whom the following story is told. When any objection or qualification was started by the Court, to a point which he was pressing upon its attention, too courteous to question or oppose the opinion of the Judge, he would escape under this formula, "But there is this *distinction*, may it please your honor;" which distinction, when it came to be stated, was often so exceedingly thin, that its existence could be discerned only by the learned gentleman himself. This little mannerism was known and observed among his friends in the profession, one of whom now living composed and passed round the bar this epitaph: "Here lies Stephen Longfellow, LL. D. Born &c. Died &c. With this *Distinction*. That such a man can never die." This epitaph reached the bench; and Mr. Longfellow himself, who not long afterwards on an argument, was met by [443
a question from the Judge. "But, may it please your honor, there is this dis——" "Out with it, brother Longfellow," said Judge Story with a good-humored smile. But it would not come. The epitaph records the death of the distinction.

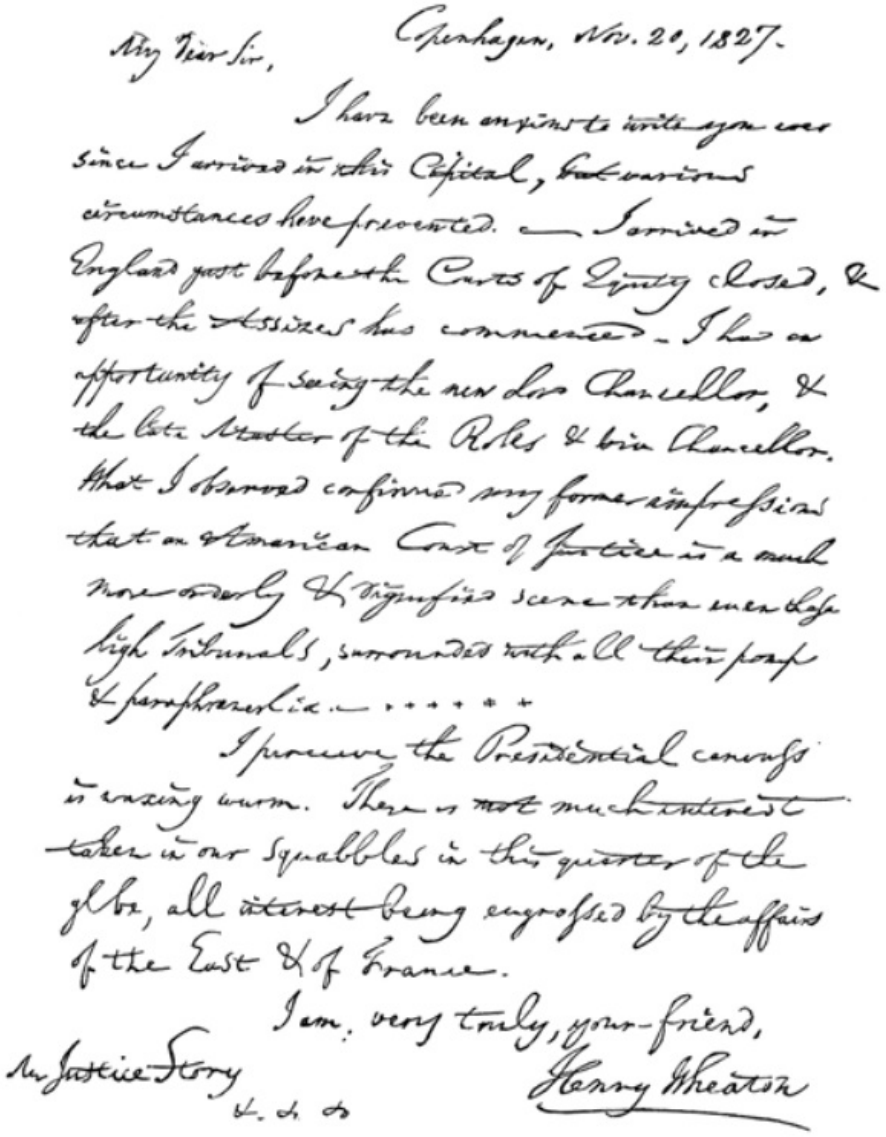
The interest which Judge Story felt in the prosperity of his University, was not wholly confined to the Law-

school, with which he was immediately connected. He was one of the overseers of the College, and entered warmly and prominently into every question affecting the welfare of the Institution; from an elaborate and recondite argument upon the meaning of the word "Fellows," in the charter of the college,—the doubt being, whether none but resident instructors were eligible as Fellows, or whether the word is merely synonymous with *socius* or associate,—down to a reform in the social observances of the students upon the occasion of what is called Class Day. The old custom had been for the students on the last day of their meeting, before Commencement, to partake together of an undefined quantity of punch from a large reservoir of that beverage previously prepared. In more modern times, this habit came to be justly considered as subversive of sobriety and good order, and it was proposed to recast entirely the order of exercises. Of this reform Judge Story was an advocate; he was present at the first celebration under the new order of things, and was much gratified and elated at the change. Class Day is now the culminating point of the student's life—the exercises are an oration and poem in the morning, and a ball and reception in the afternoon and evening. More ladies visit the College on that day, than on any other, and the students have in lieu of their punch the less intoxicating recreation of a polka. [444

Judge Story was about five feet eight inches tall, not above the middle height, with a compact and solid figure; and active and rapid in his movements. He seldom, if ever, loitered along; his customary gait was hasty and hurried, and he had a habit of casting quick eager glances about him as he moved. The expression of his face was animated and changing, his eyes were blue, his mouth large, his voice clear and flexible, and his laugh hearty and exhilarating. Late in life he was bald upon the top of his head, and his white hair below, and the benign expression of his countenance, gave him a dignified and venerable appearance, particularly when seated upon the bench. His personal habits were regular and systematic in the extreme. He never rose before seven, and was always in bed by half-past ten. His constitution required eight good hours of sleep, and he did not hesitate to gratify it in that particular. It was never intended that all men should rise at the same hour, and it is no great exercise of virtue on the part of those who do not enjoy sleep, to get up early. After breakfasting he read a newspaper for a half hour, and then worked faithfully, till called off to attend the lecture room or the court. After dinner he resumed his labors so long as daylight lasted, and the evening was devoted until bedtime to light reading, or social recreation in the midst of his family. He could pass easily from one species of employment to another without loss of time, and by working steadily when he did work, he was enabled to go through a very great amount of labor without any excessive fatigue or exhaustion. In this way his life was prolonged, and he retained to the last, undisturbed possession of all his faculties. He died in September 1845, at the age of sixty-six, having been for thirty-four years a Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States, and for sixteen years a Professor of law in the school at Cambridge. [445

Wheaton. [447

[448



My Dear Sir, Copenhagen, Nov. 20, 1827.

I have been anxious to write you ever since I arrived in this Capital, but various circumstances have prevented. — I arrived in England just before the Courts of Equity closed, & after the Assizes had commenced. I had an opportunity of seeing the new Lord Chancellor, & the late Master of the Rolls & Vice Chancellor. What I observed confirmed my former impressions that an American Court of Justice is a much more orderly & dignified scene than even the high Tribunals, surrounded with all their pomp & paraphernalia. — * * * * * *

I perceive the Presidential canvass is waxing warm. There is not much interest taken in our squabbles in this quarter of the globe, all interest being engrossed by the affairs of the East & of France.

I am, very truly, your friend,

Henry Wheaton

Mr Justice Story

U. S.

Wheaton's Residence Near Copenhagen.

WHEATON.

Among the persons whom religious persecution compelled to leave England during the reign of Charles I., and seek an asylum in the new world, was Robert Wheaton, a Baptist clergyman. He first established himself in Salem, but when the intolerance of that community led those of his persuasion to remove elsewhere, he joined Roger Williams, and assisted him in founding the now flourishing State of Rhode Island.

From him Henry Wheaton was descended. He was born in Providence, 1786, and entered Rhode Island College at the age of thirteen. He was already remarkable for his love of reading, particularly in the branches [450
of history and literature, and appears to have studied more from the pleasure he had in the acquisition of knowledge, than from any love of distinction. He graduated at the age of seventeen, and immediately after entered upon the study of the law, in compliance with his father's wishes rather than from personal inclination; for at that period he is said not to have entertained any particular leaning towards the legal profession. In 1806 he went abroad to complete his education. He passed some time at Poitiers, where he learned to speak and write French fluently, and had an opportunity of studying French law, and especially the Code Napoleon, which had then but recently been promulgated. He also attended the courts of justice, and heard some of the most distinguished lawyers of the time, of whose eloquence he often spoke in his letters to his family. He always recurred with pleasure in later years to the time he passed at Poitiers. The kindness he experienced from the family in which he lived, the graceful politeness and cheerfulness of the French character, gave him ever after a predilection in favor of France. After spending a few weeks in Paris, he went to England, where he applied himself to the study of English law. He was often at the house of Mr. Monroe, then our Minister in London, who seems to have taken some pains to converse with him on the political and social state of Europe. Perhaps these conversations contributed to form his taste for diplomatic life, in which he was destined to play so distinguished a part, and also to lead him in its course to show that willingness to impart information of a similar kind, to the young men by whom he was himself surrounded, which was so pleasing a trait in his character.

Soon after his return from Europe he was admitted to the bar in his native State, where he continued to [451
practise till 1813. At that period, feeling the want of a wider field in which to exercise his talents, he determined, having previously married his cousin, the daughter of Dr. Wheaton of Providence, to remove to New-York with his wife. We must not omit to mention, that before leaving Providence he pronounced a Fourth of July Oration, in which he spoke with generous indignation of the bloody wars which then distracted Europe, and the disastrous consequences of which his residence in France had given him an opportunity to observe. But although thus warmly opposed to wars of conquest, there were cases in which he deemed resistance a sacred duty; he therefore zealously devoted his pen to encouraging his fellow-countrymen in resisting the unjust encroachments of England. During two years he edited the National Advocate, and the spirit as well as the fairness with which its leading articles were written, insured the success of the paper, and established his reputation in New-York. At the same time he held the office of Justice of the Marine Court, and for a few months that also of Army Judge Advocate. In 1815 he returned to the practice of his profession, and published in the same year a Treatise on the Law of Maritime Captures and Prizes, which Mr. Reddie of Edinburgh has since pronounced to have been the best work then published on the subject; no small praise, if we consider that Mr. Wheaton was only thirty years of age at the time it was written. In 1816 he was named Reporter of the Supreme Court at Washington, and continued to hold this place until 1827. The Reports, of which he
published a volume yearly, and which were highly esteemed by American lawyers, were abridged without his [452
consent soon after he went abroad. The publication of this abridgment occasioned a lawsuit, which ended only with his life. The following letter, for which we are indebted to the kindness of Professor Parsons, of the Law-school in Cambridge, will, we think, be read with interest. We must only remark, that it is an error to suppose that Mr. Wheaton shunned general society after he went to Europe; he joined in it, on the contrary, more than is usual to men of his age in our country.

Cambridge, May 22, 1853.

"I am very glad to offer even a slight contribution to this memorial, of one so worthy of all respect as the late Mr. Wheaton. And you must permit me to express the hope that the sketch you now propose to make, will hereafter be expanded into that history of his life and exhibition of his character, which should be given to the world, in justice to him and to the very many to whom it would be most acceptable. I can speak of him from personal acquaintance, only after a long interval, when even recollections so pleasant as those of my intercourse with him have become somewhat dim.

"It was at the very close of the year 1821, that I went to Washington, to pass some months there. The commissioners to distribute the money due to American citizens under the then recent treaty with Spain, began their sessions that winter. Mr. Webster was employed by most of the large claimants in New England, and I went with him to assist him generally, and also charged by some of those claimants with the especial
care of their interests. In New-York I became acquainted with Mr. Wheaton; and he was with us during a part [453
of the journey to Washington. As fellow-travellers, we became intimate, and during the whole of my stay in Washington,—nearly three months,—this intimacy was kept up. From many parts of the country, eminent lawyers were at Washington, in attendance upon the Supreme Court, or charged with the care of cases before the commissioners under the Spanish treaty, and I was meeting them continually in society; and I had the good fortune also to, become acquainted with many of the most distinguished members of government and of Congress, and visited freely in the whole range—then less broad than now—of society in Washington.

"Wherever I went I met Mr. Wheaton. Every where he was upon the footing, not of a received, but of a welcomed guest; and he seemed to be most intimate in the best houses. It was easy to see the cause of this. His important position as Reporter of the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States—which office he had then held for six years—brought him into immediate contact not only with the judges of the court, but with all who practised in it; and it might be supposed that with them he would be on terms of intimacy and friendship. But there was something in the character of that friendship, that no mere position explained; and he inspired an equally warm regard in many who never met him in his official duties. Among all his friends, if I were to name any persons, I think it would be Mr. Webster himself, who treated him as he might a brother; Sir Stratford Canning, Minister from England, and M. de Neuville, the French Minister, who appeared to give tone and character to Washington society so far as any persons can influence elements so diversified and
refractory, and in whose houses he stood on the footing of a confidential friend; Mr Lowndes of South [454
Carolina, a most wise and excellent man; and lastly and most of all, Chief Justice Marshall. Let me pause a moment to say one word of this great and good man, to whose greatness and whose goodness, equally, this

country is, and while its prosperity endures, will be indebted; for his greatness rested upon his goodness as its foundation. Even his wide and accurate learning, his clear and close reasoning, his profound insight into the true merits and exact character and bearing of every question, and the unerring sagacity which enabled him to see the future in the present; all these together, and whatever more there might have been of merely intellectual power, would not have enabled him to lay the foundations of our national and constitutional jurisprudence with the depth, breadth, and firmness, which all attacks upon them have, as yet, only made more apparent, if it had not been for his moral character. Here lay the inmost secret of his power. Men felt, and the nation felt, his incorruptibility; meaning by this, not merely the absence of that baser and more obvious selfishness, which most men of decent self-respect overcome or suppress; but his perfect and manifest freedom from all motives and all influences whatever, which could tend to cloud or warp his understanding, or qualify the utterance of his wisdom. He did not stand before us a man of living ice, perfectly safe because perfectly cold; for he was affectionate and gentle as a child; excitable even to enthusiasm, when that kind heart was touched; listening, not only with an equal strength to the strongest, but with a perfect sympathy to the eloquent, and with a charming courtesy to all. There he stood, and no one ever saw him and heard him, and did not know that his one wish was to do his great duty; and that his admirable intellect came [455
to its daily tasks, and did them, wholly free from all possible distortion or disturbance, not because he was strong enough to repel all the influences of party, or passion, or prejudice, or interest, or personal favor, but because none of these things could come near enough to him to be repelled. By the happy constitution of his nature, there was no flaw in him to give entrance to any thing which, could draw him one hair's breadth aside from the straight course of truth and justice, and of the law, which in his mind was but their embodiment and voice. Of this good and great man there is as yet no adequate memorial; and it would require a strong hand, and if not an equal, at least a sympathizing mind and heart, to construct one which shall indeed be adequate. But I indulge the hope that it will be given to us before the generation which knew him shall pass wholly away. And you, I am sure, will pardon me for using this opportunity to render to his cherished memory this slight and evanescent tribute. I do but indulge myself in saying a part of what I have frequent occasion to say to the many students to whom it is my official duty to teach the law of their country as well as I can, and therefore to speak often of Marshall.

"The Chief Justice treated Mr. Wheaton with the fondest regard, and this example would have had its influence had it been necessary; but in fact the best men then in Washington were on the most intimate and confidential terms with him. The simple truth is, that universal respect was rendered to him because he deserved it. He was a gentleman: and therefore the same gentleman to all and under all circumstances; yes, he was indeed and emphatically a gentleman, and combined—with no base admixture—all the elements which [456
go to compose what we mean, or should mean, by that word, as thoroughly as any one that I have ever known.

"I did not meet him after leaving Washington until a short time before his death, and then not often. I saw very little change in his manner, for he appeared to be as glad as I was to revive the pleasant recollections of that distant winter. But I have been told that after he went abroad, he was considered somewhat silent, and even disposed to avoid rather than seek general society. I cannot say how this was during those later years; but when I knew him in Washington, no one more enjoyed society, and few sought it more, or were more sought by it. He was,—not perhaps gay,—but eminently cheerful; and his manner was characterized by that forgetfulness of self, which, as in great things, it forms the foundation for the highest excellence, so in the lesser matters of social intercourse it imparts a perpetual charm, and constitutes almost of itself, the essence of all true politeness.

There was with Mr. Wheaton, no watching of opportunity for display; no indifference and want of interest when the topics of conversation, or the parties, or other circumstances, made it impossible for him to occupy the foreground; no skilful diversion of the conversation into paths which led to his strongholds, where he might come forth with peculiar advantage. Still less did he—as in this country so many do—play out in society the game of life, by using it only as a means of promoting his personal or professional objects. Certainly, one may sometimes help himself importantly in this way. Very useful acquaintances may thus be made and cultivated, who might be rather shy if directly approached. Facts may be learned, and opportunities for [457
advancement early discovered, or effectually laid hold of, by one who circulates widely in a society like that in Washington, or indeed any where. Nor perhaps should it be a ground of reproach to any one, that in a reasonable way and to a reasonable extent, he seeks and cultivates society for this purpose. But, whatever may be the moral aspect of this matter, or whatever the degree in which conduct of this kind is or is not justifiable, there was in Mr. Wheaton's demeanor nothing of this; nothing of it in appearance, because nothing of it in fact; for one who is mainly, or in any considerable degree governed by a purpose of this kind, must be cunning indeed, to hide it effectually; and cunning of any sort, was a quality of which he had none whatever. Every body felt and knew this: and therefore every body met him with a sense of confidence and repose, which of itself would go far in making any person more acceptable as a friend or as a mere companion, in a society of which the very surface constantly exhibited the many whirling under currents of Washington life. In one word, there was in him nothing of *trick*; but that constant and perfect suavity which is the spontaneous expression of universal kindness; and an excellent understanding, well and widely cultivated, and always ready to bring forth all its resources, not to help himself, but to help or gratify others, and all others with whom he came into contact, and all this, with no appearance of purpose or design of any kind; for it was but the natural outpouring of mind and heart, of one who was open to the widest sympathy, and whose interest in all persons and things about him was most real and honest, because he loved nothing so well as to do all the good he could, by word or deed, or little or much, to one, or few, or many. He was therefore most popular in [458
society. But when we speak of Mr. Wheaton's social *popularity*, we must be careful to use this word in a higher than its common sense; and if I have made myself at all intelligible, I think you will understand both the cause and the character of that popularity.

"And more than this I cannot say. Time has effaced from my memory details and especial circumstances; nor can I therefore, by their help, illustrate this slight sketch of Mr. Wheaton's character and position, during those pleasant months which he helped so much to make pleasant. Of these particulars, my recollection is dim

enough. But no lapse of time will efface from my mind the clear and distinct recollection of the high excellence of his character, or the charms of his conversation and manners; nor shall I ever lose any portion of the affection and respect with which I regard his memory.

"I am, very sincerely,
"Your friend and obedient servant,
"THEOPHILUS PARSONS."

CAMBRIDGE, May 23, 1853.

In 1821, Mr. Wheaton was elected a member of theConvention for revising the Constitution of the State of New-York, which having been formed amid the tumults and perils of war, seemed defective and insufficient to the wants of a richer, more enlightened, and more numerous society. In his sittings he turned his attention more particularly to the organization of the tribunals. In 1824, he was appointed by the New-York Legislature a member of the commission appointed to draw up the civil and criminal code of the State, a work in which he continued to be engaged until 1827. It has been remarked that this was the first effort made by any State [459
possessing the common law, to reduce its disconnected and diffusive legislation to the unity of a code; so that his name is thus connected with one of the most important landmarks in the history of American law.

It may easily be imagined, that a person of so serious and thoughtful a disposition could not have failed at some period of his life, to turn his attention to the important subject of religion. While in college, and during the ensuing years, he had studied deeply the works of the great English theologians, and when the Unitarian Church was established in New-York, he united himself with it.

His other occupations did not prevent him from entering into literary pursuits. In 1820 he pronounced a discourse before the Historical Society of New-York, and in 1824, one at the opening of the New-York Athenæum, both of which are considered to have unusual merit; he was in the habit of contributing to the North American Review, and also translated the Code Napoleon. Unfortunately, this manuscript and some other interesting papers were soon after destroyed by fire. In 1826 he published the life of William Pinkney, whom he had known in Washington, and for whom he had the highest regard and admiration. This he afterwards abridged for Sparks's American Biography. His familiarity with the French language, laws, and customs, led to an intimacy with most of the exiles whom the downfall of Napoleon brought to this country. Count Réal, the minister of police under the empire, Count Regnault, the most brilliant orator of that time, General Bernard and Prince Achille Murat, all considered him as a friend, and retained as long as they lived a warm recollection of the kind welcome they had found at his house.

In 1827 he was appointed by President Adams, Chargè d'Affaires to Denmark, and charged with negotiations [460
the object of which was to obtain an indemnity for the American vessels seized during the last war between France and England. He embarked in July for England, where he had the satisfaction of again seeing the friends whose kindness had made his first visit to that country so pleasant, and also of meeting some of the most distinguished literary and legal characters of the day. Among the former, was Dr. Bowring, with whom he afterwards became intimate, and who was indeed one of the warmest friends he had in Europe.

Although the first few months passed in Copenhagen were not without the trials attendant on a removal to a foreign home, and in this instance were still more overshadowed by the news of his father's death, and by the illness and death of his wife's brother, who had gone with them, Mr. Wheaton soon became acclimated, formed pleasant acquaintances among his colleagues and among the Danes, who are remarkably kind and hospitable to foreigners, and availed himself of the resources the country offered to one of his tastes. The letter to Judge Story, of which we give a *fac-simile*, will show his first impressions of Copenhagen.

The climate of Denmark is damp like that of England, and its verdure quite as beautiful. Copenhagen is prettily situated, and contains as many objects of interest as any city of the size in Europe. It has fine palaces, a military and a naval academy, admirable hospitals, an extensive public library, a valuable collection of Northern antiquities, a good gallery of pictures, and fine public walks. The vicinity of the capital, although level, is highly cultivated, and affords a number of charming residences. The most pleasant of these are [461
situated on the Strandvei, a road which runs along the shore of the Baltic to the Dyr-Hange, a fine park well stocked with deer, which is a favorite place of resort during the summer season to the Danes, who enjoy out-of-door life as much as the inhabitants of a Southern clime. Many of the houses which stand at intervals along the pleasant Strandvei are rented by their proprietors to foreigners. Of one of those occupied by Mr. Wheaton and his family, we engrave a cut, from a view painted by an artist of the country. It stood, and still stands, at some distance from the road, with a green lawn before it, and surrounded by lilacs, laburnums and beech-trees, whose white bark and light green leaves give a peculiar character to the scenery of Denmark. From the windows of the house the blue waves of the Baltic, studded with every variety of sail, may be seen, and in clear weather the opposite coast of Sweden is discernible. The road is enlivened by the brilliant equipages of the Royal family and nobility, by the Holstein-wagen, long open carriages which contain ten persons, two only being seated abreast, and much used for parties of pleasure, and by the women from the neighboring fishing villages, with their green petticoats and red boddices, carrying large baskets of fish to the city.

At the time of Mr. Wheaton's arrival in Denmark, Count Schimmelmann occupied the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs. This nobleman was possessed of great talents and worth, and for nearly thirty years was employed in the service of his government. Although a great part of his income was derived from his estates in the Danish West Indies, it was chiefly by his influence that the emancipation of the negroes was effected. He was a generous patron of art and science, and one of the earliest friends of Niebuhr. By such a man Mr. [462
Wheaton could not fail to be appreciated; and although the business transacted between them was of a delicate, and to the Danish government, which had been greatly impoverished by the war, of a trying nature, these meetings were always pleasant to both. The negotiations were terminated in 1831, by the signature of a convention, by which the American government obtained nearly all it had demanded.

While thus engaged, Mr. Wheaton had not neglected the literary pursuits to which, in moments of leisure, he

always turned with pleasure. He prepared himself by the study of the languages, literature, and history of Northern Europe, for writing a work which was published in London, in 1831, under the title of History of the Northmen. At that period, Scandinavia was a new, and almost untrodden field, but although much has since been added to the information we then possessed respecting its history and antiquities, this work is still considered very valuable by those who take an interest in the subject to which it relates. It was translated into French in 1842, and a new edition of it being desired in this country, Mr. Wheaton undertook the task of preparing it, but did not live to complete it.

In the course of these studies he became acquainted with the most distinguished literary characters of Denmark, such as Bask, Rafn, Finn-Magnusen, the poet Ohlenschläger, Münter, Bishop of Zealand, and others. We must not omit to add Madame Frederika Brun, the sister of Münter, and herself a poetess of celebrity, whose splendid mansion in Copenhagen and charming country-seat of Fredericksdal, were for many years the resort of the most distinguished persons in Denmark.

It was in 1835 that he bade adieu to the country where nine pleasant years had been passed, and where his [463
amiable disposition, high integrity and talents, had won him many friends. For more than a quarter of a century, our country had had no representative in Prussia; but our increased trade with Germany rendering it important that we should renew our relations with that country, he was appointed by President Jackson, Minister Resident to the court of Prussia. On his arrival in Berlin, his new colleagues took pleasure in pointing out to him the house which had been the residence of his predecessor, John Quincy Adams, so long before.

Mr. Ancillon, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, was the descendant of a Huguenot family, who, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, sought an asylum in Germany, and is even better known as a philosophical writer and historian, than as a statesman. To him Mr. Wheaton presented his credentials, and as the King, Frederick William III., and his ministers, soon after left Berlin, according to custom, for the summer months, he devoted the interval to visiting the Rhenish provinces, in order to examine their resources and report to Government concerning them. During the ensuing summers he made excursions into different parts of Germany with the same object. In his private letters, he speaks with delight of the beauty and fertility of the country, to which historical associations gave additional charm in his eyes. In a dispatch, he says: "Having diligently explored every state and every province, comprehended in the Customs-Association, with the view of studying their economical resources, I have been forcibly struck with the vast variety and rich productions with which Heaven has endowed this beautiful and highly favored land. Its fields teem with luxuriant harvests [464
of grain and fruit, the hillsides are clad with vineyards yielding the most exquisite wines, the mountains contain inexhaustible treasures of useful minerals, whilst the valleys are filled with health-giving fountains of salubrious waters. When we add to these productions of nature and of agricultural labor, the vast variety of useful and ornamental fabrics, furnished by the persevering and patient industry of the German people, and their extensive consumption of the peculiar staple productions of the New World, we must be convinced of the great and increasing importance of the constituent elements of German commerce, of the valuable exchange it offers to the trade of other countries, and of the benefits which may be derived to our own country, from cultivating and extending the commercial relations between the United States and Germany."

In 1837, Mr. Wheaton was raised by President Van Buren to the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary; and we cannot forbear remarking, that after the opposition which—although never a violent party man—he had in previous years shown Mr. Van Buren, it is most honorable to the latter, that no feeling of rancor or pique, withheld him from making a nomination which he felt the public services of his former opponent to deserve.

In 1836, he published, in England and in the United States, his "Elements of International Law," and in 1846 republished it in this country with numerous additions. In 1841 he wrote in French, "Histoire du Progrès du Droit des Gens depuis la paix de Westphalie," which obtained a *mention honorable* from the French Institute. This work was published in French at Leipsic, 1844, and afterwards in New-York, under the title of "History of [465
the Law of Nations." Competent judges have spoken of it as the best work of the kind ever written; Mr. Reddie and Mr. Manning in Great Britain, Baron Gagern in Germany, and the enlightened and accomplished Minister of the King of Sardinia, Marquis d'Azeglio, have all awarded high praise to it. By diplomatists, it is considered an invaluable book of reference; by British statesmen, it has several times been quoted in Parliament, and there can be no exaggeration in saying, that it has entitled the author to a lasting reputation in the Old World.

In 1840, Mr. Wheaton had the misfortune to lose his eldest son, a lad of great promise, who died after a few days' illness in Paris, where he was at school. From that moment, all the father's hopes centred in Robert, his only remaining son. Of the latter, this is not the place to speak fully; but we cannot forbear to say, that he lived long enough to realize the fondest anticipations of his parents, and that his early death, at the age of twenty-five years, will ever be a source of regret to all who knew him. He died on the 9th of October, 1851, only three years after his father.

In 1843, he was made a corresponding member of the French Institute, in the section of Moral and Political Sciences. This nomination increased the pleasure he felt in visiting Paris, which he did, whenever his official duties would permit. In the literary and political circles of that great capital, he found the stimulus which every mind like his requires, and of which, he felt the want in Berlin, where men of letters and *savans* do not mix in the court-circles, which his official position compelled him frequently to attend. He knew most of the eminent statesmen and politicians of France; he was particularly well acquainted with M. Guizot, for whose [466
character and talents he entertained the highest respect, and with M. Thiers, the charm of whose conversation he admired no less than his works, He also enjoyed the opportunity he had in Paris of meeting his countrymen, of whom comparatively few visited Berlin. Nor did he neglect when there, to transmit to Government such information respecting the general state of Europe, as his long residence abroad, and his relations with the leading men in several of its countries, enabled him to collect. In the ten years during which his mission to Berlin lasted, scarcely a week elapsed without his addressing a dispatch to Government. These dispatches are extremely interesting, both from the variety and extent of information they contain concerning the political and commercial state of Prussia, and the picture they present of Europe and of European

governments, and, if ever published, will form a valuable addition to the history of American and European diplomacy.

In many respects, Mr. Wheaton was peculiarly well qualified for diplomatic life. His knowledge of international law, the soundness of his judgment, the calmness and impartiality with which he could look at the different sides of a question, his gentle and forbearing disposition, his amiable and conciliating manners, were all in his favor. To these advantages, he added the purest integrity, and the highest sense of the duties and responsibilities attached to the profession he so long followed. In the speech made at the public dinner offered him in New-York, on his return to his native country after an absence of twenty years, he said, and this was the true expression of his feelings on the subject: "You will excuse me for remarking that the mission of a diplomatic agent is, or ought to be, a mission of peace and conciliation; and that nothing can be further [467
removed from its true nature and dignity, than intrigue, craft, and duplicity; qualities too often, but in my opinion, erroneously, attributed to the diplomatic character. At least, it may I believe be confidently asserted, that the ablest public ministers, and those who have most effectually advanced the honor and interest of their country, have been those who were distinguished for frankness, directness, and a strict regard to truth."

The amount of business which devolved on him during his mission to Berlin, independent of the negotiations for a commercial treaty with the German Customs-Union or Zollverein, can hardly be estimated by reading his dispatches only. Not a week elapsed without his receiving letters from different parts of Germany and the United States, asking for advice with regard to emigration, or to the disposition of property left by friends in America or in Germany, and all requiring immediate attention. But notwithstanding these demands upon his time, he did not neglect the pursuits of literature. In 1838 he published, jointly with Dr. Crichton, the volumes entitled "Scandinavia," which form a portion of the Edinburgh Family Library; and in 1842, and the succeeding years, wrote a number of interesting letters addressed to the National Institute at Washington, which were published in the columns of the National Intelligencer.

In 1844, he was named Member of the Academy of Sciences at Berlin, and we must not omit to mention, that he was the only foreign diplomat to whom the honor had then been awarded. With Raumer and Ranke, with Ritter, the celebrated geographer, Encke, the astronomer, he was of course acquainted; Savigny, Gans, and Eichorn, he knew well; and with Alexander von Humboldt he was on the most friendly and familiar terms. [468
Count Raczynski, whose work on "Modern Art," has made his name known in this country, and whose fine gallery is to amateurs of painting one of the chief objects of interest in Berlin, was also his intimate friend. With Bunsen, one of the most agreeable as well as intellectual men in Germany, whose diplomatic duties kept him absent from Berlin, he passed many delightful hours in Switzerland, and in London. All his colleagues in Berlin met him on the most friendly terms; but the Russian, French and English ministers were those whose company he most enjoyed, and who perhaps entertained for him the most cordial friendship. The two latter gave him their entire confidence, often showing him their dispatches, and freely discussing with him the interests of their respective governments.

It was in the spring of 1844, that the negotiations with the Zollverein, with which Mr. Wheaton had been charged, and which the various interests of the nineteen different states which it then included, had protracted, drew to a close. On the 25th of March he signed a convention with Baron Bulow, the Prussian Minister of Foreign Affairs, of whose enlightened and liberal views he always spoke in high terms. This treaty, to the accomplishment of which he had devoted all his energies during several years, and which he fondly hoped would prove satisfactory to Government and the country, was rejected by the Senate. It is hardly necessary to say, that he felt this disappointment deeply.

In 1846, he was recalled by President Polk, and on the 22d July had his farewell audience of the King of Prussia, by whom he had always been treated with marked distinction and courtesy. He went to Paris to pass [469
the ensuing winter, during which he read to the Academy of Sciences a paper on the Schleswig-Holstein question, which is still unpublished. In May, 1847, he returned to his native land. A public dinner, to which we have already alluded, was given him in New-York, where so much of his early life had been spent, and where he had first distinguished himself; a dinner was also offered him in Philadelphia, but this, circumstances compelled him to decline. The city of Providence requested him to sit for his portrait, to be placed in the hall of the City Council, "as a memorial of one who shed so much honor on the place of his nativity." It is interesting to mark the contrast between this portrait, which was painted by Healy, and one painted by Jarvis nearly thirty years before. Though the countenance has lost something of the animation of youth, and the eyes have no longer the fire which flashes from the portrait of Jarvis, the head has gained in intellectual expression, and the brow wears that air of thoughtful repose, the mouth that pleasant smile, familiar to those who knew him in his later years.

In September, 1847, he delivered an address in Providence, before the Phi Beta Kappa Society, the subject of which was the Progress and Prospects of Germany. This was the last public occasion on which his voice was heard. The chair of International Law at Harvard University, to which he had been called, on his return home, he never lived to fill. His health gradually failed, and on the 11th of March, 1848, he breathed his last.

Webster.

[471

[472

Washington April 19th 52

My Dear Sir;

Your letter of the 8th of March, giving an account of the Convention in your State, & its proceedings, relative to the choice of Delegates to the Whig National Convention was duly rec'd, but the pressure of official affairs, & an absence from home for near a fortnight, have prevented its earlier acknowledgment. I have now to thank you, My Dear Sir, for the kind & friendly sentiments expressed by you, & to say that I doubt not that the course adopted by yourself & your friends was altogether wise & judicious.

I am, My Dear Sir,
with true regard,
Your friend & ob. Servt
Danl Webster

[473

Webster's Birth-place.

WEBSTER.

What justice can be done "in an half-hour of words, to fifty years of great deeds on high places." The most meagre epitome of Daniel Webster's career, can not be compressed into the few pages allotted him in this book. Foremost, in the highest spheres of intellectual exertion, as a lawyer, orator and statesman—great in all

these, yet greater as a man—how can his character, even in outline, be sketched by an unskilled pencil, on so small a canvas? High as were his stations, and severe as were his labors, they were not high nor severe enough, to exhaust his force, or exhibit his full proportions, but while meeting and mastering all, it was still [474
manifest, that he had powers in reserve, superior to greater tasks than were ever imposed. At the bar, the puzzles of jurisprudence yielded too readily to his analysis. In Congress, but one question only ever wrung his withers or strained his strength. He shook off the perplexities of diplomacy, like dew-drops from his mane; too great for party, too great for sycophancy, too great to be truly appreciated, the exalted position to which he aspired, would have added no new lustre to his name, no additional guarantee of its immortality. There was no niche in our temple, vast enough for his colossal image.

Consider too, the extent and profundity of his opinions, during the half-century of his public life. On all questions of our foreign and domestic policy, on all the important epochs of our history, on everything respecting the origin, growth, commerce, peace and prosperity of this union of states, "everywhere the philosophical and patriotic statesman and thinker, will find that he has been before him, lighting the way, sounding the abyss. His weighty language, his sagacious warnings, his great maxims of empire, will be raised to view and live to be deciphered, when the final catastrophe shall lift the granite foundation in fragments from its bed." Merely to review the record of these opinions, his public speeches, historical discourses, and state papers would be to write the civil and constitutional history of the country since the war of 1812.

Assaying none of these ambitious flights, and bearing in mind the title of this book, we shall confine ourselves to the humble task of collating from the fragmentary reminiscences of personal friends, and from his own [475
autobiographical allusions, a brief account of the homes and home life of Webster.[21]

There is a "vulgar error," which needs no Sir Thomas Browne to refute, that the possession of great intellectual endowments, is incompatible with the growth and development of the affections. During his entire career Mr. Webster suffered from this misconception. When he refused to adopt any of the arts of popular adulation; when he manifested his real respect for the people, by addressing their understandings, rather than by cajoling their weaknesses; when, rapt in his own meditations, he forgot to bow, to smile, to flatter, and bandy unmeaning compliment; when the mean stood abashed before his nobleness, and the weak before his strength, disappointed self-conceit, invariably turned from his presence, with the sneering remark, "Webster has no soul."

Death strips off all disguises. Calumny is silent over the graves of the great. It was not, until he was removed beyond the reach of party warfare and interested depreciation, it was not, until the veil that hid his true lineaments, was drawn aside, that Mr. Webster's inner life, and social relations, were revealed to his countrymen, and they began to discover, that underneath the giant's brain, there was a giant heart. The [476
disclosures of those who enjoyed his familiarity and confidence, have now placed it beyond all controversy, that home, home affections, home pursuits, home enjoyments, were more congenial to Mr. Webster's nature, than the dizzy heights of office, or the stormy forum.

He saw not merely in HOME, the walls that protected him, from Boreas and the dog-star, the spot of earth appropriated to himself, the place that ministered to his material enjoyments, but while the sense of comfort and the sense of property entered into its complex idea, his sentiments and affections gave to it a higher and holier meaning. The word HOME carried him back to his infancy, and forward to his age. It connected itself with all his affections, filial, fraternal, parental, with those grand and solemn epochs of humanity, birth, marriage and death. To his lofty imagination, the roof-tree was consecrated with ceremonies, more imposing than those of our Saxon ancestors. It symbolized the family tie, the domestic virtues, the Lares and Penates of classic mythology. Home was his retreat from the world of action, to the world of contemplation. Here he was to *live*. These walls would witness those experiences, sweet, bitter, mournful; those communings with God, with friends, kindred and himself; those aspirations, dreams, disappointments—that are embraced in that word of infinite significance, *Life*. Here his wife was to administer love and consolation; here children were to be born, hostages to fortune, heritors of name and fame, idols upon whom can be lavished the inexhaustible treasures of love. Here the pilgrimage was to end, here he was to die.

On the bleak and rugged soil of Salisbury, New Hampshire, in a green nook, hardly sheltered from the wintry [477
blasts, he was born. Under an aged elm, whose branches reach across the highway, stands this ancient habitation. It is in the shadow of lofty mountains, while a broad and rapid river winds through the meadows spread out before the door. "Looking out at the east window," says he, in one of his letters, from this hallowed spot, "my eye sweeps along a level field of one hundred acres. At the end of it, a third of a mile off, I see plain marble grave-stones, designating the places where repose my father and mother, brother and sisters. The fair field is before me. I could see a lamb on any part of it. I have ploughed it, and raked it, but never mowed it; somehow, I could never learn to hang a scythe."

As Webster advances, in years and distinction, he seems only to have been drawing a lengthened chain from his first home. With what constancy does he carry its features in his mind, Kearsarge, the Merrimack and Punch Brook! He spares no expense to cultivate the old acres and keep, the old house in repair. With what regularity does he revisit it and explore all his boyish haunts, the orchard, the mill, the meeting-house, the well, the hillside and the trout stream! With what a swelling heart, and moistened eye, does he sit beneath the ancestral elms that stretch their arms, in benediction, over the old homestead, while busy fancy repeoples these familiar scenes with the absent and the dead, the mother that bore him, the father on whose shoulder he wept, the much beloved brother, whose education he earned, "with weary fingers by the midnight lamp?" How from the great popular gathering, from the "sea of upturned faces," and even from the important issues [478
that hung on his eloquence, does his mind impulsively wander to this cherished home—"Raised amid the snow-drifts of New Hampshire, at a period so early that, when the smoke first rose from its rude chimney, and curled over the frozen hills, there was no similar evidence of a white man's habitation between it and the settlements on the rivers of Canada. Its remains still exist. I make to it an annual visit. I carry my children to it to teach them the hardships endured by the generations which have gone before them. I love to dwell on the

tender recollections, the kindred ties, the early affections, and the touching narratives and incidents, which mingle with all I know of this primitive family abode. I weep to think that none of those who inhabited it are now among the living; and if ever I am ashamed of it, or if I ever fail in affectionate veneration for HIM who reared and defended it against savage violence and destruction, cherished all the domestic virtues beneath its roof, and, through the fire and blood of seven years' revolutionary war, shrunk from no danger, no toil, no sacrifice to serve his country, and to raise his children to a condition better than his own, may my name and the name of my posterity be blotted forever from the memory of mankind."

"Take care," says he, in one of the last letters which he wrote to John Taylor, "take care to keep my mother's garden in good order, even if it cost you the wages of a man to take care of it." One of Mr. Webster's most cherished relics, which he sometimes carried in his vest pocket, and exhibited to his friends, was an antique tea-spoon, covered with rust, which John Taylor found in this very garden of his mother. In the library at [479
Marshfield, the eye turns from Healey's splendid portraits, to a small and unpretending silhouette, with the inscription, "my excellent mother," in the handwriting of her immortal son.

When he selected as the home of his manhood, the old mansion by the far-resounding sea, how completely was every want of his nature represented in the grand and impressive features of the place. Marshfield lies within the limits of the Pilgrims' earliest colony, and on Mr. Webster's farm stands the house to which Edward Winslow carried his household gods, from aboard the tempest-tost Mayflower, and the house to which a company of British soldiers bade final adieu, when they marched from it to storm the redoubts on Bunker Hill. It thus connects two chapters of that colonial history, which Mr. Webster loved to study and paint, and two imperishable monuments to his own renown. It is surrounded by vast and fertile fields, meadows and pastures green, dotted here and there with groves and orchards, for one who worshiped, as in a sanctuary, beneath the over-hanging branches of trees, and dotted also with great herds of red and black oxen, for one who "was glad when his cattle lifted up their large-eyed, contemplative faces, and recognized their master by a look." Its border, landward, is hedged with nothing less than a vast forest of pines, and within a few hours' ride, lies a fresh wilderness, unbroken, as when the Pilgrims first saw it from the Mayflower's mast-head, where the wild eagle still soars, and the timid deer "glances through the glade." His eye, far as its glance could penetrate, [480
rested on the most sublime of all nature's attractions, on thee—

> "glorious mirror where the Almighty's form
> Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
> Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
> Icing the pole, or in the torrid zone
> Dark heaving; boundless, endless, and sublime,
> The image of eternity, the throne
> Of the Invisible."

Scattered over its far-reaching expanse, he could always see the white sails of that commerce he loved to defend, and occasionally, one of those "oak leviathans," bearing the glorious flag of the union—"not a stripe erased, or polluted, not a single star obscured;" memorials at once of the nation's glory, and of his own proudest triumph.

As deep answereth unto deep, none of the majestic harmonies of the domain, but found a full and equal response in the bosom of its lord. Old ocean never rolled its waves, at the feet of one who could better grasp their immeasurable extent, unfathomable depth. When, with these surroundings, he stood on that autumn eve, beneath that magnificent elm that grows by his door-side, the sea's eternal anthem in his ear, and in his eye, the infinite vault of the starry heavens, he could find in recorded language but this one utterance: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor."

While his tastes were thus attuned to the grandest aspects of nature, all the rural sights and rural sounds of [481
this chosen spot, ministered to the delight of his acute sensibilities. "The smell of new-mown hay," says Mr. Hillard, "and of the freshly turned furrows of spring, was cordial to his spirit. The whetting of the mower's scythe, the beat of the thresher's flail, the heavy groan of loaded wagons, were music to his ear!" The rich verdure of clover, the waving of the golden grain, the shriek of the sea-mew and the softest song of the nightingale; all the varying aspects of sky and field and sea, furnished him with a distinct and peculiar enjoyment. The shrinking quail whistled in his garden shrubbery, and fed, unscared, in his carriage-way.

The observer can not fail to notice characteristics of Webster in all the features of this favorite abode. His door-yard is a broad field of twenty acres, unbroken by fence or hedge. Around it, sweep in concentric circles, of vast diameter, great belts of forest-trees, planted with his own hands, offering secluded recesses and shady walks, where "musing solitude might love to roam." Gotham Hill, once a sand-bank, piled up by the ocean, and long defeating, by its barrenness, the ingenuity of his culture, he at length clothed with a green garment of beautiful clover. Cherry Hill was converted from a lean and parched mole, into a cool and inviting grove, within a rod of his door, almost an alcove to the library. Everything in and about the house were as thoroughly systemized and adapted to each other, as the points of one of his briefs. The appurtenances of the mansion, the main barn, the sheep barn, the piggery, are all where the necessities of the farm and the comeliness of the [482
homestead require them to be placed. In the interior, the parlors, the library filled with the lore of all ages, the ample hospitality of the dining-room, the breakfast-room, opening toward that morning light he loved so dearly, the dairy cooled by its proximity to the ice-house, the gun-room furnished with every appliance for field sports, the decorations and the furniture; everything in his mansion as in his arguments, bespeaks the mind of Webster.

Within a stone's throw of this parlor-window, observe those two young English elms; they are called "the Brother and Sister," and were thus named and thus planted, by the bereaved father, when Julia and Edward

were torn from his heart. "I hope the *trees* will live," said he, with touching pathos of tone, as he completed this labor of love. There is no more pathetic expression of parental sorrow, to be found in our language, than the dedication of the sixth volume of his works, to the same departed twain. "With the warmest parental affection, mingled with afflicted feelings, I dedicate this, the last volume of my works, to the memory of my deceased children, Julia Webster Appleton, beloved in all the relations of daughter, wife, mother, sister and friend; and Major Edward Webster, who died in Mexico, in the military service of the United States, with unblemished honor and reputation, and who entered the service solely from a desire to be useful to his country, and do honor to the state in which he was born.

> "Go, gentle spirits, to your destined rest;
> While I—reversed our nature's kindlier doom—
> Pour forth a father's sorrow on your tomb."

And yet Mr. Webster was "cold as marble; all intellect." [483

But let us pass into the library; the Library! Here Vulcan forged those infrangible chains, that impenetrable armor—the shield of Achilles and the sword of Hector. Here you feel nearer to Webster than even when you enter his tomb; much that is in this room his immortal spirit carried with it in its upward flight. It is not that lifelike portrait, by Healey, that introduces you, as it were, into the visible presence of the great statesman. It is the inspiration of the place, these scattered tools, just as they were dropped by the master-workman, that well-worn manual, thumbed by his own hand; that turned leaf, indicating the last page of human lore upon which his eye ever gazed; that arm-chair, his favorite seat. He seems just to have left it, and you will now find him, in one of those shady lanes, that lead to Cherry Hill, walking slowly, as he welds together the facts and principles he has gleaned from yonder opened folio. Here then, with these surroundings, with that beautiful landscape in his eye, Daniel Webster studied, pondered, and communed with these old tomes as with familiar faces. How often has he turned from the living world, to find kindred here in Bacon, Chatham, Fox and Burke! How often has his eye run over that complete set of parliamentary debates! How often has he conned those volumes of Hansard, and these of McCullough! How often has he resorted to that full alcove of dictionaries, to learn the precise and exact meaning of some important word; and to you, Shakspeare, Milton and Gray, how often has he fled for refreshment and consolation! How often, harassed by cares, and stung by ingratitude, has he murmured, in this air, the music of his favorite Cicero, "Hæc studia adolescentiam alunt, senectutem [484
oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solatium præbent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur."

Let us now ascend this staircase, (adorned with no costly paintings, but with some choice engravings, interesting from the associations they recall, or as mementos from friends, or tributes from artists,) and approach this darkened chamber, looking toward the setting sun; tread softly and slowly! Within these walls, on that plain bedstead, beneath that window commanding an ocean prospect, Webster died. Here occurred that grand and affecting leave-taking, with kindred, friends and the world; here, "the curfew tolled the knell of parting day;" here occurred a death-scene, which can find no parallel in human history, but in the death of Socrates; here, with the assured consciousness, that his own contributions to the fund of human wisdom were imperishable, and that the "next ages" could not fail to do justice to his patriotic labors, he faintly murmured, as his spirit took its flight, and his eye closed forever, "I still live."

On an eminence overlooking the sea, by the side of the burial-place of the first Pilgrims, is Webster's last home. A mound of earth and marble slab, mark the spot where sleeps all that is mortal of the great American.

Footnotes

[1] On the causes and consequences of the war with France.

[2] "Three months after this (during the second quarter), the Selectmen procured lodgings for me at Dr. Nahum Willard's. This physician had a large practice, a good reputation for skill, and a pretty library. Here were Dr. Cheyne's works, Sydenham, and others, and Van Swieten's Commentaries on Boerhaave. I read a good deal in these books, and entertained many thoughts of becoming a physician and surgeon."—*The Works of John Adams, edited by Charles Francis Adams*—Vol. II., p. 7.

[3] The Works of John Adams—Vol. II., page 9.

[4] The Works of John Adams—Vol. II., p. 145.

[5] This picture is engraved in the "The Life and Works," Vol. II., Frontispiece. We are obliged to guess at the age when it was taken, since we find no hint concerning it—indeed no reference to the picture any where in the book.

[6] "The American nettle-tree. One of these is still to be seen growing out of the top of the rock at this place."—*Ed. The Life and Works.*

[7] "This is the mansion afterwards purchased by the writer, in which he lived from the date of his last return from Europe until his death in 1826.—*Ib.*

[8] This tree still remains in fine condition on Milton Hill.—*Ed. The Life and Works.*

[9] The Life and Works—Vol. II., p. 136-138.

[10] The Life and Works—Vol. II., p. 255.

[11] The debates in the Virginia Convention on the Federal Constitution, and his forensic argument against the recovery of the forfeited British debts.

[12] He is said (*Wirt*, p. 404) to have been offered by Washington the Secretaryship of State and the

embassy to Spain. He certainly was, by him, also offered the War Department, and by Mr. Adams the embassy to France. These are known. When the papers of Alexander Hamilton come to be published down to those of 1796, it will be seen that he was then offered, by the heads of the Federal party, through John Marshall, the nomination for the Presidency, as Washington's successor, but declined it.

[13] Life of Hamilton, by his son, John C. Hamilton, Vol. I. p. 22.

[14] Life of Hamilton, Vol. I. p. 382.

[15] Works of Daniel Webster, Vol. I, p. 200.

[16] Hildreth's History of the United States. New Series, vol. ii. p. 524.

[17] It is supposed that the State derives its name from a hill in the north part of the town, situated near the peninsula called Squantum, likewise a part of the town. Squantum was a favorite residence of the Indians; and the Sachem, who ruled over the district "extending round the harbors of Boston and Charlestown, through Malden, Chelsea, Nantasket, Hingham, Weymouth and Dorchester," had his seat on the neighboring hill, which was shaped like an arrow-head. Arrow-head in the Indian language was *mos* or mous, and hill *wetuset*. Thus the great Sachem's home was called *Moswetuset* or Arrow-head Hill, his subjects the Moswetusets, and lastly the Province Massachusetts, but frequently in the primitive days "the Massachusetts."

[18] Died early in the city of New-York, soon after entering upon the practice of law.

[19] See vignette title-page to this volume.

[20] Mr. Clay.

[21] We have consulted principally the "Memorials of Daniel Webster," published by the Appletons, containing the letters of Gen. Lyman, and the eulogies of Everett, Choate and Hildreth, all enjoying the precious favor of his personal intimacy. The reminiscences of Mr. Lanman, his private secretary, and Everett's life prefixed to the complete edition of his works, are our authority for many of the following details.

Transcriber's Notes

Spelling has been made consistent throughout but kept to the author's original format except where noted.

Images have been moved from the middle of a paragraph to the closest paragraph break. "Washington's" added to caption for Headquarters on pages 23, 25, 28, 32, 33, 34, 37, and 45.

Footnotes have been moved to the end of the text in this HTML version. Also, "The" has been added to "Works of John Adams" (footnotes 2-3) and "Life and Works" (footnotes 5-6 and 8-10) for consistency.

Page v-viii: Some of the page entries have been corrected in the tables to match the actual page numbers in the text.

Page viii: Page numbers added to "Fac-similes of Letters". Henry Clay is added to the list, whereas Patrick Henry's copy is not available.

Page 8: "Hudson's Statue" changed to "Houdon's Statue"

Page 17: "to recruit in mind and body" changed to "to recoup his mind and body"

Page 50: "great Lakes" changed to "Great Lakes"

Page 68: "old style, 1706, on a house" changed to "old style, 1706, in a house"

Page 141: Hyphen removed "much like the-lime tree of Europe"

Page 146: " removed from beginning of "In 1774 Mr. Adams was appointed"

Page 159: ? changed to , in "early companions? so that his"

Page 186: "Apalachian" changed to "Appalachian"

Page 387: , replaces ; in "His countenance, clear, expressive; and"

Page 397: Typo "then" corrected in "Legislature, and thne of"

Page 429: , replaces ; in "the other; begirt"

Page 438: "Webster, Parker, Quincy and Prescott," replaces "Webster and Parker, and Quincy; and Prescott,"

Page 441: ; removed from "a tale twice told and; who was"

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