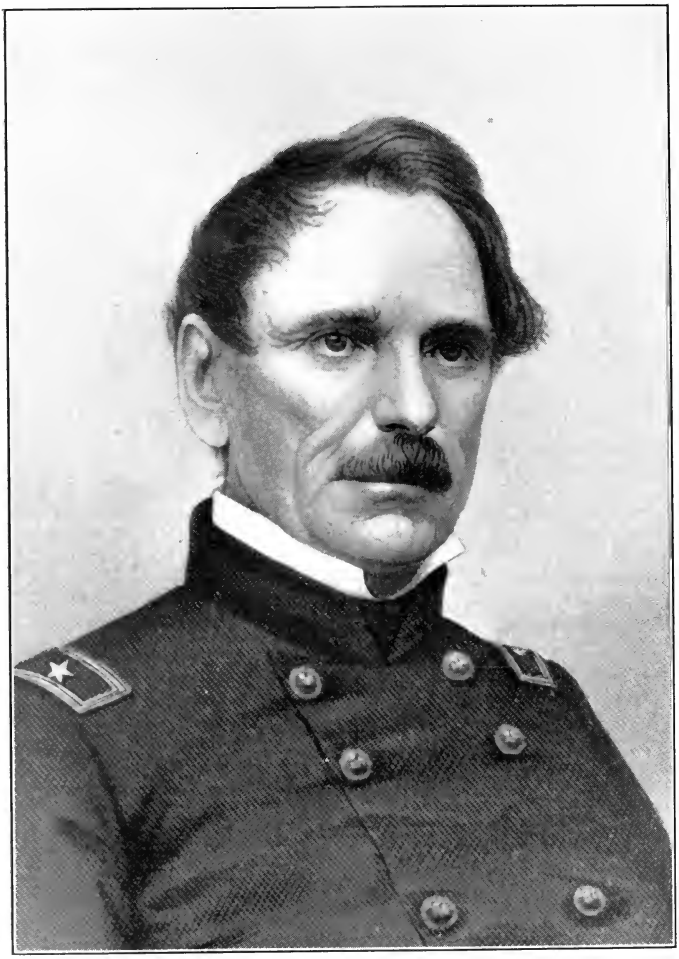

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GENERAL JAMES SHIELDS,

Soldier, Orator, Statesman.*

BY HENRY A. CASTLE.

James Shields was born in County Tyrone, Ireland, May 12, 1806. Many authorities place this date four years later, but the original family records, now in the hands of St. Paul relatives, confirm much collateral evidence of the correctness of this statement. He was of notable ancestry. In the paternal line it was distinctly Irish and Catholic, but a great-grandmother was English, and his mother was Scottish. For generations the Shields family were people of property, education, and consideration, living at Cranfield, County Antrim, Province of Ulster. At the battle of the Boyne, in 1690, Daniel Shields and four sons fought on the losing side, that of King James II. There the father and one son were killed. Two of the surviving sons went to Spain, where one of them became a general and finally Captain General of Cuba. Daniel, the youngest son, remained in Ireland, but suffered from the confiscations and banishment visited on the Catholic soldiers of the dethroned king by William of Orange, the victor.

This Daniel married an English girl, whom he had romantically rescued from drowning, and settled on mountain land at Altmore, County Tyrone. He was the direct ancestor of the future American general and senator. Charles Shields, a grandson of Daniel, married Katherine McDonnell, of Glencoe, Scotland, lineage, a woman of education and refinement. To them were born James, the subject of this memoir, Daniel, and Patrick, who thus inherited an infusion of the Scotch-Irish blood which has been manifest in many distinguished Americans. Daniel was the father of Lytton E. Shields and the grandfather of James Shields and Lytton J. Shields, all of whom have long resided in Saint Paul.

*Read at the monthly meeting of the Executive Council, April 13, 1914.

Charles Shields died when his son James was only six years old, but the mother, with her Scottish industry and thrift, raised her three boys well, giving them the best of existing educational facilities. James received some special attention, having early developed a taste for books which remained with him during his long and active career, and which was of great value in fitting him for the high positions that he occupied. Soon after his father's death, his uncle and namesake came from America, where he had lived for many years. The elder James had fought in the War for Independence, and in the War of 1812, on the American side, having been wounded in the Battle of New Orleans. He remained in Ireland for a few years, during which time he acted as schoolmaster to young James and laid the foundation for his military bent. This uncle had been professor of Latin and Greek in Charleston, S. C. The boy made rapid progress, and the uncle promised that when he grew older he would bring him to America and make him his heir. At that period also Ireland was full of old soldiers who had served in the British army in long campaigns against Bonaparte. From one of these young Shields learned fencing or sword exercise and became expert in that line. His early lessons in the military drill were from the same source, and the rudiments of a military education were acquired from books presented to him by one of these veterans. Supplementing the education received from his uncle, was a classical training from a relative of his mother, a clergyman from Maynooth College. One of the old soldiers also taught him French, so that when he migrated to America he was unusually well educated for a boy of that period.

Young Shields was a soldier by instinct. He drilled his school mates and led them in local battles with opposing clans. His shrewd devices, bold strategies, and firm discipline, made his force invincible.

In 1822, at the age of sixteen, James Shields, mindful of his uncle's alluring offer, sailed from Liverpool for America. But vicissitudes followed him. His ship was driven a wreck on the coast of Scotland, and he was one of only three survivors. He remained several months in Scotland as tutor in a wealthy

family. Then he embarked under better auspices. Arrived in America and failing to find his uncle, who had died in the interim, James adopted, for the time, a sailor's life, was purser on a merchantman, and became so expert in seamanship that many years later he was placed in command of a sailing vessel on the Pacific, whose officers were disabled, and brought her safely into port. His career as purser terminated in an accident, which left him with both legs broken and sent him to a New York hospital for three months.

He interrupted or supplemented this seafaring with service as volunteer in a campaign against the Seminole Indians. Authentic details of this episode are lacking, but he is said to have been a lieutenant and to have been wounded in battle, where he displayed marked gallantry. On this service rests his title of a soldier in three wars.

Having now reached years of discretion, through varied experiences, young Shields chose the law as his profession, and the old French town of Kaskaskia in Illinois as his field of labor. This town, the Territorial capital of Illinois, being also the county seat of Randolph county, had been founded by La Salle in 1682; was garrisoned by the King of France in 1710 with troops who in 1755 helped defeat Braddock at Fort Duquesne; and was captured by George Rogers Clark in 1777.

He supported himself by teaching school in and near Kaskaskia, his knowledge of the French language being of great value then and afterward. He was admitted to the bar in 1832, and opened an office. He gained so rapidly in acquaintance and popularity, that in 1835 he was elected a representative in the State Legislature, as a Democrat from Randolph county, then overwhelmingly Whig in sentiment. He took his seat at Vandalia, the state capital, in January, 1836. Here he met, as fellow representatives, Douglas, Lincoln, Browning, Hardin, Baker, McClernand, and other young athletes of politics. Shields easily took his place on terms of equality in this distinguished company. His personal appearance and manners were engaging. He was five feet nine inches tall, of fine figure and graceful bearing. His voice was well modulated; his speech frank, clear and resolute. He was prominent in debate

and influential in council. It was a critical time in the affairs of Illinois, the inauguration of a policy of extensive public improvements, in which the youthful legislator bore a progressive part.

Shields served four years in the Legislature, gaining so much prominence that in 1839 he was elected State Auditor. Meantime, Springfield had become the state capital, and in 1840 he began his residence there, which continued for fifteen years. His administration was so successful that in 1841 he was reelected without opposition.

While he occupied this important office he was involved in an "affair of honor" with a Springfield lawyer,—no less a personage than Abraham Lincoln. At this time "James Shields, Auditor," was the pride of the young Democracy. In the summer of 1842 the Springfield Journal contained some letters from the "Lost Townships," by a contributor whose nom de plume was "Aunt Becca," which held up the gallant young Auditor to ridicule. These letters caused intense excitement in the town. Nobody knew their authorship except the editor of the paper, of whom Shields demanded the name. The real author was Miss Mary Todd, afterward the wife of Abraham Lincoln, to whom she was engaged, and who felt bound to assume the responsibility for her sharp pen thrusts. Mr. Lincoln accepted the situation. Not long after, the two men with their seconds were on their way to the field of honor. But the affair was adjusted without any fighting, and thus ended the Lincoln-Shields duel of the Lost Townships. The antagonists were ever afterward firm friends.

Considering all the circumstances, the temperament of the respective parties, the customs and surroundings, there was nothing censurable in the conduct of either. Shields justly deemed himself grossly insulted and humiliated by some of the epithets in the letters, and bitterly resented. Lincoln felt in honor bound to represent his fiancée. Both displayed bravery in meeting the crisis and magnanimity in adjusting it. Times and customs have happily changed. Some mistaken friends on both sides have latterly felt impelled to discredit the whole story, but the truth of history demands that it be correctly

stated. Existing files of the Springfield newspapers contain all the correspondence, no material part of which has ever been controverted.

In 1843, Auditor Shields was appointed by the Governor as Justice of the Supreme Court of Illinois to succeed Stephen A. Douglas, who had been elected to Congress. He heard and decided many difficult cases. Among the great lawyers who practiced at the bar when Judge Shields was on the supreme bench, were Abraham Lincoln, John M. Palmer, Lyman Trumbull, O. H. Browning, E. B. Washburn, E. D. Baker, J. J. Hardin, Stephen T. Logan, J. C. Conkling, W. Bushnell, and Archibald Williams. All of these men afterward acquired distinction, many of them becoming United States senators, congressmen, and judges. That Shields, who was still a young man, sustained himself in such exalted company, and afterward, in war and in peace, fully maintained his position with them and others of nation-wide renown, is conclusive tribute to his ability and energy. An eminent Minnesota lawyer of a later generation has carefully studied the decisions of Judge Shields, as recorded in the Illinois Supreme Court Reports, and testifies that they bear conclusive evidence of a legal erudition and discrimination, rare in that period, and little to be expected of one so seemingly immersed in non-professional interests.

In 1845, President James K. Polk appointed Judge Shields Commissioner of the General Land Office at Washington. He was deeply interested in the important matters coming before this great bureau, and was solicitously preparing for such an energetic administration as the exigencies then demanded, when the outbreak of the Mexican War gave him a new opportunity of proving his devotion to his adopted country. President Polk, recognizing in him the qualities that constitute a great soldier, appointed him a brigadier general of United States volunteers. His commission was dated July 1, 1846.

At the siege of Vera Cruz General Shields distinguished himself, and gave good promise of other valiant service. This promise was amply fulfilled at the battle of Cerro Gordo and at the storming of Chapultepec. At the former battle his deeds of valor seem like those of Roland at Roncesvalles or Ney at Borodino.

At Cerro Gordo he was severely wounded while leading his men, but he refused to quit the field. He advanced to the charge, when he was struck in the chest by an iron grapeshot, an inch in diameter, that passed through his lungs. He fell into the arms of Oglesby, afterward United States senator from Illinois, and was carried from the battlefield to all appearances lifeless. The wound was skillfully treated by a French surgeon, who had been captured with the Mexicans, and in nine weeks he was again in the saddle.

For his gallant conduct on this occasion, he was brevetted Major General, and his commanding officers, Generals Twiggs and Scott, both mentioned him in most laudatory terms in their official reports. Four months afterwards, he led the celebrated charge of the "Palmettos" of South Carolina and the New York volunteers at the battle of Cherubusco, where the Mexicans, according to the official account of Santa Anna, lost one-third of their army. On the 13th of September, he was in the thick of the fight at Chapultepec. His horse having been shot under him, General Shields fought on foot, bareheaded and in his shirt sleeves, leading his brigade, sword in hand. His command led the van into the City of Mexico and first planted the stars and stripes on the halls of the Montezumas. Here Shields received another severe wound, a fractured arm, but remained with his brigade until the goal was reached. Among the young subordinates and subalterns in the regular service, who participated in this victory and won early distinction, were U. S. Grant, Joseph E. Johnston, Robert E. Lee, James Longstreet, George E. Pickett, and "Stonewall" Jackson.

One of the notable battle-pictures of the world, hanging in the corridors of the capitol at Washington, is that of the assault on Chapultepec, the citadel of the City of Mexico. It shows General Shields, easily distinguishable, in the thick of the fight, where he always loved to be. It thus, on the outer walls of the Senate, where ten years later he shed glory on Minnesota, certifies to his imperishable renown.

After the conquest of Mexico, and on July 28, 1848, General Shields' brigade was disbanded, and he returned, still feeble from his wound, to Illinois and resumed his law practice. His

State presented to him a sword that cost $3,000, and South Carolina presented him a diamond-hilted sword which cost $5,000. When he died, thirty-one years later, there were left to his widow and children the swords of Cerro Gordo, which, with his blessing, was about all he had to leave them.

President Polk, recognizing General Shields' valuable services in Mexico, appointed him Governor of the new Territory of Oregon. But his election to the senatorship, which immediately followed, prevented his acceptance.

The people of Illinois were not unmindful of the fidelity with which the General in his various civil and military capacities had served them. Although Senator Breese, then in office, had greatly distinguished himself and was a candidate for re-election, yet Shields' popularity was so great that he defeated Breese and was elected United States Senator for the term of six years, commencing March 4, 1849. When he presented his credentials some technical question was raised as to their regularity. He promptly resigned, returned to Illinois, and was at once re-elected.

He entered the Senate as the colleague of Stephen A. Douglas. He found there Webster, Clay, Calhoun, Benton, and Cass, who were among the grandest figures in our annals of statesmanship, while Chase, Breckenridge, Jefferson Davis, Sumner, Fessenden, and Everett, were already entering upon their several spheres of action. This was the beginning of the end of the slavery struggle, which affected nearly every important debate in the Senate. Shields was opposed to the extension of slavery, although his party was for slavery, and he did not hesitate to express his opinions on the subject. He was placed on important committees. His work in constructive legislation was intelligent, practical, and influential. He made many effective speeches. He advocated grants of land to agricultural colleges, to railroads, to soldiers, and to actual settlers under a liberal homestead law.

Probably the most significant speech of General Shields in the Senate was that delivered in January, 1850, on the bill for the admission of California. This speech fills many pages in the reports, and is saturated throughout with the spirit of patriot-

ism, the spirit of liberty, the spirit of wisdom, the spirit of prophecy. On the attempt by the South to force slavery on California, he said:

Sir, they are laying the foundation of a great empire on the shore of the Pacific,—a mighty empire,—an empire that at some future day will carry your flag, your commerce, your arts and your arms into Asia, and through China, Hindustan, and Persia, into Western Europe. Talk about carrying slavery there, of imposing such a blight upon that people, of withering their strength and paralyzing their energies by such an institution! No, sir; such a thing was never intended by God, and will never be permitted by man. It is sometimes urged here that our constitution carries slavery with it wherever it goes, unless positively excluded by law; in other words, that slavery is the normal law of this Republic. I think the principle is just the reverse. Slavery, being in violation of natural right, can only exist by positive enactment; and the constitution of this country only tolerates slavery where it exists, but neither extends or establishes it anywhere.

Concerning the Southern threat of secession, he philosophized thus eloquently and convincingly:

But suppose the Southern Confederacy was now established, that it was quietly and peaceably established this moment, what would be the actual condition of the Confederacy? It could not exist a single day without a close and intimate connection with some great nation having all the elements of industrial, financial and commercial power. The South possesses none of these elements. It has plenty of cotton, and it has brave men and lovely women, but it is wholly destitute of all the other material elements of national power. In fact the Southern Confederacy would be a mere colony of masters and slaves to raise cotton for the factories of England. Besides, sir, it is my firm conviction that the institution of slavery, as it now exists in the South, would not last, in its present shape, for the space of twenty years in that Southern Confederacy. The South might as well attempt to shut out the pressure of the atmosphere, as to shut out the whole pressure of the civilized world on its cherished institutions.

Senator Shields' term of six years expired March 4, 1855, and on February 8 preceding the Illinois legislature met in joint session to choose his sucessor. Shields was the Democratic caucus nominee, but the embryo Republican party was in the ascendant and elected Lyman Trumbull in his stead. On the first ballot Shields received 41 votes, Abraham Lincoln 45, Lyman Trumbull 5, and 5 votes were scattered. On the last ballot the anti-Nebraska men concentrated on Trumbull and

elected him, thus saving Lincoln for the great debate with Douglas three years later which made him President in 1860.

On leaving the Senate in 1855, General Shields came to Minnesota to select some lands that had been awarded for his war service. He was so favorably impressed with the country that he decided to go East and organize a large colony of Irish-Americans to settle on the fertile soil of Rice and Le Sueur counties. His project met with much general approval, but was vigorously opposed by Archbishop Hughes, then at the head of the American hierarchy, and was only partly successful. That this opposition policy was a mistaken one, both for the church and the people, was clearly shown twenty-five years later by the grand work of another and a greater Archbishop, our esteemed prelate and citizen, John Ireland. What Shields, unimpeded, might have accomplished, with an earlier start and better opportunities, can only be imagined. His wisdom and prescience can only be commended. He saw, as in a vision, the Clontarfs, Gracevilles, Green Isles, and Avocas, embosomed in prolific farmsteads, which we now see face to face.

General Shields received a warm welcome in Minnesota. His fame had preceded him, for it was nation-wide. He brought with him more acquired eminence than any predecessor. He entered at once and with vigor on constructive work. He was one of the original proprietors of Faribault. He founded the town of Shieldsville, a few miles distant, as the center of his extensive rural settlements, but resided in Faribault for a considerable period. His colony prospered and is now one of our richest domains.

When the first Legislature of the State of Minnesota convened in December, 1857, it was Democratic in politics and there was great rivalry between numerous candidates for the two United States senatorships. General Shields was a newcomer, with no local claims, but was suggested as a compromise; and he was finally elected with Henry M. Rice, then the Territorial delegate. The General drew the short term, which expired on March 4, 1859, while Mr. Rice had the allotment which carried him until 1863. The next Legislature was Republican, and Shields failed of re-election, for that reason alone, Morton S.

Wilkinson being chosen as his successor. Thus, for a second time, the shifting fortunes of his party, and not a lack of merit or popularity, prevented his return to the Senate.

The value of Senator Shieds to this State cannot be measured by the length of his term. His previous high status in the body to which he now returned, made him a worthy colleague of the astute pioneer, Mr. Rice; they worked together in fine harmony and with rare effectiveness in securing liberal favors for the struggling young commonwealth. They antedated this militant generation, when the hand that rocks the cradle stones the premier, and the spear that smites the octopus knows no brother. But they helped found a State that has royally justified their intelligent solicitude.

That the services of General Shields to Minnesota were appreciated is testified to by the naming of a military company in St. Paul, "The Shields Guards," in his honor. The manuscript files of the Minnesota Historical Society contain many letters from Shields to H. H. Sibley, during the period of his residence in this state, which throw instructive side-lights on political and social affairs of that period.

On June 25, 1856, during the last year of Franklin Pierce's administration, Shields wrote to Sibley, both being Democrats: "This administration has been the most insignificant that ever disgraced this great country." On November 21 of the same year, Buchanan having just been elected President to succeed Pierce, and Shields having gone to Washington to act as "best man" at the (second) marriage of his former colleague from Illinois, Senator Stephen A. Douglas, he said to Sibley of Buchanan's proposed cabinet: "My fears outrun my hopes. Buchanan will be forced to take warring elements in,—disunionists from the South, presidential aspirants from the North. The South elected him, and will make him a Southern President. If he yields to this, he is lost." Impartial history has long since verified these sagacious, independent statements and prophecies.

Anent the Douglas wedding, Shields dropped a remark in this letter which the future also fully justified: "The bride, Miss Cutts, is a splendid person, and will be a great benefit to Judge Douglas. She has good sense, exquisite taste, and a

kind, generous disposition. Her influence will improve his appearance and soften his manners.''

This manuscript correspondence with Sibley shows that during the entire period of his residence in Minnesota, Shields manifested a lively interest in public affairs generally as affecting the new State, and especially the region occupied by his Irish-American colonists. On June 7, 1859, after he had ceased to be Senator, we find him writing to Sibley, then Governor of Minnesota, from Faribault, that a meeting in that town at which he presided, had selected directors to choose a site for the State deaf and dumb asylum,including four from Faribault, William Sprigg Hall of St. Paul, and N. M. Donaldson of Owatonna.

The memory of Gen. Judson W. Bishop supplies the narrative of an episode which we do not find of record, but which shows General Shields' dominating military spirit, and which came near giving him the title of a Soldier in four wars. When the Indian massacre at Spirit Lake, Iowa, occurred in 1857, General Shields, then residing at Faribault, promptly rallied a company of his colonists and other citizens, had them armed and mounted and started for the scene of hostilities, about 150 miles distant. Other bands of settlers, living nearer, arrived first, and the Indians had disappeared. General Bishop, heading a surveying party, met Shields' detachment on their return, and vividly describes their zeal and ardor. Thus the former brigade commander in Mexico, the future division commander in Virginia, was equally ready to lead a hundred undisciplined men in what might have been a very hazardous campaign.

After retiring from office as Senator from Minnesota, General Shields was led by business considerations to settle in California. In San Francisco, in 1861, he was married to Miss Mary Carr, who was a daughter of Jerome and Sarah Carr and was born August 15, 1835, in County Armagh, Ireland. Her father, a linen merchant, with the proverbial Irish large-heartedness, had endorsed a note for a friend and thereby lost his fortune, the accumulation of years of industry and frugality. Looking, as so many others had done, for a place to recover

his lost resources, he turned to America and settled in the city of Baltimore, where he died in 1852, his wife only surviving him a year. The daughter, thus left, for a time attended a convent boarding school and made her home with relatives.

The Shields and Carr families were friends in Ireland, had intermarried, and quite naturally James Shields and Mary Carr met and were friends in America. During the summer of 1861 Miss Carr was visiting at the convent in San Francisco, and when General Shields found he had business in that city, he pressed his suit and won his bride. They were married August 16, 1861, in the Church of St. Ignatius. The General and his bride embarked that evening on a steamer for Mazatlan, Mexico, thus auspiciously beginning their matrimonial voyage on the smooth and placid waters of the Pacific, truly typical of the happy and tranquil domestic life which was ever theirs.

Soon after Sumter was fired on, General Shields, blazing with loyalty and soldierly ardor, tendered his services to his old friend, now President of the United States. Official notice of his appointment as brigadier general of volunteers to date from August 19, 1861, reached him in Mexico, where he was manager of a profitable mine in which he had a large interest. As soon as his business affairs could be adjusted, he repaired to Washington and reported for duty. He was sent to the Shenandoah valley in Virginia, which had been the theater of much indecisive marching and fighting.

March 7, 1862, General Shields assumed command of the division of General Lander, who had died two weeks before of Mexican war disabilities. The division instantly felt the magic of his touch, and although only a few men of his new command had previously been in battle, they recognized that their commander had brought with him his master hand, and if any soldier had doubts as to the courage or ability of General Shields the doubts soon vanished. In fact, within two weeks from his taking command they were fighting "Stonewall" Jackson's army at Winchester, on the 22d of March. The battle continued two days, ending at Kernstown. Early in the engagement, General Shields was wounded, as usual, having his arm fractured and his shoulder badly torn by the explosion

of a shell, and was carried from the field. But so thoroughly had he enthused his little division with his own invincible spirit that it went on and gained the victory, while Shields directed its movements from his cot of suffering three miles in the rear. Colonel Nathan Kimball, who succeeded to the leadership, officially reports that he carried out his general's plans and followed his directions, until the field was won and "Stonewall" Jackson's invincible cohorts were in full retreat. This was two years before Sheridan sent Early "whirling up the valley," over some of the same ground.

Of the close of the battle, in which Shields' division alone confronted Jackson's entire army, Colonel Kimball wrote: "With cheers from right to left our gallant soldiers pushed forward, and as the sun went down, our stubbornly yielding foe, who had thrice advanced to the attack, gave way and Jackson's army was badly beaten,—his shattered brigades in full retreat." General Banks, Department Commander, congratulated the troops on their great victory, which had expelled Stonewall Jackson from the valley. Jackson retreated eighty miles to Harrisonburg, confessing his first and only defeat.

General Shields' wound disabled him for five weeks. He resumed command of his division April 30, 1862. Jackson had, after his defeat at Winchester and Kernstown, retreated so rapidly and so far that the authorities at Washington supposed he had returned to Richmond. Hence Shields' division, with other troops, was hurried across the Blue Ridge to reinforce McDowell at Fredericksburg. But Jackson had not left the valley, and he came back northward as rapidly as he had gone the other way. Shields was at once ordered to retrace his steps. The remainder of McDowell's corps were taken by rail to Aquia Creek, by transports to Alexandria, and by railroad to Front Royal, where they arrived two days later than Shields' division. General Fremont with his forces, had been ordered from the Kanawha Valley to get in the rear of Jackson. Banks was reinforced, and Jackson, learning of these movements, again retreated up the Shenandoah. McDowell followed, Shields in advance. At Port Republic, Jackson made a stand, and Shields disposed his division for another battle.

He ordered Carroll, one of his brigade commanders, to burn the bridge across the Shenandoah, in certain contingencies. This order was, it was alleged, countermanded by McDowell. At any rate, the bridge was not burned. Jackson crossed the river, and severely handled the troops opposed to him.

Speaking of this occurrence, General Oates, an officer in high command under Stonewall Jackson and later a U. S. Congressman, stated at the reception of the Shields statue in Washington: "Had General Shields' orders been obeyed, there was no escape for Jackson." In the same connection, Jefferson Davis wrote of Shields and his division as being superior in efficiency to the entire corps of General Howard.

President Lincoln showed his appreciation of Shields' achievements in the valley, by promoting him to Major General of Volunteers, and appointing him a brigadier general in the regular army. The Senate, on political grounds, it is said, failed to confirm the latter nomination. It is authentically stated that the President informally tendered to General Shields the command of the Army of the Potomac after McClellan had failed, but that the position was declined, owing to the general's strained relations with Secretary Stanton. For this, and other reasons, Shields resigned from the army March 28, 1863, returned to California, and settled in San Francisco.

On some accounts the Pacific coast did not satisfy General and Mrs. Shields as a place of residence. After the close of the war, in 1866, he returned to the Mississippi valley, via steamer and New York City. Mrs. Shields, ever on the alert for her husband's welfare, persuaded him to retire to a farm, hoping that the quiet, restful life would restore his health so sadly shattered by his brilliant, though exacting, service to his adopted country. The general climate, fertile soil, and newborn prosperity of Missouri appealed to them. On an exploring expedition, the general happened to meet, at Carrollton, Missouri, an old friend and supporter in the Illinois legislature, Judge George Pattison, who so impressed him with the beauties and prospects of that region, that he decided to make that his future home. The place selected, still pointed out as the

"Shields Farm," was the ideal for which these people sought; its quiet shade, its spacious comfortable house, its orchard burdened with fruits, and its natural scenic beauty, appealed to the General. Neither he nor his wife had ever lived on a farm, but they thoroughly enjoyed all the pleasures of rural life. Their hospitality soon became proverbial, and the evening of the old soldier's life could not have been more happily spent.

But he could not entirely escape the penalties of his merited prominence. His fame had preceded him. In 1868, only two years after his settlement in Missouri, his fellow Democrats forced on him the nomination for Representative in Congress in his district, which embraced Kansas City. He received a decided majority, but, on account of some alleged irregularity in returns, the hostile canvassing board rejected the votes of two counties, and gave the certificate to his opponent. Shields' friends contested the election in his name, but the Congress, also politically antagonistic, declined to seat him. Nevertheless, it recognized the force of his claim to the extent of voting him a full year's salary.

General Shields' home remained in Carrollton from 1866 until his death in 1879. Here he cultivated his farm, devoted much of his time to lecturing tours for charitable objects, and also resumed some interest in political affairs. His benevolence covered a wide scope. Lacking wealth, he gave freely of his time and of his eloquent appeals for every good cause, and for every phase of human suffering. When the yellow fever, a very pestilence, scourged the South and depopulated cities, when every heart throbbed in sympathy for the stricken sufferers, and when in populous Atlanta there were not enough of well ones left to bury the dead, it was the clarion tones of General Shields that woke the echoes from city to city, until more money was raised and sent through his individual effort than was secured by any score of his co-workers, who also did their best in this noble work.

In the year 1876, General B. F. Butler, Republican representative in Congress from Massachusetts, proposed the name of General Shields for doorkeeper of the House, which was then Democratic. The position was worth $200 per month, but the

veteran resented the proposal as an indignity, and Butler was suspected of a design to entrap the opposition. The Democratic caucus had nominated General Field, an ex-Confederate, who had left the country to serve in the Egyptian army, and Shields was defeated. The House, in order to atone for this action, voted to place Shields on the retired list as a brigadier general, but the Republican Senate, for some reason, failed to concur, and the bill failed to become a law.

In 1874 General Shields was sent by the Democrats of Carroll county to the Missouri legislature and was re-elected in 1875. Here, as ever, he was active in useful work. One of his wise measures was the law creating the State Railroad Commission. In the year 1878, he was chosen for the third time and from the third State, United States Senator, to serve during the unexpired term of Senator Lewis V. Bogy, deceased. He was welcomed back to the halls of legislation, which he had first entered thirty years before, by a new generation of statesmen, who paid willing tribute to his rare endowments.

The richest treasure a people can possess is the memory of their eminent men. Greater in importance than agricultural, mineral, and industrial wealth, is the value of the inspiration and example of men whose lives exemplify those qualities which make for good government and free institutions. The life of James Shields meets this standard. The general significance to be found therein is that he was equal to every responsibility and faithful in every trust. He doubtless had a fair allotment of human shortcomings, but they neither marred his record nor dimmed the luster of his worthy deeds. We may fervently pray that the day will soon dawn when the nations shall learn war no more; but sad will be the hour when we cease to honor those who have bravely fought for the honor of their country and the freedom of mankind.

His career emphasizes the possibilities of American citizenship, and the freedom from religious and racial prejudices of our people. Though he was neither of the race nor creed of the majority of the people of the three great states whom he represented in the United States Senate, this did not prevent his selection. Of a people of whom it has been said, "they have

fought successfully all battles save their own,'' he helped the people of his adopted country to successfully fight their wars. Born in a foreign land, he was in every fiber of his heart, in the very texture of his soul, distinctively and intensely American. He devoted his life with unchallenged purity of purpose to the service of his adopted country, and in three wars shed his blood in her defense. He was too generous to be thrifty and acquisitive, too honest to be a schemer, and too bold to be a trimmer. But he was a true, brave man, a patriot, and a gentleman.

His private life was irreproachable. He was strictly temperate. His bearing was unobtrusive; his tastes were literary and domestic. The bitterest of partisan contests left no taint on his reputation. He was a model husband, father, citizen, and churchman.

On the 26th of September, 1878, General Shields, who died eight months later, had a characteristic reception and ovation in Brooklyn, New York, whither he had journeyed from his home in Missouri to deliver a lecture before a large and representative audience in one of the great auditoriums of the city. The following spirited report of the occasion will convey an idea of the enthusiasm which he created whenever he made his appearance as an orator or lecturer.

The space in front of the Academy is black with people, and from opposite directions come diverging streams. The doors are thrown open, and in twenty minutes the house is packed. The stage, too, presently fills up, civilians and military, lay and clerics, take their places. The rattle of drums, the clashing of cymbals, and the notes of the ear-piercing fife, float in from without. The General, with his escort, enters. All is hushed. He is very pale, very attenuated. Silence reigns, all eyes and all hearts turn toward him. Simultaneously all on the stage rise to their feet. A voice: "Three cheers for General Shields!" The great audience rose, and then, as the band played "Hail to the Chief," recollections of the victories he had helped to win, from Buena Vista to Winchester, flashed back; then, as the chieftain who had a generation ago led in triumph the citizen soldiery of New York into the City of Mexico, stood before the remnants of his comrades in arms; then, as the only man who had ever successfully crossed swords with Stonewall Jackson, came in sight; then, when General Shields, now a feeble, sick man, presented himself before the

people of Brooklyn,—then went up a tempest of ringing cheers such as never before resounded within the four walls of that house.

Such episodes, varying in degree, but all testifying to a wide popular recognition of his illustrious career, were numerous in his later years. As a soldier, he was a true knight; but as an optimist, he was a very prince. To his optimistic mind no cloud had such density of midnight blackness that it did not show him a silver lining. He was always a helper. No human being struggling in any whirlpool of difficulty or danger came within his sight that he did not immediately "throw out the life line."

And he has never received due credit for his accomplishments and abilities as a theoretical soldier. On January 10, 1862, in a letter to General McClellan, commander in chief of the army, General Shields outlined the military operations which he deemed necessary for the suppression of the Rebellion. Secretary Seward, in an official communication a few days later, submitted this letter to the Secretary of War, urgently inviting his attention thereto. The letter is published in the Rebellion Records, Series 1, Volume 5, pages 701 to 703. It is one of the most important papers relating to the conduct of the war, and stamps its author as not only brave, but capable as a strategist of great ability.

General Shields died suddenly at Ottumwa, Iowa, on Sunday, June 1, 1879. He had gone there to deliver a lecture for the benefit of a local charity, and remained several days visiting relatives. He had appeared in his usual health on that day, but just before retiring he complained of a pain in his chest, and shortly afterward said to his niece that he was dying. In thirty minutes he expired, sitting in his chair, remaining conscious to the last. His body left Ottumwa for his late home in Carrollton the next day. The funeral took place in Carrollton on Wednesday. It was largely attended and the services were conducted with the imposing ceremonial of the Catholic Church, of which he had been a lifelong and consistent member.

After the death of the General, Mrs. Shields continued to reside in Carrollton, educating and caring for her two sons and one daughter, as only a mother can from whom the staff and stay has been removed, and who thus leans upon as well as lifts

and buoys her children, the jewels of her home. For two decades she lived in her home on North Main street, which she still owns, though for the past few years she has lived with her son, Dr. Daniel F. Shields, in New York.

James Shields had a remarkable career, and his was a remarkable character. He is to us James Shields born in Ireland, the American General, the American Senator, James Shields of Ireland and America. We need not hesitate to claim a modest participation in his fame and to hail him, James Shields of Minnesota! His mortal remains rest in Missouri, but Illinois, Minnesota and California, Winchester, and Port Republic, claim their share of his renown, for it is as true in America today as it was in Greece of old that the whole earth is the sepulcher of illustrious men and all time is the millennium of their story.

The State of Illinois, rich beyond measure in illustrious sons, chose Senator Shields as her representative in the hall of fame in Washington. The legislature of Missouri, at its latest session, appropriated generously for a colossal bronze statue in his honor on the public square in Carrollton. The Grand Army of the Republic and the Loyal Legion of Minnesota have heartily endorsed a movement to install his statue in our beautiful capitol.

For thirty years his grave remained unmarked at Carrollton. But finally, by joint action of local authorities and the United States Congress, funds were provided early in 1910 for the erection of an imposing monument near his resting place. It is of red granite and is surmounted by a colossal bronze bust of the distinguished General.

On Saturday, November 12, 1910, this monument was unveiled and dedicated in the presence of ten thousand people, after a grand civic and military procession in which a battalion of regular troops from Fort Leavenworth, a regiment of the Missouri National Guard, and an immense concourse of citizens, participated. The exercises at the dedication consisted of addresses by Governor Hadley of Missouri, Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis, Congressmen Rucker and Borland, Attorney Ralph F. Lozier, Senator Busby, and others. There were present, as guests of honor, Mrs. Mary A. Shields, widow of General

Shields; Dr. Daniel F. Shields, their son; Mr. L. E. Shields, of St. Paul, a nephew of General Shields, and other relatives.

Minnesota was represented at the ceremonies, in addition to Mr. L. E. Shields, by Mr. J. J. Reagan, President of the national organization of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, and by the writer hereof, who had been specially commissioned by Governor A. O. Eberhart as the State's official delegate.

Accorded a leading place on the programme of addresses, Minnesota's envoy paid a brief tribute to the hero of the occasion, which embodied this personal reminiscence:

A striking incident of my early boyhood is linked across two generations with this event. One morning, when I was seven or eight years old, the tidings spread through the Illinois village which was my home that General Shields, returning wounded from the Mexican War, was a passenger in the stage from Quincy, which stopped for breakfast and to change horses at our little tavern. A crowd assembled and waited, with silent awe, the appearance of the hero. He came out, pale and feeble, supported by two attendants, was lifted into the coach, and it rolled on toward Springfield.

To the group of wide-eyed youth who gazed with undisguised wonder on the scene, it was a revelation and an inspiration. Many of them were destined, fifteen years later, to be soldiers and heroes in a vastly mightier conflict for an inexpressibly holier cause. But this was our first sight of a military uniform, our first view of a real general, our first realization of the pains and penalties of war. It was an object lesson in patriotism. As that coach rolled away toward Springfield, the dust from its wheels, lighted by the morning sunbeams, became a golden aureole through which we saw many things in new colors. The world was never quite the same again.

Thus General Shields vanished from our sight as in a cloud of splendor. Thus his restless spirit passed through life,—through a picturesque, versatile, and always honorable career. Thus he lives and will live in history, a faithful servant of the people, a fearless soldier of the republic, worthy to be hailed, with an innumerable company of his colleagues and comrades, as a priest in the temple of freedom, a prince in the kingdom of glory.