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FILSON CLUB PUBLICATIONS NUMBER 9.

THE POLITICAL CLUB

DANVILLE, KENTUCKY

1786-1790

*BEING AN ACCOUNT OF AN EARLY KENTUCKY
SOCIETY FROM THE ORIGINAL PAPERS
RECENTLY FOUND.*

BY THOMAS SPEED,

Author of "The Wilderness Road."

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DEDICATION.

I dedicate these pages to Center College, which for seventy-five years has been an honor to the State of Kentucky and the pride of the town of Danville. It was my privilege to attend this institution as a student during the presidency of Dr. Lewis W. Green, whose father was a member of The Political Club, and my college days at Danville gave me a lasting attachment both for the school and the delightful place of its location.

THE AUTHOR.



PREFACE.

FIFTEEN years ago it was my fortune to discover among my grandfather's papers the records of "The Political Club," a society which had its existence at Danville, Kentucky, from 1786 until 1790. I have often been requested to publish these records, together with some account of the work of the club, but it has not been convenient for me to do so until now. To meet expectation on this subject I prepared this work and read it before the Filson Club.

I have felt that it is a duty I could not fail to perform. The existence of The Political Club is a chapter in Kentucky history worthy of even more detailed treatment than is here given. Nothing that has been recorded of the pioneers so well illustrates their character for intelligence. Professor Shaler, in his History of Kentucky, published in 1885, says: "The early records of Kentucky are too imperfect to afford

any clear insight into the condition of education or the intellectual motives of the pioneers. Recently, however, there has been disinterred a quantity of papers giving the record of a Political Club that existed at Danville from 1786 to 1790." . . . "The notes of this club give a very fair idea of the intellectual quality of its meetings. For several years, or until the changes of the shifting population removed its leaders far from their original abodes, this club industriously debated the questions of polity that concerned the settlements."

There is no historic mention of "The Political Club" prior to finding the records, nor was there any tradition of its existence; the old papers alone have preserved it from oblivion. Perhaps this is not strange under the circumstances. There was no newspaper to publish its meetings and discussions. Besides, what occurred at the meetings was not publicly known, as none were admitted except the members. When the club ceased to exist many of the members removed from Danville to other places in the State, and other interests superseded thought or memory of the club meetings.

The historian, Humphrey Marshall, knew of the club, though as he was not a member he could not have

known particularly of its work. It was not at all likely that the later historian, Butler, knew of the club at all, and Collins, though his history contains much in detail of every county in the State, failed to discover that there had been such a society at Danville.

The preparation for public service which the club gave to the body of men composing it was so soon made use of, and the ideas developed there so quickly embodied in the first State Constitution, that the club debates were overshadowed by real legislation. But it was these debates that laid the foundation of the practical usefulness of the actors in this legislation.

The sketches of the members show that for more than a quarter of a century they took a leading part in affairs in Kentucky. Going out from the sessions of the club to engage in the public transactions of the day, they made an impression upon the times, but the club itself, to which they owed so much for training in political knowledge, was lost sight of and forgotten.

In the preparation of this work I have deemed it advisable to point out some of the reasons, and particularly those of a geographical nature, which brought the town of Danville to the forefront in the early

days, and made it the place for the existence of a society like The Political Club.

Following the suggestions offered on this subject, sketches of the members are given. Many of them are so well known, however, that biographical mention is almost unnecessary. Some account of their descendants is also shown. Following these sketches the work of the club is presented.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to the President of the Filson Club, Colonel R. T. Durrett, for suggestions, and for assistance in finding in his full collection of historical works facts which could not be found in any other collection.

For information concerning the members of the club and their descendants, I am indebted to Colonel Thomas M. Green personally, and to his valuable work, "Historic Families of Kentucky."

I am also indebted to Judge James S. Pirtle and Judge W. Overton Harris, of the Louisville Bar, and in general I acknowledge my indebtedness to the members of the Filson Club.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., October 1, 1894.

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THE POLITICAL CLUB.

EARLY KENTUCKY.

THE events in the early history of Kentucky are invested with that peculiar fascination which belongs to heroic and romantic periods.

The people of the present generation look back to the pioneer days with feelings somewhat akin to the memories of their own childhood. They read of Daniel Boone and his times very much as they read old legendary romances. In the hazy distance of a hundred years ago men assume heroic proportions, and their deeds excite wonder. But there is a reality in these Kentucky annals which gives them a charm above the mere fanciful. The assurance of veritable history gives an irresistible interest to narrations which also have features of the marvelous.

This singular fascination, which is found in the accounts of the pioneer days of Kentucky, springs from a combination of conditions which attended the occupation of the country by the white man.

The climate was propitious; it is the most delightful part of the temperate zone. Having neither too great heat nor cold it was favorable to out-door life, which, to a great extent, was necessarily the lot of the pioneers. The country was covered with woods, which gave shelter against the winds and afforded material for fuel and house-building. In the woods of Kentucky Robin Hood would have found a boundless expansion of Sherwood Forest. The land itself was extremely fertile, and so drained by nature that the soil was dry and easily cultivated, while springs and running streams afforded an abundant supply of water.

The people who settled Kentucky were families from the Atlantic States, of substance and education, being of the best stock and having the refinements of society. Yet it was their fortune to undergo hardships of the severest sort and face dangers that were frightful. They had to endure bereavements and losses, and make their wilderness homes at the cost of blood and tears. Thus there came about in the great immigration which settled Kentucky in the days between 1775 and 1792 a remarkable conjunction of circumstances as to people, country, and climate.

The explorations and adventures of Doctor Thomas Walker, Christopher Gist, Daniel Boone, Stewart, and

Finley, and the "Long Hunters," together with those of Simon Kenton, Benjamin Logan, Richard Henderson, and many others, are all as thrilling as any romance, with the added interest of being real occurrences. The settlement of Kentucky, which closely followed these exploits, furnishes incidents not less interesting. Placing ourselves one hundred and twenty years back, we find a deep meaning in the statement that the settlements in Kentucky were in the wilderness. It was a wilderness of magnificent distances, being so vast in extent that for all practical purposes it might be described as boundless. Eastward the habitations of men were beyond the mountains; to the west all was unknown; north lay the unoccupied regions to the lakes and beyond; southward all was desolate to the Gulf. In the heart of this limitless wilderness the Kentucky Commonwealth grew up while all the surrounding land remained unbroken and untouched.

The "Land of Kentucke," as the country was called by the explorers, had many rare attractions, which have often been described. It lay on the waters of a beautiful river, and possessed inducements for occupation second to no spot on the earth. Yet it was hid away, like a jewel in an unopened mine, up to the very period of its sudden settlement. One writer describes it thus:

“Covered with boundless forests and protected by Alpine barriers terrific to the eye, and almost inaccessible to the most adventurous foot, this lovely country remained unexplored until Boone and his associates resolved to subdue and people it.”*

The people east of the mountains knew, indeed, that there was land extending far away toward the west, but for aught they knew the mountains continued on and on in wild, inhospitable, and uninhabitable grandeur without a break. They did not know that a delightful region lay spread out upon the southern tributaries of the Ohio like the garden of the Lord for beauty and fertility.

This secluded and hid-away condition of Kentucky has been beautifully described in verse by Henry T. Stanton, in his Centennial Ode:

Shut out from civil bound by rivers deep,
By forests dark, and mountains high and steep,
By rocks, ravines, and rude, forbidding lines
Of garbled laurels and of tangled vines,
The Unknown Land, that on the sunset rim
Stretched over distance limitless and dim,
Lay, with its spread of plain and vale and hill,
Beyond the eye, mysterious and still.

To daring hunter and explorer bold
Unbroken stood the fastness of its hold,

* Hall.

While, south and westward, dimly stretched away,
With range on range the bristled mountains lay,
The Blue Ridge, Smoky, Clinch, and Cumberland,
Toward the sky, precipitous and grand,
As if to bar from man's ambitious quests
The dark beyond, upheld their cloud-hid crests.
With no brave hand to grasp and put aside
The thorny hedging of its thickets wide,
And no sure foot to make its toilsome trail
From peak to farther peak, and vale to vale;
For centuries this now historic bound
Remained to civil man untrodden ground.

The great immigration which suddenly made Kentucky a State in the Union began about the close of the Revolutionary War, but the whole period of seventeen years from 1775 to 1792 constitutes the peculiarly heroic or romantic age of Kentucky. It was the immigration in this period which established the power of the white man in the western country. It pierced and broke the center of the barriers which had barred the west against occupation. It divided the Indians north from those in the south; it operated as a flank movement upon the powerful tribes which occupied the choicest portions of New York and Pennsylvania, and caused them to give way before the advance of civilization. It made the vast territory of the West, including Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, vulnerable to settlement, and opened the way to Tennessee and Alabama.*

* Wilderness Road.

The contemplation of families of people in Kentucky during the earlier period of the immigration brings to the mind a continuous series of exciting scenes—the breaking up of the homes and associations east of the Alleghanies; the excitement attending the proposed removal; the perils and hardships of the long journey. We follow them along the toilsome way; the first stages lead upward to the tops of the mountains, where the streams which run westward begin to take their rise. Then comes the descent by the rugged passages through vast solitudes, either to Cumberland Gap or to the Ohio River; then the dangerous descent of the river, or wearisome travel over the equally dangerous trace through the mountains of Kentucky. The arrival at the destined end of the journey was at no town or settlement, it was only a halt in a solitude. The hastily constructed cabins clustered about common centers called stations, which were stockades intended for refuge from Indian attacks. Subsisting on the bare necessities of life, in constant dread, fighting for their lives, nursing the wounded, burying the slain; men, women, and children spent their days and nights, weeks, months, and years, until a State was evolved at a period when the greater portions of New York and Pennsylvania, and even Virginia, were untouched by the hand of civilization.

The boldness, energy, hardihood, self-denial, and perseverance of the pioneers have often been described. Their bravery in Indian fighting, skill and sagacity in hunting, their wonderful powers of endurance have been the theme of many writers. But it is not alone in such accounts of the early days in Kentucky that we find extraordinary interest. There are facts and features of those early days which have not received their full share of attention from the historian, which are of the deepest interest to those whose more thoughtful minds seek for the philosophy of remarkable events occurring among mankind.

The pioneers were more than hunters and fighters. They were a people who brought into intelligent order the original and elementary material of a State; they erected from the very elements of social life an organized Commonwealth. They did their work under many difficulties, and in the face of many discouragements; and, it may be added, they resisted inducements to form other connections than that of the newly formed union of the States. Every thing connected with this work of State building in the wilderness is full of interest.

These pages will set forth a chapter of this early history which, from causes to be made to appear, has not been heretofore written; and this long forgotten

and newly discovered feature in the early annals of Kentucky will be found to have an interest second to nothing else bearing upon her first civic affairs.

LOCATION OF THE FIRST SETTLERS.

Preliminary to an account of "The Political Club," it will be interesting to consider some of the facts and conditions of the times and place of its existence.

In the spring of 1775 Daniel Boone marked out the trace which soon became the Wilderness Road. This was the route by which immigrants came to Kentucky "overland" or through the mountains. They entered the State at Cumberland Gap, and by that road made their way to the interior. At the time this trace was made there were no settlers in the country of Kentucky. From that time until the close of the Revolutionary War in 1783, a period of eight years, the immigration, while not so rapid as it afterward became, yet resulted in a population of over twenty thousand. The close of the war led to a greatly increased interest in the western country, and from that time until 1792, and later, the immigration was so remarkable it is best described as a movement of population.* In 1790 there were more

*In a document transmitted by Lord Dorchester to Lord Sydney in England, 1789, it is said: "The last census of the people (in Kentucky), taken in

than seventy-five thousand inhabitants in Kentucky. In five more years that number was about doubled.

The geographical distribution of the first settlers is a subject of great interest. What attractions were most powerful? What portion of the State was first occupied? Did the early settlers scatter themselves generally over the extensive territory which now constitutes the State of Kentucky, or did they cluster together in some favored portion of it?

If the reader will take a map of Kentucky and draw a line from Maysville to Crab Orchard, and another line from Louisville to Crab Orchard, it will be seen that the two lines form almost a right angle. Taking then the course of the Ohio River from Maysville to Cincinnati, and from thence to Louisville, a body of land is included almost square, and about one hundred miles in extent each way. It contains about ten thousand square miles, and is larger than the State of Massachusetts. The country lying east of the line from Maysville to Crab Orchard begins to be hilly and soon becomes

1788, amounted to 62,000 souls, including a much greater portion of adult males than is usually to be looked for in a common estimation of this nature, to which great additions have been made since, the writer having seen five hundred persons at Limestone who had just landed or arrived there in the course of two days—the time of his stay—besides a constant influx of families he met on the high road." (See Colonel John Mason Brown's "Political Beginnings," Appendix.)

mountainous. Also southwardly of the line from Louisville to Crab Orchard lies the broken country of the Muldraugh Hill range, which, beginning in the semi-mountainous section near Crab Orchard, extends across the State to the Ohio River a little below the Falls at Louisville.

Within the square described the land is generally level or gently undulating, almost all of excellent quality and admirably adapted to cultivation. It well merits the encomiums it received from the early explorers. It is traversed by the Kentucky, the Licking, and Salt rivers and their numberless tributaries. Two sides of the square are washed by the Ohio River. It now comprises thirty-six counties, twelve of which border on the Ohio River. The world-famous Bluegrass land lies within this area, constituting a large part of it. Those portions which do not properly come under the designation of "Bluegrass" are yet like it in respect to being gently undulating and of fertile soil.

The first settlers naturally sought this singularly favored body of land. It was this section which Daniel Boone called "A Second Paradise," and Felix Walker, a companion of Boone, tells in his diary how, after leaving the mountains, "we began to discover the pleasing and rapturous appearance of the plains of

Kentucky." Colonel Richard Henderson, who came out over Boone's trace the same spring it was opened, speaks of leaving the Rockcastle hills and "camping in the eye of the rich lands." John Filson, writing in 1784, says: "By casting the eye upon the map and viewing that great compass of about one hundred miles square is seen the most extraordinary country the sun enlightens with his celestial beams."

The "level lands" of Kentucky were first reached by the immigrants who came over the Wilderness Road at Crab Orchard, which was not far from the spot which became the site of Danville. The immigrants who came down the Ohio River first reached the level lands at the landing-place called Limestone, afterward Maysville. While some landed there others proceeded on and landed at the mouth of Licking River or Kentucky River, or at the Falls of the Ohio. From these river gate-ways, as well as from the entrance at Crab Orchard, the settlers spread themselves over the area described. Having naturally passed beyond the mountainous country before landing at Limestone, they as naturally did not pass down the river beyond the Falls, where navigation was impeded. Nor did they go into or beyond the rough country of the Muldraugh Hill range as long as they could find eligible locations without doing so.

The following extract from Shaler's History of Kentucky confirms the foregoing statements:

"In the middle section of the State, stretching from the Ohio River to the escarpment of Muldraugh Hill, lay the rich lands since known as the 'Bluegrass' district; west of them the unwooded district known as the Barrens, which were at first supposed from their treeless condition to be worthless lands; and still further west a tract of sandy country like that of the easternmost district—good lands, it is true, but not rich enough to attract the first settlers. It was this bluegrass land that was the incentive to immigration. . . . After the Bluegrass district was occupied the population began to move to the less attractive lands."

THE KENTUCKY WOODS.

At the coming of the white race the whole of this region was a dense woods. No more magnificent forest ever adorned the face of the earth. It was not excelled even in the imaginings of poetry and romance. Every conceivable grandeur of forest scenery was displayed.

"The loftie trees, yclad with sommer's pride,
Did spread so broad that Heaven's light did hide."

From the margins of the streams to the tops of the hills, on the slopes and the outspread plateaus stood the finest timber of oak, poplar, ash, chestnut, hickory, sugar - tree, beech, walnut, mulberry, wild cherry, and

many other varieties, all evidencing the rich, strong soil beneath.

As the primeval forest of Kentucky has been so destroyed that all its original grandeur has disappeared, it is worth more than a passing mention in this work, which is intended to bring to view transactions which occurred before the destruction took place. Many writers have endeavored to present to the mind a picture of the Kentucky woods. Professor Shaler says: "This forest territory was singularly unbroken, having a continuity of woods unknown in the other States." He says: "This forest was principally of the broad-leaved tree, no great extent of coniferous woods existing then in the eastern part of the District. Fortunately for the settlers the broad-leaved trees were of old growth, and singularly open beneath, so that the early trackways and wagon roads were easily made through them." This is a correct statement, as many now living, and who in their earlier years traversed portions of these forests unbroken at that date, can testify. The long stems of the trees, measuring from fifty to one hundred feet in height, and from three to six feet in diameter, sustained a leafy canopy, the shade of which prevented undergrowth and produced the solemn cathedral-like impression often mentioned.

Colonel Durrett in his centennial address takes the distinction between the timber-shadowed land and the more open spaces where a lower growth was found. He says: "Over an area that millions might inhabit, of mountain and hill, and plain and valley, stands a dark forest. . . . Here and there where the trees cast not their shadow the cane and the clover and the rye and the bluegrass cover the soil like emerald isles in the forest seas."

In the singularly weird story of early Kentucky days by Doctor Robert M. Byrd, entitled "Nick of the Woods," he says: "The forest was of the grand and gloomy character which the fertility of the soil and the absence of the axe for a thousand years imprinted on the western woodlands. Oaks, poplars, elms, walnuts, and beeches, with other monarchs of the wilderness, lifted their trunks like so many pillars, and swung their majestic arms far overhead."

Roosevelt in his "Winning of the West" uses very graphic expressions on this subject. He says the country "had been shielded by the forest which lay over the land like an unrent mantle. All through the mountains and far beyond it stretched without a break."

Speaking of the Indians, he says: "Their wars were carried on in the never-ending stretches of gloomy

woodland. . . . To their keen eyes, trained for generations to more than a wild beast's watchfulness, the wilderness was an open book; nothing at rest or in motion escaped them. They had begun to track game as soon as they could walk; a scrape on a tree or the soil, which the eye of no white man could see, all told them a tale as plainly as if it had been shouted in their ears."

Speaking of the white men, he says: "Up to the door-sills of their log huts stretched the solemn and mysterious forest. There were no openings to break its continuity; nothing but endless leagues on leagues of shadowy, wolf-haunted woodland. The great trees towered aloft till their separate heads were lost in the mass of foliage above. . . . The sunlight could not penetrate the roofed archway of murmuring leaves; through the gray aisles of the forest men walked always in a kind of midday gloaming. Here and there it was broken by a rare hillside glade, or by a meadow or a stream valley; but elsewhere a man might travel for weeks as in a perpetual twilight, never once able to see the sun through the interlacing twigs that formed a dark canopy above the head."

It was a true appreciation of the fearful significance of dense forests up to the very doors of the settlers'

cabins that inspired our Kentucky poet* to write the beautiful poem which he entitled, "The Mothers of Our Forest Land."†

The first implement called in requisition by the settler was the axe. Wherever he chose to make his wilderness home it was necessary to clear the land of heavy timber before even a few vegetables could be grown or a corn patch planted. Game was abundant in the woods, and springs and creeks were everywhere found. Generally speaking, it may be said that all parts of the country included in the lines stated were attractive to the early settlers, and, as all the soil was new, the differences as to the fertility of the first clearings were not so apparent as in after years, when long-continued cultivation had tested the enduring qualities of the soil.

* W. D. Gallagher.

† While this noble forest has been practically destroyed, there yet remain fine specimens here and there of the old trees. The following extract from a volume entitled "Trees and Tree-planting," by General James S. Brisbin, U. S. A., strikingly shows the impression the sight of some remnants of the Kentucky forest can make upon strangers. General Brisbin says: "For four years I had lived on the plains, surrounded by sage-brush and sand, never once seeing a mountain or a forest. Then I was ordered east with troops to Kentucky. We had been running very fast all night in the cars, and in the morning I heard the soldiers in the forward coaches cheering. I asked the conductor what was the matter, and he replied, "*The soldiers are cheering the trees.*" We all hastened to the doors and windows, and there sure enough found we were running through a grand old Kentucky forest; and

THE TRAVELED WAYS.

Leading through this vast interminable forest under the perpetual shadow of the trees were the traveled ways or traces along which the pioneers made their toilsome journeyings. With natural engineering skill these roads were marked out along the high ground or ridges, avoiding miry places and impassable hills. The course was shaped so as to pass some ever-flowing spring, and so as to lead to the fording-places of the streams, descending and ascending from them by the easiest slopes. Along these roads stations were located, rude stockade forts into which the settlers would hastily gather in time of danger from Indians.

One of these traveled ways extended from Limestone, now Maysville, on the Ohio River, to Crab Orchard, passing through the eastern portions of the level lands, it was indeed a most beautiful sight. It had rained the night before, and the dripping trees shone like silver in the newly risen sun; grape vines hung in heavy festoons from the arms of giant oaks; woodbines clung about their trunks; the grass on the earth was green as emerald; and so I longed to jump from the cars, lie down on it, and roll over and over, and shout for very joy.

"Thank God for noble trees!
How stately strong and grand
These bannered giants lift their crests
O'er all this beauteous land."

though some distance from the mountain region.* Another was the extension of the Old Wilderness Road which led through the mountains from Cumberland Gap to Crab Orchard, and on to the Falls of the Ohio, passing the present sites of Lebanon, Bardstown, and Shepherdsville. Along its course the Muldraugh Hill range could be seen bounding the level lands toward the southwest. Another road extended from Crab Orchard through the present site of Harrodsburg, crossing Kentucky River near the present site of Frankfort, and thence along the great divide between the waters of Kentucky and Licking rivers to the mouth of the Licking, opposite which Fort Washington was built, at the present site of Cincinnati. Another historic traveled way led from Crab Orchard southwardly through the hills to the settlements in Tennessee.

It thus appears that as all the roads east of Cumberland Gap converged to that great natural gate-way in the mountains, so when the mountains of Kentucky were passed all the roads diverged from Crab Orchard,

* As late as 1825, and perhaps later, goods in great quantities were hauled from Limestone through Lexington and Danville, and passing on over the Wilderness Road through Cumberland Gap to be carried down the Tennessee Valley to Alabama. The goods were wagoned to Pittsburgh, thence carried by flatboats to Limestone, and thence wagoned, as stated, into Alabama. Accounts are now given by the older citizens of Danville of trains of wagons passing through, covered with canvas, drawn by six horses with bells on the

the point of debouching from the mountains. All travel concentrated upon these two points. From the Gap the travelers going eastward diverged into the ways to Virginia and the Carolinas, and from Crab Orchard the divergence was into the level lands of Kentucky.

Danville, which was located near Crab Orchard, soon became the proud little gate city, standing like the pupil in the focal point of the Crab Orchard region, which Colonel Henderson called the "eye of the level lands of Kentucky."* It is thus seen that Danville, instead of being centrally located in the area of the level lands, was situated in its extreme southeast corner.

LOCATION OF DANVILLE.

While it is true that Danville is the geographical center of the State, it was in a corner of that portion of the State first settled; yet Danville was the most important point in Kentucky in the early days. It was the first capital. It was the place where the District

harness. Large droves of hogs and mules were driven over the road destined for the markets in the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama.

*It is curious that upon large maps which show mountain ranges, these ranges curve at the Crab Orchard region so as to resemble somewhat a human eye.

Court held its meetings, that being the first court established in Kentucky, and its jurisdiction was co-extensive with the entire District. It was the place where Colonel Benjamin Logan called the militia officers to assemble in November, 1784, to take into consideration the affairs of the District, and the place where all the subsequent conventions were held until Kentucky became a State and was admitted into the Union.

The lack of urban conditions and privileges in Kentucky is strikingly brought to the mind by the facts attending the location of the District Court at the point which became Danville. That court was first established at Harrodsburg, a station ten miles east of the site of Danville; but there being no building suitable for the purpose, and it being necessary to erect one, it was determined to select some safe place and build a log house large enough for the purposes of the court, and also a jail of sawed or hewed logs.* The

*"The Attorney-General and Clerk were directed to fix on some safe place near Crow's Station (near which Danville was located) for holding the court. They were authorized to procure a log house large enough to accommodate the court in one end and two juries in the other. They were likewise to contract for building a jail of hewed or sawed logs at least nine inches thick. This arrangement for buildings so suitable to the poverty of the mechanic arts at this time gave rise to the town of Danville, which continued the seat of the District Court and was the place of meeting for all the early public assemblies of Kentucky."—*Buller*.

place chosen was near Crow's Station, and this gave rise to the laying out of Danville in 1784.*

The reason for the favorable consideration of the locality of Danville unquestionably was its situation with reference to the "Wilderness Road."

The influence of that highway upon the settlements in Kentucky was very great. More immigrants came by that route than by the Ohio River. All return travel was by that way. The records of that day show that the most direct and expeditious routes from Fort Washington (the present site of Cincinnati), and also from Limestone (afterward Maysville), and from the Falls of the Ohio, to Philadelphia were through the country to Crab Orchard, and thence by the Wilderness Road through Cumberland Gap.

Among the interesting facts of the early days were the published notices from time to time to the effect that a party of men would, upon a given date, start from Crab Orchard to go on the journey to the East through the great wilderness. Letters and messages

*I searched in vain for some historic mention of the location of Crow's Station. I obtained from Honorable R. P. Jacob, of Danville, the information that Crow's Station was east of Danville, and within three miles of the town. His information was obtained from Mr. N. D. Logan, who was born in the neighborhood, and who knew of its location from his father, who was one of the early settlers and died at an advanced age. Mr. Jacob also learned of the location of Crow's Station from Mr. B. O. Rhodes, who derived his

were sent from all parts of Kentucky to friends beyond the mountains by these parties, and those who wished to make the trip in person would join with them for protection and company.*

Another fact, which would scarcely be credited except that it is attested by official records, shows the importance of this great highway. In 1794, Kentucky then being a State in the Union, a post-route was established, by which the mail was carried down the Ohio River to Limestone (Maysville), thence through Lexington to Danville, and thence by way of Bardstown to Louisville, thus following that portion of Boone's old trace which led from the Gap through Crab Orchard to the Falls of the Ohio.*

Some idea of the distribution of the first settlers in Kentucky may be had by a consideration of the statistics found in the census of 1790 and other sources. In that year the nine counties into which Kentucky was then divided, with their populations, were as follows:

information from Mr. Wm. Baughman, whose father once owned the Crow farm. I learned from Honorable John W. Yerkes, of Danville, that on this farm is a stone dwelling built by Mr. Crow, and that he was buried on the place. A head-stone bears the inscription, "William Crow, born March, 1755, died January 3, 1821."

*Wilderness Road.

Bourbon,	7,830
Fayette,	18,410
Jefferson,	4,765
Lincoln,	6,548
Madison,	5,772
Mason,	2,729
Mercer,	7,091
Nelson,	11,315
Woodford,	9,210

The only towns mentioned in that census are five, with populations as follows:

Lexington,	834
*Washington,	462
Bardstown,	216
Louisville,	350
Danville,	150

The counties of Fayette and Nelson had the greatest population.† Washington, then the county seat of

*The town of Washington grew up four miles from the river, on account of the difficulty of large wagons loaded with goods for the interior ascending the steep road leading up to the high ground. Goods were conveyed to the top of the hill in smaller quantities and there loaded into the great wagons. The town grew rapidly, and handsome brick residences, stores, churches, schools, and banks were built. Traffic by steam power diverted the business. Washington declined, and has almost disappeared, and the river town of Maysville took its place.

†In the document transmitted by Lord Dorchester to Lord Sydney, in England, 1789, entitled "Observations Upon the Colony of Kentucky," it is said: "Danville, the seat of the convention and considered at present the capital, is situated in the interior country, upwards of eighty miles east of

Mason, Lexington, the county seat of Fayette, Louisville, the county seat of Jefferson, and Bardstown, the county seat of Nelson, were the largest towns. Fayette County, being centrally located, received immigrants from all the river gate-ways above the Falls, but those who landed at the Falls proceeded along the road which led through Shepherdsville to Bardstown, and thence to Danville. This traveled way out from the Falls was, as we have seen, the extension of the Wilderness Road. The country along this way of travel was early settled, Nelson County being next in population to Fayette.

The situation of Danville with respect to early travel is illustrated by the following statement in a paper entitled "Observations Upon the Colony of Kentucky," dated 1789, found in the Canadian Archives, and published for the first time in "The Political Beginnings," by Colonel John Mason Brown:

the Ohio, in a part well inhabited and improved. It contains upward of one hundred and fifty houses, and some tolerably good buildings." The same paper says "Lexington has two hundred houses and Harrodstown one hundred." It also says "Bourbon is a small town thirty miles from Lexington, and Washington a long, straggling place in one street on each side of the great State road, within five miles of Limestone;" also "Limestone is on the south side of the Ohio, about five hundred miles below Pittsburgh, and is the general landing-place of all immigrants from the Atlantic States, from whence they proceed into the interior country and disperse either to the right or to the left of the great State road to form their improvements." (See Colonel Brown's "Political Beginnings.")

"The distance from Louisville, the most westerly settlement of Kentucky, to Limestone, the most easterly, is by the route of Danville about one hundred and ninety miles, traveling on a large and very good carriage road, both sides of which generally speaking are tolerably inhabited and in some places good improvements."*

This shows that the way of travel from the Falls of the Ohio to Limestone was by way of Danville.

A number of pioneer stations had been built in the section of country in which Danville became a town. Within a radius of twenty miles or less they were more numerous than in any other area of like size in Kentucky. Among them were Harrod's, Crow's, Carpenter's, Casey's, Craig's, Gilmer's, McKinney's, Whitley's, Wilson's, Worthington's, St. Asaph's, Knob Lick, Dougherty's, and others.

Danville was laid out as a town near Crow's Station in 1781 by Walker Daniel, who was killed three years later by Indians. Its location gave it an importance more than commensurate with its populousness. The country about it could hardly be surpassed in beauty and fertility by any in all that magnificent body of land bearing the proud designation of "The Bluegrass." The locality was perfect in soil, timber, and water. Twenty miles away in a southeast direction lay Crab Orchard,

* Political Beginnings.

the rendezvous and starting-place, as we have seen, for all return travel to the States; but Crab Orchard was not sufficiently advanced from the rough country to be favored like Danville with the best features of the best Kentucky land. Ten miles nearer was Logan's Fort, or St. Asaph's, the halting-place of Benjamin Logan when he came into Kentucky with Daniel Boone in the spring of 1775, he building this station at the same time Boone established Boonesboro on the Kentucky River. The town of Stanford is now situated at this place. Only ten miles distant in another direction lay Harrodsburg, founded, about the same time as Boonesboro, by James Harrod and the McAfees, who came by the Ohio River route, entering the mouth of the Kentucky River and pursuing their search for an eligible location up the waters of that stream until they came so nearly up to Danville's favored site.

This early settled section first came to be recognized in a public manner in 1779, when the Virginia Land Commissioners, William Flemming, Edmond Lyne, James Barbour, and Stephen Trigg, held their sessions at St. Asaph's Station. In the year 1783 Kentucky was formed into a District by the Virginia Legislature, and a District Court was opened at Harrodsburg, with Samuel McDowell, George Muter, and John Floyd as

judges. During the year, however, this court was removed to Danville, which we have seen was selected as the most eligible place for its sittings. The following year the threatening attitude of the Indians impressed the people of Kentucky with the importance of concerted action on their part to resist an expected invasion. Colonel Benjamin Logan assumed the responsibility of assembling the militia officers of the District of Kentucky, and issued a call for a general meeting. The place selected for this consultation was Danville. The conference of these officers developed the fact that Kentucky was sadly in need of a local government of its own. They therefore issued a call for a more formal convention of militia delegates to assemble December 27, 1784. The place selected for this meeting was Danville. It in turn provided for a civic convention to be held in May, 1785. It was also held at Danville. It was succeeded by the convention of August, 1785. Another was held in September, 1786. Others succeeded, in all nine being held before Kentucky became a State of the Union in 1792, and all were held at Danville.

A noticeable fact in this connection is that Danville was the first location of Transylvania Seminary, afterward removed to Lexington and known as Transylvania University. In the years 1780-83 the Virginia Legisla-

ture endowed this seminary, giving it twenty thousand acres of land, exempting it from tax, and exempting the professors and students from militia duty. Two of its first trustees were men who afterward were members of The Political Club, Christopher Greenup and James Speed. The act establishing Transylvania Seminary provided that the first meeting of the trustees should be at Crow's Station, near Danville. It was there held in November, 1783. In the most valuable account of education in Kentucky, prepared by Professor William Chenault and read before the Filson Club December 7, 1885, he says:

“This meeting was a memorable one in the early educational history of the State. The whole subject of establishing a public institution of learning in the District was discussed by earnest men in all its bearings upon the welfare of the future State of Kentucky. The foremost lawyers, doctors, ministers, and military officers of the District were there. The meeting was presided over by the venerable David Rice. Walker Daniel, Robert Johnson, Caleb Wallace, John Craig, Isaac Shelby, Samuel McDowell, James Speed, Christopher Greenup, and Willis Green were among the prominent speakers. Future governors of the State, founders of synods and presbyteries, judges of the Appellate Court, and judges of Circuit Court were alike present.”

The conclusions reached were that the prosperity and happiness of the rising young State were intimately connected with liberal education, and that the people of the District should increase the endowment. On the

25th of May, 1785, the seminary was opened at Danville, and it continued there until 1789, when it was removed to Lexington.

Professor Chenault says:

“Transylvania Seminary was thus opened and continued during the scenes of the separation conventions at Danville. The quietude of the school-house must have been often broken by the stormy debates occurring in the old log court-house in Danville. The students must have often seen the manly form of Isaac Shelby and the tall, contemplative figure of Benjamin Logan as they rode into Danville to these successive conventions. Frequent visits to Danville by General George Rogers Clark must have furnished occasions to the students for seeing this Hannibal of the West. They must have frequently looked upon the person of General James Wilkinson, and have heard his inflammatory and eloquent speeches upon the navigation of the Mississippi, and also listened to the appeals of George Muter and Colonel Thomas Marshall for a constitution in accordance with the laws of Virginia.”

The transfer of the Transylvania School to Lexington, however, did not extinguish the light of learning at Danville. For a number of years Lexington was the social and literary capital of the West. But in 1819 the Danville embers again burst into flame, and since that day Center College has given a wide celebrity to the place as a seat of learning. For more than seventy years, under the presidencies of Chamberlain, John C. Young, Green, Breckinridge, Beatty, and W. C. Young,

it has held aloft the torch of science, and for the future the promise is that of a perpetual luster. Danville has also been made memorable by the establishment there, in 1853, of the "Danville Theological Seminary," an institution of the Presbyterian Church, in which the instructors at one time were Robert J. Breckinridge, Edward P. Humphrey, Stuart Robinson, and Stephen Yerkes—men whose names are more enduring than any monument.

It may be further said of this interesting section of Kentucky that, having come to the front in the early days when travel overland by the Wilderness Road was preferred, in later years, when steam navigation made the Ohio River the great highway for travel and commerce, the peculiar advantages of Danville's location were taken away. But the railroad has in turn superseded the river travel, and now trains of cars running out from the Falls of the Ohio over Boone's old trace,* through Danville and Crab Orchard and Cumberland Gap, are bringing back the days of overland travel, and Danville is regaining something of her pristine supremacy.

*It is interesting to observe how closely the railroad follows the old Wilderness Road. From Crab Orchard to Cumberland Gap the old road can be seen from the car windows almost continuously on one side or the other.

FORMATION OF THE CLUB.

In view of the advantageous situation of Danville in the early days, as has been shown, it is not unnatural that there were then found in and about that little inland town a number of the most important men who had come out to the West, nor is it unnatural that these men were, as we now know, associated together for purposes of consultation and discussion and mutual instruction concerning the subjects of the highest practical importance to themselves and the people of Kentucky at large.

In the fall of 1786, eleven years after Daniel Boone had first marked out the Wilderness Road, and five years after Danville was laid out as a town, and three years after it became the Capital of Kentucky, an association was there formed entitled "The Political Club."

For several reasons this society is a subject of peculiar interest, and deserves to have its history particularly recorded.

Its very early date and location at the place where all the early conventions were held connect its work with that of these civic assemblies.

The roll of members shows that nearly all were members of the conventions; their names show that they were the leading men and most influential citizens in the new western community. The subjects discussed show the practical and timely character of their deliberations. The minutes of their meetings show the seriousness and dignified gravity of men who were in earnest and felt the weight of responsibility. It is evident that they were imbued with a consciousness that upon them was cast the work of securing for the inhabitants of Kentucky a government adapted to their wants and necessities. They saw around them a magnificent body of land, and appreciated the advantages it afforded, the wonderful attractions it offered to settlers, and the promise it held for the future. They saw it rapidly filling up. They had, by their own toilsome journey to Kentucky, experienced the full sense of the wide separation from the Virginia government. They felt the necessity for a home government, and set themselves diligently to work upon the practical questions of the hour.

Great, however, as must have been the influence of this society upon the times, it is a singular fact it has no mention in any history. Richard H. Collins, who searched in every section of the State with the most indefatigable industry for every thing illustrative of the

character and work of the early Kentuckians, came upon no trace of this society. The traditions of Danville, strange as it may seem, failed to perpetuate it. The members—who in their later years found homes in other towns of the State, Lexington, Frankfort, Louisville, Bardstown, Versailles, and others—did not preserve in any form, recorded or otherwise, the memory of this club.

The accidental finding of the original papers of the club, and the consequent publicity of the fact that so important and interesting a society had an existence in the early days at Danville, led Colonel R. T. Durrett, the President of the Filson Club, to examine his immense stores of old manuscripts for any reference or allusion to it they might contain. He was rewarded with finding one mention of the club. In the manuscript journal or diary of Major Beatty, a paymaster in the United States Army, is an entry of date August 29, 1786. The Major, after narrating that he had paid off some western troops at the Falls of the Ohio, proceeds to tell how he journeyed to Limestone by way of Danville. At Danville he spent a night, and he gives the following account of a meeting of The Political Club:

“Very much disturbed by a Political Club which met in the next house where we slept and kept us awake till 12 or 1 o'clock.

This club is very commendable in a new country. It is composed of members of the most respectable people in and near Danville, who meet every Saturday night to discuss politics. Some pretty good speeches and some tolerable good arguments made use of last night. The dispute was: One side insisted that an Act of Assembly was not law when it did not perfectly agree with the Constitution of the State. It was opposed by the other party, and a very long debate took place."

The minutes of the club contain an account of this very debate, and show that the decision of the club was that an Act of Assembly must be in accordance with the Constitution of the State.

So far as the records disclose the club had an existence from 1786 until 1790. Its secretary was Thomas Speed, then a young man, well educated and trained in a clerk's office. He wrote a fine, clerkly handwriting, and evidently was careful and methodical. In after years he was a Circuit Court Clerk; several times member of the State Legislature, and once a member of Congress.

His methodical habits led him to put up the records of The Political Club in a package, label it "Political Club Papers," and place them in a drawer of his secretary with other papers which had served their purpose and were not likely to be wanted. He probably did this when the club ceased to meet, which was in 1790. The papers were discovered by the present writer in the

year 1878. They had, therefore, remained untouched for eighty-eight years.* Examination of the package showed that it contained the records of a society of which no living person had any information. The names of the members were there, the constitution and rules of procedure, the minutes of the meetings, and various other papers pertaining to the conduct and work of the society.

The papers were brought to Louisville by the writer, where they were eagerly inspected by persons versed in early Kentucky history, particularly Colonel R. T. Durrett, Colonel John Mason Brown, and Richard H. Collins, and the "find" was pronounced to be of the greatest interest and value. An account of the discovery was published by the present writer in September, 1878, in the *Louisville Commercial*, which was copied by other newspapers in Kentucky. The *Commercial* then said editorially:

"The existence of The Political Club is not mentioned in any history, and so far as we know there is no tradition of it, and, except for the discovery a few weeks ago of the papers of the club, all memory of this truly remarkable association of men would

*Thomas Speed, the Secretary of the Club, removed from Danville to Bardstown in 1793, where he resided until his death in 1842. The desk he used was the old-fashioned sort, with a writing shelf, and drawers below. In these drawers he put away many "old papers." After his death the desk was used, but the drawers of "old papers" were not disturbed. In 1878 the present writer unlocked the drawers, and among the papers was found the

have been lost entirely. The records are now nearly one hundred years old. They have been preserved in a drawer of an old desk which belonged to the secretary of the club. They alone perpetuate the memory of The Political Club."

The Courier-Journal said:

"The extracts which have been published are sufficiently full to satisfy ordinary curiosity, but the publication of the whole record would be a valuable contribution to the history of Kentucky. Such papers discovered in any State having a well-conducted historical society would be seized upon as a most valuable and interesting acquisition."

In addition to the account given in the Louisville Commercial, an address upon the subject of The Political Club was afterward delivered at Danville by Judge Alexander P. Humphrey, which was published in the Courier-Journal. Mention of the society and the discovery of its records is made in Shaler's recent History of Kentucky, and in the "Political Beginnings of Kentucky," by Colonel John Mason Brown, and also in other late publications.

package labeled "Political Club Papers." The package had remained so long closely packed with others it had become partially glued to them, and separated with a crackling or tearing sound. They were tied with a string made of homespun flax. Though yellow with age they were perfectly preserved. The writer's father, then nearly seventy, was present, and, though he had been familiar with the desk all his life, he stated to the writer that he knew nothing whatever about the papers or of the club.

Colonel John Mason Brown, whose remarkable knowledge of Kentucky history was so well known, pays this tribute to the members of The Political Club:

"The list of names of the members of The Political Club will suggest to every one familiar with the early story of Kentucky a just idea of the usefulness of that body. It would not have been possible to assemble another body within the District equal to these men in accomplishments, experience, and possession of public confidence. Their names appear on every page of Kentucky's earlier history."

Professor Shaler, a native of Kentucky, in his recent history of the State (having the original papers before him), says:

"This association was composed of about thirty of the brightest spirits of the times, who were resident in and about Danville. On its roll we find the names of many of those who had already or were afterward to lead the State in the paths of peace or war."

Judge Humphrey in his address says:

"In this list of names will be found men who filled every office of honor in this State. Indeed they are to Kentucky, in its struggles for life and greatness, equal in importance to the ships given in Homer, to the Greeks at Troy."

The attention the subject has received shows the interest taken in the discovery of the existence of the society, and has demonstrated its importance in the early history of events in Kentucky.

THE MEMBERS.

The club consisted of thirty members. Their names were as follows:

Harry Innes,	Samuel McDowell,
Christopher Greenup,	William McDowell,
John Brown,	Benjamin Sebastian,
Robert Craddock,	Baker Ewing,
Thomas Todd,	P. Tardeveau,
John Belli,	William Kennedy,
G. J. Johnston,	Willis Green,
George Muter,	James Speed,
Peyton Short,	Matthew Walton,
Stephen Ormsby,	William McClung,
Thomas Allin,	James Brown,
Thomas Speed,	Robert Dougherty,
Abe Buford,	Joshua Barbee,
John Overton, jr.,	James Overton,
David Walker,	James Nourse.

This is a striking list of early Kentucky names. Some of the men at that time were officially connected with public offices in the District of Kentucky, and nearly all of them afterward held important offices of trust and honor in the State and General Governments.

Brief biographical sketches of these earnest-minded men can not fail to impress even those to whom their names are unfamiliar, with the excellent material of the club, and a mention of some of their descendants will show that the weight and high character of the members have been transmitted to subsequent generations. Not only were they conspicuous in shaping the beginnings of a commonwealth, they were the ancestors of a race which has taken a large part in guiding its career.

It will not be necessary to speak of them in words of sounding praise, or describe at length their characteristics. Their names alone bring to mind the history of Kentucky. Mention of the positions of trust they filled tells the story of their merit. A few brief suggestions will suffice to show how permanently their work and influence were impressed upon the State.

They were men who had passed through the training of the Revolution. The natural force that was in them had been developed in times that tried men's souls and ripened the faculties of men at an early age. The energy and enterprise which led them to the west were coupled with intelligence and education. Every member of the club had received a good education. Many had studied law under the best advantages. In the records

of the club, as well as in other accounts, there is plain proof of the possession of accomplishments belonging to the best colonial society. They were all men of high type intellectually; men of that class who would take prominent positions in any of the legislative assemblies of our country at any time.

Their environments in the backwoods of Kentucky did not preclude the exhibition of a dignified refinement and courtesy of demeanor acquired before they left their eastern homes. It is an historic fact that very many of the early immigrants to Kentucky were people of ability and substance. The seventy thousand who went thither within the fifteen years from 1775 to 1790, went with the deliberate purpose of removing permanently to the West with their families. They were not from overcrowded districts, nor were they surplus population. They were people of the best position in Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the Carolinas, whose intelligent foresight taught them that a great field for progress lay on the western waters, and they had the enterprise to make the most of a golden opportunity. They reaped a rich reward in the rapid advancement in value of the large tracts of land they acquired.

A pleasing light is thrown upon the character of the pioneers by the records of The Political Club. In the

various papers they drafted, in the minutes of the club meetings, and in their letters there is a cultivated diction and an excellence of handwriting contrasting strongly with ideas suggested by the simplicity of living in their rude log cabins, dressed in homespun and buckskin, and fighting Indians.

There is evidence also of a broadness of judgment, an aversion to injustice, a liberality and fairness of dealing, and a warmth of friendship and comradeship natural to men cast together in a new country and mutually dependent upon one another.

We have seen that it was natural that a group of intellectual men should be found at Danville. It is proof of the singular excellence of a community that thirty such members as constituted The Political Club could be chosen by ballot from so small a population. Thus the value of the long lost records and the desirability of their publication is emphasized, as they give indisputable proof of the fact that by the movement of population, known as the "great immigration," the same kind and class of people were suddenly planted in Kentucky as had given to the Colonies their world famous reputation for courage, independence, and enlightenment.

JUDGE HARRY INNES.

Among all the men who were engaged in the work of securing order and government for the people of Kentucky in the pioneer days, no one was more conspicuous than Judge Innes. He had both legal knowledge and practical common sense, and this combination of qualities fitted him for peculiar usefulness. He was born in Caroline County, Virginia, January 4, old style, 1752, and died at Cedar Hill Farm, near Frankfort, Kentucky, September 20, 1816, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. When a member of The Political Club he was thirty-five years of age.

He was the second of three sons of Reverend Robert and Catherine Richards Innes. The eldest son, Robert, was a physician, and the two younger were lawyers. James, the youngest, became Attorney-General of Virginia, and was a member of the Virginia convention which adopted the Constitution of the United States.

Harry was a school-mate of James Madison, and his life-long friend.

In 1772 he obtained his license to practice law in the Colony of Virginia from John Randolph and G. Wythe, by the authority of the General Court. He at once acquired a large business, and practiced in the counties

of Bedford, Chesterfield, Fincastle, Amelia, Cumberland, Pittsylvania, Caroline, Botetourt, and Franklin. In 1778 he was appointed deputy attorney for the county of Bedford by Governor Patrick Henry. In 1779 he was appointed escheator for that county by Governor Thomas Jefferson, and afterward was made collector of specific tax for the same county by Governor Benjamin Harrison. In 1782 he was appointed District Commissioner for the counties of Halifax, Charlotte, Pittsylvania, Henry, Bedford, and Campbell by Governor Harrison. The services rendered in this position were very valuable, and he received the special thanks of the Governor and the War Department. Also under the appointment of the Virginia Legislature he was employed to determine land claims.

In 1782 he was appointed assistant judge for the "District of the Western Waters," and in October of the same year Governor Harrison appointed him judge of that District. In October, 1784, he was elected by the legislature of Virginia Attorney-General for the Western District, which office he filled until 1787. He was appointed by President Washington United States District Judge for Kentucky in 1789, in which capacity he served the remainder of his life. His position as judge did not preclude him from public service of other kinds. In

1790 he was authorized by the United States Secretary of War to take military measures for the protection of the frontiers against hostile Indians, and in 1792 he was associated with Generals Charles Scott and Isaac Shelby, Colonel Benjamin Logan, and Honorable John Brown in the "Military Board" appointed to act in conjunction with the commander of the United States forces in organizing the militia for expeditions against the Indians. His conduct in these affairs was so admirable that it elicited the thanks and commendation of President Washington.

In 1792 he was chosen one of the electors provided for by the first constitution of Kentucky, and presided over that body, which chose the first Governor, Isaac Shelby, and also the State Senators.

In 1799 he was a member of the convention which framed the second Constitution of Kentucky. Another feature of his active and useful life is that from 1787 until 1793 he was President of Transylvania College. It may be said, indeed, that the name of Judge Harry Innes is connected with every important event in the affairs of early Kentucky history. He was held in the highest esteem as a judge, and trusted and honored as a citizen.

Judge Innes was twice married. First, to Elizabeth Calloway, daughter of Colonel James Calloway, of Bedford County, Virginia. The children of this marriage were four: First, Sarah, who married Francis Thornton. A son of this marriage was Judge Harry Innes Thornton, of California, whose wife was a sister of Honorable John J. Crittenden. Second, Katherine, who married Samuel G. Adams, of Virginia, and their son, Thomas Adams, was the father of Gilmer Adams, now prominent among the business men of Louisville. Third, Elizabeth, who married Thomas C. Alexander, of Virginia. Fourth, Ann, who married John Morris, of Virginia.

The second wife of Judge Innes was Mrs. Ann Shiel, widow of Doctor Hugh Shiel. Their only child, Marie Knox, married John H. Todd, of Frankfort, Kentucky, and after his death she became the second wife of John J. Crittenden.

The descendants of Judge Innes are found in many parts of the United States: The Thorntons in Alabama, Virginia, California, and Kentucky; the Alexanders and Forbeses in Virginia; the Adamses in Kentucky, New York, Virginia, and Texas; the Pollards in Louisiana and California; the Crittendens and Todds in Kentucky; the Morrises, of Frankfort, Kentucky. The late Major Eugene Wilkinson Crittenden, U. S. A., was a soldier in the late war. Lieutenant John J. Crittenden, who was killed in Custer's fight, was also a descendant of Judge Innes. The late Lieutenant John H. Todd, U. S. A., and Lieutenant-Commanding C. C. Todd, U. S. N., were great-grandsons of Judge Innes. Lieutenant John Jordan Crittenden, of the Twenty-second United States Infantry, is also a great-grandson.

JUSTICE THOMAS TODD.

Thomas Todd was born in King and Queen County, Virginia, January 23, 1765. His father was Richard Todd, of Virginia. He was left an orphan at an early

age, but received an excellent education. He was a skillful surveyor and an accomplished clerk, as a young man; then a practicing lawyer, and then a judge. He was the clerk of all the early Kentucky conventions, also clerk of the United States District Court until 1792, and when the Kentucky Court of Appeals was established he was appointed clerk of that court. This office he held until 1801, when he was appointed by Governor Garrard Judge of the Court of Appeals. In 1806 he became the Chief Justice. At that time, however, the increase of population in the western country demanded the creation of a new United States Circuit and an additional Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. The States of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio constituted the new circuit, and Thomas Todd was appointed by President Jefferson to the Supreme Bench. In this position he continued until his death. He died at his home near Frankfort, February 7, 1826.

The bar of the Supreme Court passed resolutions expressing their regret and high appreciation of his character and sense of the great loss to the court and the country at a meeting presided over by William Wirt, Attorney-General of the United States. The resolutions were presented by Daniel Webster.

The first wife of Justice Thomas Todd was Elizabeth Harris, a sister of Mrs. Judge Innes. The children of this marriage were: First, Elizabeth, who married John Hanna. Second, Ann Maria, who married Edmund Starling. Third, Harry Innes, who died unmarried. Fourth, Charles S., well known as Honorable Charles S. Todd, of Owensboro, Kentucky. He was chief of staff to General William Henry Harrison during the Indian wars, and was appointed by President Tyler minister to Russia. One of his sons is Doctor Charles H. Todd, of Owensboro; another is Captain Thomas Todd, of Shelby County, Kentucky. Fifth, John Harris, well known as John H. Todd, of Frankfort, Kentucky. He represented Franklin and Owen counties in the legislature in 1822-1824, and was most influential in that body. He married Maria Knox Innes in 1817. Their children: Harry I., Catherine, Lucy, and Elizabeth A. Among the leading business men of Louisville is George D. Todd, son of the last named Harry I. Todd.

The second wife of Justice Thomas Todd was Mrs. George Steptoe Washington, whose maiden name was Lucy Payne, and she was a sister of Mrs. James Madison. Their children: William J., who died young; Madisonia, and James Madison, whose daughter married Arthur Peter, of Louisville.

GEORGE MUTER.

At the time of the formation of the club, George Muter was Chief Justice of the District Court of Kentucky. Associated with him on the bench were two other members of the club, Samuel McDowell and Harry Innes. The clerk of the court was Christopher Greenup, also a member of the club. This court held its sessions at Danville. It was established under an Act of the

Virginia Legislature passed in 1782, Kentucky having in 1780 been divided into three counties—Jefferson, Fayette, and Lincoln—and they constituted the “Kentucky District.” The Act made provision for a court for this District having jurisdiction of all treasons, murders, felonies, crimes, and misdemeanors, and also of law and equity cases. The court held its first session in 1783 at Harrodsburg, but in that year it was removed to Danville. Judge Muter held his office until Kentucky became a State, and then in 1792 became Judge of the Court of Appeals, and so continued for eleven years, being the first Chief Justice.

In addition to his services in a judicial capacity, he had served in the Revolution as the commander of a ship of war. He came to Kentucky with the military title of Colonel, and was a pioneer soldier as well as one of the most useful of all of the early builders of the Kentucky Commonwealth. He was a member of all the conventions which, from 1785 to 1789, were held at Danville for the purpose of erecting Kentucky into a State. In 1785 he and Judge Harry Innes were deputed by the convention of that year to proceed to Virginia and lay before the legislature the petition of Kentucky to be made a State, which service they performed. He was a member of the convention which framed the first

constitution in 1792. In that year he was one of the electors under that constitution to select the first Governor of the State—their choice being Isaac Shelby. They also chose the first State Senators. It is noticeable that besides Judge Muter six other members of The Political Club—Short, Todd, Greenup, Innes, Samuel McDowell, Kennedy—were electors, the four latter being all who were sent from Mercer County. The total number from all the State was forty.

The occupation of most of George Muter's life was that of a judge, and when he left the bench in 1803 he was old and poor. The legislature, in recognition of the debt of gratitude the State was under to so faithful a public servant, granted him a pension of \$300, to be paid to him annually during the remainder of his life. The act recited the services he had rendered his country, both civil and military, his age and withdrawal from public life without a competency, and the injustice of leaving a faithful public servant to struggle with penury. The succeeding legislature, moved by fear that the precedent would destroy the fabric of the Commonwealth, repealed the generous and gracious act. But it is a pleasant reminiscence of the times that the Governor, Christopher Greenup, vetoed the repealing act. The veto message was strong and earnest, citing the case of Clarinda

Allington, who had been a prisoner among the Indians, and received a pension, not for public services but simply because of her distressed condition; that Judge Muter's claims were stronger, being for his distinguished civil and military services all through the pioneer period. The repealing measure was passed over the veto. But Governor Greenup had done all that was in his power to befriend his old Political Club brother.

When Thomas Todd was appointed Justice of the Supreme Court he requested his friend Judge Muter, who had no family, to reside in his home. The offer was accepted. Judge Muter's estate, which consisted of revolutionary claims, went by his will to the family of Thomas Todd.

COLONEL ABRAHAM BUFORD.

Abraham Buford was of Virginia lineage, and was born and reared in that State. Having received a good education, his early life was spent in military service. In the battle of Point Pleasant, October 10, 1774, when General Andrew Lewis signally defeated the Indians under their chief, Cornstalk, Lieutenant Abe Buford fought with the body of Virginia volunteers commanded by his cousin, Thomas Buford. His experience and talents caused him to be placed in command of a

Virginia regiment in the Revolutionary War, through which he served and participated in many engagements. At the close of the struggle, like many others, he sought his fortune in the western country. He settled in Kentucky prior to 1783, and in that year was surveyor of Lincoln County by appointment. He became the owner of large tracts of the finest Bluegrass lands, and in 1788, while a resident of Danville, he married Martha McDowell, daughter of Judge Samuel McDowell. Thus he was associated with his distinguished father-in-law not only in The Political Club but in the public measures for founding the State of Kentucky.

The eldest son of Colonel Abraham Buford, Charles S. Buford, married first a daughter of Governor John Adair. A daughter of this marriage was Pattie, who married General James S. Jackson, member of Congress and a distinguished Union officer, who fell at Perryville. Her brother Henry married Miss Marshall, and their son is Judge Humphrey Marshall Buford, of Lexington, Kentucky. Colonel Abe Buford's second wife was a daughter of Doctor Basil Duke. Their son Lewis was a major in the Union Army. Their daughter Susan married Major Edson, Professor at West Point, and another daughter, Henrietta, married Thomas F. Barbee, a grandson of Joshua Barbee, who was a member of The Political Club.

Another son of Colonel Abe Buford, William S., married a daughter of Chief Justice Robertson. A daughter of Colonel Abe Buford married James K. Duke, brother of Charles S. Buford's second wife. Their daughter Charlotte married Reverend Mr.

Strahan. Another daughter, Pattie, returned to the Buford name by marrying General John Buford, U. S. A., whose father was a cousin of Colonel Abe Buford. General John Buford served with marked distinction in the Army of the Potomac. Another daughter married General Green Clay Smith, of Kentucky, who served his country in the Mexican War and Civil War. A son, William Duke, son of James K. Duke, served in the Mexican War, and on the Confederate side in the Civil War. General Abraham Buford, of the Confederate Army, was a descendant of the same Virginia family to which Colonel Abraham Buford belonged.

ROBERT DOUGHERTY.

Robert Dougherty belonged to a family of that name which came to Kentucky with the earliest of the pioneers. He founded Dougherty's Station, which was about one and a half miles from the site of Danville, on Clarke's Run, and doubtless resided at that place during the existence of the club. In later years he removed to Barren County, and was in 1800, 1801, 1802, 1807, and 1814 the representative from that county in the State Legislature. In 1808 he was in the State Senate. Others of the name, presumably brothers or near relatives, came to Kentucky at the same time with Robert. Their names appear among those of the first pioneers at Boonesboro, Harrod's Station, and Mayslick.

CHRISTOPHER GREENUP.

Christopher Greenup possessed noble traits of character and performed eminent services for his State and country. He was born in Virginia in 1750. He served in the War of the Revolution with the rank of colonel. Upon its close he removed to Kentucky in 1783. He was a lawyer and began practice in the District Court. He had also learned surveying, and his name is connected with the first effort toward an historical and geographical account of Kentucky. Indorsed upon the map made by John Filson, and published with his history of Kentucky in 1784, is this dedication:

"While this work shall live may this inscription remain a monument of the gratitude of the author to Col. Dan. Boone, Levi Todd, Jas. Harrod, Christo. Greenup, Jno. Cowan, and Wm. Kennedy, Esq., of Kentucky, for the distinguished assistance with which they have honored him in its composition, and a testimony that it has received the approbation of those who he justly esteems the best qualified to judge of its merits."

In March, 1785, he was appointed clerk of the District Court. He was a member of the early conventions, and an elector for Governor and Senator under the first constitution in 1792. From 1792 until 1797 he was a member of the National Congress, being, together with Alexander D. Orr, the first to represent the State in

that body. In 1804 he was elected Governor without opposition. The Palladium said editorially at the time:

“The election of this gentleman to the first magistracy of the State by a unanimous vote is a strong evidence of the satisfaction he has given in the many high offices to which he has been previously called by the voice of his fellow-citizens.”

When he took the oath of office he said:

“Having at an early period of my life formed the strongest predilection in favor of a republican government, having also shared in part the toils, dangers, and difficulties experienced by all those who joined in the glorious cause which secured to the United States her liberty and independence, seeing the unparalleled progress which our citizens are daily making in the arts and sciences, together with the great extension of the agricultural and commercial interests, and the astonishing increase of population in the short time the United States has become a nation, all combine to convince me that a republican form of government is capable of and does afford more lasting security to the lives, liberties, and property of the governed than any other. . . . To my apprehension such a government is a government of the people under such an organization as they shall, from time to time, ordain and establish, and where every freeman not legally disqualified has directly or indirectly a voice in the administration.”

In such words did Governor Greenup in 1804 express the sentiment, uttered sixty years later by Abraham Lincoln, “A government of the people, by the people, and for the people.” In the same year in an address to the legislature he said:

"But a few years ago Kentucky was a wilderness; now science, civilization, commerce, and all the arts which facilitate and sweeten human intercourse exist and are cherished and promoted. The Commonwealth presents the pleasing spectacle of an industrious and law-abiding people."

In 1805 he vetoed an act repealing the charter of the Kentucky Insurance Company, and said in his veto message that he regarded the charter as in the nature of a contract which could not be impaired; thus reaching the same conclusion as that reached by the Supreme Court of the United States fourteen years later in the Dartmouth College case.

The Burr conspiracy occurred during his administration. The secrecy of the movements of Aaron Burr in that extraordinary event is well illustrated by the fact that in the same month (November, 1806,) that Burr was at Lexington, Kentucky, pushing his schemes, Governor Greenup felicitated the legislature on its assembling, that no extraordinary event had occurred during the year, which had been "marked only by the roll of the seasons and the resulting avocations of men."

In his next message he showed how the machinations of designing men had been happily frustrated without bloodshed. It has been already stated in the sketch of George Muter that Governor Greenup vetoed an act of

the legislature repealing the act which gave a pension to Judge Muter.

After his term expired as Governor he represented Franklin County in the legislature. He accumulated wealth, and for many years was a director in the old Bank of Kentucky. He was popular, and had the confidence and love of the people. One of the counties in Kentucky bears his name. He died April 27, 1818.

His wife died October 22, 1807. The obituary in the Palladium tells of her virtues and graces, and that she was forty-two years of age, but it fails to mention who she was or when married. Among the papers of The Political Club, however, are some small fragments of paper containing resolutions in the handwriting of Mr. Greenup. On the opposite side are fragments of a letter in the same handwriting. From these and a letter which is yet entire, it can be determined that Mr. Greenup was married in the year 1787, in Virginia.

JUDGE SAMUEL McDOWELL.

Samuel McDowell was the eldest son of Captain John McDowell, of Virginia, and grandson of Ephraim McDowell. The latter was a Scotch-Irish patriot in the times of the English Revolution of 1688. Afterward crossing to America he settled in Pennsylvania. Captain

John McDowell was born in Pennsylvania, but moved to Virginia in 1737, his son Samuel being then two years of age. The connection of the McDowells with the most prominent families of Virginia, and their services in both civil and military affairs, is historic.

Samuel McDowell was well educated in youth, one of his instructors being the distinguished Doctor Archibald Alexander. When twenty years of age he became a soldier in the French and Indian Wars, and was in the battle of "Braddock's Defeat." In 1774 he served as captain in "Dunmore's War," and fought in the battle of Point Pleasant. He was a colonel in the War of the Revolution, and, with his regiment, served under General Green at the battle of Guilford Court House, and throughout Green's campaign against Cornwallis. Preceding the Revolution Samuel McDowell and Thomas Lewis represented Augusta County in the convention of 1775 at Richmond, and protested against government by any ministry or parliament in which the people were not represented. These two members were delegated to address to George Washington, Patrick Henry, and Ben Harrison, and the other delegates from Virginia in the Continental Congress, a letter of thanks and approval of their course; in response to which letter they received a communication which shows the high appreciation of themselves personally by those distinguished men.

In 1776 Samuel McDowell was a member of the celebrated convention which was held at Williamsburg and there proclaimed the rights of man and instructed the delegates to the Continental Congress to declare the Colonies free and independent.* Samuel McDowell, therefore, brought to the deliberations of The Political Club, and into the Kentucky conventions, an experience that was directly applicable and of the utmost value.

Immediately upon the close of the Revolutionary War, attracted by the fame of the Kentucky lands, he journeyed to the west with his family over the Wilderness Road and took up his residence in Fayette County, as surveyor, in 1783. In that year at Harrodsburg he presided over the first District Court held in Kentucky, the other judges being John Floyd and George Muter. He then removed to Mercer, the county in which Danville was situated. He was accorded the distinction of being made the president of all the early Kentucky conventions except the first and the last. That he should have been selected to preside over these seven important

* "To that body were chosen more than one hundred and thirty of the ablest and most weighty men of Virginia. They were the choice of the freeholders of Virginia, and the majority were men of independent fortune or even opulence. It was afterward remembered that of this grave assembly the members were for the most part men of large stature and robust frames, and that a very great proportion of them lived to exceeding old age. They were to decide whether Virginia demanded independence, and if so they were

deliberative bodies is a striking testimonial to his character. He was one of the first District Judges, as we have seen. In every position he held he was respected for his ability and revered for his personal high qualities. He lived to be eighty-two years of age, and died at the residence of his son Joseph, near Danville, 1817.

When quite young Samuel McDowell married Mary McClung. Her nephew, William McClung, was a member of The Political Club. His brother John married Elizabeth Alexander, of Princeton. The descendants of Judge McDowell were numerous and unusually distinguished. Four of his sons served in the Revolutionary War.

Major John McDowell, the eldest, was with Washington at the crossing of the Delaware, at Valley Forge and Yorktown. He was also a major in the War of 1812. He was frequently in the Kentucky Legislature, and a member of the convention which framed the second Constitution of Kentucky. His wife was his cousin, and their son married a daughter of Governor Shelby. His descendants also intermarried with the Marshalls and Logans, and some of them served with distinction in the Confederate Army in the Civil War.

Colonel James McDowell, the next son, married Mary Paxton Lyle. He served in the Revolution with two of his sons, and in the War of 1812. His descendants intermarried with the Campbells, McPheeters, Paxtons, Moores, Picketts, McClungs, Clays, Riggses,

to establish a commonwealth, and in making this decision they moved like a pillar of fire in front of the whole country." (Bancroft's History United States, Volume 8, page 377.)

Bancroft also says, speaking of this convention: "The county of Augusta represented the necessity of making the confederacy of the United States more perfect, independent, and lasting; and of framing an equal, free, and liberal government that might be the test of all future ages. (*Ibid.*, page 376.)

and Andrewses; Doctor Hervey McDowell, of Cynthiana, Kentucky, Doctor Thomas E. Pickett, of Maysville, Kentucky, and Honorable W. A. Sudduth, of the Louisville Bar, are among them.

Judge William McDowell, the third son, was a member of the club, and a sketch of his life will be given.

Judge Samuel McDowell, of Mercer County, the fourth son, served in the War of the Revolution and War of 1812. His wife was Anna Irvine, of the noted Irvine family. Their descendants are very numerous, intermarrying with the Starlings, Sullivants, Ballards, Prestons, and Clays.

Abram Irvine McDowell, one of his sons, was the father of General Irvine McDowell, U. S. A., Colonel John McDowell, and Colonel Malcomb McDowell, all soldiers in the Civil War, the former the Commander of the Army of the Potomac.

Doctor William A. McDowell, another son, was the father of Mrs. Judge Bland Ballard, of Louisville. Judge Ballard was appointed Judge of the United States District Court for Kentucky by Mr. Lincoln in 1861, and served with great distinction until his death, eighteen years after. The brother of Mrs. Bland Ballard is Major Henry Clay McDowell, who served in the Civil War. He married Annette Clay, daughter of Colonel Henry Clay, who fell in the Mexican War, the son of the great Henry Clay. Major Henry Clay McDowell and his accomplished wife now own and reside in the home of Henry Clay, "Ashland." His brother is Major William McDowell, of Louisville.

The eldest child of Judge Samuel McDowell, of Mercer, and Anna Irvine married William Starling. They removed to Hopkinsville, Kentucky. Their children were Colonel Sam Starling, Colonel Lyne Starling, and Colonel Edmund Starling, all of whom attained their rank by service in the Union Army. William Starling, of Hopkinsville, was also their son.

Colonel Joseph McDowell, of Danville, fifth son of Judge Samuel McDowell and Mary McClung, served in the War of 1812. His

wife was Sarah Irvine, sister of the wife of his brother Samuel. General Henry B. Carrington, U. S. A., who served with distinction in the Civil War, is their grandson. Other descendants intermarried with the Sullivants, Davidsons, and Reeds. The wife of E. L. Davidson, of Louisville, is a granddaughter.

Doctor Ephraim McDowell, sixth son of Judge Samuel McDowell and Mary McClung, achieved a world-wide fame as a surgeon, which need not be dwelt upon here. He died in 1830. His wife was a daughter of Governor Shelby. Their children intermarried with the Halls, Youngs, and Irvines.

Caleb Wallace McDowell, seventh son of Judge Samuel McDowell and Mary McClung, married his kinswoman, Elizabeth McDowell. Their descendants intermarried with the Chrismans, Scotts, Halls, and Bells. A granddaughter married Governor L. E. Parsons, of Alabama.

Mary McClung, daughter of Judge Samuel McDowell and Mary McClung, married Judge Caleb Wallace, whose distinguished career has been ably presented in one of the Filson Club Publications by the Reverend William H. Whitsitt. Her twin sister, Magdalen, married Andrew Reid, a prominent Virginian. Their daughter married General Andrew Moore, member of Congress and United States Senator, whose home was at Lexington, Virginia. A granddaughter married Professor James White, of Lexington, Virginia, whose daughter is the wife of Helm Bruce, of the Louisville Bar.

Another daughter of Judge Samuel McDowell and Mary McClung, Martha, married Colonel Abe Buford, a member of The Political Club, who has been mentioned.

Another daughter, Mary, married Judge Alexander Keith Marshall, a brother of Chief Justice Marshall. Their children and descendants formed alliances with the Andersons, Bufords, Paxtons, Harbesons, and Marshalls.

JUDGE WILLIAM McDOWELL.

William McDowell was a worthy son of his distinguished father, Samuel McDowell. He was born in Virginia, 1762, which made him twenty-four years of age when The Political Club was organized. He served in the Virginia militia during the Revolution. He was well educated in the best schools in Virginia, and became an accomplished lawyer and able judge. He came to Kentucky with his father in 1783. He was a representative from Kentucky in the Virginia Assembly in the year 1787. He became the first auditor of Kentucky by the appointment of Governor Shelby, and for a number of years he was a member of the State Senate. He was a man of the highest character, and of splendid ability. He married Miss Margaretta Madison, of Virginia, a niece of President Madison. Their son Samuel became an active and useful member of the Kentucky Legislature from Warren County. Their daughters all married prominent men, one of them being the wife of Honorable James G. Birney, the "Liberty" candidate for the presidency in 1844. Another married D. Brashear, and a daughter of this marriage became the wife of Joseph Sullivant, of Columbus, Ohio.

JOHN BROWN.

Honorable John Brown was one of the most eminent of the early Kentucky statesmen. He enjoyed the personal friendship of Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Madison. He was born at Staunton, Virginia, in 1757, being the son of Reverend John Brown and Margaret Preston. He received the most thorough education in youth, and served in the War of the Revolution under Washington and Lafayette, having left Princeton College to join the army. He afterward read law in the office of Thomas Jefferson, and in 1782, when twenty-four years of age, removed to Kentucky, arriving immediately after the battle of Blue Licks. He was a prominent figure in Kentucky until his death, at the age of eighty, in 1837. He was a member of the Virginia Legislature from Kentucky, and also a member of the early conventions. In 1787 and 1788 he was a member of the old Congress. In 1789 and 1791 he was the representative from Kentucky in Congress under the Federal Constitution. After Kentucky was admitted into the Union he was made United States Senator three consecutive terms.

Beside his services in a civil capacity, he, in conjunction with General Charles Scott, General George Rogers

Clark, Colonel Benjamin Logan, Judge Harry Innes, and Colonel Isaac Shelby, executed the most important military trusts, taking part in various campaigns for the defense of the State. "With General George Rogers Clark, Governor Shelby, and Governors Scott and Madison, and with Judges Innes and Todd, and Colonels Nicholas and Breckinridge, and their illustrious associates, he held the most confidential intercourse, and their attachment, commenced in periods of danger and under circumstances of trial, never wavered." (Collins.)

His wife was a daughter of Reverend John Mason, a noted Presbyterian minister of New York. His strong characteristics descended to his children and grandchildren. One of his sons, Judge Mason Brown, of Frankfort, Kentucky, was distinguished as a lawyer and judge, and in connection with Judge Monroe, of Frankfort, made the well known compilation of Kentucky laws. Judge Mason Brown was twice married: first, to Judith A. Bledsoe, daughter of the famous lawyer and orator, Jesse Bledsoe; second, to Mary Yoder, daughter of the pioneer, Jacob Yoder. One of his sons was Honorable B. Gratz Brown, who was a candidate for Vice-President of the United States in 1872. Another son was Colonel John Mason Brown, who was a prominent officer in the Union Army in the Civil War, and afterward a leader of the bar in Louisville.

Colonel John Mason Brown was an honored and beloved member of the Filson Club, and one of its originators. His accomplishments were of the highest order. He had a fondness for the study of the history of his own State, which he gratified even while engrossed with an unusually large law practice. His knowledge of Kentucky history was very great, and he has left as monuments

of his devotion to its study not only the "Political Beginnings of Kentucky" but also many pamphlets, including the "Battle of Blue Licks" and "Early History of Frankfort." His death in 1890, at the age of fifty-two, was profoundly lamented throughout Kentucky and the country.

The resolution of the Louisville Bar said: "Descended from ancestors whose fame had been honorably blended with the civil and military glory of the country, he proved himself worthy to bear the name he had inherited. To a commanding person and captivating manner he added a mental culture and force of character which threw a charm around the circle in which he moved."

The "Salmagundi Club," of Louisville, of which he was president, said in its memorial: "He had labored for many years in finding out and giving to the world what Kentucky pioneers accomplished in the field of thought and action. In his life and character he bore an honorable ambition, and a large achievement which was the accumulated heritage of many generations. In his profession he stood among the foremost. As a scholar and writer he attained distinction. He was everywhere throughout the land recognized as a man who belonged to the public, and whose services might at any time be demanded in exalted station. In his life in this community every deserving movement or undertaking for the last score of years was helped in direction by his wise counsel and bore the impress of his helping hand. In his death it is the universal feeling that this community has suffered an irreparable loss."

The establishment of the system of public parks at Louisville is largely due to Colonel Brown's influence. He was one of the originators of the scheme, and prepared the bill for the legislature.

Another son of Honorable John Brown was Orlando Brown, of Frankfort, Kentucky, who, as a lawyer and citizen and a writer of rare merit, occupied a position of great prominence and usefulness.

JAMES BROWN.

James Brown was a brother of Honorable John Brown. His ability as a lawyer caused him to be associated with those who were the most eminent before the Kentucky courts—Clay, Nicholas, Breckinridge, and others. His wife was a daughter of Colonel Thomas Hart and sister of the wife of Henry Clay. He was the fifth Secretary of State, being appointed by Governor Shelby. Upon the purchase of Louisiana, in 1803, he removed to New Orleans, where he and Mr. Livingstone prepared the Civil Code of Louisiana. He was elected to the Senate of the United States from Louisiana several successive terms, from 1812 to 1823. In 1823 he was appointed Minister to France by President Adams, and filled that high office for ten years. He died in Philadelphia in 1836.

CAPTAIN JAMES SPEED.

Captain James Speed was born in Virginia in 1739. His father was John Speed, of Mecklenburg, who was also born in Virginia, and whose father came to Virginia from England in 1695. Captain James Speed was one of a family of six brothers, all of whom served in the Revolutionary War, one being killed in the battle of

Guilford, North Carolina, where Captain James Speed received a shot through his body while leading his command in the battle. At the close of the Revolutionary War he removed with his family to Kentucky and settled near the spot where Danville was afterward built. When a member of the club he was a little under fifty years of age, and had the gratification to have with him in the club his oldest son, Thomas Speed, who was its secretary. He had not studied law, but his great intelligence and strong practical wisdom caused him to be selected in 1784 judge of one of the first courts established in Kentucky. He was a member of the early conventions, and prominent in all the efforts for State establishment.

He never recovered entirely from the wound received at Guilford, not being able to hold himself erect. Having received a classical education, he taught his own children after coming to Kentucky until schools were provided. It was said of him by Judge Bibb and others who knew him well that he was a natural lawyer, and his papers, which have been preserved, give evidence of that fact. For his military services he received large grants of land, and he became the owner of other tracts by purchase.

The wife of Captain James Speed was Mary Spencer, of Virginia. His eldest son, Thomas, was a member of The Political Club, and

its secretary. A sketch of his life will be given. The second son, John, settled near Louisville about 1795, and was known as Judge John Speed. He was the father of Honorable James Speed, of Louisville, Attorney-General of the United States in the Cabinet of Abraham Lincoln, and of Joshua F. Speed, Mr. Lincoln's friend in Illinois. Their brothers, William, Philip, and J. Smith, were valued citizens of Louisville, and the sisters were Mrs. James D. Breckinridge, Mrs. Austin L. Peay, Mrs. B. O. Davis, and Mrs. Adams, all residents of Louisville.

One of Captain James Speed's daughters, Mary, married William Smith, of Virginia. Their son, Colonel John Speed Smith, of Madison County, Kentucky, was an able lawyer, and one of the most enterprising and valuable citizens of the State. Colonel John Speed Smith was the father of General Green Clay Smith, distinguished as a soldier in the Mexican War and Civil War; twice a member of Congress, Governor of Montana Territory, and in 1876 Prohibition candidate for the presidency of the United States.

A daughter of Colonel John Speed Smith married General D. S. Goodloe, of Lexington, and a son of this marriage was the brilliant young statesman of Lexington, Colonel William Cassius Goodloe. All of the descendants of Colonel John Speed Smith are people of the greatest excellence in that portion of the State.

Colonel John Speed Smith's sister Elizabeth married Thomas Walker Fry, a son of Joshua Fry. A daughter of this marriage, Mary, was the wife of Reverend L. W. Green, D. D., son of Willis Green, a member of the club. Another daughter married Colonel Thomas Barbee, of Danville, whose father was a member of the club. A son of Thomas W. Fry and Elizabeth Smith Fry was Doctor Thomas Walker Fry, a fine physician. Another son was General Speed S. Fry, who was an officer in the Mexican War and a noted Union General in the Civil War.

A daughter of Captain James Speed, Elizabeth, married Doctor Adam Rankin, of Henderson, Kentucky, an intimate friend and

associate of the great naturalist, Audubon; his descendants bearing the name Rankin, and also the Johnsons and Riveses, are prominent and useful citizens of Henderson.

MAJOR THOMAS SPEED.

Thomas Speed was born in Virginia and came to Kentucky with his father, Captain James Speed (also a member of the club), in 1782. As shown by the minutes of the club, he was one of the first members, and was made the secretary. Although quite young, being the youngest man in the club, the records which were kept by him show that he was well qualified to be associated with the older and more experienced members.* His handwriting was remarkably excellent, and it is to his careful habits of business that the preservation of the records of the club are due. He continued to reside in Kentucky as long as he lived, and died at his home near Bardstown in 1842. His life was one of singular purity and excellence, and he received many evidences of the high estimation in which he was held. For many years he held the office of Clerk of Bullitt and Nelson Circuit Courts. A number of times he represented his county in the State Legislature. He was a

*Many evidences of his unusual precocity are found among his papers, in letters from Honorable John Brown, George Muter, Christopher Greenup, Thomas Todd, Judge Innes, and many others, all of which show that he was a man of affairs before he was twenty-one years of age.

major in the War of 1812. In 1817 he was elected to Congress. His early education was the best that could be obtained in Virginia and at Danville, and, having a taste for letters, he accomplished himself by reading and became a student and writer. His papers, which he carefully preserved, show correspondence with all the distinguished men of his time, and that he was a member of various historical societies. He wrote accounts of events in Kentucky which were published in the local papers, and was a regular contributor to the *National Intelligencer*.

The first wife of Major Thomas Speed was Susan Clayton Slaughter. An only daughter of this marriage died young. His second wife was Mary McElroy, of the pioneer McElroy family which settled in Kentucky at Lebanon. One of her sisters was the wife of Reverend James Blythe, another married General James Allen, another Felix Grundy. Major Thomas Speed purchased land and made his home near Bardstown in 1794, and there resided until his death in 1842. He left two sons: the younger was Doctor J. J. Speed, of Louisville; the elder, Thomas S., inherited the old home near Bardstown, and resided there until his death in 1892. He was the custodian of the old desk which contained the papers of *The Political Club*. He was the father of the present writer.

WILLIS GREEN.

Willis Green was born and reared in the Shenandoah Valley. He was the son of Duff Green and Anna Willis.

He married Sarah Reed, daughter of John Reed and Sarah Wilcox. This marriage was at Danville in 1783. He came out to Kentucky a few years before that date as a surveyor, and located his home on a beautiful body of land near the site of Danville. The name "Waveland," which he gave to his homestead, is still borne by it.

Willis Green was a representative from Kentucky in the Virginia Legislature, and also a member of several of the early conventions. For many years he was clerk of the court at Danville. He was a man of strong characteristics, which have been inherited by his descendants.

Seven children of Willis Green lived to maturity, the eldest, Duff Green, born in 1784. He became a lieutenant in the United States Army, afterward graduated as a physician, and was a surgeon in the War of 1812. He married a niece of Simon Kenton. His son, Doctor Willis Duff Green, is now a physician in Mount Vernon, Illinois. Another son is Judge William H. Green, of Cairo, Illinois. Two daughters of Doctor Duff Green reside in Bloomington, Illinois, Mrs. McElroy and Mrs. Harvey.

The second son of Willis Green was John, known as Judge John Green. He was born in 1787, studied law with Henry Clay, was three times in the State Senate and as often in the Lower House. He served in the War of 1812 on the staff of General Isaac Shelby. He became Judge of the Circuit Court, and died while holding that office in 1838. His first wife was Sarah Fry, daughter of Joshua Fry. The eldest born of this marriage was John Reed Green, who

died nineteen years old. Second, Willis Green, who married a daughter of B. B. Smith, Bishop of Kentucky. Third, Ann Peachy, who married Reverend Robert A. Johnson. Fourth, Sally A., who married John Barclay, of Danville. Her daughter Mary married Reverend William R. Brown, and another daughter, Jessamine, married E. W. C. Humphrey, of the Louisville Bar. Fifth, Reverend Joshua Fry Green, who married Harriet Booker, daughter of Major William Booker, of Washington County, Kentucky. Sixth, Susan, who married Honorable James Weir, of Owensboro, Kentucky. Their daughter Belle married Honorable Clinton Griffith, of that place. Seventh, Reverend William Lewis Green, who married Susan Weir, sister of Honorable James Weir.

Judge John Green married, second, Mary Keith Marshall, daughter of Chief Justice Marshall. Two sons were born. First, Thomas Marshall Green, who first married Ann Eliza Butler, and afterward Pattie Craig, of Danville. Second, John Duff Green, who married Illa Triplett.

The youngest son of Willis Green and Sarah Reed was Lewis Warner, well known as Reverend Lewis W. Green, D.D., whose eminent career is thus summed up by Reverend E. P. Humphrey in an address in 1883: "Doctor Lewis W. Green was the first President of Center College, then a professor therein; afterward successively pastor in Baltimore, professor in Hanover College, President of Hampden Sidney College, President of Transylvania University, and six years at the head of Center College; everywhere equal to his great opportunities, he was one of the most eloquent men of a generation in Kentucky abounding in eloquent men." Doctor L. W. Green married Mrs. Mary Lawrence, the mother of Fry Lawrence, of Louisville. She was the daughter of Thomas W. Fry and granddaughter of Joshua Fry. A daughter of Doctor L. W. Green, Julia, married Honorable Matthew T. Scott, of Lexington, Kentucky, and resided at Bloomington, Illinois. Another daughter, Letitia, married Honorable Adlai E. Stevenson,

a native of Christian County, Kentucky, a lawyer and statesman of Bloomington, Illinois, and Vice-President of the United States.

The eldest daughter of Willis Green and Sarah Reed, Letitia, married James Barbour, a Virginian by birth, a merchant in Danville, and a major in Barbee's Regiment in the War of 1812. James Barbour, of Maysville, is their son. Another son is Reverend Lewis Green Barbour, D. D., of Central University, Richmond, Kentucky, whose sons are Doctors Philip and John F. Barbour, physicians of Louisville. A daughter of Major James Barbour married Mr. Vick, of Vicksburg, Mississippi. Another daughter, Martha, married a Presbyterian minister, and their son, Reverend B. Lewis Hobson, now a professor in McCormick Theological Seminary at Chicago, married a daughter of E. W. C. Humphrey, of the Louisville Bar.

Another daughter of Willis Green and Sarah Reed married Doctor Ben Edwards, an eminent physician of St. Louis, brother of Governor Ninian Edwards. Doctor Ben Edwards had a large family. His son, Willis Green Edwards, was educated in medicine in this country and in Paris, and rose rapidly to prominence, being professor in the Medical College of St. Louis. His other sons were Benjamin, Pressly, Cyrus, and Frank. His daughter Sarah married General Lewis W. Parsons. Another daughter was the mother of the wife of Robert L. Todd, a lawyer and banker of Columbia, Missouri, a grandson of General Levi Todd, of Kentucky.

Willis Green's third daughter, Martha Eleanor (who was called Patsey), married Doctor William Craig, an accomplished gentleman, educated at Washington College and at Transylvania and the Philadelphia Medical School. He was a surgeon in the War of 1812, several times in the Kentucky Legislature, and President of the Branch Bank of Kentucky at Danville. A son of this marriage was Lewis Green Craig, who died unmarried. Another son is Reverend Willis Green Craig, now a professor in the McCormick Theological Seminary at Chicago; he was the presiding officer of the Pres-

byterian General Assembly at Washington in 1893. A daughter, Letitia, married Doctor George Cowan, of Danville, and their son, Doctor Harry J. Cowan, is now an accomplished physician of Danville. Eliza Craig died unmarried. The youngest daughter of Doctor William Craig was the brilliant Pattie Craig, of Danville, now the wife of Colonel Thomas Marshall Green.

STEPHEN ORMSBY.

Stephen Ormsby was one of the first members of the club. He was then about twenty-eight years of age. He came to Kentucky from Philadelphia. He was born in Ireland, though he belonged to an English family of distinction and ancient lineage. He was an accomplished gentleman, educated for the bar, and possessed literary culture and taste. During the existence of the club he removed to Louisville and became Judge of the Circuit Court. From 1811 until 1817 he was in Congress. During the War of 1812 he served as an officer on the staff of General Armstrong.

Judge Ormsby died in 1844, aged eighty-five. His home was about nine miles east of Louisville, on a farm of fifteen hundred acres. At his splendid country seat, which he called "Moghera Gloss," pronounced "Morra Gloss," he dispensed a famous hospitality.

The following resolution is found among the papers of the club without date. It shows the estimate the

members had of their brothers, Stephen Ormsby and George Muter, and is worthy of preservation:

"WHEREAS, The Honorable George Muter and Stephen Ormsby, Esq., members of this club, have given information that they are about to remove from this neighborhood, and having expressed their desire of still continuing to be members, as it will often be convenient to give their attendance; therefore,

"*Resolved*, That the club, as a mark of esteem for the said George Muter and Stephen Ormsby, having experienced their aid in discussing the subjects that have been debated in club, does consent to their continuance as members thereof."

GENERAL MATTHEW WALTON.

Matthew Walton was born in Virginia, and became an officer in the Revolutionary Army. He was a brother of George Walton, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Soon after the conclusion of the war he removed to Kentucky, and at once became a commanding figure among the pioneers. He was a member of the convention held at Dauville in May, 1785, and a member of two of the succeeding conventions. In the Virginia Convention which ratified the Constitution of the United States he was a member from Kentucky. In 1790 he was a member from Kentucky of the Virginia Legislature. He was also in the Convention of 1792, which framed the first Constitution of Kentucky. In

1792 he represented the County of Nelson in the Kentucky Legislature. Washington County being formed in 1792 out of part of Nelson, General Walton after that date represented the new county, in which he then resided. In 1795 and 1808 he was a member of the legislature. From 1800 to 1803 he was in the State Senate, and from 1803 to 1807 he was the representative from his district in Congress. His great popularity is shown by his having been kept so steadily in public service. General Walton was a man of great refinement and culture. He had large possessions and lived in elegant style, having built for his home one of the first large brick residences erected in Kentucky. At one time he owned nearly two hundred thousand acres of land. He died in 1819.*

Representatives of the Walton family are numerous. Doctor C. J. Walton, a physician of Munfordville, Kentucky, was a surgeon in the Union Army in the Civil War, and afterward filled the office of Pension Agent at Louisville for four years by appointment of President Harrison. Reverend J. B. Walton is a professor in Center College, Reverend R. A. Walton is a Presbyterian minister in Georgetown, Kentucky, Judge Matt Walton is a lawyer in Lexington, and his brother is a lawyer in Washington City.

*Judge James S. Pirtle, of Louisville, states that he often heard his father (Chancellor Pirtle) talk of General Walton and his family. They were near neighbors of the father of Chancellor Pirtle in Washington County. These accounts represent General Walton as a man of large landed interests and great wealth otherwise. He lived in fine style at a splendid country seat,

THOMAS ALLIN.

Thomas Allin was a Revolutionary soldier, having served on the staff of General Nathaniel Greene. He came to Kentucky very soon after the close of the war, and resided at Harrodsburg. He was a clerk and also a surveyor. He was a member of the Convention of 1799, which framed the second Constitution of Kentucky. His descendants have filled stations of honor in the history of the State. The offices of Circuit and County Clerk at Harrodsburg have been held by members of the Allin family from the beginning of the Commonwealth until the present day. The descendants of Thomas Allin have always been leading citizens of Mercer County.

PEYTON SHORT.

Peyton Short was an elector under the first constitution, and was one of the first Senators of the State, representing Fayette County from 1792 to 1796. He was born in Surrey County, Virginia, in 1761, being twenty-five years of age at the organization of the club.

and it is said used the first carriage brought to Kentucky. His wife was a lady of great refinement and unusual accomplishments. After the death of General Walton she married General John Pope. A fine monument at Springfield, Washington County, now marks her resting-place and that of General Pope.

He was the son of William Short and Mary Skipwith, she being a daughter of Sir William Skipwith, of England. Peyton Short and his brother William were educated at William and Mary College. Peyton came to Kentucky in 1785 with General Charles Scott. His letters show that he came down the Ohio River in preference to coming through the wilderness. Landing at the Falls, he made his way to Lincoln County, and stopped at Danville. He wrote in great praise of the beauty and fertility of the country. In 1788 he married Maria Symmes, eldest daughter of John Cleves Symmes, whom he met two years before at the house of General James Wilkinson. The youngest daughter of John Cleves Symmes afterward, in 1795, married General William Henry Harrison. William Short, brother of Peyton, was Secretary of the Legation when Thomas Jefferson was Minister to France under the Congress of the Confederation. Afterward, in 1792, he was sent to Spain to negotiate concerning the navigation of the Mississippi. Subsequently he was appointed Minister to France by President Washington. Peyton Short lived continuously in Kentucky, owning large tracts of land in various sections. He died in 1825.

Children of Peyton Short and Maria Symmes leaving families:
First, John Cleves Short, who married, first, his cousin, the daugh-

ter of General William Henry Harrison and Ann Symmes, and, second, Mary Ann Mitchell. Their children reside in Hamilton County, Ohio. Second, Charles W. Short. Third, Ann Maria.

Peyton Short was married the second time to Mrs. Jane Churchill. A daughter of this marriage, Jane, married James Weir, senior, of Greenville, Kentucky. Another daughter, Elizabeth S., married James Breathitt, of Hopkinsville, Kentucky, and their son was Major John Breathitt, conspicuous as a gallant Union officer in the Third Kentucky Cavalry. Another daughter, Sarah C., married Edward H. Green, of Hopkinsville, Kentucky.

Charles W. Short, above mentioned, was a distinguished physician. He married Mary Henry Churchill. Their children leaving families were: First, Mary C., who married William Allen Richardson, of Louisville, and their daughter, Mary C., married John F. Henry, of Louisville. Second, Doctor William Short married Catherine Matilda Strader, and their children reside in Louisville. Third, Sarah E. married Doctor Tobias Richardson, of New Orleans. Fourth, Lucy R. married Honorable Joseph B. Kinkead, of Louisville; their children reside in Louisville.

Ann Maria, above mentioned, married the celebrated Doctor Benjamin Dudley, of Lexington, Kentucky.

WILLIAM KENNEDY.

William Kennedy was a member of the Convention of August, 1785, and also a member of the Convention of 1787. In the latter the five members from Mercer County were all members of The Political Club: Samuel McDowell, Harry Innes, George Muter, William Kennedy, James Speed. In 1792 he was one of the electors

from Mercer County under the first constitution. Four of the eight electors from that county had been members of the club: Christopher Greenup, Harry Innes, Samuel McDowell, William Kennedy. As has been stated in the sketch of Christopher Greenup, William Kennedy is named upon Filson's map of Kentucky as one of the six pioneers to whom Filson expressed his gratitude: Daniel Boone, Levi Todd, James Harrod, Christopher Greenup, John Cowan, and William Kennedy. Filson says his map had received the approbation of these men, whom he "esteems the best qualified to judge of its merits." William Kennedy came to Kentucky at a very early day, being with a company at Georgetown in 1776, but from the fact that he was afterward called General William Kennedy it is presumable he returned and bore his part in the Revolutionary War.

Evidence of his enterprise is found among the "old papers," where the club papers were found, in the plan of a town which he laid out on Green River and called Kennedysville. At what point on the river the town was, the plat does not show.

The descendants of General William Kennedy are numerous and reside in the central part of the State, but the author has not been able to learn definitely about them.

WILLIAM McCLUNG.

William McClung, known as Judge McClung, was a native of Virginia and son of John McClung and Elizabeth Alexander. He was a member of the early conventions, and afterward a member of the State Senate from Nelson County. He was twice appointed on the bench: first, he was appointed by President Adams one of the sixteen Circuit Judges provided for by an act of Congress, about the close of that administration. The act was repealed, which ended this appointment, but subsequently he was appointed Circuit Judge by Governor Christopher Greenup.

In 1793 he married Miss Susan Marshall, who was a sister of Chief Justice John Marshall. Their son, John A. McClung, born in 1804, was educated for the bar and became a successful practitioner. He subsequently became one of the most eloquent ministers of the State of Kentucky. He was the author of "McClung's Sketches of Western Adventure," which was first published at Maysville, Kentucky, in 1832, and afterward passed through several editions.

This is one of the most readable books upon the subject of western adventure, containing excellent sketches of Boone, Kenton, Logan, and others. Collins in his History of Kentucky makes liberal excerpts from it. The "Outline History" in Collins' valuable work was written by John A. McClung. He was the author also of a romance entitled "Camden." John A. McClung lost his life by drowning while bathing in Niagara River above the Falls.

Another son of Judge William McClung was Colonel Alexander Keith McClung, of Mississippi. The mother of Judge William McClung, whose maiden name was Elizabeth Alexander, was the aunt of the distinguished Doctor Archibald Alexander, of Princeton Theological Seminary.

GABRIEL JONES JOHNSTON.

Gabriel Jones Johnston went from Virginia to Kentucky in the early days. He removed to Jefferson County from Danville, and in 1800 was a member of the State Legislature. He afterward lived in Louisville, where he was a practicing lawyer until his death in 1815.

He bore the name of one of the most eminent men of his time—Gabriel Jones, who was a distinguished lawyer in Virginia, known as the “Valley Lawyer.” It is probable they were nearly connected.

His brother, Will Johnston, also lived in Louisville, being the first Clerk of the Jefferson County Court. The son of Will Johnston was Doctor James C. Johnston, a distinguished physician and accomplished gentleman whose descendants now live in Louisville.

The traditions of Gabriel Jones Johnston represent him as a very accomplished man, scholarly in his tastes, fond of anecdote, and a genial companion. His descendants were in Louisville until a little while before the Civil War, when they removed south.

JOSHUA BARBEE.

Joshua Barbee was the son of John Barbee, and was born in Virginia in 1761. John Barbee removed with his family from Culpepper County, Virginia, to Kentucky, and settled at a place called Stony Point, about three miles north of the site of Danville. The children of John Barbee were Thomas, John, Daniel, William, Joshua, and Elias. Of these, John was the father of Honorable John Barbee, who was Mayor of Louisville in 1855, and father of Mrs. General John B. Castleman, of Louisville; her sister was the wife of Bishop Gallagher, of New Orleans. A sister of John Barbee married Doctor Claiborne Pirtle, a brother of Chancellor Henry Pirtle; his son is Captain John B. Pirtle, of Louisville, who was a distinguished officer in the Confederate service. Elias, the youngest, removed from Danville to Green County, and was a number of times in the State Senate and House between the years 1800 and 1825. Several of the sons of John Barbee, including Joshua, served in the Revolutionary War. It was a wealthy family, owning very large tracts of the finest Bluegrass land. The brothers were all well educated, and Joshua throughout his life was a promoter of educational institutions. He was a trustee of Center College, and a

large contributor to it. He was a very elegant and courtly gentleman, and adhered to the old-style dress of ruffled shirt, knee breeches, silk stockings, and silver shoe-buckles. He was an officer of a military company raised in 1791 by Captain James Brown for service against hostile Indians. He also served in the State Legislature. He died October 8, 1839.

It will be seen from the minutes of the club that some of its meetings were held at the house of this member.

Joshua Barbee married Elizabeth Hobson. The children born were two, Thomas and Sarah. The latter married James Hopkins, who was a half-brother of Colonel John Speed Smith and Elizabeth Smith Fry, wife of Thomas Walker Fry. Thomas Barbee was the well-known and greatly-esteemed Colonel Thomas Barbee, of Danville. At that place he was born in 1806. There he resided until his death, aged eighty-three, in 1889. He married Nannie Fry, daughter of Thomas Walker Fry and granddaughter of Joshua Fry.

The children of Colonel Thomas Barbee were Fannie, who married Mr. Talbott; Joshua, a Presbyterian minister in Missouri; Lucy Gilmer, who was the first wife of the present Governor of Kentucky, John Young Brown; Sallie Hopkins, who married Doctor Best; Thomas F., now a lawyer in Iowa, who married Henrietta Buford, daughter of Charles Buford, of Rock Island, Illinois; Nannie and Alice, who now live in Danville.

JOHN AND JAMES OVERTON.

At a very early day four Overton brothers came to Kentucky from Virginia. They were natives of Louisa

County, Virginia. Clough Overton was killed at the battle of Blue Licks. Waller Overton settled in Fayette County. James and John Overton resided at Danville. They were sons of James Overton and grandsons of William Overton, who emigrated from England about 1670.

William, the emigrant, was a son of Colonel Overton, a distinguished soldier in the Parliamentary War. History first takes note of him in a letter of October 2, 1647, from Lieutenant-General Oliver Cromwell to Sir Thomas Fairfax, General of the Parliamentary forces, recommending that Colonel Overton, then commanding a regiment in the field, be appointed Governor of Hull, an important fortress and depot of supplies. The appointment was made, and Colonel Overton remained in command of Hull and its garrison until the breaking out of the second Parliamentary War, when he again took the field, commanding a brigade at Dunbar and Inverkeithing, in which latter "mercy," as Cromwell called his victories, he won flattering mention in one of Cromwell's pious letters to Speaker Lenthall, of the House of Commons.

Colonel Overton was, however, a Presbyterian and "friend of Milton," as Carlyle says, and was suspected of sympathy with his brother Covenanters in his quarrel with Cromwell and the Puritans.

After the conquest of Scotland he was sent for to Whitehall and admonished; and again in December, 1654, he was sent for and questioned about a reported conspiracy to depose General Monk and place him (Colonel Overton) at the head of the army then in Scotland. The end of this last "lecture" was a commitment to the Tower, where he probably died.

Colonel Overton's son William was born in 1638. He married Mary Waters, a young lady of Roman Catholic faith and considerable fortune, and these two, Presbyterian and Catholic, left England after the Restoration and settled in Virginia on a grant of five thousand acres in Hanover County, which they named Glen Cairn.

The following inscription on the tomb of one of their daughters is still legible: "Here lies the body of Temperance Harris, deceased the 19th of February, 1710."*

One of their grandsons, John Overton, was an officer in the Revolutionary Army and father of the late William Overton, of Green Springs, in Louisa County, Virginia, a country gentleman of wealth and social position, widely

* A descendant of Mrs. Temperance Harris is Judge W. Overton Harris, of the Louisville Bar, to whom I am indebted for this account of the Overton family.

known for the virtues and graces which belonged to that class.*

Four other grandsons were the John, James, Waller, and Clough who removed to Kentucky. Waller became a noted citizen of Fayette County, where his descendants still reside. His daughter married the celebrated lawyer, William T. Barry, and a daughter of this marriage became the wife of Colonel James Taylor, of Newport, Kentucky. It is an interesting fact that Waller Overton was on the jury with Daniel Boone, in 1780, which escheated the lands of John Connolly, where the city of Louisville now stands. George May was the escheator of the court at Lexington, and the jury found that Connolly of his own free will had joined with the British forces.

James and John Overton were both lawyers. While they lived at Danville they practiced in the courts in other parts of the State. James was sworn in as an attorney at Louisville, April 5, 1786. While both were marked men, John was destined to the greater success and distinction.

After practicing in Kentucky some years John Overton removed to Nashville, Tennessee, in 1789, where he

*In Wirt's *Life of Patrick Henry* is an account of a very interesting interview between Patrick Henry and Colonels Samuel and John Overton at the home of the latter.

entered upon a career as lawyer, judge, and man of affairs of constant and unbroken success. He served as Commissioner of the Revenue under a commission from General Washington, and afterward as Judge and Reporter of the Court of Appeals of Tennessee.

Shortly after his removal to Tennessee Andrew Jackson also removed there, and between the two there sprang up a friendship and close business connection which lasted until Judge Overton's death.

In 1794 Overton and Jackson as partners purchased the land at Chickasaw Bluff, then far beyond the confines of white settlements, and there in 1820 Overton founded and laid off the city of Memphis.

Judge Overton died April 12, 1833, sending with his last breath a message to his friend, Andrew Jackson, then President of the United States: "Write to the General and tell him I die as a hero should die."

James Overton remained in Kentucky, and at his death left the bulk of his estate to Center College.

Judge John Overton married Mary White, daughter of General James White, of the Revolutionary Army, and the founder of the city of Knoxville, Tennessee. One of their sons, John Overton, still survives and dispenses at the paternal homestead near Nashville, called "Travellers' Rest," a bountiful hospitality. A daughter of Judge Overton married Judge John M. Lea, and a granddaughter is the wife of Judge John M. Dickenson.

A son of James Overton accompanied General Jackson as *aide-de-camp* to Florida, and remained there until Florida was admitted into the Union, when he was appointed United States District Attorney for that State.

BAKER EWING.

A strong family bearing the Ewing name removed to the West from Virginia at an early day. Baker Ewing was in Danville in 1785, and about the same time General Robert E. Ewing located in Tennessee. From 1793 to 1800 Charles Ewing represented Washington County in the Kentucky Legislature. Reuben Ewing and Young Ewing were members of the second Constitutional Convention. Reverend Fines Ewing was a noted Presbyterian minister in 1810. Baker Ewing, who was a member of The Political Club, was sent to the Virginia Legislature as the member from Lincoln County, Kentucky, in 1778. He was further honored in 1792 by appointment as Register of the Land Office, being the first incumbent of that office. In 1802 he represented Franklin County in the Kentucky Legislature. The Ewing family was one of great prominence in Russellville. Ephraim M. Ewing, a son of General Robert E. Ewing, located there, and was a leading lawyer. From 1835 to 1846 he was Judge of the Court of Appeals. His son, Presley Ewing, a brilliant young

man, died before he attained his prime, but not until he had been sent as a representative to the National Congress. Doctor U. E. Ewing removed from Russellville to Louisville, where for many years he was a distinguished physician and most useful citizen. A son of Doctor Ewing bore the name Baker Ewing. The daughters of Doctor Ewing all married distinguished men.

General Thomas Ewing, of Ohio, was born in Virginia in 1789, and no doubt belonged to the same family with those who came to Kentucky. Many of the most prominent men in the country are connected by marriage or blood with the Ewing family. Among them may be named Honorable Adlai Ewing Stevenson, Vice-President of the United States; Honorable James S. Ewing, Minister to Belgium; Honorable Andrew Ewing and Edwin H. Ewing, of Tennessee, the former being the father of Mrs. Henry Watterson, of Louisville. General W. T. Sherman married a daughter of General Thomas Ewing, of Ohio.

BENJAMIN SEBASTIAN.

Benjamin Sebastian was educated for the ministry, and went to England for "orders" on account of the refusal to send bishops to this country. He officiated for a time as an Episcopal minister, but turned his

attention to law. His talents were recognized, and he became a Judge of the Court of Appeals. Unfortunately his integrity did not equal his ability. It was discovered that, while on the bench, he was receiving a regular pension from the Spanish Government in consideration of services to that power. His downfall is a well-known fact in Kentucky history. He was elected a member of the club near the close of its existence, and only attended one meeting.

JOHN BELLI.

John Belli was one of the originators of The Political Club. While but little can now be told concerning him, it is certainly very significant as to his character and standing that he was associated with Samuel McDowell, Harry Innes, Thomas Todd, Robert Craddock, John Brown, and Christopher Greenup in organizing the club. John Belli had been a lieutenant in the Revolutionary Army, and among the manuscript documents in the possession of Colonel R. T. Durrett the fact is shown that he was a paymaster of United States troops. A letter dated 1796, written by him, has been found by Colonel Durrett, which will here be given entire. It shows that he was at the time associated in some way with General Wilkinson. It has never been published,

and has an interest in connection with that remarkable man. There seems to be no record of his subsequent movements:

"CINCINNATI, June 7, 1796.

"DEAR GENERAL: To my great surprise I received last night a most extraordinary letter from Mr. Charles Wilkins, dated 1st inst. He says: 'Mr. Hollingsworth has just informed me that you deny in your letters to General Wilkinson being an agent but a partner in the contract, and assert that I am the agent and accountable to the contractors for the whole business in this department.'

"That I have informed you, Sir, confidentially, that Mr. Wilkins was the acting agent is a fact. It was his brother's wish that he should do the business in Kentucky, but, Sir, I never mentioned to you that he was responsible for his transactions. It is foreign, and I don't think I ever wrote you any thing of the kind, therefore I am certain you did not say so. But, Sir, supposing for a moment I had actually written you so, would it be kind—is it common—among friends to show confidential letters to others? Have I not numbers of yours in my possession, and which, by being shown to certain characters, would cause trouble? Recollect how often you have made me your *confidante*, and have I ever betrayed you? Recollect, a few days before you left here, what you told me about a certain young man, with whom it seems you now are intimate; would it have been clever in me to mention what you then told me? Have I not been your friend on every occasion in your absence? Perhaps I don't frequent your table as often as some folks do, but does that show any ill-will? Was it because I did not immediately go to camp when you wrote to me? and which, if I had, I would probably have lost a boat-load of flour, which sank about that time at Columbia, and which I saved by great exertions. My God! is it possible that General Wilkinson would give up confidential letters? In short it is impossible. How many times have I heard you make

observations condemning Colonel Muter for publishing a certain letter in Kentucky of Mr. Brown? In short I can't believe that you have done any such thing. You must recollect a variety of things you told me of when I came down last fall, but further it did not go, nor never shall. You will therefore be good enough to let me know how this matter stands.

"I have written to Mr. Wilkins that I did not inform you that *he* was the principal agent, but, respecting his responsibility, I observed to him I never wrote to you a word, neither that he was not one of the partners, which he certainly is.

"I have some letters from members in the House, dated 7th and 20th ult., and one from our friend, Mr. Brown, of the 20th. He says the military establishment is now under consideration of Congress. A reduction to about three thousand is agreed upon by both houses: that the House of Representatives say to be commanded by a Brigadier; the Senate say by a Major-General and Brigadier. The dispute is still depending, and how it will be determined is as yet uncertain. Mr. Wilkins has purchased, I believe, a large drove of beeves, which he tells me will come forward in a few days. Every thing also to close the contract has been here for some time. My friend has not yet forwarded to me the 40,000 account of warrants, but I still expect them. Mr. Wilkins and A. Scott sent me about 6,000 account to lay for them immediately. In hopes that I shall hear from you shortly, I remain, Dear General, yours,

"JOHN BELLI.

"GENERAL WILKINSON."

PETER TARDEVEAU.

Peter Tardeveau was an intelligent Frenchman who came to America from Bordeaux. He and another Frenchman, Mr. Honore, sought fortune in the western

country, and Tardeveau resided for a time at Danville, engaged in merchandising. He had carried on trade from Bordeaux to the Colonies during the Revolutionary War, and was regarded as extremely wealthy.

Among the papers of The Political Club are two letters from him bearing date Danville, February 7, 1787. One is addressed to Harry Innes and incloses the other, which is addressed to the President of the Club. They show that he had in some way given offense to two members at a club meeting, and had been censured for it. His letter to the President of the Club announces his withdrawal. He said his words had been interpreted contrary to the ideas that gave them rise, but he thought it best to "withdraw from a society where I got instruction and amusement happily mingled together." He expresses his thanks to the members of the club by whose favorable acquiescence he was admitted, and for the honor done him as a member. On a very small slip of paper is found the following resolution, which is also found duly copied in the minutes:

"FEBRUARY 10, 1787.

"Resolved, that the secession of Mr. Tardeveau as a member of this club be received, and that the letters to the President and Mr. Innes on this subject, which have been read, be filed with the Secretary."

Tardeveau removed from Kentucky to Louisiana, but at what date is not known.*

ROBERT CRADDOCK.

Robert Craddock removed from Danville to the southern part of Kentucky and resided at Bowling Green. He acquired much property and owned many slaves. He died in 1837 in Bowling Green. By his will he emancipated all his slaves and made liberal provision for them both in money and land. He was the owner of lands in Logan County, including part of the town of Russellville. This and other property he devised in trust for the benefit of schools. He was unmarried.

JAMES NOURSE.

James Nourse came to Kentucky from Virginia and settled in Lincoln County. He resided at Danville and Harrodsburg, and subsequently removed to Bardstown. He was a lawyer, and was also interested in merchan-

* "In 1782-83 Messrs. Tardeveau and Honore left Redstone, Old Fort (now Brownsville, Pennsylvania), in the commencement of a trade to New Orleans, which they transferred to Louisville, and continued to the Spanish and French settlements of the Mississippi." (Collins' Kentucky, Vol. 2, page 358.) In the document transmitted by Lord Dorchester to Lord Sydney in England (see "Political Beginnings," page 254,) it is said: "Lacassang & Co., at Louisville, and Tardeveaus, at Danville, are mercantile houses of note in the interest of

dising. He was elected a member of the club February 7, 1789. His son, Charles Nourse, was an honored citizen of Bardstown, where he spent a long life of rare usefulness and uprightness.

Charles Nourse married Miss Logan, a sister of Chancellor Caleb Logan. One of his sons, James D. Nourse, married Miss Wickliffe, a daughter of Honorable Nat. Wickliffe, of Bardstown. He was an accomplished scholar, and author of an excellent historical work, entitled "The Past and its Legacies." Another son was Charles E. Nourse, who married a daughter of Judge Brown, of Bardstown. Another son is Reverend Wallace Logan Nourse, a minister of the Presbyterian Church in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. A daughter became the wife of Honorable Joseph Wilson, a prominent lawyer of Louisville. Other sons of Charles Nourse are Robert C., Virgil McKnight, and Joseph W. The latter is Superintendent of Public Schools in Spencer County, Indiana.

MAJOR DAVID WALKER.

David Walker was an officer in the Revolutionary Army, serving from the beginning until the close of the war with a Virginia Regiment. He was severely wounded at Savannah. Removing from Virginia to

France. The latter carried on a trade from Bordeaux to the States during the war, and are supposed once to have been prisoners at Halifax." It is an interesting fact that the family of Mr. Honore, with whom Tardevean was associated in business, afterward became prominent in business circles in Louisville. In 1818 Messrs. Honore and Barbaroux were owners of one of the earliest steamboats on the Ohio. Among his descendants are Mrs. Frederick D. Grant and Mrs. Potter Palmer.

Kentucky, he settled at Danville. He afterward removed from Danville to Fayette County, and represented that county in the legislature from 1793 to 1796. In the year 1800 he went to Logan County. From 1817 to 1820 he was in Congress, being the successful competitor for that position against the celebrated Matthew Lyon. He died while a member of Congress. His dying request was that no public notice should be taken of his death by Congress. This request was complied with, except that his colleague, Mr. Quarles, announced his decease in a feeling speech, which was followed by appropriate remarks by the Speaker of the House, Henry Clay, and by John Randolph, of Virginia. The son of Major David Walker, James V. Walker, represented Logan County in the Kentucky Legislature in 1810.

The records of the club show that these men were associated together for a practical and important purpose. The members were recognized leaders in the public affairs of the new western community. They were looked to for counsel upon the necessary duties of the hour in the formative period in Kentucky when population was rapidly increasing and local government had to be provided. They felt the pressure of responsibility, and the work of the society was directed to the solution of those

problems which had to be determined in laying the foundations of civic and social order. It was a period of constitution-making. It was the time when the Federal Convention sat at Philadelphia to frame the Constitution of the United States. The patient study the club members gave to that great instrument when it was first promulgated, as will be seen in these pages, is a monument to their zeal for the public welfare; and the fruits of their labors were inevitably great, as the members coming in contact with their fellow-citizens were able to disseminate an amount of political knowledge productive of enlightenment and a healthy public sentiment.

The influence of the members of the club in the public assemblies of the day was strong. Seven of these members were in the first convention of 1785, the whole number being twenty-eight. In the second convention of 1785, of the twenty-six members seven belonged to The Political Club. Ten were in the Convention of 1787, a body of thirty-eight members. As has been stated, some were in each convention, including the one of 1792, which framed the first constitution, and also the one of 1799, which framed the second constitution.

Full and complete biographies of some of the members would present a history of Kentucky from the

beginning of its settlement past the first quarter of the ensuing century. They would show participation in all the events of importance for fifty years; through the contests with the Indians; through the separation struggle and the establishment of the State; through the eight years under the first constitution; through all the excitements of the Spanish conspiracy led by Wilkinson; through the conspiracy of Aaron Burr; through the fierce resentment which flamed up at British impressment of American seamen, which led to the War of 1812; through that war, in which seven thousand Kentuckians bore an honorable part, from the battle of Tippecanoe to the battle of New Orleans; through the old court and new court controversy, and through the presidencies of Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Jackson.

The changes in the material conditions of the country, of which they were eye-witnesses, were greater than at any other period. They saw the primeval forest give way to cultivated farms, towns, and cities. They saw the blazed ways through the woods become turnpike roads. They saw the introduction of steam navigation on the rivers and the beginning of railroad travel. They saw the western country fill up with inhabitants, and the addition of fourteen new States to the original thirteen.

The lives of men who were actors through a period so eventful are worthy of study. The limits of this work do not admit of more extended mention than in the brief sketches given, but a volume of biography would fail to do justice to the public services and personal worth of many of the members of The Political Club.

ORGANIZATION.

The minutes of the first and second meetings show the time and place The Political Club began its existence, and that it was organized under a written constitution and rules of order. These minutes are full of interest. On the 27th day of December, 1786, there were assembled at the house of Judge Samuel McDowell six other men, Judge Harry Innes, Thomas Todd, John Brown, Christopher Greenup, John Belli, and Robert Craddock. The position and character of the five first named are historic. The other two are less known, but the fact that they were so associated with the others is evidence that they were leading men, as in fact they were. It is very suggestive that these persons, engaged in the active duties of life and under the circumstances surrounding them, conceived the idea of such a society. Those whom they invited to join with them were men

like themselves, the thoughtful, influential citizens of the Danville community. On that evening they selected a subject for discussion at the next meeting.

At the second meeting, which was at the house of Thomas Barbee one week after the first, an organization was made under a written constitution and rules of order, and the subject selected at the preceding meeting was discussed. The following are the minutes of these meetings:

DANVILLE, WEDNESDAY, THE 27th DAY OF DECEMBER, 1786.

Present at the house of Samuel McDowell: Harry Innes, John Brown, Thomas Todd, Robert Craddock, Christopher Greenup, and John Belli.

Resolved, that the persons now present do form themselves into a society to be hereafter distinguished and known by the style and title of "The Political Club," to be governed by such laws and regulations as shall be hereafter agreed on.

Resolved, that the following gentlemen be invited to become members of the club, viz: George Muter, Peyton Short, Stephen Ormsby, William McDowell, Thomas Speed, Gabriel Jones Johnson, Peter Tardeveau, Thomas Allin, James Overton.

Resolved, that Harry Innes, John Brown, Christopher Greenup, and John Belli be a committee to form a constitution for the regular government of the club, and also a set of rules and regulations for proceedings therein, and report the same to the next meeting.

Resolved, that the next meeting of the club be held at the house of Thomas Barbee, in this town, on Saturday evening next, at six o'clock, or at such other place therein as the committee for forming a constitution shall appoint and direct.

The subject to be debated on Saturday evening next is "Whether the immediate navigation of the Mississippi River will contribute to the interest of this District or not?"

Adjourned until Saturday evening, December the 30th, 1786.

At a meeting of The Political Club at the house of Thomas Barbee, on Saturday evening, the 30th day of December, 1786, present eleven members. Resolved, that Mr. Thomas Speed be appointed Secretary to this club, pursuant to the constitution. Resolved, that Harry Innes, Esq., be appointed President for this evening, who took the chair accordingly.

Mr. Brown, from the committee appointed to draw up the form of a constitution and rules for the regular proceedings of the club, presented, according to order, a constitution or form of government, which he read in his place and then delivered the same in at the clerk's table, where the same was read twice and debated by paragraphs, and several amendments made.

THE CONSTITUTION.

A constitution or form of government agreed on by the members of The Political Club, as follows:

1. A meeting of the club shall be held on every Saturday evening, at such place as shall from time to time be agreed upon, but for good cause shown a majority may appoint any other day at a longer or shorter period. On the appearance of six members they shall proceed to choose a president for that evening only, also such other officers whose places may be vacant.

2. A secretary and treasurer shall be appointed, who shall respectively continue in office during good behavior, and upon the death, resignation, removal, or other disability of either, such vacancy to be supplied in such manner as the clerk may direct. They are to be members of the club and have the same privileges

of debate and giving their vote on any subject as any other member.

3. The Secretary shall keep exact minutes of the proceedings of the club in a book to be provided for that purpose, and to preserve all papers that may be brought in and ordered to be filed, and divulge no secret that may be enjoined.

4. Each member shall, from time to time, advance such sums of money as shall be adjudged necessary for the expenses and other disbursements of the club to the Treasurer, who shall receive the same, and also the moneys arising from fines, and, with the assistance of the Secretary, shall settle all accounts against the club.

5. On the non-attendance of any member from the club at any meeting, he shall be fined in such a sum as from time to time shall be agreed on by a majority of the club, unless at a future meeting it shall be determined that he had a reasonable excuse for his absence.

6. When any member has subjected himself to a fine, he is not to be re-admitted until he pays the same or is excused.

7. The club shall have power to inquire into any irregularity of its members, and if it shall appear on inquiry that any member has behaved himself beneath the character of a gentleman, or shall misbehave at any meeting, such member shall be expelled by order of a majority then present, or suffer such other punishment as the club may direct.

8. The Treasurer shall, once in every month, lay before the club an account of all moneys by him received, and his disbursements thereof, for examination.

9. No new members shall be admitted without the unanimous consent of all the members of the club, to be taken by ballot either given by him or his proxy. Nor shall such election be made until three club nights have elapsed between the time the intended member's name shall be proposed and the day of

election, nor shall strangers be admitted into the room on any pretense whatsoever.

10. No member shall absent himself from the club-room, after taking his seat therein, for the space of fifteen minutes, until the hour of adjournment, without first obtaining a permission from a majority of the members then present.

11. The President, Secretary, and Treasurer, and all other appointments, except the appointment of new members, shall be chosen by a majority of the members then present, and when there is an opposition the same shall be chosen by ballot.

12. At the meeting of every club a subject shall be agreed on, and entered on the minutes, to be debated at the next meeting, and two members shall be appointed by rotation to introduce the same, who shall take opposite sides by lot, if not otherwise agreed on; but any other member may also debate thereon after the same shall be so introduced, and the determination shall be entered on the minutes.

13. Power shall be reserved for the club to make such further reform in this constitution as may appear to be reasonable, provided that such alteration shall be approved by at least eight members then present.

Resolved, N. C. D., that the said constitution or form of government be received, held, and deemed as the constitution and form of government for the club, and that the same be subscribed by the members now present, and also by such others as may be admitted members of this club.

Resolved, that Mr. Thomas Allin be appointed Treasurer, pursuant to the constitution.

Mr. Brown, from the committee appointed to draw up the form of a constitution and rules for the regular proceedings of the club, reported, according to order, certain rules and orders, which he

read in his place and then delivered the same in at the clerk's table, where the same were again twice read and amended, as follows:

THE RULES.

Rules and orders adopted by The Political Club:

That no member absent himself from the service of the club unless he have leave or be sick and unable to attend.

That each member attend punctually at the house appointed for meeting, and, unless for good cause shown, on failing to attend within half an hour thereafter, he shall be subject to a fine of one shilling and sixpence, or on failing to attend at any meeting he shall be subject to a fine of three shillings; or if any member shall, without leave, absent himself from the club before the hour of eleven o'clock he shall be subject to a fine of one shilling and sixpence.

That at each meeting of the club, before they proceed to any business, the Secretary do read over the orders for taking any matters into consideration at that meeting.

That when any member is about to speak in debate, or to deliver any matter to the club, he shall arise from his seat, and without advancement from thence, except to a table appointed for that purpose, shall, with due respect, address himself to Mr. President, confining himself strictly to the point in debate, and avoiding all indecent and disrespectful language.

That when any member shall be speaking in address to the President no member shall pass between the person speaking and the chair, nor otherwise interrupt him unless by requesting the President to call to order, which any member may do when he shall think necessary, nor shall any member name another in debate.

That no member speak more than twice in the same debate without leave of the club.

That while the President is putting any question no member shall entertain private discourse, stand up, walk into, out of, or across the room, or read any private book.

That all motions, except such as are of a general nature, shall be reduced to writing before the question be put thereon, and the member who makes a motion may withdraw it before a division is given by the club.

That no motion shall be admitted to consideration which is not seconded; but, when a motion is thus brought regularly before the club, the debate and division thereof shall not be interrupted by the admission of any other motion, except it be for the previous question, or for amending or postponing the original motion.

That the sense of the club shall be taken by the members saying yea and nay, and by standing up or going forth, if occasion requires, and the ayes and noes shall be taken if required by any two members, and the members shall possess a right to enter protest.

Resolved, N. C. D., that the said rules and orders be adopted and observed by the club in all their proceedings.

Messrs. William Kennedy, Benj. Grayson, and Maurice Nagle were nominated to this club in order to be admitted members of this club. Ordered that their names do lie on the table, pursuant to the constitution.

The question proposed on Wednesday last, as follows: "Whether the immediate navigation of the Mississippi River will contribute to the interest of this District or not?" was read, and, after solemn debate,

Resolved, that the immediate navigation of the Mississippi River will not contribute to the interest of the District.

The question proposed to be debated next meeting shall be, "Whether it will be to the advantage of this District immediately to separate from the government of Virginia and become an inde-

pendent State or not?" and that Mr. Innes and Mr. Brown do introduce the same.

Resolved, that each member present pay into the hands of the Treasurer the sum of six shillings, to defray the expenses of the club.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

The seriousness and business-like gravity of the club, and the practical character of the whole movement, are seen in the first questions taken up for consideration. They were the all-absorbing topics of the day. At no time in the subsequent history of Kentucky have the people been more profoundly stirred than they were by the questions of 1786. There was urgent need for calm and dispassionate interchange of thought among the recognized leaders of the people. The benefit of the club in affording opportunity for consultation among these leaders can not be overestimated. The conclusions reached, when closely scrutinized in the light of history, disclose intelligent thinking and sound judgment.

The first question discussed by the club was one of pressing importance to the people of Kentucky: "Whether the immediate navigation of the Mississippi River will contribute to the interest of this District or not?"

After "solemn" debate the club decided this question in the negative. A decision in the affirmative would seem more natural. Why they decided as they did is a

puzzle difficult of satisfactory solution. The minutes do not disclose any reasons or arguments, and we are left to find them, if we can, from the situation of affairs with reference to the Mississippi River at that time. The navigation of this stream had been forbidden by Spain, which power then controlled its lower waters. The only hope for Kentucky to have any market for supplies produced was the river. If flat-boats could carry what the people had to sell down the Ohio and the Mississippi to the sea there was a prospect for trade and wealth, but if not there was none whatever. A singular statement is found in McMaster's History, Volume I, page 149. Speaking of the condition of Kentucky in 1784, he says: "Wheat fields and corn fields and orchards began to spring up in every direction, and already the wagons that brought out merchandise from Philadelphia went back laden with grain."

If he had said the grain was transported by railway cars in 1784 he could not have made a greater mistake. At that time there was no wagon road to Kentucky. All luggage that came over the Wilderness Road was carried on pack animals. That which came down the river could not be carried back the same way. There was no way for produce to go east. Flat-boats could not be carried up stream, and wagons could not cross

the mountains. The river way, down to the sea, was absolutely essential to the future prosperity of Kentucky. It was the only outlet. Yet the question before the club was decided in the negative.

Perhaps the word "immediate" in the question affords an explanation. It might have been considered that there was no immediate necessity for descending the river, and that the people could for a while employ their time to the best advantage in clearing and building and fencing, thus laying the foundation for future rather than "immediate" convenience. But the history of that period does not make it certain that this explanation is correct. In the same year this debate was had, 1786, a proposition was submitted to the Congress of the States, by Mr. John Jay, which was reported to the people of Kentucky as a proposition to cede to Spain the control of the Mississippi for twenty-five or thirty years. They were greatly excited. The suggestion of being deprived of their only outlet was alarming. A convention was called to meet at Danville in May, 1787, to consider the subject. Much excitement in favor of the navigation of the Mississippi was expected. But the result of the meeting was as singular as the decision of the club. The historian, Marshall, says: "At the time and place recommended, they assembled, assumed the de-

liberative form, and, after conferring, adjourned without day." Butler says: "The convention quietly adjourned without any definite action on the subject;" "a circumstance," says he, "not a little remarkable, considering the subject and the temper of those who composed the meeting. Kentuckians have not often assembled together and dispersed so quietly; a fire of resolutions might at least have been expected." It is possible that the Kentuckians apprehended that the demand for immediate navigation would lead to war with the Spaniards, and they did not feel prepared for it.

Whatever it was that influenced both the club and the convention, the decision showed the conservative character of the members of the club, which also displayed itself on other occasions. There was, as we now know, an unnecessary excitement upon the subject. The times required the counsels of thoughtful men. Certain restless spirits were suggesting separation from the States and an alliance with Spain. The decision of the club indicates no sympathy with that movement, and, as the members were the principal men in the convention of May following, it is but reasonable to conclude that they counseled and effected a moderation of views in the convention, and calmed the general feeling of apprehension.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 1787.

Present, ten members. Resolved, that Christopher Greenup, Esq., be appointed President for this evening, who accordingly took the chair.

The question proposed on Saturday last, viz., "Whether an immediate separation of this District from the State of Virginia will tend to its benefit?" was read, and, after solemn debate, Resolved, as the opinion of this club, that an immediate separation of this District from the State of Virginia will tend to its benefit.

The question proposed to be debated next meeting is, "The propriety of separating this District from the State of Virginia upon the act entitled 'An Act concerning the erection of Kentucky into an independent State.'" Ordered that the club be adjourned.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 1787.

The habit of the club to discriminate clearly and intelligently is shown in the selection of subjects. The general question of separation having been discussed and decided affirmatively, the next question was the propriety of separating according to the terms of the Act of the Virginia Legislature. In the year 1785 the people of Kentucky had memorialized the Legislature of Virginia upon the subject, and in January, 1786, an act was passed providing for the erection of Kentucky into a State. The act contained many clauses and various provisions touching many subjects. Whether these provisions would be acceptable and advantageous was a

serious question to the people to be affected. It is easy to see that so important a measure demanded careful consideration. The minutes do not give any details of the discussion. They show that Honorable John Brown presided, and the question for debate was read and decided in the affirmative. It was five years after this discussion before Kentucky became a State. The delays were many and harassing, but the statesmen of Kentucky were firm in their loyalty, and patiently waited for the consummation of their wishes.

The minutes are as follows:

Resolved, that Mr. Thomas Allin be appointed Secretary *pro tempore*. Resolved, that John Brown be appointed President for this evening, who accordingly took the chair.

Resolved, that the constitution of this club be amended as follows, to wit: In page the 3d, line 2d, insert one in the room of three, and in line the 3d night in the room of nights.

The question proposed for this evening's debate, to wit, "The propriety of separating this District from the State of Virginia upon the act entitled 'An act concerning the erection of the District into an independent State,'" was read, and, after being solemnly debated,

Resolved, as the opinion of this club, that an immediate separation of this District from the State of Virginia would tend to its benefit upon the terms prescribed in the act.

Ordered that each member present do pay into the hands of the Treasurer the sum of six shillings, to defray the expenses of the club.

Resolved, that the Secretary, at half past six o'clock each club night, call over the roll and note down the member or members absent, who shall, on their first appearance in the club-room, render the cause of their absence to the club, and on failure thereof be subject to the fine in such case provided, and no excuse thereafter be received.

Messrs. Willis Green and John Reed, junior, were nominated to this club in order to become members thereof.

The subject to be debated at the next meeting shall be, "Whether representation by counties or by numbers is most eligible, and whether any other election is to be preferred," and that Mr. Johnston and Mr. Ormsby do introduce the same.

Ordered that the club be adjourned until the next meeting in course.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 1787.

Present, all the members. Resolved, that Mr. Tardeveau be appointed President for the evening. Resolved, that Mr. R. Craddock be excused from his fine incurred by his absence for two club nights.

The club not having time fully to investigate the subject of representation, Resolved, that it be postponed until the next club night. Resolved also, that the subject of election be postponed till the next club night. Resolved, that William Kennedy, Esq., be admitted a member of this club by unanimous consent. Resolved, that Mr. Benjamin Grayson be rejected as a member of this club, he not having a unanimous vote. Resolved, that Mr. Maurice Nagle be rejected, not having a unanimous vote. Mr. James Speed was nominated to become a member of this club.

Resolved, that Mr. Brown, Mr. Greenup, and Mr. Belli be appointed a committee to examine the accounts of the Treasurer and to make report the next club night.

Ordered that the club be adjourned until Saturday next.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 1787.

Present, Innes, Brown, Greenup, Belli, Craddock, Johnston, Ormsby, Allin, Todd, Speed, Tardeveau. Resolved, that Mr. Belli be appointed President for this evening.

The question for this evening's debate, to wit, "Whether representation by numbers or by counties is to be preferred," was read, and, after being debated, Resolved, that representation by numbers ought to be preferred. On motion of Mr. Craddock, seconded by Mr. Johnston, ordered that the ayes and noes on this question be taken and inserted in the journal. The names of those who voted in favor of representation by numbers are Innes, Greenup, Belli, Ormsby, Allin, Speed, Tardeveau. Those who favored representation by counties were Brown, Craddock, Johnston, Todd.

At that time representation in Virginia was by counties, without regard to population. The Kentucky convention of May, 1785, which petitioned the mother State for separation, called another convention to meet in the following August, and recommended that the delegates be elected on principles of equal representation, which meant by numbers rather than by counties. The historian, Butler, says: "This early and unanimous indication of the democratic or popular spirit in one of the earliest assemblies of Kentucky is a faithful key to her political complexion."

The club not having time to enter upon the discussion of the second subject for this evening's debate, to wit, "Whether annual or other elections are to be preferred," Resolved, that it be postponed

until the next meeting, and that Mr. Craddock and Mr. Allin do introduce the same.

The club, according to order, proceeded to ballot for those gentlemen who had been nominated to become members of this club, and had lain upon the table pursuant to constitution. The committee appointed to examine the ballots taken for the election of Mr. Willis Green reported that they found in favor of Mr. Green's admission nine ballots, and against it two. Resolved, therefore, that Mr. Green be rejected as a member of this club.*

The committee appointed to examine the ballots for the admission of Mr. John Reed, junior, reported that they found in favor of his election seven ballots, against it four. Resolved, that Mr. Reed be rejected as a member.

On motion made by Mr. Brown and seconded by Mr. Belli, Resolved, that the Secretary be excused from his part of the expenses of this club.

Resolved, that the committee appointed to examine the Treasurer's accounts do make report thereof at the next meeting.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Johnston be appointed President for this evening.

The question for this evening's discussion, to wit, "Whether annual or other elections are to be preferred," was read, and, after being debated, Resolved, that other than annual elections ought to be preferred.

The logical sequence shown in the selection of subjects for discussion is here illustrated. Having determined that representation should be by numbers, and

*Mr. Green was afterward elected at another meeting.

that other than annual elections were to be preferred, the next question in order was, "What period of election is most agreeable to the spirit of a free government? and that Mr. Todd and Mr. Speed introduce the same."

The intensely practical character of the club is not more apparent in the subjects discussed than in the spirit of independence displayed in the selection of members. Not only were well-known persons rejected, but those who were admitted were expected to show appreciation of the fact.

At this meeting it was Resolved, that it be a standing rule of the club that when any gentleman shall be elected a member thereof he shall attend within two club nights after his election, or on failure thereof forfeit his seat, unless the club be of the opinion that there was good cause for such absence.

Resolved, that a committee of three members be appointed to revise the constitution of this club and make report. Ordered that Mr. Innes, Mr. Greenup, and Mr. Allin be appointed a committee for the above purpose.

Whereas, George Muter, James Overton, Peyton Short, and William McDowell, Esqs., were heretofore invited to become members of this club, and having declined to attend, Resolved, therefore, that they be not admitted as members unless they be admitted in the manner prescribed by the constitution.* Resolved, that the balloting for Mr. James Speed be postponed until the next meeting of the club. Ordered that the report of the committee appointed

*They were all subsequently admitted to membership in the regular way.

to examine the Treasurer's accounts be postponed until the next club night.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Craddock be appointed President for this evening. Resolved, that the subject for this evening's discussion, to wit, "What period of election is most agreeable to a spirit of free government?" be postponed until the next meeting of the club.

No reason is assigned for the postponement, but as the minutes show the presence of only six members it may be inferred that the night was inclement.

At this meeting Mr. Tardeveau sent in his resignation, and the following resolution was passed:

"Resolved, that the secession of Mr. Tardeveau as a member of this club be received, and that his letter to the President and Mr. Innes on this subject, which have been read, be filed with the Secretary."

Resolved, that the balloting for Mr. James Speed be postponed until the next club night.

Mr. Kennedy having represented to the club that his non-attendance since his election hath been on account of an indisposition, which still continues,

Resolved, that the reasons assigned by Mr. Kennedy for not having attended the club since his election are satisfactory.

Ordered that the report of the committee for examining the Treasurer's accounts be postponed until the next meeting.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Thomas Allin be appointed President for this evening. Resolved, that the reasons given for the absence of Mr. Brown, Mr. Belli, and Mr. Greenup are satisfactory, and that the fines by such absence incurred be remitted.

The question for this evening's discussion, to wit, "What period of election is most agreeable to the spirit of a free government?" was read, and, after being debated, Resolved, that it is the opinion of this club that biennial elections are most agreeable to the spirit of a free government.

Resolved, that following be the question for the discussion of Saturday evening next: "Is the exclusive right of the Indian tribes to the extent of territory claimed by them founded on the laws of nature and of nations, and can they consistent with said laws be divested of such right without their consent?" Mr. Innes and Mr. Brown to introduce the same.

Resolved, that the Treasurer's accounts do pass.

George Muter, Esq., was nominated by Mr. Belli to be admitted as a member of this club.

Ordered that the committee appointed to revise the constitution do make report next Saturday.

The following most important and significant resolution was adopted at this meeting:

"Resolved, that a committee be appointed to prepare a Bill of Rights and Constitution or form of government which they shall think agreeable to and convenient with the local situation of this District, and make report, and that Mr. Innes, Mr. Brown, Mr. Greenup, Mr. Belli, Mr. Craddock, and Mr. Todd be a committee for the same."

The minutes of the club being incomplete, no report of this committee appears. Its appointment, however, to perform this duty is an impressive testimonial to the earnestness of these men in the arduous work they voluntarily took upon themselves, and as the club was largely represented in the first constitutional convention of the State in 1792, it is fairly presumable that the work of this committee was carried into that convention and into the first constitution.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Todd be appointed President for this evening.

Ordered that the subject appointed for this evening's debate be postponed until the next meeting of the club.

The committee appointed to examine the ballot for the admission of Mr. James Speed report that they find he is unanimously elected a member.

Ordered that a committee be appointed to revise the constitution, and that Mr. Innes, Mr. Greenup, Mr. Allin, Mr. Belli, and Mr. Brown be a committee for the same.

Ordered that each member pay into the hands of the Treasurer the sum of six shillings.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 1787.

Present, Mr. Brown, Mr. Greenup, Mr. Belli, Mr. Craddock, Mr. Allin, Mr. Todd, Mr. Thomas Speed, Mr. Kennedy, and Mr. James Speed. Resolved, that Mr. Craddock be appointed President for this evening. Resolved, that the reasons given by Mr. Innes for his

absence on Saturday evening last are sufficient, and that he be admitted to his seat without a fine. Resolved, that the reasons given for Mr. Kennedy's absence since his election as a member of this club are satisfactory, and that he be admitted to his seat upon his signing the constitution. Whereupon the constitution was read, and Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Speed, who was also elected a member, signed the constitution and took their seats.

The question for this evening's debate, to wit, "Is the exclusive right of the Indian tribes to the extent of territory claimed by them founded in the laws of nature and nations, and can they consistently with said laws be divested of such right without their consent?" The discussion was opened by Messrs. Innes and Brown. After debate it was "Resolved, that the Indian tribes have an exclusive right to the territory claimed by them by virtue of the law of nature and nations; also, Resolved, that the Indian tribes can not, consistent with the laws of nature and nations, be deprived without their own consent of the exclusive right to the territory claimed by them."

The minutes disclose nothing bearing on this discussion. The decision certainly shows extraordinary moderation, calmness, and impartiality. It shows that these men had laid aside all revengeful feelings and approached the subject with a spirit of the utmost fairness. Their companion, Walker Daniel, who laid out the town where their meetings were held, had been killed by the Indians. Every member of the club was familiar with Indian atrocities and knew how the red men had murdered men, women, and children throughout the settlements, yet they so divested themselves of

resentment as to deliberately resolve that the Indian had rights the white man was bound to respect.*

Mr. Innes, from the committee appointed to revise the constitution, reported that they had come to a resolution thereon, which was read and agreed to, as follows:

Resolved, that no member shall be admitted without the consent of two thirds of all the members of the club, and this consent to be taken by ballot given in person or by proxy; nor shall such election be made until one club night hath elapsed between the time the intended member's name shall be proposed and the day of election.

The committee appointed to examine the ballots taken for the election of George Muter reported that he was unanimously elected a member.

Messrs. Willis Green and John Reed, junior, were again nominated in order to become members of this club.

Resolved, that the following be the subject of discussion for the next meeting of the club: "Has a member of any government

* Among the misapprehensions regarding the Indians is that they owned the country. They were not sufficiently numerous to own in any real sense of the word so extensive a territory as this country is. According to the best authorities the total number of Indians never exceeded three hundred thousand. According to Bancroft, at the time the Europeans came to America there were not more than one hundred and eighty thousand Indians all told east of the Mississippi River. Professor Seelye, in his introduction to Helen Hunt Jackson's "Century of Dishonor," says: "The present number of Indians in the United States does not exceed three hundred thousand, but it is possibly as large now as when the Europeans began the settlement of the North American Continent."

The small State of Vermont has a population of over three hundred and fifty thousand. This fact shows how little real ownership that number of people could have of the entire United States. To parcel out the whole

a right to expatriate himself without leave?" and that Mr. Greenup and Mr. Belli do introduce the same.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Kennedy be appointed President for this evening.

Mr. Muter, who had been elected a member of this club, appeared in order to take his seat, whereupon the constitution being read Mr. Muter signed the same and took his seat.

Resolved, that the subject for this evening's debate be postponed until the next meeting of the club.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Speed, senior, be appointed President for this evening.

The question appointed for this evening's debate, to wit, "Has a member of any government a right to expatriate himself without

country to three hundred thousand people gives ten square miles of land to each one. The State of Kentucky was not occupied at all by Indians. Bancroft says: "The Five Nations could not have varied much from ten thousand, and their warriors strolled as conquerors from Hudson Bay to Carolina, from the Kennebec to the Tennessee." While not allowed to own a continent to the exclusion of the white race, they have been treated as though they had some ownership. Immense tracts of land have been accorded to them, and the government has given them provisions, money, and clothing continuously. When the slaves were emancipated, four million human beings were left to care for themselves as best they could, without land or property of any kind whatever. The Indians have been treated generously, and instead of dying out, as many sentimental writers have deplored, there are as many now as ever, if not more.

leave?" was read, and, after being debated, Resolved, that any member of any government has a natural and inalienable right to expatriate himself without leave.

Mr. Belli and Mr. Greenup opened the debate.

The practical importance of this question is not as apparent now as it was a century or even less than a century ago. The War of 1812 grew out of the assertion on the part of Great Britain of the right to her subjects everywhere, even upon American ships. It is only necessary to open Blackstone's Commentaries, published twenty years before the organization of The Political Club, and from that day to this a synonym of the law itself, to see why, in 1787, there should be a solemn debate upon the question of the right of expatriation. Blackstone taught that allegiance to one's native country could not be thrown off by any thing the subject could do; that every natural born British subject remained a British subject at all times and places, unless Parliament by an act released him from his allegiance.* Such absurd teaching naturally led to the

*Blackstone says: "Natural allegiance is such as is due from all men born within the King's dominion. For immediately upon their birth they are under the King's protection; at a time, too, when (during their infancy) they are incapable of protecting themselves. Natural allegiance is therefore a debt of gratitude which can not be forfeited, canceled, or altered by any change of time, place, or circumstance, nor by any thing but the united concurrence of the legislature. An Englishman who removes to France or

assertion of the right of searching vessels and seizure of real or supposed British subjects even on American ships in American waters. But the better doctrine asserted in the backwoods of Kentucky began to prevail after the War of 1812.

Resolved, that Mr. Willis Green be admitted a member of this club, he having a unanimous vote.

The committee appointed to examine the ballots taken for the admission of Mr. John Reed, junior, report that they find in favor of his election — votes, and against it —. Resolved, that he be not admitted a member of this club.*

Messrs. Humphrey Marshall and Joshua Barbee were nominated to become members of this club.

Resolved, that the following be the subject for discussion for next Saturday evening, to wit, "In a free government ought there to be any other qualification required to entitle a member thereof to a right of suffrage than that of freedom?" and that Mr. Craddock and Mr. Johnston do introduce the same.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

to China owes the same allegiance to the King of England there as at home, and twenty years hence as well as now, for it is a principle of universal law that the natural-born subject of one prince can not by any act of his own, no, not by swearing allegiance to another, put off or discharge his natural allegiance to the former, for this allegiance was intrinsic and primitive, and antecedent to the other, and can not be divested without the concurrent act of that prince to whom it was first due. . . . It is unreasonable that by voluntary act of his own he should be able at pleasure to unloose those bonds by which he is connected to his natural prince."

* The numbers of ballots are not given.

SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Muter be appointed President for this evening.

The subject appointed for this evening's debate, to wit, "In a free government ought there to be any other qualification required to entitle a right of suffrage than that of freedom?" after being read and debated was determined as followeth: Resolved, as the opinion of the club, that some other qualification ought to be required.

It does not appear whether property and education were both deemed essential or whether one would be sufficient. At that time in all the States something more was required than mere freedom, excepting that in Pennsylvania and Rhode Island the eldest sons of freeholders could vote without being tax-payers. In New Hampshire, New York, Delaware, Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia there was a property qualification ranging from two hundred and fifty to thirty-three dollars.

The discussion of the subject in the club shows that the members were not content to accept without question the principle of universal suffrage, which, in the progress of our civilization, has been largely adopted.

Ordered that each member present do pay into the hands of the Treasurer the sum of six shillings.

Resolved, that the following be the subject for discussion for Saturday evening next, to wit, "Ought capital punishment to be inflicted for any other crime than that of murder or treason?" and that Mr. Allin and Mr. Ormsby do introduce the same.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Innes be appointed President for this evening.

Resolved, that Mr. Greenup have leave of absence until the first Saturday in June, 1787.

Resolved, as the opinion of this club, that capital punishment ought not to be inflicted for any other crimes than that of murder or treason.

The committee appointed to examine the ballots for the admission of Mr. Humphrey Marshall reported that they found in favor of his election eight members, and against it five.

Resolved, that he be not admitted a member of this club.

Resolved, that Mr. Joshua Barbee be admitted a member of this club.

Ordered that the Secretary and Treasurer be appointed a committee for the purpose of securing a room for the use of the club on Saturday evening next.

Resolved, that the following be the subject of discussion for Saturday evening next, to wit, "Ought the inhabitants of the District of Kentucky to submit to the impressment of their arms and accouterments?" and that Mr. Todd and Mr. Speed, junior, do introduce the same.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

The question of capital punishment discussed at this meeting was a very interesting one. It is only necessary to refer to Blackstone's Commentaries to see how far the Kentucky pioneers were advanced beyond English sentiment of the same date. Blackstone had published his Commentaries on English Law twenty years prior to this

discussion, and copies of his work were in the possession of members of the club. He says:

“It is a melancholy truth that among the variety of actions which men are daily liable to commit, no less than one hundred and sixty have been declared by act of Parliament to be felonies without benefit of clergy, or in other words to be worthy of instant death.”

He justly calls this a “dreadful list.” Yet as late as 1819 this dreadful list instead of decreasing in England was enlarged, there being then two hundred felonies on the statute-book punishable with death.* It is in the reign of Victoria that this barbarism has passed away.

At the time the question was discussed in the club many offenses were punished with death in our American States. By the Massachusetts law there were ten; in New York more; and in Virginia twenty-seven, including counterfeiting and forgeries and certain thefts which were so punishable.†

It is certainly worthy of note that the members of The Political Club, in a new community, came fully up to the advanced and liberal views which now prevail both in England and our own country.

*“There are no less than two hundred felonies on the statute-book punishable with death.” (Speech of Sir James McIntosh in Parliament, March 2, 1819. Quoted in Allison’s History of Europe, Second Volume I, page 126.)

†See Sneed’s History Kentucky Penitentiary, page 16, where the list is collated.

SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Brown be appointed President for this evening.

Mr. Joshua Barbee, who had been elected a member of this club, signed the constitution and took his seat accordingly.

The question appointed for this evening's debate, to wit, "Whether the inhabitants of the District of Kentucky ought to submit to the impressment of their arms and accouterments?" after being read and debated was determined in the negative.

Ordered that Mr. Speed and Mr. Craddock and Mr. Todd be appointed a committee to inspect the Treasurer's accounts and make report.

On a small piece of paper are found the memoranda or heads of the argument of one of the members on the subject of the impressment of arms:

"What is the end of impressment?" "The design of impressment in general is to supply our requisites toward carrying on public defense." "Then whatever is necessary toward carrying on public defense ought to be supplied by every person." "Because their private and personal safety depends in a great measure on the success of their public defense." "The situation of the District of Kentucky has been such that every man could not have been obliged to keep a gun." "Why not submit to impressment of guns as provisions? Are not horses private property?" "Public good depends on private right; so it does, but what does private right depend on?"

It is a natural inquiry, of what practical importance was the discussion of this question? The answer is, the

existing Virginia laws made provision for the impressment of arms. It was provided by statute that, in order to equip and arm the militia when called into duty, such militia shall be furnished, if necessary, by impressing the arms and ammunition of the citizens, and any one not delivering them up when required should be imprisoned.

SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Johnston be appointed President for this evening.

The question appointed for this evening's debate, to wit, "Whether the culture of tobacco in the District of Kentucky will be beneficial to the citizens of the District?" Resolved, that it is the opinion of this club that the culture of tobacco will not be beneficial to the citizens of the District of Kentucky.

Resolved, that the following be the subject for discussion for Saturday evening next, to wit, "If an Act of Assembly should be contrary to the Constitution, which ought to govern a judge in his decision?" and that Mr. Innes and Mr. Brown do introduce the same.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

The decision of the question concerning the culture of tobacco was that it was not beneficial. The members had a knowledge of its effects in Virginia, and they must have been familiar with Jefferson's Notes on Virginia, a volume published in 1781. Speaking of tobacco Mr. Jefferson said:

"It is a culture productive of infinite wretchedness. Those employed in it are in a continual state of exertion beyond the power of nature to support. Little food of any kind is raised by them, so that the men and animals on these farms are badly fed, and the earth is rapidly impoverished."

He strongly advocated the culture of wheat instead of tobacco.

SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Thomas Allin be appointed President for this evening.

Mr. Speed and Mr. Innes were excused from paying their fines for their absence at the last meeting.

Resolved, that the subject appointed for this evening's debate be postponed for the discussion of Saturday evening next.

Resolved, that Mr. Belli be granted leave of absence until December next.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

SATURDAY, MAY 5, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Todd be appointed President for this evening.

The question appointed for this evening's debate, to wit, "If an Act of Assembly should be contrary to the Constitution, which ought to govern a judge in his decision?" after being read and debated was determined as follows: Resolved, as the opinion of this club, that when an Act of Assembly is contrary to the Constitution, the judge ought to govern his decision by the Constitution.

Resolved, that the club in future be adjourned to the court-house, and that the hour of meeting be at half after three o'clock in the afternoon.

Resolved, that the following be the question for discussion for the next meeting of the club, "Would it be consistent with the policy of this District to encourage intermarriages with the inhabitants thereof and the neighboring Indian tribes?" and that Mr. Johnston and Mr. Allin do introduce the same.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

The debate on the question whether the courts have the power to adjudge an act of the legislature unconstitutional has been mentioned as being noticed in the diary of the United States Paymaster, Major Beatty.

In the present period of the history of our country, when courts of all sorts, even justices of the peace, pass upon the constitutionality of an act, any discussion of the proposition seems idle, but it was not so when the members of The Political Club were engaged in solving questions and mapping out new and original lines of civil government. In that day the powers of courts and legislatures were considered largely in the light of English precedents, and in England the Parliament was, as it is to this day, supreme.

Blackstone says: "An act of Parliament is the highest authority that the Kingdom acknowledges upon earth."

It was a new proposition that government should be and ought to be so framed that there should be a limit to the powers of the representatives of the people, and that there should be a tribunal to annul their acts.

Chancellor Kent says: "This great question may be regarded as now settled, and I consider it to be one of the most interesting points in favor of constitutional liberty and of the security of property in this country that has ever been judicially determined." He also says the progress of this doctrine and the manner in which it has been discussed are worthy of notice. The first case he cites is one in North Carolina, 1 Martin's Reports, 48, of date 1787. The next is Rayburn's case in New York, 1791. The next is in South Carolina, 1 Bay's Reports, 252, 1792; the next in Pennsylvania, 2 Dallas, 304, 1795; it was also discussed in the *Federalist* by Alexander Hamilton. (No. 78.)

Finally, in the great case of *Marbury v. Madison*, 1 Cranch, 137, in 1803, Chief Justice Marshall forever put the question to rest, and Kent says: "The principle in the English Government that Parliament is omnipotent does not prevail in the United States. . . . The law with us must conform in the first place to the Constitution of the United States, and then to the subordinate constitution of its own particular State, and if it infringes the provisions of either it is in so far void."*

*It seems that the question came before the courts in several of the States. The case of the Judges, 4 Call's Reports, 135, was an interesting one. The Virginia Legislature passed an act which would have deprived the Appellate Judges of their seats. After a full discussion the judges decided

In a very recent work of John Fisk, entitled "Civil Government in the United States," this subject is mentioned in this striking manner: "The importance of this feature of civil government in the United States can hardly be overrated. It marks a momentous advance in civilization, and it is especially interesting as being peculiarly American. Almost every thing else in our fundamental institutions was brought to bear by our forefathers in a more or less highly developed condition from England, but the development of the written constitution, with the consequent relation of the courts to the law-making power, has gone on entirely upon American soil." It is not surprising then that the debate in The Political Club was one to be character-

that they would proceed to business, for as they held their offices under the constitution the new law could not take them away if it were so intended.

Judge Cooley, in his *Constitutional Limitations*, page 160, cites *Tevett v. Weedon*, a Rhode Island case, where the judges refused to enforce a law punishing without trial by jury any one who discouraged the circulation of certain State bank bills as specie. The judges were impeached, and though not removed they were not re-elected, and others more pliable were put in office. The discussion in the club in 1787 was at least contemporaneous with the earliest cases before the courts. It is hardly likely that the club could have had knowledge of the cases, but doubtless considered the subject independently of them. The difference between the law-making power in England and in America is well expressed by Justice Patterson, of Pennsylvania, in 1795, in *Vanhorne v. Dorrance*, 2 Dallas, 308. He says: "In England the authority of Parliament was without limit and rests above control. It is difficult to say what the Constitution of England is, because, not being reduced to written certainty and precision, it lies entirely at the mercy of Parliament.

ized as it was by Major Beatty.* The teaching and preconceived opinions of the members naturally led to revere the law-making power, but they were coming steadily up to the light and were in the dawn of constitutional rights and constitutional liberty.

SATURDAY, MAY 12, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Speed, senior, be appointed President for this evening. Resolved, that the reasons given by Mr. Willis Green for not attending since his election are reasonable and satisfactory. Whereupon he signed the constitution and took his seat.

The question appointed for this evening's debate, after being read and debated, was determined as follows: Resolved, as the opinion of this club, that the encouragement of intermarriages between the inhabitants of this District and the neighboring Indian tribes would not be consistent with the policy of the District.

William McDowell was nominated for membership.

Resolved, that the following be the subject for discussion for the next meeting of the club, "Would it be to the interest and true policy of this District, should a separation from the State of Virginia take place, to invite the inhabitants of Cumberland to unite

It bends to every governmental exigency. It varies and is blown about by every breeze of legislative humor or political caprice."

In America, he says, every State has its constitution, which "contains the permanent will of the people and is the supreme law of the land. . . . What are legislatures? Creatures of the constitution; they owe their existence to the constitution; they derive their powers from the constitution; it is their commission, and therefore all their acts must be conformable to it or else they will be void."

*See page 33.

with them in government?" and that Mr. Todd and Mr. Ormsby do introduce the same.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

It is difficult to conceive what arguments could have been used on the affirmative side of the question of intermarriage with Indians. That the question should have been discussed at all arouses a feeling of repugnance. But the members of The Political Club had a better knowledge of the Indian character than persons of later generations. No degradation has ever attached to the admixture of Indian blood, and it may have been supposed by some that as occasional marriages between the whites and Indians, that of Pocahontas and Rolfe being a noted instance, had resulted favorably, that the practice might be not only tolerated but encouraged. But the decision of the question was in the negative.*

SATURDAY, MAY 19, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Muter be appointed President for this evening. Resolved, that the reasons given by Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Todd for their absence the last club night are sufficient. Resolved, that Mr. Green have leave of absence for this evening.

*It has been seen that it was the opinion of the club that the Indians had certain rights to the land. This and the fact that the question of intermarriage was considered at all go to show that thoughtful men a century ago, who had the best opportunities for knowing Indian character, seem to have had liberal views concerning those mysterious people. In the earlier

Resolved, that the reasons given by Mr. Ormsby for his absence for four club nights are satisfactory, and that he be readmitted without paying the fines.

Resolved, that the subject for this evening's debate be postponed till the next meeting of the club.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

SATURDAY, MAY 26, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Kennedy be appointed President for this evening.

The committee appointed to examine the ballots taken for the admission of William McDowell reported his election by unanimous consent. Resolved, that the decision on the subject appointed for this evening's discussion be postponed until the next meeting of the club.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

SATURDAY, JUNE 2, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Allin be appointed President for this evening.

Resolved, that the Treasurer's accounts do pass.

Resolved, that the following be the subject for the next meeting of the club, "What ought to be the powers in the second branch of the legislature in a commonwealth?" and that Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Speed do introduce the same.

Resolved, that Mr. Muter have leave of absence for the two club nights next ensuing.

days the terms "noble savage" and "child of nature" were not so entirely poetical as at this time. Contact with civilization has not advanced the Indian as much as it has injured him, perhaps. It is a singular fact disclosed by these old Political Club papers, that the pioneers of Kentucky, while fighting the Indians, were yet willing to do them justice, and saw enough good in the savages to lead them even to consider the possible propriety of intermarriage with the white race.

The discussion at this meeting was upon the question, "Would it be to the interest and true policy of this District, should a separation from the State of Virginia take place, to admit the inhabitants of Cumberland to unite with them in government?" Messrs. Todd and Ormsby were the leaders, and the question was decided in the affirmative.

The section called Cumberland was the central portion of the territory afterward erected into the State of Tennessee, the eastern portion being at that time known as Franklin. The Cumberland settlement had been started by James Robertson, in 1780. He, with a party, moved out to the west, passing through Cumberland Gap and over the Wilderness Road as far as Crab Orchard. Then, instead of turning into the level lands of Kentucky, he took a southwestwardly course and made his way through the hills to the Cumberland River, at the point which afterward became Nashville. He there established a community which received the name of Cumberland. In the contests with the Indians Robertson visited the Kentucky settlements and received from them substantial aid. The question in The Political Club at Danville suggests again the influence of the routes of travel upon the events of that day. The way of reaching Nashborough from the east, and

the way of return thither, continued for some time to be through Kentucky. This brought the people about Danville in contact with the inhabitants of Cumberland, and directed attention to that settlement, thus suggesting the desirability of uniting with them in the formation of a western government, such a movement being an entirely new proposition.

SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 1787.

The minutes of this meeting are fragmentary. They show that it was resolved that the club should adjourn until the last Saturday in June, and that the subject for discussion for the next meeting was, "Whether it is not more to the interest of a commonwealth that the legislative body should consist of two branches than one?" and that Mr. Craddock and Mr. Speed introduce the same.

SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Samuel McDowell be appointed President for this evening.

The only other minute of this meeting is:

Resolved, that the decision on the subject appointed for this evening's meeting be postponed until the next meeting of the club.

It would appear from this that discussion was had, but no decision.

SATURDAY, JULY 7, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Ormsby be appointed President for this evening. Resolved, that Mr. Barbee and Mr. Green, who were absent at last meeting of the club, be excused.

The question postponed at the last meeting of the club, to wit, "Whether it is not more to the interest of a commonwealth that the legislative body should consist of two branches than one?" was read and debated. Resolved, as the opinion of this club, that it would be more to the interest of a commonwealth that the legislative body should consist of two branches than one.

The committee appointed to examine the ballots taken for the admission of Matthew Walton reported that they found all the ballots in favor of his admission. Resolved, that Mr. Matthew Walton be admitted a member of this club.

Resolved, that the following be the subject for the next meeting of the club: "What ought to be the powers of the second branch of the legislature in a commonwealth?"

SATURDAY, JULY 14, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Barbee be appointed President for this evening. Resolved, that the subject appointed for this evening's discussion be postponed until the next club night. Resolved, that Mr. Allin have leave of absence for this evening.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

SATURDAY, JULY 28, 1787.

Resolved, that Mr. Todd be appointed President for this evening. Resolved, that Mr. Brown be excused for his absence the four nights last preceding. Resolved, that Mr. William McDowell be excused for his absence the last club night.

The subject postponed for the debate of this evening was read and again postponed for the discussion of the next club night.

Resolved, that Mr. Brown, Mr. Iunes, and Mr. Allin be appointed a committee to revise the constitution of the club. Resolved, that the next meeting of the club be Saturday, the 11th day of August.

Ordered that the club be adjourned.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 1787.

Mr. McDowell, junior, President.

Mr. Barbee, Mr. Speed, senior, and Mr. McDowell, senior, excused. Discussion postponed, and ordered that the club adjourn until August 25th.

From this date the minutes of the club are not among the papers. The work of the club can only be gathered from fragments of paper and disjointed memoranda. There is nothing to show what conclusion was reached upon the discussion of the question, "What ought to be the powers of the second branch of the legislature?" but in the discussion of the Constitution of the United States, which afterward followed, there are expressions which show the sentiments of some of the members.

Although the club had in February, 1787, debated the question whether annual or other elections were to be preferred, it seems that in the summer or autumn of the same year they recurred to the subject and dis-

cussed, "What period of elections is most agreeable to the spirit of a free government?"

A brief mention of this discussion is preserved, not in any regular minute, but upon a scrap of paper, the smallness of which illustrates one of the features of that day in Kentucky. It is easy to believe paper was a scarce article with the members of the club, and they used it sparingly. Upon a bit of coarse paper, once white but now yellow, is written in excellent characters the following, being doubtless the head of some member's argument:

"Before we can properly discuss this question it will be necessary to inquire, What is the spirit of a free government? In the first place the spirit of a free government is that the people alone govern. In the second place, that the people should be governed by just, equal, and wise laws.

"To inquire into what period will most certainly produce this, weekly or monthly elections would certainly secure the people the government. Then why is the period carried from weekly or monthly to annual? The more effectually to secure to them their freedom. I do not conceive that their freedom and happiness consist so much in their governing themselves as in the laws by which they are governed. Can I be said to be free if the laws are so weak as not to secure my property and defend my person?

"To prove that we shall not be so well represented by annual as by longer election. . . . If we are better represented, our laws must certainly be better. If our laws are better, are we not more happy and more free?"

December 29, 1787, the question was in the form of a resolution:

Resolved, that it would be most conducive to the safety of a republic that the second branch of the legislature should be elected by representatives chosen with power for that purpose.

This method of electing senators was provided in the first Constitution of Kentucky, framed four years later, and, as we have seen, several members of the club became electors of the senate. These electors were chosen every four years, and formed a college for the choice "of men of the most wisdom, experience, and virtue in the State as senators," and they also selected the governor. This arrangement continued until the year 1799, when a new constitution made a change.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 1788.

Resolved, that Mr. Barbee be appointed President for this evening.

The question discussed was, "Whether the emission of a paper currency would be an advantage to the inhabitants of this District."

The decision was, Resolved, as the opinion of this club, that the emission of a paper currency would be injurious to the inhabitants of this District.

There are fortunately preserved a few memoranda of this discussion:

Mr. Barbee urged "the bad policy of emitting a paper currency, for want of a sufficient fund to redeem the same."

Mr. Muter thought "civil list warrants would be better perhaps than paper currency."

Mr. Innes suggested: "Emit a small sum which must be taken up each year, and a new emission for each year."

Mr. Greenup said: "Money is the sign of wealth, and paper the sign of that sign. Better receive commutables and give credit in taxes for what they will sell for."

Mr. Innes said: "We are without a circulating medium, and of course something must be done in order to support the government."

Mr. Muter said: "To make paper currency legal tender is fatal to it; on the other hand, specie has an intrinsic value."

Mr. McDowell said: "No fund is necessary for the support of a paper currency but the due collection of taxes."

Mr. James Speed said: "Paper currency is hated as the devil."

Mr. McClung said: "Affluence is dangerous to the morals of man. Paper currency perhaps a temporary relief. The necessity of a paper currency or circulating medium depends upon the particular occupation and situation of a country. A trading country has a greater necessity for money than one that depends upon its own manufactures for support."

It would be difficult to frame a more apt definition of money and paper than that given by Mr. Greenup: "Money is the sign of wealth, and paper the sign of that sign."

DISCUSSION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

The records of the club contain nothing which shows more impressively its intense earnestness in the study of questions of government than the brief notes of the

discussion of the Constitution of the United States. That great instrument was completed in 1787, and was printed on a sheet of paper, folio size, at Alexandria, Virginia. Appended to it is the letter of George Washington, President of the Convention, submitting it for consideration. A copy found its way to the club, and is preserved among the papers. On the margins opposite most of the sections are marks showing the sentiment of the club. Many of these marks are the simple word "agreed;" the word "amended" often occurs, also "disagreed to," "rejected," "expunged," "struck out."

The consideration of this important subject began in February, 1788, George Muter resolving that "it is the opinion of this club that the constitution ought to be preceded by a bill of rights."

It is well known that this feature was added to the constitution by the amendments made at the first session of Congress under the new government.

The time occupied in the discussion of the constitution shows the patience and thoroughness of the club in its work. The discussion ran through four months, ending in May, 1788. At the conclusion a committee was appointed "to revise the resolutions of the club as far as relates to the Federal Constitution and make report." This committee was as follows: Messrs. Muter,

Innes, Greenup, Dougherty, William McDowell, Todd, and Overton.

The work of this committee was well performed, the result being the production of the entire constitution according to the views of the club. Among the papers is found a bulky document on large paper, written in the elegant chirography of the Secretary, entitled "The Constitution of the United States as amended and approved by The Political Club." It is the entire constitution written out to conform to the ideas of the volunteer convention sitting at Danville.

Fragments of paper contain some of the comments of the members, as follows:

FEDERAL CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE I, SECTION I.

Mr. Greenup objected to two branches in the government, there being but one interest in a republican government, and moved against it. Mr. Todd seconded the same.

Mr. McDowell in favor of a senate.

Mr. Muter—Men since the creation of the world have been prone to domination and ever will be—hence a necessity for a check.

Mr. Innes—Ninety-nine men out of a hundred possessed of power will abuse it. Without a senate, one State will have a power of imposing on another, one having a greater number of representatives. A senate in this case would be a very proper check.

Mr. Speed—One set of men having power have always abused it—even God Almighty's own men, the clergy, abuse the power given them—a check necessary.

Mr. Greenup—Does the name senate make a man virtuous? Why fear corruption and thirst of power from the House of Representatives only? Find a senate of superior virtue. Admitted.

Article 1st, adopted.

Mr. Muter—Section 2, Clause 3, proposed to reduce the number of representatives to one for every sixty thousand instead of thirty thousand. Objected to.

Mr. Muter objected to the Vice-President of the United States being President of the Senate. This objection seems to have met the approval of the other members. Their idea was embodied in their amended instrument, which did away altogether with the office of Vice-President. They provided that "the Senate of the United States shall choose its own Speaker."

Among the papers is found a small separate package inclosed by a wrapper and labeled "Resolutions concerning the Federal Constitution." These are here given, for the reason that they show how concentrated was the thought of the members upon the subject:

Resolved, that it is the opinion of this club that the Federal Constitution ought to be preceded by a Declaration of Rights, in which it should be clearly expressed that the Congress of the United States shall not have power by law to alter, repeal, or change any part of the Constitution, and that all laws contrary to the true spirit, intent, and meaning of the same shall be void.

Resolved, as the opinion of this club, that every bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and Senate (money bills excepted) before it becomes a law be presented to the President of the United States, and by him laid before the Executive Council and Judges of the Supreme Court for their opinion on the same, to be by him with the advice and consent of the council and judges approved and signed, when it shall become a law, or returned with their objections to that House in which it shall have originated; and that every order, resolution, or vote (except in case of appropriation of money), or on questions of adjournment, shall be proceeded on in the same manner, which House is to enter the objections on their journal and proceed to reconsider them. If after such reconsideration two thirds of that House shall agree to pass the bill, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other House, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two thirds of that House it shall become a law. But in all such cases the votes of both Houses shall be determined by yeas and nays, and the names of the persons voting for and against the bill shall be entered on the journal of each House respectively. If any bill shall not be returned by the President within ten days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the same shall be a law in like manner as if it had been signed as before directed, unless the Congress by its adjournment prevent its return, in which case it shall not be a law.

Article I, Section 3. Strike out Clauses 4, 5, and 6, and insert Resolved, as the opinion of this club, that the Senate ought to have the power of choosing their Speaker and all their other officers, and the sole power to try all impeachments under the Federal Constitution. When sitting for that purpose they shall be on oath or affirmation, and no person shall be convicted without the concurrence of two thirds of the members present.

Article I, Section 3. Resolved, as the opinion of this club, that the Senate of the United States ought to be composed of two

senators from each State, chosen by the legislature thereof for three years, and each senator ought to have one vote, and immediately after they have assembled they ought to be divided into three classes—the seats of the senators of the first class to be vacated at the end of one year, the second class at the end of the second year, the third class at the end of the third year, and no member of the Senate be again eligible for three years after the vacation of his seat.

Article I, Section 4. Resolved, that the times, places, and manner of holding elections for senators and representatives shall be prescribed in each State by the legislature thereof; strike out the remainder of the paragraph.

Article III, Section 1. Strike out from “and” in the second line to the word “the” in line four, and insert “at least one inferior court in each State.”

An interesting discussion took place upon a motion to amend one of the clauses defining the powers of Congress. The Constitution as framed and as it now stands provides that Congress shall have power “to provide for calling forth the militia to *execute* the laws of the Union,” etc.

Mr. Muter moved to strike out the words “execute the laws of the Union.” His motion was seconded by Mr. Speed.

The motion was voted down. Mr. Innes then moved to insert the word “enforce” instead of the word “execute;” seconded by Mr. McDowell. This amendment was carried. In the debate Mr. Muter opposed

the amendment, expressing his fears in calling in a military force. That the civil power was sufficient; that militia when employed are under military government, and therefore dangerous to freedom. That the case is unprecedented. He was seconded by Mr. Speed.

Mr. Innes and others thought the military force necessary to enforce the collection of taxes, and instanced the case of Massachusetts. The word enforce was agreed to. This nice distinction in the use of words was well taken. The regular execution of the laws of the United States is the work of civil officers. There is no need to call out the militia to "execute" the laws. That is done in regular course. It is only in cases of emergency that the militia can ever be needed, and then it is more proper to use the word "enforce" than the word "execute."

The notes show that Mr. Innes "wished that there might be a clause in the second article which should make the President of the United States ineligible for a certain term of years. Mr. Greenup seconded this motion, and it was agreed to. The constitution as revised by the club provides that the President "shall hold his office during the term of four years, after which period he shall be ineligible for the four succeeding years."

It also provides that "no member of the Senate shall be eligible for three years after the vacation of his seat."

The clause that the Chief Justice shall preside over the Senate in cases of impeachments is left out.

But while the club seemed to think the Senate could provide its own presiding officer without calling on the Supreme Court for one, it showed its great respect for that court by the adoption of the clause to the effect that every bill, except money bills, should be submitted to the Supreme Court before it became a law.

Consideration of the Constitution ended May 17, 1788. Subsequent to that date the notes of meetings are fragmentary. They are sufficient to show that the club continued its work. Christopher Greenup presided at a meeting May 31, 1788. At the meeting June 14, 1788, Mr. Dougherty was granted leave of absence until November 1, 1788.

It appears from a note of a meeting February 7, 1789, that Mr. Allin was President; that the question was, "Are the present existing laws concerning citizenship founded on principles of sound policy?"

For some reason which does not appear, it seems the club had recurred to the subject of the Constitution of the United States, as there is this memorandum of a resolution at this meeting: "Subject of the Federal

Constitution postponed until January next." While there are no minutes of the meetings, yet it appears the discussions were continued.

VIEWS OF THE CLUB AS TO SLAVERY.

There is but one thing in the records of the club to indicate the views of the members on the slavery question. The Constitution of the United States contained a clause providing that Congress should pass no law prohibiting the importation of slaves prior to the year 1808. This clause permitted the slave trade to continue as it was for twenty years from the time the Constitution was made. The resolution of The Political Club expunged this clause. The members were willing to allow Congress to deal with the odious business at any time, and as soon as it saw fit to do so.

OTHER QUESTIONS.

It appears that the club continued its regular Saturday sessions, but there are such slight memoranda that they can not be mentioned definitely. Resolutions and questions on small pieces of paper are all that can be found. The following are some of the questions:

"Whether the admission of tobacco as a commutable for the discharge of taxes in the District of Kentucky will not prove a

real injury to the inhabitants at large, provided no other commutable is admitted?"

"Whether, in a political view, polygamy ought to be tolerated in a free State?"

"Are the present existing laws concerning citizenship founded on principles of sound policy?*"

The following resolution, found among the papers of the club without date, shows the desire of the members to have the benefit of the best talent in the State, and it also illustrates what has been said concerning the peculiar advantages possessed in that day by the town of Danville, by reason of its situation on the great highway of travel:

"Whereas, this society was instituted for the purpose of acquiring political knowledge, and it hath been suggested to this club that some gentlemen of abilities are desirous of becoming members thereof, who are not residents of the neighborhood, whose business will frequently call them to this place, and therefore render their attendance convenient; Resolved, that the admitting of gentlemen of merit non-residents of the neighborhood to become members of this club will tend to the promoting of political knowledge; that hereafter, if any gentleman shall become a member hereof he shall incur no fine for his non-attendance except for defaults arising during his stay in the neighborhood."

The meetings of the club were sometimes at the house of Samuel McDowell, sometimes at the house of

* It is reasonably certain that the discussion of this question occupied more evenings than one. The subject was of the most vital importance, and brought under review the suitability of the Virginia laws to the new condi-

Joshua Barbee, and sometimes at the tavern kept by Benjamin Grayson. In May, 1787, it was resolved that the meetings be held in the court-house, and that the hour of meeting be half past three o'clock P. M. This is a significant minute. It was a little after this date Major Beatty heard the debate on the question as to the power of the courts to adjudge an act of the legislature unconstitutional. He noted in his journal that the debate lasted until after midnight. The Treasurer's accounts show that the members took their supper at Grayson's tavern. From these facts it appears that the meetings of the club began in the middle of the afternoon and lasted until midnight.

The Treasurer of the club kept account of all moneys received from fines and dues and special assessments. He paid it out for the supplies at Grayson's tavern and for the regular evening's supply of the staple article of refreshment which Kentuckians of that day regarded as essential to health. The Treasurer was Thomas Allin, though it appears that Mr. Overton also served in that capacity at one time.

The minutes show that a committee was regularly
tions and necessities which had arisen among the inhabitants of Kentucky. The new community had many phases of society which did not exist in the parent State. The views of the club upon many subjects differed, as we have seen, from the established usages of the day.

appointed to audit the Treasurer's accounts. The report of one of these committees is worthy of preservation, as showing the orderly manner in which the business of the club was conducted:

"Your committee have examined the accounts of the Treasurer to them referred, and find that there has been paid into the Treasury, on the 30th of December last, the sum of £3.6.0, being the deposit of eleven members at six shillings each, and on the 13th day of January last, the further sum of £2.14.0, being the deposit of nine members, amounting on the whole to £6.0.0.

"Your committee also find that there has been disbursed for the use of the club, on the 30th day of December and on the 6th day of January last, the sum of £3.6.6, in one account, and on the 13th day of the same month the further sum of £1.17.6, amounting in the whole to £5.2.0, which leaves a balance in the Treasurer's hands of eighteen shillings to be appropriated to the further use of the club, as will more fully appear by the annexed statement."*

*The inevitable humors which must have been a feature of the club are not recorded, but on stray scraps of paper are found indications of other interests beside those of the debates. A letter from Christopher Greenup, dated December 29, 1787, addressed to the President, begs leave to inform the club of his safe arrival and his desire to continue a member. He says: "When the *motives* are considered which drew me from home in March last, and delays which generally attend *that business*, of which the club are sufficiently informed, I can but flatter myself that my absence will be deemed excusable, and that they will be pleased to re-admit me as a member without paying the fines incurred by the constitution." It would not be hard to guess the character of the "business" which caused this member to journey back over the Wilderness Road to his old home in Virginia and remain from March until December, but on a fragment of paper, upon which he had written a resolution, chanced to have been torn from a letter he had written but had not

The minutes also show that several amendments were made to the constitution and rules of the club, and that all their regulations were strictly observed. A fact worthy of consideration further illustrates the singular earnestness of the members and the sense of duty and responsibility they evidently felt. While some of the members resided in the town of Danville, the greater number had their homes in the "neighborhood," that is, in the country around, at distances varying from a mile or two to ten miles. The minutes show attendance of the most creditable regularity, and fines for non-attendance were only remitted by resolution of the club.

The consideration of all the various subjects necessarily broadened and enlightened the minds of the members, as the natural range that discussion takes brought under view those things which either intimately

sent, and on the opposite side, are found in fragments of lines and words, "idea of my attachment" "so fine a young lady" "heart" "love" "will you take" "wife". These are unmistakable.

Upon a small piece of paper is found this poetical conceit:

I	{	had both	}	money	{	and a	}	friend	{	by whom I set great store;
		lent my				to my				and took his word therefor;
		asked my				of my				and nought but words I got,
		lost my				and my				but sue him I would not.
		saw my				with my				which pleased me very well,
		got my				from my				but sad it is to tell:
		had my				but my				quite away from me fell;
		may have				and a				as I had heretofore,
'll keep my	and my	and play the fool no more.								

or remotely connected themselves with the questions. While the subjects before the club were those which had an immediate bearing on the circumstances and condition of the inhabitants of Kentucky, it is easy to see how the arguments would be laden with every illustration that could be adduced from history. Indeed, the very fact that the discussions revolved so continuously upon kindred topics would afford the most prolonged mental excitation, and encourage research and reflection. The extended duration of the club, running through four consecutive years, must have led to the acquisition of such published writings upon the subjects considered as were obtainable. It is not probable that the "packs" which were first carried over the mountains to the "Land of Kentucke" were burdened with books, nor would there be a demand for them if the sole occupation of the settlers had been physical encounter with the roughness of wilderness living. There was needed that which would stimulate a desire to bring out the law books and histories and other publications. That this was done there is sufficient evidence, and nothing could have had a stronger influence in this particular than the debates in The Political Club.*

*Mr. W. J. McConathy, a member of the Filson Club, states that his grandfather brought out two mules' burden of books, and the fact that two pack animals were only loaded with books created considerable comment.

The high type of the men constituting The Political Club is evident from the sketches which have been given. They were all well educated, and many of them possessed the peculiar accomplishments characteristic of the statesmen of that period whose fame and achievements are linked with the founding of the American Republic. That so many men of this class were found in and near the little town of Danville is very suggestive of the character of the material which immigrated to Kentucky in the early days. Associated with the more unlettered but courageous and enterprising movers was a large element of the best culture and talent that could be found in the Atlantic States. Young men of the best families, who had enjoyed the advantages of schools, had been trained in law offices and clerks' offices, and under the veteran surveyors whose occupation in that day was one of the greatest activity and importance, were numerous among them.

Other evidences of the enlightened character of the first settlers of Kentucky are abundant. Family tradi-

There is now before the writer an invoice of books sent out by the old Philadelphia publisher and bookseller, Mathew Cary. It shows more than a hundred different works. Among them are six "American Constitutions," De Lolme's *British Constitution*, Blackstone's *Commentaries*, Vesey's *Reports*, Blackstone's *Reports*, Harrison's *Chancery Practice*, Hinde's *Chancery*, Leach's *Crown Law*.

tions and private records are numerous throughout the boundaries just mentioned, within which, as we have seen, the settlers first located. Within the same boundaries, and with a membership co-extensive with the same, there existed the "Kentucky Society for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge," the object of which is shown by its name. While very little is recorded of it in history, yet the existence of such a society as early as 1786 can but be regarded as the outgrowth of a genuinely intelligent public sentiment.* In these first days of Kentucky a newspaper was published at Lexington, printed on a press brought out on pack animals. At the Royal Spring, Georgetown, a paper-mill was established, and books were printed upon the paper there made, and bound in leather tanned in a Kentucky

*See Collins' History, where the names of the members are given. The whole number of members was thirty-eight, and their residence was not confined to any special locality, yet fifteen of the thirty-eight were members of the club. The account in Collins' History simply shows the existence of the society, and that the members were requested by a published advertisement to send their ballots for officers to the Secretary, Mr. Thomas Speed. The present writer is able to supplement the account in Collins by giving the responses, they being in excellent preservation in the papers of the Secretary.

The committeemen elected were George Muter, Caleb Wallace, Harry Innes, James Garrard, Robert Johnson, Humphrey Marshall, and Levi Todd. The curator elected was Christopher Greenup. The Treasurer, John Coburn.

Those who received votes, but not enough to elect, were James Parker,

tan-yard. The rapid progress of the new community is strikingly shown by the fact it began the publication of the decisions of the courts almost as soon as any of the Atlantic States, and even in advance of some of them. Manufacturing also started,* and the services of the school-teacher were invoked from the beginning. No more noted teacher than Joshua Fry ever trained young men in Kentucky, and he began his work in the pioneer days. At Danville, before 1790, the first law school in Kentucky was taught by George Nicholas. At the same place Doctor Ephraim McDowell achieved his world-wide fame. The church and school-house were side by side. The observances of religion in constituted churches was one of the earliest features of Kentucky. In the great immigration of 1781 the "traveling church"

Joseph Crockett, James Speed, Isaac Shelby, Thomas Todd, Samuel McDowell, James Brown, Willis Green, Stephen Ormsby, William McDowell, Thomas Allen, Joshua Barbee, Robert Todd, and John Brown.

*As early as 1789 a society for promoting manufactures was organized at Danville, and resulted in the establishment of a cotton factory at that place, the machinery being brought from Philadelphia, landed at Limestone, and carried from thence to Danville.

The promoters of this enterprise deserve to be all named, and in the list it will be noticed how many were members of The Political Club—thirteen of the twenty-nine. The list of names entire is as follows: James Dunlop, John Cochran, John Warren, Christopher Greenup, Benjamin Field, Peyton Short, James Wilkinson, Thomas Lewis, Abraham Buford, George Nicholas, John Brown, William McDowell, Joshua Barbee, B. Tardeveau, P. Tardeveau, W. Nagle, Baker Ewing, Thomas Barbee, Walter E. Strong, William Reed,

came out from Virginia, being an entire church—membership and minister—moving in a body like the Israelites of old.*

Among the landmarks in Kentucky at the present day are numerous fine old brick and stone residences built more than a hundred years ago by the first occupants of the soil.

The records of the club are not full enough to furnish an answer to all the questions which naturally arise. Although the men who are charged with complicity in the Spanish conspiracy were prominent members, there is not a word in the minutes or on any fragment of paper to suggest Spanish interests or influences. General James Wilkinson was about Danville more or less during the four years the club flourished, but his name and his schemes are as unknown in these records as if he had never lived.

The thorough study which the Constitution of the United States received indicates a lively and sincere interest in the Union. The numerous questions discussed all point to statehood like that east of the

Thomas Todd, Harry Innes, William Hughes, Robert Craddock, Samuel McDowell, George Caldwell, S. Fisher, James Speed, R. Mosby.

*See "Wilderness Road," by the present writer. Professor Ranck, of Lexington, Kentucky, has also written a most interesting account of this event, entitled "The Traveling Church."

mountains. The direction of thought was all toward a government that would secure freedom. The greater number of the members had served in freedom's cause against the tyranny of a foreign power. Every indication is that they were studious to build a purely American commonwealth. Such a spirit was incompatible with intriguing with Spaniards, and is circumstantial evidence against such aspersions.*

When we remember that the club was organized for the study of those political questions which were urgent in Kentucky at the time, and that it existed through the years of the early conventions at the town of Danville, where they were all held, and recall how numerous the club was represented in each one, it is easy to believe it was the source of a powerful influence in the work of those conventions. And when we recall that the first Constitution of the State was made at Danville in 1792, and signed by Samuel McDowell, President, and Thomas Todd, Secretary of the Convention, and that other members of the club were members of that convention, and that the same questions which came before

*Judge Humphrey, in his address, says: "Of one thing we have the strongest evidence, that these men with one exception, Sebastian, were intent only on following that path which would lead to the good of the whole people. There is an absence of self-seeking, a presence of devoted patriotism which can not be too highly commended."

the convention had been faithfully studied in The Political Club, it is easy still to trace its influence.

The credit of making the first constitution is usually given to George Nicholas. Butler calls him the author of the constitution. Colonel Brown, in his *Political Beginnings*, says it may be fairly regarded as his production.* Such expressions state the case too strongly. The constitution was the work of a convention, not of one man. In that convention sat Harry Innes, Benjamin Logan, Alexander S. Bullitt, Matthew Walton, Caleb Wallace, Robert Breckinridge, David Rice, Isaac Shelby, and thirty-five others, all chosen for their ability and thorough knowledge of the needs of the Kentucky people. The greater portion of them had been in Kentucky from eight to twelve years. Logan had been a tower of strength to the settlements from their beginning in 1775, a period of seventeen years. Nicholas came out in 1788, four years before the convention. It would seem unlikely that the wisdom and experience of the convention should go for nothing. It has been already shown that The Political Club appointed a committee to draft a form of government adapted to the needs of Kentucky as early as February 17, 1787.

*Humphrey Marshall, in his *History of Kentucky*, says: "If the Constitution of Kentucky could be ascribed to any one man, it should doubtless be to Colonel George Nicholas."

It is a noticeable fact that the convention was engaged upon its work only eighteen days, from April 2d to April 19, 1792. This would indicate that some persons had hitherto been engaged upon that important work and had laid the foundations. There are indications of the work of the club. We have seen that the method of choosing State Senators and the Governor was by a College of Electors, which method was the one proposed by the club. Butler says, "The general character of this constitution evidently bears a strong similitude to that of the United States," and attributes that fact to the publication of the *Federalist*.*

The study of the Federal Constitution in *The Political Club* bore its natural fruits in the construction of the one of 1792 for Kentucky. That the Senate should choose its own speakers was according to ideas of the club. An extended bill of rights was also a feature which the club had deemed desirable.

*Judge Robertson, speaking in 1843, before the adoption of the third constitution, says of the first: "The adoption of a political constitution in the wilds of Kentucky by the free will of a majority of its free inhabitants was a novel and interesting spectacle. The first constitution, the production principally of George Nicholas, was a very good one, certainly equal if not superior to any other State constitution then existing. As it provided for another convention at the end of seven years, a new constitution was adopted in 1799. Both constitutions were alike—in outline the same. . . . There may be reason to doubt whether the last is altogether better than the first."

As before stated, it was the constitution-making period in our country's history. Ten years before The Political Club was organized the Declaration of Independence caused the Colonies to frame, each for itself, a form of government adapted to the requirements of the new condition of freedom. Mr. Bryce says: "The colonial charters naturally became the State constitutions. In most cases they were remodeled with large alterations by the revolting Colony."

Each Colony, therefore, had something to build on. Her people were to a large extent coherent, made so by slow growth and by common suffering through a long period of time. But in 1786 the problem in Kentucky was unlike any before known. Between eighty and ninety thousand inhabitants were settled within her borders, drawn thither in large measure within the three or four years just preceding, and the numbers were rapidly increasing. How urgent was the need of a local State government imagination can readily picture and the records of the time fully attest.

At first Kentucky was a single county; then it was made into three, then nine; but all the time the government was at Williamsburg, Virginia, five hundred miles distant on an air line, and twice that far by way of the Wilderness Road through the desolate and dangerous regions intervening.

Who would make for Kentucky a local government? How was it to be brought about? What sort of government would be adapted to the wants of the multitude of people suddenly collected in the Kentucky settlements? Who would study the questions involved, and after forming conclusions be able to exert an influence? The demands of the hour were met in The Political Club. Its singular appositeness to these demands, in the quality of its membership, its location, and its discussions, all point so directly to the first organic law of the new commonwealth, the conclusion is irresistible that its work entered into the construction of the first constitution.

A number of men in the club by official position, as well as by talents and character, were recognized leaders of public opinion. They were expected to guide the course of events. To do so intelligently and successfully they must study the problems and be prepared at every step to satisfy the expectations of friends and meet the objections of the querulous or unfriendly. They found in The Political Club the means of enlightenment and acquisition of knowledge which nothing else could have afforded. Week after week, for four years, these faithful students of political science, most of them heads of families and engrossed with personal duties, devoted

their time and centered their thought in preparing the elemental material of a government for the maintenance of internal peace and the security of their liberties. Like the hewers of wood in the mountains and the stone squarers in the quarries they prepared the beams and the granite to be built into a new temple dedicated to freedom, which has been called "The Earliest Political Fabric after the Revolutionary War."

By their work they illustrated in the far West the great idea embodied in the legend placed on the seal of the United States by the Continental Congress during the struggle for liberty, and re-adopted under the Constitution of 1789: *Novus ordo seclorum*.

There was a tremendous meaning in the words, "A new order of the ages." It was a new thing for a people to provide their own government, according to their own wishes, without let or hindrance of king or titled nobility. The same forces which led the Revolutionary fathers to break away from old ideas and establish our free republic moved the fathers of the Commonwealth of Kentucky when they laid her foundations.

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NOTE.

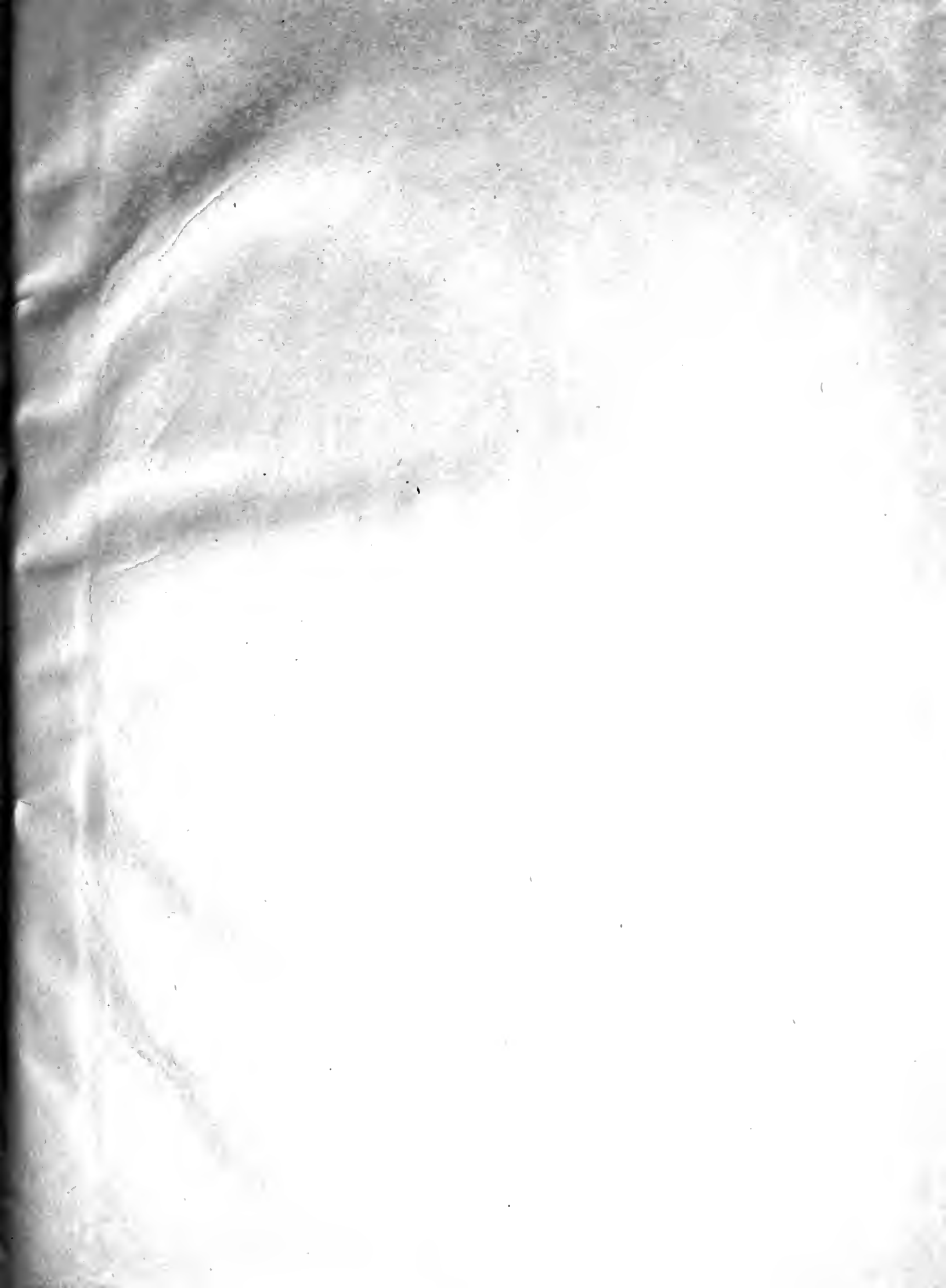
It is stated on page 21 that the location of the court near Crow's Station gave rise to the laying out of Danville in 1784. It is also stated on page 25 that Danville was laid out in 1781. There is some confusion as to the date of the founding of Danville. Collins says it was laid out by Walker Daniel in 1781. He also says it was founded when the court was removed to the vicinity of Crow's Station, which was in 1783. Marshall says Danville arose from the fact that the court was located at that place.

The Act of the Virginia Legislature establishing the town of Danville was passed December 4, 1787. It recites that Walker Daniel had in his lifetime laid off a part of seventy-six acres for a town at that place. (Walker Daniel was killed by Indians in August, 1784.) The trustees named in the Act were John Jouett, William McDowell, Harry Innes, Christopher Greenup, Samuel McDowell, senior, Abraham Irvine, George Muter, William Kennedy. It will be observed that of the eight trustees six were members of The Political Club.

Danville is mentioned as a town by John Filson, who wrote in 1784. It may be that Walker Daniel laid out the town in 1781, but the town itself began when the court was removed to that place in the latter part of 1783.

The growth of Danville must have been very rapid. A letter written to the Secretary of The Political Club, dated November 6, 1786, has been preserved, cautioning the young man against the gaiety of that place. The writer says: "How do you like the life you lead in Danville? Are you not drawn into excesses? Keep no bad hours or company. You deserve the character you have of a prudent man for your years, yet I fear the levity of that place may lead you astray."

It is difficult to think of Danville possessing the allurements of a city as early as 1786.









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