

see P. 5—

# AN ADDRESS

BY

**GENERAL SELDEN CONNOR**

MAY 5, 1909

AT A

Meeting of the Maine Commandery of the Military Order  
of the Loyal Legion of the United States at  
Riverton Park Casino, Portland, Me.,  
to commemorate the

ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH

OF

**HANNIBAL HAMLIN**

IN PARIS, MAINE, AUGUST 27, 1909



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“I point you to the whole Union as a monument of political grandeur, towering toward the heavens, upon which the friend of freedom, wherever upon our globe he may be, may gaze; around whose highest summit the sunlight of glory forever shines, and at whose base a free people reposes, and, I trust, forever will repose.”


— HANNIBAL HAMLIN

“HANNIBAL HAMLIN, of Maine, whose clear head, firm principles, and ample experience, none who sat with him in the Senate can contest.”

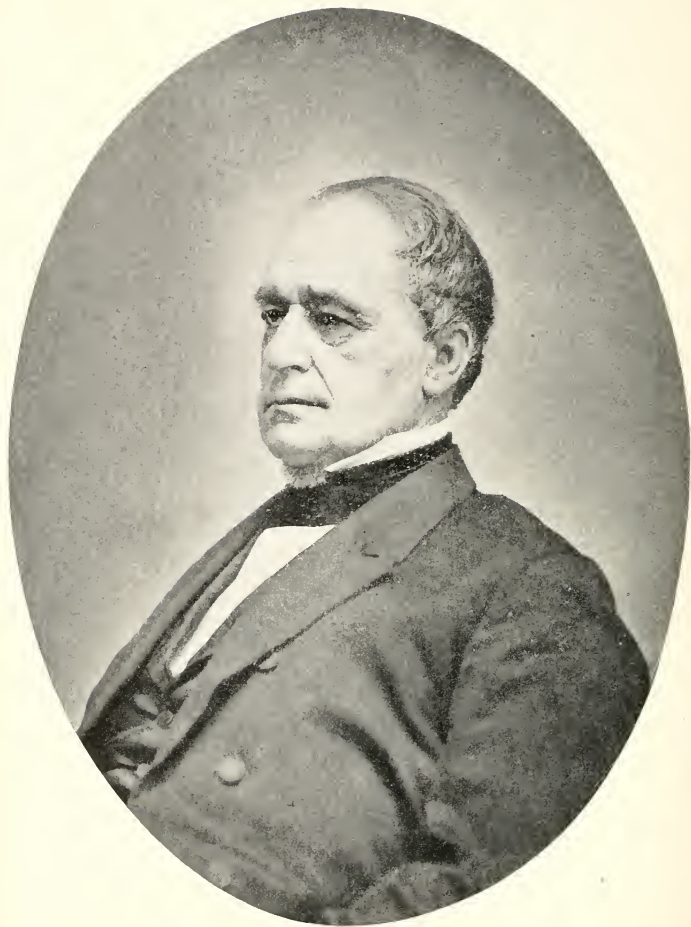
— CHARLES SUMNER

“MR. HAMLIN was, I think, the most influential man in the Senate when I entered it, and until he left it. . . . He was a sturdy, rugged character, like an old gnarled oak, inflexibly honest, absolutely fearless, always ready to do battle in any cause he deemed just and righteous, a lover of liberty, wise, understanding thoroughly the mechanism of our government, trusting the people, loving his country and loving his State.”

— GEORGE F. HOAR



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*Hannibal Hamlin*

# HANNIBAL HAMLIN

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The praise of Lincoln has hardly ceased echoing throughout the world, evoked by the hundredth anniversary of his birthday. This year is also the centenary of Hamlin, Lincoln's fellow standard-bearer, trusted friend and counselor. It is proper that at this meeting the centennial of the birth of Hamlin, a few months hence, should be anticipated and our evening devoted to loving memory of him and to the recollection of his many and high claims to good fame and enduring honor among men. It is especially fitting that the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States should be mindful of this great friend and supporter of the Union, since the chief of its objects is "to cherish the associations and memories of the war waged in defence of the unity and indivisibility of the Republic," and because Hamlin was elected a companion of the Order by the Mother Commandery at Philadelphia under that section of the constitution which made eligible to membership "those gentlemen who in civil life, during the Rebellion, were especially distinguished for conspicuous and consistent loyalty to the National Government, and were active and eminent in maintaining the supremacy of the same." It is the high privilege of the Commandery of Maine to initiate the memorial exercises in honor of the centenary of Hamlin, since he was a companion of this Commandery by transfer and was the noblest representative of Maine in the great struggle for Freedom and Unity that will make the middle of the nineteenth century forever memorable. Following our lead the state and the country will no doubt pause for a moment at this milestone of history, roll back the tide of years and disclose the merits of this preeminent citizen, this great American, and declare his standing in "the title deeds of fame, his hold and heritage in distant times."

The life of Hamlin, extending from August 27, 1809 to July 4, 1891, embraced the most interesting and eventful period in the life of the Republic if not of the historic world. Conspicuous as was his share in the public life of that period throughout the years of his manhood, full credit for all his worth and work must wait for their just and full estimate upon the eternal years of God. The view-point from which the men of action and their deeds in the crisis of the Republic will be regarded with due interest and appreciation, lies somewhere among the coming years. Scattered throughout the country here and there are aged men who, whether participants or observers, recall with feelings approaching awe the great men and mighty scenes that held the boards when, in their lifetime, the colossal drama of Freedom and Union was enacted. But the great majority are comparatively indifferent. They have but a languid interest in matters antedating their personal experience and not yet crystalized into history. The very greatness and beneficence of those years bore in themselves the germs of forgetfulness, since the new life they gave the nation is so fiercely aglow with the absorbing activities of the present, and so bent on the beckoning promises of the future, as to leave no interval for the consideration of the dead past.

Yet it must be that a man of the noblest type of American manhood, who gave nearly fifty years of his life to the devoted, courageous and effective service of his country, can never be wholly forgotten by his countrymen and that it requires but the touch of suggestion to quicken in loyal minds and hearts the memories of the greatness and the goodness of Hannibal Hamlin.

Among the many points of resemblance between Lincoln and Hamlin was that of self-education. While Hamlin was born in a fairly well-to-do family and was surrounded from childhood with the refinements and culture that were unknown to the pioneer boy, he was balked of his desire and intention to take a college course by



the pressing need of his services at home on the farm. After less than a year at an academy he was forced to depend for his further education upon such reading as he could pursue between long days of labor and short nights of rest and while at his work. At the same time young Lincoln was reading by the firelight and in the noontide rest. Both boys found good friends who gave them valuable counsel and assistance and had the wisdom and tact to make their influence felt. Both were the acknowledged leaders, physically and intellectually, of the boys and young men who were their respective associates. The art of surveying was among the acquisitions common to them both and each had a little experience in storekeeping. They were one in the purpose to become lawyers. Thus fate was guiding these two boys, one in Maine and one in Illinois, along similar ways destined to converge and bring the two together on the highest summit within the ken of human ambition. Fate duplicated her favor when she assigned instructors in law to these students. The chance or judgment that led Hamlin to the office of Fessenden and Deblois was most fortunate. The members of that firm were the leaders of the Cumberland bar. They took a warm interest in their promising pupil and the friendly relations then established between the instructors and the student lasted through their lives. A year's time was all that the farmer boy could afford to devote to study exclusively—the law school was far beyond his means—and then came his admission to the bar at the age of twenty-four, followed by his marriage in the same year and his entrance on the practice of his profession in the town of Hampden, a town ever after as noted for being the home of Hannibal Hamlin as Carrollton was for being that of Charles Carroll.

Two years of residence and practice so impressed his neighbors and those with whom he came in contact with his manly qualities and his intellectual abilities that they elected him as their representative to the legislature which met in 1836. He was by successive re-elections

five years a member of the House of Representatives. In his second term, when he was but twenty-seven years of age, he was elected speaker and was re-elected when his party returned to power for each of the two remaining years of his service in the House—a record which has never been equalled in that body. His biographer well says “The key to Hannibal Hamlin’s success is to be found in his legislative training and experience.” Congresses differ but little from legislatures. The difference mainly is one not of kind but of degree, arising from the broader field of action of the national body and the more important interests that come before it. The young man who had filled the speaker’s chair of the legislature for three years had so mastered the machinery of parliamentary proceedings that he had no need to “orient” himself when he entered the national House and thus he had the important advantage over most new members of being able to take part in its proceedings at once and with perfect confidence. Throughout his Congressional career he was regarded as an authority on parliamentary law and custom. The legislature is an admirable school for studying human nature. Men of different degrees of ability and with various standards of morality, working singly or in combination for ends not always obvious, from single or complex motives, their secret influence sometimes failing to support their public statements and avowed objects,—sometimes sneaking treachery in the shadows leering at loyalty in the open—present a microcosm of humanity wherein the devotee of “the proper study of mankind” may find the richest opportunities for pursuing his observations from day to day and arriving at conclusions. The young speaker profited by the object-lessons before him and became an adept in reading men. His fellow members had opportunities for estimating him as well and it was undoubtedly the most profitable reward of his legislative service that he so thoroughly established himself in their esteem as to make many lifelong friends among them—strong and influential men who mightily upheld him in his after career.

Perhaps the most notable action of his in the period of his legislative experience, and the one most vitally affecting his subsequent political life was the unmistakable stand he took on the question of slavery at a time when parties were not divided on that issue. The occasion grew out of the suggestion that a petition relating to the abolition of slavery should not be received. The young patriot, while disavowing sympathy with the abolitionists, indignantly asserted the inviolability of the right of petition. Going farther he declared his opposition to slavery as a curse and a moral wrong to be endured only so far as the constitution required it to be maintained. He expressed the hope that it might in some way be abolished and added in words of peculiar significance in view of the great event in after years, "It may die out, but God is sure in his own way and time to put an end to it." His opposition to slavery grew, if possible, stronger and stronger as time went on. It led him to stand against the dominant power of his party, the Democratic party, and to become one of the foremost leaders in upbuilding the great party founded on the proposition that Freedom is national, Slavery is sectional.

The analysts of the character and characteristics of Lincoln have not given due importance to the peculiarity which so strongly differentiated him and which gave him a constant rule and guide of conduct—the strength of his hold on his convictions. He was slow and careful in forming them,—how careful is indicated by his reading six books of Euclid to impress upon his mind the full significance of a "demonstration"—but once formed he did not depart from them. That characteristic was Hamlin's also. His convictions were firmly his and were never assailed by faint doubts. The trying period beginning with the aggressive activity of the pro-slavery party in Congress and lasting to the end of the war, was an especially distressful one to the trimmers who were anxious to be on the winning side and to those amiable men who

held loyal convictions but were not sure whether it was not their duty to modify or surrender them for the sake of peace. Lincoln and Hamlin so far possessed their souls in peace in that they had no uncertainty as to the object in view and therefore could concentrate all their energies on devising ways and means to attain it.

It is not to be wondered at that Hamlin always considered his years of service in the Maine Legislature as the happiest time in his life. He was young, honored, surrounded by friends and admirers and had the work he liked best to do.

Then there occurred a break in his public service. He was a candidate for Congress in 1840 and was beaten by his Whig competitor. That was the year when Maine went so profanely for Governor Kent. After three years of the practice of his profession he was again a candidate for Congress and this time he turned the tables on his former competitor and gained the election. A writer has this to say of him as a member of the 28th Congress:—"Naturally enough, in what was then the small and contracted political and social circle of Washington, a man of Mr. Hamlin's striking appearance and many attainments was not long in making his mark. Tall and graceful in figure, with black and piercing eyes, a skin almost olive-colored, hair smooth, thick and jetty, a manner always courteous and affable, the new member soon found his way into the best society of the Capital. His advancement to a commanding position in the political world was quite as rapid." He was re-elected for a second term and in 1846 he was brought forward as a candidate for the Senate. The split between the pro-slavery and the anti-slavery men had just begun to appear. Hamlin had made himself obnoxious to the "doughface" element of his party by his fearless and outspoken stand in Congress against every measure that tended to increase the area of slavery and on that account he lost the election by one vote. James W. Bradbury was the successful compromise candidate. His friends desired

him to be a candidate for re-election to the House. He declined to be considered for another term and returned to his home in Hampden under the impression that he had withdrawn from politics. But he was at once met by the urgent solicitation of his friends that he would solve local troubles in the party by becoming a candidate for the legislature. He consented, was elected in spite of the opposition of the pro-slavery element in the party, and, once more in Augusta, he renewed the contest against slavery he had there initiated and which for four years he had continued in Washington.

He returned to Augusta under a fortunate star. A vacancy was caused in the Senate by the death of Senator Fairfield in that year. Hamlin's course in the legislature had strengthened the anti-slavery cause and made friends for himself who rallied around him in the contest for the nomination and by superior generalship overcame the carefully laid plans of the enemy and made him the candidate. At the age of 39 he became a senator. On taking his seat he found that the same old fight he had been engaged in when he was in the House, was on in the Senate—over the admission of Oregon. He made an important contribution to the discussion of that question in a speech notable also because among those who listened to it with interest and approval was Abraham Lincoln then a member of the House. In March, 1850, he made a speech on the admission of California on the day following the last speech of Calhoun and in answer to it. This speech attracted a great deal of attention, and was regarded as establishing the new senator's reputation as one of the first debaters in the Senate—and that too in a Senate containing such debaters as Webster, Calhoun, Clay, Benton, Crittenden, Reverdy Johnson, Stephen A. Douglas and others.

Senator Hamlin was compelled to pass through a very strenuous campaign before he was re-elected by the legislature of 1850. The pro-slavery party had been gathering strength and had full control

of the Democratic "machine" in Maine. Naturally the leaders did not approve the course of the young senator who had made himself prominent on the anti-slavery side. When they found that they could neither break nor bend him they determined to defeat him at any cost. When bad men conspire good men must necessarily unite. The contest lasted many weeks and its plots and counterplots were as complicated as a Sherlock Holmes story. When chairs for the study of practical politics are established in our universities the Maine senatorial campaign of 1850 may well serve as the Waterloo or Gettysburg of the course. The triumph was brought about by a union of the Free Soilers with the anti-slavery Democrats. Several similar cases in other parts of the country indicated that a new arrangement of the political forces of the country was on the way. Hamlin's victory was joyfully acclaimed by the anti-slavery people of all parties in Maine and throughout the country.

Franklin Pierce was not Hamlin's choice for the presidency. But he accepted Pierce loyally, believing that he would keep the pledges in his letter of acceptance and his inaugural address not to disturb the compromises that had effected a peaceful condition of affairs after the long period of excitement. He was from the first somewhat distrustful of Pierce owing to the fact that the ultra pro-slavery men surrounded him and seemed to have his confidence. His suspicions were more than confirmed when like lightning from a clear sky the proposition to repeal the Missouri compromise was brought forward, apparently with the approval of the administration. The Maine Senator had proof positive of Pierce's complicity in the plot when the president sent for him and undertook to bribe him to vote for the repeal with liberal offers of patronage. We who remember Hannibal Hamlin can imagine the scene in the White House :—

"Mr. President, did you ask me to come here expecting to get me to aid you in repealing the compromise?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Pierce after a moment's hesitation, "I did."

"Then, sir, I must say to you," replied Mr. Hamlin earnestly, "that during the more than forty years I have lived I have doubtless made many mistakes, but I have never lost self-respect. I would do so should I vote for the repeal of the Missouri compromise. It is needless to say more and I shall bid you good morning."

This was the last time Hamlin spoke with Franklin Pierce and the last time he entered the White House as a member of the Democratic party.

Upon the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, in 1854, our senator notified the leaders of his party that if the party at its next convention should endorse the doctrine of non-intervention in the territories, he should leave it. In the meantime he anticipated the action of the convention and was counted among those opposed to the administration. When the Cincinnati convention nominated Buchanan and adopted an extreme pro-slavery platform, Senator Hamlin, in a brief and forcible speech, formally renounced the chairmanship of the Committee on Commerce and severed his connection with the Democratic party.

The changed allegiance of a United States Senator who had been for many years so prominent and who enjoyed so high a reputation for patriotism, honesty and sincerity, naturally made a great sensation. In Maine the rejoicing was welcomed with the highest enthusiasm and delight. The rising Republican party insisted that he should become its candidate for governor. His campaign has been called a "whirlwind." The candidate headed his forces and addressed meetings all over the state, everywhere arousing enthusiasm by his forcible and eloquent speeches in behalf of the Pathfinder candidate for the presidency and the young party of Freedom. That was a joyful season for thousands of patriots — men in all parties who discovered that the bond which united them to each other was stronger than mere party attachments —

who felt that at last the overpowering issue was clearly presented and all who wished their country to advance under the light of Freedom must stand shoulder to shoulder. Drawn together by devotion to the highest principles and the noblest aspirations they looked into each others faces and were glad in the liberty of the new allegiance, filled with an exulting sense of power and coming triumph because their cause was just and all hearts were true to it.

Judge Carter, one of the staunchest of Hamlin's friends, was then editor of the *Portland Advertiser*. Years afterwards, when judge of the municipal court of Haverhill, Massachusetts, he told this incident of the campaign:—The *Advertiser* in the contest of 1856 published every day a list of recruits to the standard of the new party. The publication of the names made work for the campaign managers in that district since it exposed their accessions to the attempts of the deserted party to bring them back to their allegiance; but it was of great help to the party elsewhere. A rally had been held in Gorham. There was a band and a large attendance from the surrounding country. The next day Judge Carter met one of the converts from the Democratic ranks whose name had appeared in the paper of that morning — "We had a fine meeting at Gorham yesterday, didn't we?" said the judge. "Ya-a-as" was the reply, "quite a big meetin' but there was too much derved noise." "O, I don't know about that," replied the judge, "the people were interested and happy and showed it, that was all." "Ye needn't tell me," retorted the critical neophyte, "I was there an' I tell ye there was too much d — d clappin' and hoorawin'. I see one feller who had only one arm and he stood up and clapped his leg with his one hand." The colloquy indicated that the man had not reached that high plane that would entitle him to be called "an honest politician" according to Tom Reed's definition—that he had not sufficient civic virtue to "stay bought."



The Republican candidate for governor was triumphantly elected : but the new party was not yet sufficiently strong to elect a president. Governor Hamlin resigned after a few weeks' service, was elected to the Senate as his own successor and took his seat on the 4th of March.

There were twenty Republican senators in this senate. And what men they were ! The list now sounds like that of the kings and chiefs who followed Agamemnon to Troy — like the roll of Napoleon's marshals or Washington's generals, or the names of the leaders who wandered with Aeneas — "brave Gyas," "strong Cloanthus" and the rest : — Hamlin and Fessenden, Sumner and Wilson, Foster and Dixon, Hale and Bell, Collamer and Foot, Seward and King, Simmons, Simon Cameron, Ben Wade, Zach Chandler, Durkee and Doolittle, Lyman Trumbull, and James Harlan. Among them were able statesmen, profound lawyers, eloquent orators, keen debaters, skilful parliamentarians, highly educated and scholarly men, and men whose strong native powers compensated for the lack of the polish of the schools. Their quality made them much more than a "respectable minority" in the Senate. They were inspired with the high moral courage which came of their faith in the righteousness of the cause they represented, and the primal physical courage of the strong man also infused the little phalanx with its virile spirit. The days of misunderstanding were over. Compromises had had their day. The majority were already conspiring to make the Union such as they would have it. The minority were conscious that evil was brewing and so they were on their guard and observed the conspirators

"With watch as circumspect as seamen keep  
When in the night the leeward breakers flash."

The "arrogant old plantation" way was a punctured terror. The heroic form and countenance of Chandler, the new senator from Michigan, and his fearless bearing had their effect on friend and foe. It was known that he was ready to defend his honor and his cause

in any arena to which he might be challenged. There is good authority for the story that Chandler, Cameron and Wade made a solemn compact that they would put an end at any cost to insolence to Republican senators and attempts to browbeat them. Hamlin may not have been a party to the formal agreement: but it cannot be doubted that he would have co-operated at need because the senators constituting the triumvirate were his closest friends and associates. The biographer of Chandler says "A close personal intimacy with Mr. Wade, Mr. Hamlin and Mr. Cameron sprung up at this time, and general agreement of opinion on public questions led them into concerted action as representatives of the more "radical" element. Much of their work was beneath the surface and is not a matter of record, but the results of their efforts at that crisis to infuse vigor by all possible means into the lifeless national sentiment of the North and to prepare the people for the coming struggle, were important and durable." The friendship between the strong man of Maine and the strong man of Michigan was especially close and firm.

The stormy years of Buchanan's administration during which attempts to perpetrate "the crime against Kansas" were persistently pushed until they received their quietus at the hands of the patriotic, freedom-loving people of the infant state, the splendid work of the Republicans in Congress, and the split in the Democratic party combined to make the Republican National Convention in Chicago on the 16th of May 1860 an imposing and enthusiastic assemblage. It was inspired with devotion to the cause and confidence in the result of the campaign it was inaugurating. Many among the great leaders of the party had been suggested as candidates for the presidential nomination. The nomination of Seward was generally considered a foregone conclusion; but there were many sagacious politicians who did not regard Seward as the right man for leader in the troublous times evidently impending and who believed Lin-

coln was likely to be the choice of the convention. The fact that the Illinois man who had attracted the attention of the whole country by his powerful championship of Republican principles, had been brought to New York under the auspices of influential members of the party who did not favor Seward, and had made such an impression by his Cooper Institute speech, forcibly suggested the direction the wisest and most patriotic men were looking for the leader. Hamlin was a friend and admirer of Seward but he did not think Seward would be a strong enough candidate to win the election or that he possessed the qualities that a president should have in such an exigency. All he knew of Lincoln and could gather from western men in regard to him, led him to look upon the great son of the West as the man of the hour.

The sentiment of Maine was very strongly favorable to Seward. It was therefore necessary to proceed very cautiously and delicately in the endeavor to prevent the full vote of the state from being cast for him in the convention. Mr. Hamlin's course in this matter is a fair example of his political sagacity and skill and of his honorable methods in political contests. He made it known that he was opposed to Seward because he did not think Seward could carry the doubtful states. Surely neither Seward nor his friends could find fault with Mr. Hamlin for his opposition on that score. At that golden stage of the party everybody was willing to subordinate the interests of individuals to those of the cause. The legislative caucus named four men for delegates at large to the Convention. They were known to be friendly to Seward; but through the influence of Mr. Hamlin, among others, they were left free to act on their own judgment. Through Mr. Hamlin's foresight one district delegate inclined to Lincoln was chosen and, through his representations as to the undesirability of Seward as a candidate, two of the ablest of the delegates at large were ready to act with an open mind. Therefore three of the sixteen delegates were virtually for

Lincoln. At Mr. Hamlin's suggestion one of the delegates canvassed the delegations of the pivotal states of Pennsylvania, Illinois and Indiana and obtained from them in writing the names of three men who in their opinion could carry their respective states. The result of this test was to convince three more of the Maine delegates that Lincoln was the man, so that on the first vote six of the sixteen were for him.

Owing to the suggestions and advances that had been made to him, Hamlin notified the Maine delegation that he should not accept a nomination for either the first or the second place. The sentiment in the Convention was so strong for the Maine Senator as the candidate for vice-president that the delegation believed themselves warranted in falling in with it. On the second ballot he was chosen and the choice was made unanimous. It was with good reason that he was the voluntary, deliberate and unanimous choice of the young party. No man had a higher reputation for integrity, faithfulness, and absolute trustworthiness. No man had rendered greater, more faithful or valuable service to the cause. He had stood up for it so long and in such a conspicuous arena that he was known throughout the country and those that were nearest to him regarded him the most highly. He was especially qualified for a presiding officer by his good judgment, equable temperament, the easy dignity and natural affability of his manner and his exceptional familiarity with parliamentary law. Although policy had little to do with his selection, from that point of view also the nomination was a wise one since it coupled an eastern man of democratic antecedents with a western man who had been a whig. Mr. Hamlin, who was in Washington when the nomination was announced, was greatly surprised and his inclination was to decline, but when it was suggested that his refusal to accept

would be construed as a fear on his part that the ticket would not be successful the matter was settled promptly and he signified his acceptance.

The loyal people bore the Republican banner to victory at the election. But the party in power had still some months in which to further their nefarious designs. Buchanan was for a time as dough in the hands of the fire-eaters — until weeping and alarmed at the appalling conditions to which his administration had brought the Union he called good and true men to his cabinet, too late to withstand the tide that had made such headway in its destructive course. Mr. Hamlin was of the opinion that Buchanan had assured the conspirators before his election that they need fear no opposition from him in carrying out their designs. It hardly seems necessary, in order to account for his acts, to ascribe them to malice aforethought. They were due, probably, to weakness rather than to wickedness. Senator Dolliver, when a representative, in a speech on the occasion of the acceptance by Congress of a statue of Grant presented by the Grand Army of the Republic, felicitously and charitably disposed of the doddering old man in these words: — "James Buchanan was in no sense an ordinary man. He was all his lifetime, a leader of men, though he was left at the end of his generation impotently trying to answer elemental and volcanic questions with the dead phrases of an obsolete vocabulary."

Soon after the election Lincoln initiated a correspondence with the vice-president elect and in November he requested Mr. Hamlin to meet him in Chicago. At that meeting he expressed his willingness to accept any advice that the vice-president might give him, and Mr. Hamlin assured him that although the precedents were not encouraging to intimate relations between the president and the vice-president, he pledged himself to be a good friend and to aid him to the extent of his powers. That pledge was fully redeemed.

The friendship then formed grew stronger through the stress and burdens of the years of their association. Lincoln sought Hamlin's advice in making up his cabinet and gave him the naming of the member from New England. Mr. Hamlin named Welles for Secretary of the Navy. He was never heard to boast of his appointee.

When the new administration assumed the duties and responsibilities of government the prospect was far from exhilarating. Seven states had seceded and formed a confederacy with Jefferson Davis as its head. There was danger that others would follow them. But worse than the outright defection of these Southern states and the defiant attitude of the pro-slavery democracy, was the weak-kneed condition of the party that had so enthusiastically elected its candidates in November. The menace of disunion which had been treated with derision looked less and less like an empty threat as the days of the expiring administration grew fewer. The party of the North did not want disunion, still less did it want war. It would probably have sacrificed a large slice of principle to avert an armed contest. Happily the quality of its civic morality was not tested since the other side gave no sign of a willingness to treat. There were some however who did not believe that there was anything serious in the action and attitude of the South. Even Seward and Sumner were of the mind, after the inauguration even, that the South was carrying out its usual policy of bluster and threat in order to procure concessions, and that there was no danger of actual armed resistance to the government. Hamlin was under no such illusions. He knew the Southern leaders well and he was confident that they meant to disrupt the Union. One of his friends, Mr. Dunning of Bangor, was in Washington at the inauguration and on his return he announced that Hannibal Hamlin had told him that war was coming and therefore it was sure to come. Thereupon amid much jeering and chaffing he set about raising a com-

pany which became the nucleus for the Second Maine when the call for 75,000 men was made.

After the inauguration of Lincoln there was a period of waiting on both sides which was so conducive to the sober second thought on the part of the people of the South, leading to doubts as to the wisdom of their course, that Jefferson Davis was told that he "must fling blood into the faces of the people" if he would keep them true to their new allegiance. Accordingly Sumter was attacked and captured. That act indeed fired the Southern heart, and it fired the Northern heart as well. The wavering and the apathy that had been growing since the election ceased as if by magic. The whole North was kindled with a burning enthusiasm and inspired with the deep determination to avenge the insult to the flag and to maintain the Union at all hazards.

The vice-president was inclined to sympathize with the radical element of the Republican party which was impatient at the caution and deliberation exercised by the President, especially at the beginning of the war. From the first and all through the years of their association in the administration he was in close touch with the President, who was always ready to ask and receive his counsels. Respect and admiration grew with acquaintance and he was not long in learning how great a man was in the seat of responsibility and what all-embracing and far-seeing sagacity governed his course. He never criticised the President but accepted his action in every case as for the best, waited with confidence and, in the meantime, worked loyally to uphold and assist him. His official duty as the presiding officer of the Senate was the least part of his service. The leaders of the party were glad to admit him to their conferences and to have the benefit of his sound judgment and long experience. In private and in public his manner and his words gave confidence to the doubtful and strengthened the faint-hearted. Persistency is one of the chief attributes of the saints. People in the mass do not

seem to possess it. In the dark days of defeat or disappointment, appalled by the loss of life and weighed down by the financial burdens of the war, even the most loyal would have halted or turned back if Lincoln had not held them with a firm hand without seeming to entertain a doubt that they were steadfast in their purpose to maintain the Union, and if such trusted leaders as Hamlin had not given him their powerful aid.

He gladly gave much time and attention to the interests of the State of Maine and of Maine soldiers and their friends, visiting the departments to personally attend to some matter of business for the State, procuring furloughs for sick or wounded soldiers, making arrangements for some anxious and bewildered father to go to the front to see a son in hospital, urging the promotion of worthy officers, and otherwise befriending officers and men seeking advice or assistance. In addition to a patriotic interest in soldiers he had a special personal regard for them; they had an attraction for him through his soldierly instincts. When a boy he would have gone to West Point but for his mother's desire that he should stay at home. Early in his residence at Hampden he was elected captain of the volunteer company of that vicinity and, it may be remarked in passing, he was largely indebted to his popularity in that capacity for his political advancement, in its early stages especially. Soon after the call for 75,000 men he attended a flag-raising at Hampden and after his speech he enforced his appeal for the support of the government by lining up his hearers and drilling them with pickets from a near-by fence in lieu of muskets. It is recorded in the Adjutant General's Report that Hannibal Hamlin was a private in Company A, Maine State Guards. He enlisted early in the war and served in the ranks several weeks when the company was ordered on duty. Thus he earned his membership in the Grand Army of the Republic which he greatly prized. He attended many encampments of that Army and was always warmly welcomed by his com-



rades. His two sons rendered longer and more active military service—General Cryus Hamlin, who served through the war with great credit and whose death soon after its close cut short a life of brilliant promise, and our honored Companion, General Charles Hamlin.

To a great many loyal persons,—not all of them of a highly developed devout nature—the guiding hand of Providence seems remarkably apparent in the vicissitudes of the war and the conduct of the affairs of the Union. But it must be by faith alone, by a recognition of the limitations of finite beings, that the act of a beneficent Ruler can be seen in the selection and election of Andrew Johnson as Vice-President of the United States. In the presidential campaign of 1864 the friends of Lincoln regarded it as a matter of course that the old ticket would be renominated. The Vice President was perfectly neutral, content to abide by the decision of his party whatever it might be and his friends did not think it would require any special effort to secure his nomination. The story of the substitution of Andrew Johnson for Hannibal Hamlin is not a pleasing one. Suffice it here to note that the influences that brought it about were not due to any objection to Mr. Hamlin, but to a purpose to use the vice presidency to accomplish ulterior ends. The only point of interest in the nomination to Mr. Hamlin and his friends is the charge that it was due to Lincoln's suggestion. This they have indignantly denied as untrue and dishonoring to the memory of Lincoln. The story is *a priori* preposterous. Lincoln's character and methods were utterly opposed to the slightest color of belief that, while answering his friends and the trusted leaders of the party that he should not undertake to direct the convention in the choice of a candidate for vice-president, he whispered to certain comparatively unimportant individuals that Johnson was the man. If he had believed there were sound political reasons for the nomination of another, Mr. Hamlin would have been the first to be

informed by him. The question is effectually settled by this statement of John G. Nicolay :—"On Sunday, the 5th of July, I went to Baltimore to attend the convention as a spectator. I was not a delegate, and had no object or mission beyond that of curiosity. My going was not suggested by the President, neither did he object when I informed him of my intention. That being the fifth year of my service as his confidential and official private secretary, I knew I would be questioned about the President's desires. I mentioned this to him and asked him specially whether he wished me to say anything as to whom he might prefer to have associated with him as candidate for Vice-President.

His answer was that all the various candidates and their several supporters being his friends, he deemed it unbecoming in him to advocate the nomination of any one of them; but that privately and personally he would be best pleased if the convention would renominate the old ticket that had been so triumphantly elected in 1860, and which would show an unbroken faith and leadership in the Republican party, and an unbroken and undivided support of that party to the administration and in the prosecution of the war."

Mr. Hamlin showed that he bore no resentment by cordially supporting the ticket in the campaign. At home and stumping through some of the middle and western states he praised Johnson as one of the faithful among the faithless, a man who could be trusted in any exigency.

A senator was to be chosen in Maine by the legislature of 1865 in consequence of the resignation of Fessenden to take the Treasury portfolio, and Mr. Hamlin's friends confidently expected that he would be elected; but Fessenden soon had enough of the cabinet office and entered the field as a candidate for the position he had relinquished, whereupon Mr. Hamlin withdrew.

The President desired to make Mr. Hamlin Secretary of the

Treasury and perhaps would have done so had the assassin's hand been stayed.

He was appointed to the lucrative office of Collector of Customs of the port of Boston in 1865 and in the year following he resigned the office compelled thereto by his keen sense of propriety. As an official he felt that he could not hold an office under an administration whose policies he could not approve, and as a citizen, whom the people had honored and still regarded as one of the great leaders of the party, he felt that it was his duty to emphasize his disapproval of the dangerous course the President was bent on pursuing.

After his withdrawal from the collectorship he, as president of the company, occupied himself with building the Piscataquis railroad and in preparing for the senatorial contest in 1869. That struggle was one of the most remarkable in political annals and attracted the attention of the whole country. A very considerable portion of the population of the State of Maine went to Augusta while it was going on to take a hand in the exciting game. Both candidates were strong, able and patriotic and both deserved well of their party. The friends of each were the enemies of the other in a Pickwickian sense only. Mr. Hamlin won by that one vote which had turned the balance for or against him in previous contests. When he resumed his seat in the Senate he found some of his former colleagues there and many able men among the new senators. His return was cordially hailed as a valuable accession to his party associates and to the Senate. He continued the same course he had pursued in his former service and became a working, rather than a talking senator. As chairman of the Committee on the District of Columbia he was largely instrumental in procuring an appropriation of five millions of dollars for the improvement of the National capital, which enabled Alexander R. Shepherd, the celebrated Governor of the District of Columbia, to inaugurate on a most extensive scale, the work which has made the nation's city the most attractive and

beautiful one in the world. He was on cordial terms with President Grant and heartily supported him. Mr. Hamlin said that the men who "grew on him" most were Webster, Lincoln and Grant. As a member of the Committee on Foreign Relations he rendered a notable service to the administration, to the country and to the cause of peace throughout the world, by his championship—and champions were needed—of the arbitration treaty with England as to the damage to our shipping by the English-rebel cruisers.

At the conclusion of his term he was re-elected with but little opposition. His relations with the new president, Hayes, were not close and cordial. Hayes started out with an original Southern policy and consulted the Bourbon leaders rather than those of his own party. Senator Hamlin was appointed a member of a delegation of the Republican leaders to wait upon the President and ascertain his position. Hayes closed his statement of his policy with the words, "Gentlemen, I expect as a result of my Southern policy that the Republican party will carry six or seven states at the next election." Senator Hamlin rose to his feet and replied impressively "Mr. President, you will not carry a single school-district." The President's subsequent treatment of Senator Hamlin indicated that he cherished a personal resentment on account of that rebuke. Senator Hamlin, however, did not allow personal relations to influence him in public matters. His own judgment led him to stand by the administration in all important measures, notwithstanding powerful opposition in the Senate and adverse popular opinion. Among them was the question of a treaty with England as to the fisheries on the basis of the award of the Halifax Commission. As chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations he made a remarkable report in which, although he considered the award exceedingly unjust, he recommended its acceptance for the sake of furthering the great principle of international arbitration which was so dear to him.

It so happened that his last important speech in 1879 when the antagonism of Dennis Kearney and his "sand-lots" following to "Chinese cheap labor," caused a bill to be rushed through the house modifying the Burlingame treaty with China, in a manner which would not have been considered in the case of a treaty with a "civilized" country. The Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations made a noble and impressive speech, in a strain of the loftiest patriotism, urging the maintenance of the national honor and good faith and predicting in glowing terms the greatness of "our empire upon the Pacific" and a "mighty commerce" with the far East. When minister to Spain he was warmly thanked by the Chinese minister to that court for his well remembered aid in securing fair treatment for China. If he had intended that speech to be his "swan song" he could not have made it sweeter and more tuneful or more accordant with the theme of the retirement of a patriot sage from long years of service to his country in the highest places.

He made it known before the end of his term that he should not be a candidate for another term. His decision was not caused by any waning of his influence or mental power. Thomas B. Reed said of him: "At no time during his long and varied career could he have laid down so much power as when at the age of seventy-two he voluntarily left the Senate of the United States."

He was wearied with the ceaseless daily round. He was so constituted that he could not disregard the calls of duty or refuse his help to any who asked for it and such appeals were incessant and ever increasing. Rather, he thought, go now while my people want me to stay than to linger until they want me to go. As he who "dying remembered sweet Argos," so in his weariment and fulness of years the venerable statesman thought with longing of his quiet home on the Penobscot, of his beloved fields and trees, and of daily intercourse with old, true and tried friends and his fellow-citizens

in a community where respect, honor and love encircled him wherever his walks might lie.

The cessation of his senatorial career was greatly regretted by his compeers. No senator was ever more respected and liked by his associates. Even in the hot days before the war he was on good terms personally with the Southern senators. Jefferson Davis was a personal friend. Allen G. Thurman and he maintained a close friendly alliance. Even the exclusive and fastidious Conkling yielded to the spell and could be more readily influenced by him than by any other senator.

The limitations of this paper are exhausted by the simple, lean record of the long, useful life of its subject so that no space is left for reciting his achievements. The exclamation of the classic wanderer, "*Quae regio in terris nostri non plena laboris,*" may well be paraphrased by asking what matter of public importance tending to the welfare and advancement of the country did not receive the earnest support of our great statesman.

Early in his congressional career he determined to give his attention to work rather than to oratory and his committee assignments gave him full opportunity to execute his purpose. Thus he established a reputation as "the best business man in the Senate" and an authority in all matters pertaining to navigation and commercial relations.

He was always ready, however, to speak at need and he always spoke to the purpose and with effect. His was not the grand, laborious style of oratory having in view "the applause of listening senates to command." His speech was plain, simple, concise, aiming to convince, though when warmed to enthusiasm in a cause that appealed to his heart and his imagination, he could rise to heights of fervid eloquence. He liked to look upon the faces of his fellow-countrymen and to talk directly to them, and they liked to hear him. Hence he was in great request as a campaign speaker and

took part in all the great political contests in his day, speaking in many states. One, speaking of his wonderful power before the people, said, "Why, they believe every word he says." "The grand old wisdom of sincerity" was the secret of the trust he inspired.

On his return to Bangor he was given a grand reception by the citizens of that city without distinction of party. The occasion was made specially notable by the receipt of many messages from his former colleagues of both parties and other prominent men with whom he had been associated, all expressing a high estimate of his ability and public services and warm personal regard.

President Garfield having heard Mr. Hamlin mention casually that he would like to go abroad, tendered him the appointment of minister to Spain. Mr. Hamlin accepted with the understanding that he would remain but a year. He went to his post in the fall of 1881 and was absent fourteen months having in the meantime seen many cities and met many distinguished men. In a letter which appears in the "Life and Times of Hannibal Hamlin," the fine work of Charles Eugene Hamlin, a son of Companion Charles Hamlin, the minister writes that the "King's carriages" were sent for him when he went to Court to present his credentials, and with what cordiality he was received.

Thenceforward the life of his serene old age was one of quiet enjoyment of home life and association with friends and neighbors, and of the pleasures his farm, the woods and trout streams so bountifully afforded him. On a few occasions the claims of friendship drew him from his retirement to a participation in the old activities; as when in 1884 at McKinley's urgent solicitation he stumped the Ohio congressman's district with him, and in 1887 when he appeared before the legislature of Maine to plead for the abolition of capital punishment, and again in 1889 when at the

invitation of President Harrison, whose nomination he was first to suggest, he attended the latter's inauguration.

His last conspicuous appearance before his countrymen was at the celebration of Lincoln's birthday by the Republican club of New York, five months before his death. The object that induced him to make such a journey at an inclement season was to urge a movement to make Lincoln's birthday a national holiday. When he arose to speak the scene must have been most impressive and moving. As one present said of it, "In all my life I never saw anything that stirred so many emotions and aroused so many memories as when Hannibal Hamlin pleaded with the nation to make Abraham Lincoln's birthday a holiday."

There could have been no more receptive and appreciative an audience—an assemblage of the most patriotic and influential men of the metropolis, men of the keenest sensibilities, instantly responsive to every touch of nature or of art. What soul-thrilling sensations of tenderness, respect, and wonder that was near to awe, must have exalted everyone, heart and brain, looking upon the venerable and venerated man who, a generation before, had stood at the right hand of the great President—his more than four score years serving but to heighten the nobility of his presence and to soften the expressions of his countenance as in his sweet clear tones he voiced the love and honor he bore Lincoln and bespoke for him this tribute of the nation's remembrance and gratitude.

On the fourth of July, 1891, he was suddenly stricken while sitting with friends at his club and in a few minutes the brave, true heart was still forever. He died on an anniversary of his country's birthday as those other patriots and statesmen, Adams and Jefferson, died. The memories of these founders of the Republic and of him who bore so grand a part in saving it, thus connected with the national holiday, deepen and heighten its significance as a sanction of the inviolable life of the Union. Beginning with those fathers



who pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor to the cause of liberty, many strong and true men have made names for themselves through eminent and faithful service to their country, and their memories enrich the nation and ennoble humanity. Among them none more worthily holds a place than Hannibal Hamlin.





