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SOME SUCCESSFUL AMERICANS

BY

SHERMAN WILLIAMS

FORMERLY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS AT
GLENS FALLS, N.Y.

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PREFACE

As superintendent of schools I frequently talked with boys who were in doubt as to what they should do in life, and who felt that there were very few opportunities in the business world of to-day for those without money and influence. Of course there never was a time when the demand for capable, industrious, energetic, and honest young men so far outran the supply as at present. A personal talk with a boy would generally convince him of this; but for one boy who would come and talk with me about it there were probably several others who were also thinking, but who would not come to me, and many more who were not even thinking. This led me to do something in school in the way of a study of the lives of men and women who had made a success in life in the face of what are called adverse circumstances.

When I began institute work I urged upon teachers the importance of taking up this matter, and was met with the statement that unless one had access to a fair library the work could not be done, as there was no one book that could be used to advantage; that while there were many excellent biographies and works of collective biography, there was none which dealt with both men and women, with those working in very different fields of labor, and which dealt only with those who had had to make their own way in life. It was desirable and almost necessary to

have a book which met these conditions. It was also desirable that it should deal only with Americans and with those who were no longer living, as the complete life should be studied.

I saw the force of these statements and have endeavored to make such a book as these teachers feel they need. It goes without saying that these sketches are so brief that very much must be omitted in each life. Teachers should encourage their pupils to read more complete biographies, not merely of these men and women, but of many others as well. A well-written biography is as interesting as a novel, and far more profitable reading.

SHERMAN WILLIAMS.

May 2, 1904.

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SOME SUCCESSFUL AMERICANS

TO THE READER

This little volume tells the story of a few men and women who began life under what are generally considered adverse circumstances and who yet were remarkably successful. The sketches cover a wide range of callings, extend over a considerable period of time, and represent different portions of our country.

These few men and women, however, typify a very large class. More than three fourths of the leaders in industries, professions, and other callings began life without money or influence. You can scarcely find a single manager of a great manufactory who did not come up from the ranks. Permit me to call your attention to a few who have made their way up from humble beginnings.

Philip Armour lived on a farm till he was twenty.

Oakes Ames, the great shovel manufacturer, was the son of a blacksmith.

Henry Burden, the inventor and famous maker of horseshoes, was a farmer's son.

Isaac Babbitt, inventor of the metal that bears his name, was a goldsmith.

Ephraim Bell, founder of the celebrated agricultural works and inventor of a reaper, a harvester, and a mower, began life as a carpenter.

Charles Brush, the noted electrician, spent his early years upon a farm.

George Henry Corliss, maker of the famous Corliss engines, began life as a clerk in a cotton factory.

Alexander Cassatt, president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, was a rod man in the employ of the company of which he is now president.

Charles Cheney, the great silk manufacturer, began as a clerk at fourteen and then worked at farming till middle life.

Alvin Clark, the first of the great opticians of that name, was the son of a farmer.

Jonas Chickering, the great piano maker, was the son of a blacksmith.

Samuel Colt, the noted manufacturer of firearms, went to sea as a boy before the mast, and was afterwards a dyer and bleacher in his father's factory.

Horace Claflin, the great merchant, began life as a clerk.

Andrew Carnegie began as a bobbin boy at a salary of $1.20 per week.

Henry Disston, manufacturer of the Disston saws, was a mechanic working at day wages.

William E. Dodge, the wholesale dry goods merchant, worked in a cotton mill.

Anthony Drexel, the great banker, was a poor boy working in his father's office.

Thomas A. Edison was a newsboy.

John Fritz, the nestor of the iron trade, began life as a blacksmith.

Jay Gould was brought up on a farm, and became, first, a bookkeeper, then a surveyor.

Daniel Fayerweather, who left many millions to hospitals and educational institutions, was first a farm hand, then a shoemaker, then a tin peddler.

Collis P. Huntington, the great railway magnate, supported himself from the time he was fourteen.

Peter Henderson, florist and seedsman, was apprenticed to a gardener in Scotland.

Elias Howe, inventor of the sewing machine, was the son of a farmer, and was a working mechanic.

James Harper, founder of a great publishing house, was a farmer's son, and was apprenticed to a printer.

George Pullman, founder of the great Pullman company, at seventeen was working for a country merchant.

Asa Packer, founder of Lehigh University, first worked in a tannery, then on a farm, and afterwards became a carpenter and joiner.

James Lick, of Lick University fame, was very poor when a young man, and worked in a piano manufactory.

Isaac Rich, who gave one and a half millions of dollars to Boston University, began life working in a fish stall.

Philo Remington, founder of the Remington company for the manufacture of firearms, began life as a factory hand.

John Roach, the famous shipbuilder, came to this country penniless, at the age of fourteen.

John Rockefeller began life as an assistant bookkeeper in a commission house at a salary of less than four dollars a week.

Charles Schwab began his career driving stakes at a dollar a day.

Samuel Sloan, the great railway president, was at first a clerk in an importing house.

Isaac Singer, of sewing-machine fame, was a mechanic working for daily wages.

Moses Taylor, the great merchant, began life as a clerk.

Herbert Vreeland, president of the Metropolitan Street Railway, began life on a delivery wagon, afterwards worked in a gravel pit, and then as a brakeman.

Lucy Larcom, the author, was the daughter of poor parents, and at thirteen years of age entered a cotton factory as a common operative.

George W. Childs, of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, was an errand boy. At thirteen he entered the navy, in which he remained about a year and a half; he then became a clerk in a bookstore at three dollars a week.

James A. Garfield was born in a log cabin. He worked on a farm early in life; later he was a wood chopper, and a mule driver on the canal. He earned his first dollar by planing boards.

George Peabody, the great London banker, entered a grocery store as a clerk at eleven years of age.

John Ericsson, of *Monitor* fame, was a poor boy, and early in life worked in the iron mines of Sweden.

Samuel Williston, who gave more than one and a half millions of dollars for noble purposes, began work on a farm at ten years of age, and remained there for six years at an average wage of seven dollars a month.

Daniel Webster was the son of a poor struggling farmer.

Thurlow Weed as a boy was so poor that he had to wear old bits of rag carpet tied on his feet in place of shoes and stockings. He worked in a blacksmith's shop when only eight years of age.

Elihu Burritt, the youngest of ten children, was the son of a farmer. At eighteen years of age he was apprenticed to a blacksmith.

Lucy Stone was born on a farm. Almost as soon as she could walk and count she had to help in the work, driving the cows from the pasture, dropping corn for the planting, and similar light work.

John Jacob Astor was the son of a butcher and worked with his father till he was sixteen years of age. After he had worked for himself three years he had saved only seventy-five dollars.

Henry Wilson, the noted statesman, was the son of a day laborer. At ten years of age he began work on a farm, and at twenty-one was a shoemaker and cobbler.

This list might be extended indefinitely and include famous lawyers, physicians, preachers, in fact representatives of every calling.

It is worth while to note that these successful men have been willing to begin their work by doing whatever they could get to do, that they have been industrious, prudent, economical, persistent, and temperate.

In closing I should like to call your attention to the following from Andrew Carnegie.

It is not from the sons of the millionaire or the noble that the world receives its teachers, its martyrs, its inventors, its statesmen, its poets, or even its men of affairs. It is from the cottage of the poor that all these spring. We can scarcely read one among the few "immortal names that were not born to die," or who has rendered

exceptional service to our race, who had not the advantage of being cradled, nursed, and reared in the stimulating school of poverty. There is nothing so enervating, nothing so deadly in its effects upon the qualities which lead to the highest achievement, moral or intellectual, as hereditary wealth. And if there be among you a young man who feels that he is not compelled to exert himself in order to earn and live from his own efforts, I tender him my profound sympathy. Should such a one prove an exception to his fellows, and become a citizen living a life creditable to himself and useful to the state, instead of my profound sympathy I bow before him with profound reverence; for one who overcomes the seductive temptations which surround hereditary wealth is of the "salt of the earth" and entitled to double honor.

Statue of Abraham Lincoln in Lincoln Park, Chicago

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

1809–1865

PERHAPS the most striking character in all American history is Abraham Lincoln. Few people have begun life under more unfavorable circumstances. No other person in this country beginning life under such conditions, ever accomplished so much. Such a man with such a history must always be a person of great interest to all who believe in a "government of the people, by the people, and for the people"; to all who believe that the world with its opportunities for progress should be open to every child, no matter how humble his origin.

Every boy who believes, as he should believe, that he is "the architect of his own fortune," and who is ambitious to make the most of himself, must be interested in the story of Abraham Lincoln. His early life with its hardships, its struggles, its lack of opportunity, must encourage one who begins life under much more favorable circumstances. His success under these conditions should stimulate every ambitious boy to begin the struggle of life hopefully and to continue it courageously.

Believing that the story of such a life is the birthright of every American citizen, and that it is a calamity to miss it, the writer is led to do his part in placing that story within the reach of American children.

Lincoln's Ancestry

Abraham Lincoln was the second child of Thomas and Nancy Lincoln. His mother's maiden name was Hanks. Though his parents were very poor and his father was thriftless and without ambition, they came of good ancestry. About 1640 three brothers of the name of Lincoln came to Hingham, Massachusetts, from the west of England. One of these, Samuel, was the ancestor of Abraham Lincoln. Many of Samuel's descendants were prominent men. One was a member of the Boston Tea Party and was a captain of artillery during the Revolution. A great-grandson, named Levi, a graduate of Harvard, was one of the minutemen at Cambridge. He held several local offices and was appointed Attorney-General of the United States by Jefferson; for a few months he was Secretary of State. In 1807 he was lieutenant governor of Massachusetts. In 1811 he was appointed associate justice of the United States Supreme Court by Madison, but declined to serve. For years he was considered the head of the Massachusetts bar.

His son, also named Levi, a graduate of Harvard, became governor of Massachusetts, and held other important offices. Enoch, another son, was a member of Congress for eight years and became governor of Maine.

Another son, named Mordecai, from whom Abraham was directly descended, was the proprietor of numerous iron works, sawmills, and gristmills. His son Mordecai moved to New Jersey and from there to Pennsylvania. Many of his descendants in the latter state have taken prominent positions in public life. A son of this Mordecai

moved to Virginia. He had five sons, to one of whom he gave one hundred and twenty acres of land situated in what is now Rockingham County, Virginia.

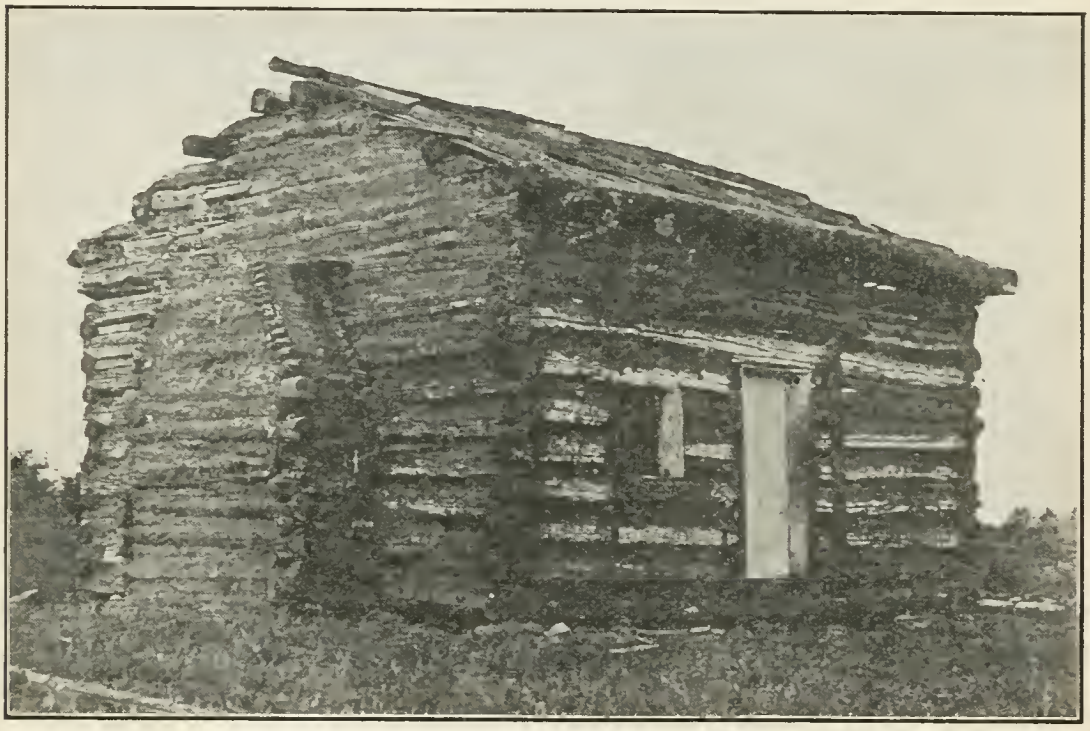
Soon afterwards rumors of a rich western land called Kentucky began to be circulated. The favorite route to this new country was through Rockingham County, and the newly arrived settler caught the fever of unrest and with his wife and family moved to Jefferson County, Kentucky. In 1778 he was killed by the Indians, leaving three sons and two daughters. The eldest son, Mordecai, inherited most of the large estate and became well-to-do. Very little is known of the second son, Josiah. The daughters married into well-known Kentucky families. The youngest son, Thomas, the father of Abraham Lincoln, was, at ten years of age, left to shift for himself, and was a wandering, laboring boy before he had learned to read.

The ancestry of the mother of Lincoln is as follows. Benjamin Hanks came to this country in 1699 and settled at Plymouth, Massachusetts. He had eleven children, one of whom, William, went to Virginia and settled near the mouth of the Rappahannock River. William had five sons, four of whom, about the middle of the eighteenth century, moved to Amelia County, Virginia, where they owned a thousand acres of land. Joseph, the youngest of these sons, married Nancy Shipley, a sister of the mother of Thomas Lincoln. About 1789 Joseph Hanks moved to Kentucky and settled near what is now Elizabethtown. His youngest daughter, Nancy, was the mother of Abraham Lincoln.

That such a man as Lincoln should spring from such ancestry is in no way remarkable.

Lincoln's Boyhood

Abraham Lincoln's father was an illiterate man who learned to write his name in a bungling sort of way after he was married. He seems to have been willing to work, but was neither thrifty nor ambitious. He learned the



Abraham Lincoln's Birthplace

trade of carpenter and cabinet maker. He married his cousin, Nancy Hanks, in 1807. Abraham, their second child, was born on the 12th of February, 1809. The name Abraham had been common in both the Lincoln and the Hanks families for generations.

The Lincolns lived far from any considerable settlement, and Abraham was a well-grown lad when he first saw a church. Both his father and his mother were religious; but religious services were rare, being confined to those held

now and then by itinerant preachers. One of these, a Baptist by the name of Elkin, aroused Abraham's interest in public speaking. Years afterwards, when Lincoln was President, he referred to Elkin as being the most remarkable man whom he knew in his boyhood.

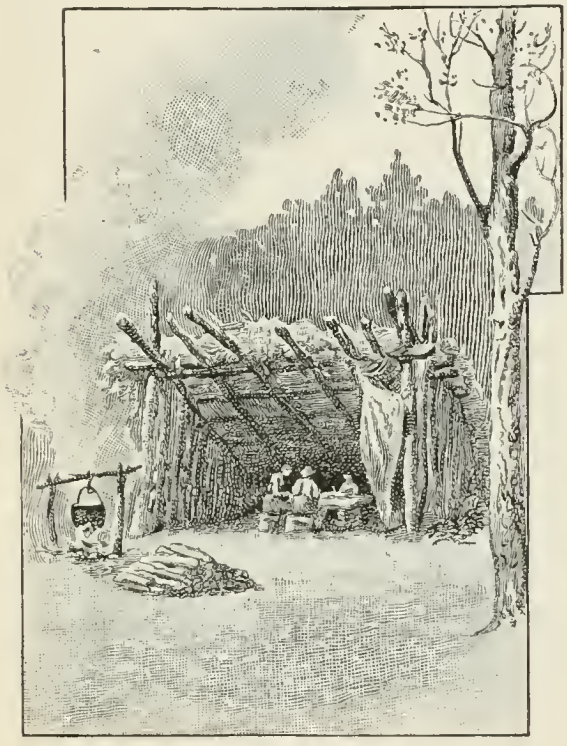
Not only the Lincolns but most of their neighbors were very poor. Thomas Lincoln gave up his trade and took to farming, and, when Abraham was about four years old, moved his family to Knob Creek. The boy now began to go to school, but the schools of that time bore little resemblance to ours. There was no regular time for the school to be in session; it might continue for a few months or a few weeks or even for a shorter time. The only thing required of the teacher was ability to manage the older boys. The schoolhouse was usually a log hut furnished only with rough benches, a teacher's desk, and a box stove or rude fireplace. Many of the pupils had no books.

It is said that young Lincoln was an apt pupil and learned readily. His mother took great pains to teach her children what she knew, and from her they learned much of Bible lore, fairy tales, and country legends. Lincoln was wonderfully familiar with the facts and with the language of the Bible. No doubt this came from his mother's training, as perhaps also did his love for story-telling.

In 1816 the Lincolns moved to Spencer, Indiana, where for nearly a year they lived in a "half-faced camp," a rude cabin inclosed on three sides, the fourth being partly screened by the skins of animals. In one corner was a rough fireplace made of sticks and clay, also a chimney of the same material. The furniture of the house was of the rudest description and of home manufacture. The cabin

which later took the place of the "half-faced camp" had no floor, door, nor window. Abraham slept on a bed of leaves in the loft. There was no stairway, but in its place were wooden pegs driven into the wall.

Lincoln was now in his eighth year. His dress consisted of a shirt of linsey-woolsey, a homespun stuff made from a mixture of cotton and wool, colored, if at all, with dyes obtained from roots and bark. He wore cowhide boots or moccasins, deerskin leggins, a hunting shirt of the same material, and a "coon-skin" cap. He never wore stockings until he was a man. Now that he was strong enough to work he was put to such tasks as bringing tools, carrying water, dropping seeds, and picking berries.



Half-Faced Camp

There was plenty of food, such as it was. Game, fish, and wild fruits were to be had in abundance. The potato was the only vegetable raised to any considerable extent. The everyday bread in the Lincoln family was corndodger, wheat cakes being a dainty reserved for Sundays and special occasions. Food was prepared in the simplest way, owing to a lack of facilities, and the Lincolns were not the only family who had none of our modern conveniences. There was no stove, the nearest approach to one being the Dutch oven. This, with an iron kettle, made up the

outfit of most kitchens, with the exception of an old piece of tin punched full of holes to serve as a grater, or, as it was then called, a "gritter." Sometimes it was used to make corn meal, but this was a slow and laborious process. Most of the dishes were pewter; the spoons were iron; the knives had horn handles. The War of 1812 had just closed. The embargo act had destroyed commerce. Few things were manufactured in this country, and those imported were too expensive for the use of the common people. Thorns were used for pins, crusts of rye bread for coffee, leaves of various herbs for tea, and corn whisky diluted with water was a common drink.

During the summer of 1818 a mysterious disease called the "milk-sick" broke out in Indiana. It seems to have been something like quick consumption. Many died of it, among the number the mother of Lincoln. There was no doctor in that distant wilderness to care for the sick, nor could a minister be found to bury the dead. Soon after the death of his mother, Lincoln wrote what he says was his first letter,—a letter asking his old friend, Parson Elkin, to come and preach a memorial sermon, which the parson did. It was a memorable occasion to Lincoln. He said of his mother, "All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother."

Thomas Lincoln was left with the care of his two children, Sarah, twelve years of age, Abraham, nine, and Dennis Hanks, eighteen months younger. It was a hard situation. The few comforts that had been known were exchanged for a home more forlorn than you can possibly imagine. But Thomas Lincoln did not allow anything to worry him long. His was too easy a nature for that.

He hoped the good Lord would send them help somehow and some day, but how and when he did not feel called upon to be concerned about. In the fall of 1819 he went to Kentucky and married Mrs. Sally Johnston, a widow with three children.

The new mother brought furnishings unknown in the Lincoln home. There were tables, chairs, a bureau, clothing, crockery, bedding, knives, forks, and many other comforts which the Lincoln family had always done without.

Abraham was ten years of age when his new mother came. They were good friends at once. Years afterwards she said of him, "He never gave me a cross word or look, and never refused, in fact or in appearance, to do anything I requested of him." He said of her, "She was a noble woman, affectionate, good, and kind."

From the time he was ten till he was twenty-three Lincoln was rarely idle. He learned to do all the kinds of work which the early settlers, wholly dependent upon themselves, must do, — to drive, to plow with the old shovel plow, to use the sickle, to thresh wheat with a flail, to fan and clean it with a sheet, and to take the grain to mill and grind it. His father taught him the rudiments of carpentry and cabinetmaking. He became one of the strongest and most popular "hands" in the vicinity. Much of the time he worked as a hired boy on some neighbor's farm for twenty-five cents a day, the wages being paid to his father. He served as hostler, plowman, wood chopper, carpenter, and helped with the "chores."

Hunting was the most common sport of the day, but one in which young Lincoln seems to have had little or no interest. He was fond of fishing, swimming, wrestling, and jumping.

He ran races at the noonday rest. He was present at every country horse race and fox chase. He enjoyed most the occasions that brought men together, — the "raising," the husking bee, the spelling school. At all these he was very popular. He was noted for his wit, his stories, his good nature, his practical jokes, and a kind of rough politeness.

Lincoln says he went to school by "littles" and not more than a year altogether; but he learned to read, to love reading, and to love good books ; and if one does that and thinks about what he reads, he is in a fair way to become well educated. Lincoln had access to few books, but they were good ones. He read them again and again and knew them thoroughly. Among them were the Bible, "Æsop's Fables," "Robinson Crusoe," "Pilgrim's Progress," a "History of the United States," Weems's "Life of Washington," and the Statutes of Indiana.

Lincoln told a friend that he read every book that he heard of in a circle of fifty miles from his home. He read nights, and mornings as soon as it was light. He made long extracts from what he read and discussed his reading with others. Mr. Jones, the storekeeper, took a Louisville paper, and Lincoln went regularly to read it. All the men and boys in the neighborhood gathered at the store and discussed the contents of the paper. Lincoln read Cooper's "Leatherstocking Tales" with rapturous delight. It is said that he had a hunger for books that was almost pathetic. He was not, however, a weak bookworm. He was fond of athletic sports, excelled any boy of his age in wrestling, and was a champion at every game of muscular skill.

At seventeen years of age Lincoln walked a long distance to hear one of the famous Breckenridges of Kentucky speak

at a murder trial. This speech seemed to arouse the latent genius of the young lad, and from that time on he practiced speaking. He would speak on any topic that had aroused the interest of the neighborhood, — road building, school tax, bounty on wolves, etc. His fondness for speech making led him to attend all the trials in the neighborhood, and to be often present at the sessions of the court held fifteen miles away.

Lincoln could never be satisfied on any question till he understood it thoroughly, nor could he give up a difficult problem till he had mastered it.

When he was eighteen or nineteen years of age Lincoln spent some months as a boatman on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. All that he saw of life in his early years, outside his own neighborhood, was on these rivers, which offered to the West of that day the only route to the outer world. This river life was peculiar. There were all sorts of craft,— steamboats, keel boats, flatboats, pirogues, timber rafts, "arks," "sleds," "Orleans boats," and "broad horns." None of these ran on any time schedule. No one was in a hurry. They stopped anywhere to let off passengers. They tied up wherever it was convenient. This experience must have widened Lincoln's ideas of life.

In the spring of 1830 the Lincolns moved to Sangamon County, Illinois. In the summer of that year the young man started out to shift for himself. He left home empty-handed. He had not even a respectable suit of clothes. He had no trade, no profession, no land, no patron, no influence, but he was strong, good-tempered, and industrious. He was already some months over twenty-one years of age. The first work he did was to split rails in payment

for enough brown jean to make a pair of trousers, splitting four hundred rails for each yard of cloth.

Lincoln was six feet four inches tall, and very proud of his height, as well as of his strength. It is said that he could outlift, outwork, and outwrestle any man he ever met. His strength won him friends, but his good nature, wit, stories, and skill in debate did far more for him.

In 1831 Lincoln went again to New Orleans and remained for a month. It was here that he first saw the horrible side of slavery,—the negroes in chains, the whippings and scourgings. In later life he often referred to this visit.

Soon after his return from New Orleans he became a clerk in a store and mill at New Salem, Illinois. It was at this time that he received the title "Honest Abe." The following incidents, characteristic of the man, show why he was regarded as being unusually honest. On one occasion he discovered that he had taken six and a quarter cents too much from a customer. After the store was closed for the day he walked three miles to return the money. On another occasion his last transaction for the day was to sell a customer half a pound of tea. In the morning he found in the scales a four-ounce weight. Seeing his mistake of the night before, he closed the store and hurried to deliver the rest of the tea.

Since leaving Indiana, Lincoln had read but little. The store life gave leisure for reading, and he began to look about for books. More than ever did he realize that one's power over men depends upon knowledge. He began the study of English, walking six miles to borrow a copy of Kirkham's Grammar, the only book on the subject in that section of the country.

Lincoln in Public Life

The Black Hawk War broke out in 1832. Lincoln enlisted and was chosen captain of his company. At the close of the war he became a candidate for the legislature, but was defeated, the only time he ever suffered defeat by a direct vote of the people. His popularity where he was known was shown by the fact that his own district, though opposed to him politically, gave him two hundred and twenty-seven out of three hundred votes.

Lincoln sought employment as a clerk, but being unable to secure it went into partnership with a man by the name of Berry and bought out, one after another, the three grocery stores of New Salem. All his leisure at this time was taken up in reading borrowed copies of Shakespeare and Burns, and in studying law, which he now undertook seriously. He bought of an emigrant a barrel partly filled with refuse. At the bottom he found a copy of Blackstone's "Commentaries," which he read with the greatest interest. His partner's dissolute habits and his own absorption in his books were fatal to business, so that before long Lincoln had saddled upon him a debt which it took him many years to pay. In 1833 he was made postmaster, but the office was worth very little financially.

The same year he was made deputy county surveyor. He knew nothing of surveying, but in six weeks he had mastered all the books he could get that treated of that subject. This is another illustration of his power of application. His surveys are said to have been remarkably accurate. His pay as surveyor was three dollars a day, a far larger sum than he had ever earned before.

In 1834 Lincoln was elected to the legislature and began to study law as a matter of business instead of pleasure. Twenty years later, when a young man asked him how to become a lawyer, he recommended the reading of certain books and then said, "Work, work, work is the main thing."

In 1836 Lincoln was reëlected to the legislature, and during the same year admitted to the practice of law. The legislature that year contained many remarkable men. One afterwards became President of the United States; another became an unsuccessful candidate for the same office; six became United States senators; eight, members of the House of Representatives; one, Secretary of the Interior; three, judges of the state Supreme Court. It is certainly remarkable that so many able men should have been at the same time members of the legislature of a young backwoods state. The influence of close association with these men during the formative period of Lincoln's life can hardly be overestimated.

It was at this session of the legislature that an event occurred which showed the thorough honesty of the man. The delegation from his county had been pledged to use all honorable efforts to secure the removal of the state capital to Springfield. The matter was put into Lincoln's hands. He was promised the support of influential men if he in turn would support another measure which he believed to be wrong. This he refused to do. The influence brought to bear upon him both by those who wished the capital at Springfield and by those interested in the other measure was very great. There was an all-night meeting of interested members. Later there was another meeting, at which there were present others who were not

members of the legislature but who were interested in one or another of the measures being considered. A long session was closed with the following declaration by Mr. Lincoln:

> You may burn my body to ashes and scatter them to the winds of heaven; you may drag down my soul to the regions of darkness and despair to be tormented forever; but you will never get me to support a measure which I believe to be wrong, although by doing so I may accomplish that which I believe is right.

At the close of this session of the legislature Lincoln moved to Springfield and became the law partner of John T. Stuart. He was elected to the legislature in 1834 and served till 1842. In 1842 he married Mary Todd, a brilliant, ambitious, and highly educated girl.

In 1841 Lincoln's friends offered to support him for the office of governor of his state, but he declined, as he wished to go to Congress. He was elected a member of the House of Representatives in 1846. At the close of his term in Congress he seemed to have done with politics. His friends wished him to take the governorship of the territory of Oregon, believing that it would soon be admitted as a state and that he could be elected to the Senate, but his wife was unwilling to go so far west.

Lincoln had not yet paid all the indebtedness incurred through the failure of the New Salem store years before; his father and mother were dependent upon him for many of the necessaries of life, and in various ways he was helping other relatives. His own family was growing and he needed to be earning money, so he at once resumed the practice of law.

Lincoln was very popular wherever he went. To all he was sympathizing and kind-hearted. Upon the circuit he

was unassuming, kind, and friendly. He was remarkably generous to young lawyers just entering upon their profession. It is said that no young lawyer ever practiced with Lincoln who did not throughout his after life have a great personal regard for him.

Lincoln had comparatively few cases of large importance. In the main they were litigations about boundary lines, deeds, damages by wandering cattle, and quarrels at county festivities. When a client came to him his first effort was to arrange matters so as to avoid a suit if possible. In a law lecture given about 1850 he said:

> Discourage litigation. Persuade your neighbors to compromise whenever you can. Point out to them how the nominal winner is often a real loser — in fees, expenses, and waste of time. As a peacemaker the lawyer has a superior opportunity of being a good man. There will still be business enough. Never stir up litigation. A worse man can scarcely be found than he who habitually overhauls the register of deeds in search of defective titles whereon to stir up a strife and put money in his pocket. A moral tone ought to be infused into the profession which should drive such men out of it.

To the astonishment of his clients and the wrath of his fellow-lawyers Lincoln was very moderate in his charges. On one occasion Judge Davis remonstrated with him, saying: "You are pauperizing this court, Mr. Lincoln; you are ruining your fellows. Unless you quit this ridiculous policy, we shall all have to go to farming." Lincoln, however, made no change in his habits in this respect. In 1847 the total earnings of Lincoln & Herndon were only about $1500. For the ten years preceding his election as President, Lincoln's earnings averaged from $2000 to $3000 a year.

The moral make-up of Lincoln is indicated by the fact that he never undertook a cause of doubtful morality. He was a very effective jury lawyer, largely because people believed him to be thoroughly honest. His knowledge of the common people and of human nature was remarkable. He made more of the equities of the case than of the technicalities of the law. His chief strength was his skill in examining witnesses. Judge Scott said of him that much of the force of his argument lay in his logical statement of the facts of the case. Besides, he had the faculty of making the jury believe that they were trying the case and that he was their assistant.

There has been a general impression that Lincoln never rose to the first rank in his profession. This has probably come from the fact that the public has been interested in his political rather than his professional career. From 1840 to 1861 he had nearly one hundred cases before the Illinois Supreme Court, though in this period he was two years in Congress and spent much time in opposing the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. This record was not exceeded by any of Lincoln's Illinois contemporaries.

Among his important cases was one for the Illinois Central Railroad, the case really involving the existence of the road. Lincoln won the case and presented a bill for $2000. The officer to whom it was presented said, "Why, this is as much as a first-class lawyer would have charged." Lincoln was incensed and withdrew the bill. Consulting with leading lawyers, they all agreed that $5000 would be a moderate charge. Lincoln sued the company for that amount and won his case. It is said that this is the only case in which he sued for a fee.

From 1849 to 1857 Lincoln gave himself up to the practice of his profession, but the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1854 aroused him as nothing up to that time seems to have done. He had early put himself on record in opposition to slavery. The Illinois legislature passed resolutions in regard to slavery of which Lincoln, then a member of the legislature, did not approve. He and Daniel Stone were the only members of the legislature opposed to them. They drew up and signed a document protesting against the action taken.

At the time of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, which repealed the Missouri Compromise, Richard Yates was a candidate for Congress from Lincoln's district. Lincoln volunteered to speak for him, the agreement being that he should make his whole argument against the Kansas-Nebraska bill. Stephen A. Douglas by his attitude on the bill aroused such antagonism that when he spoke in Chicago he was hooted from the platform. His power over men was so great, however, that he soon began to win his way again and had aroused much of the old enthusiasm when in October he went to Springfield to speak at the annual state fair. He spoke for three hours to a great crowd. At the close of his speech it was announced that Mr. Lincoln would reply to him the next day. Lincoln did so. Never had he spoken so well. He surprised those who had expected the most of him. The people were so aroused that Douglas felt compelled to reply to him on the following day. These speeches on the 3d, 4th, and 5th of October really formed the opening of the great Lincoln-Douglas debates. They made Lincoln the leader in the fight against slavery.

Twelve days after his Springfield speech Lincoln made another at Peoria. In that speech, speaking of slavery, he said:

I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world; enables the enemies of free institutions with plausibility to taunt us as hypocrites; and causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity.

Lincoln was again elected to the legislature, but resigned to try to secure his election to the United States Senate. The first vote stood: Lincoln, 44; Shields, 41; Trumbull, 5. The choice finally fell on Lyman Trumbull as a compromise. There can be little doubt that it was fortunate both for Lincoln and for the country that he was not elected, as he was left free to do the work that he could hardly have found time for had he been a senator.

A convention was held at Bloomington on May 29, 1855, for the purpose of getting all who were opposed to the Kansas-Nebraska bill to act together. There were present Whigs, Democrats, and Abolitionists. The excitement throughout the state over Kansas affairs had become intense. The new state was in the hands of a pro-slavery mob, her governor was a prisoner, her capital in ruins, her voters intimidated. Charles Sumner had been assaulted in the United States Senate. Paul Selby, who had been expected to preside over the meeting, was struck down at home by a cowardly blow from a political opponent. All these things made the meeting one of great interest and importance. A platform was adopted, delegates to the national convention were chosen, and speeches were made. All were earnest, but there was a feeling that they were still Whigs, Democrats, Abolitionists, — members of separate parties. There had not yet been spoken the word that would fuse them into one body. At this point Lincoln was

called for, and coming forward he made what many regarded as the greatest speech of his life. It has been known as the "lost speech" because it was not reported. The reporters were so carried away that they forgot to take notes. Mr. Medill of the Chicago *Tribune* was there. He said:

> I well remember that after Mr. Lincoln sat down and calm had succeeded the tempest, I waked out of a sort of hypnotic trance, and then thought of my report. There was nothing written but an abbreviated introduction. It was some sort of satisfaction to find that all the newspaper men present had been equally carried away by the excitement caused by the wonderful oration, and had made no report or sketch of the speech.

"The greatest speech ever made in Illinois, and it puts Lincoln on the track for the Presidency," was the comment made by enthusiastic Republicans. In fact, at the next national convention, held three weeks later, the first Republican national convention, Lincoln was second on the list of candidates, receiving one hundred and ten votes, though he was not a candidate, no delegates had been instructed for him, and he himself had no idea that any one would vote for him. It was a spontaneous response to his Bloomington speech, which, though not reported in words, was enthusiastically written about in all the leading Illinois papers, and was more talked about by those who were present than any other speech that had ever been made in the state. During the Fremont campaign Lincoln made more than fifty speeches, all cool, argumentative, historical. He was building for the future.

Soon after the inauguration of Buchanan, the Supreme Court of the United States, in a decision of the Dred Scott case, declared that a negro could not sue in the United

States courts and that Congress could not prohibit slavery in the territories. This decision aroused the North as nothing had done before. Douglas hastened home to calm his constituents. Lincoln answered his speeches. The two men became candidates for the United States Senate, and the fight for the control of the legislature was really a fight for the senatorship. The question at issue was that of slavery. A series of joint discussions between Lincoln and Douglas was arranged. These discussions aroused the greatest enthusiasm. Perhaps nothing of the kind in the history of politics in our country has equaled it. The Republicans of Illinois supported Lincoln with unanimity and with the greatest enthusiasm. On the evening of his nomination Lincoln made an address which he opened with the following paragraph :

> A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe that this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the house to fall, but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other.

This was the keynote of Lincoln's campaign. It was followed by the famous charge of conspiracy in which Lincoln charged that Pierce, Buchanan, Chief Justice Taney, and Douglas had carried out a carefully prepared plan to legalize the institution of slavery in all the states, old as well as new. This charge was argued with great skill.

In the second of the joint debates with Douglas, Lincoln asked him this question, " Can the people of a United States territory in any lawful way, against the wishes of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits prior to the formation of a state constitution ? " Lincoln

had consulted with several of his friends before asking the question and they had all counseled against it, saying that Douglas would say Yes and thus secure his election to the United States Senate. Lincoln said that the question would put Douglas in an embarrassing position. If he answered No, the people of Illinois would never elect him to the Senate; if he said Yes, the South would never support him for the Presidency. Events showed the wisdom of Lincoln's course. Douglas did answer Yes. The people of Illinois did elect him to the Senate, and the South refused to support him for the Presidency at the next election, which resulted in two Democratic tickets and the election of Lincoln. In a word, Lincoln won the Presidency by losing the senatorship. Like all great men he was able and willing to sacrifice the present for the sake of the future.

In the fall of 1859 Lincoln made a speech at Cooper Union in New York City to an audience that was notable even for New York. There were present such men as William Cullen Bryant, Horace Greeley, and David Dudley Field. The speech made a great impression. In the course of it Lincoln said, "Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it."

This speech was followed by others in New England which made Lincoln better and more favorably known in the East and contributed not a little towards giving him the nomination for the Presidency. This is no place to give an account of the struggle between the friends of Lincoln, Seward, and others at the national convention. Lincoln was nominated and elected.

Lincoln as President

Before Lincoln's inauguration several of the states had seceded. Others were threatening to do so. The Republicans were divided in opinion as to what should be done. Lincoln's life was threatened and his friends insisted that he should go to Washington at another time than had been planned. There was much feeling over cabinet positions, as is likely always to be the case. Not a few said that Lincoln would be simply the tool of Seward; but the men appointed to cabinet positions were those whom Lincoln had determined upon months before.

Lincoln closed his first inaugural address as follows:

> I am loath to close. We are not enemies but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break the bonds of our affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

The general feeling that Lincoln would be President in name only — a feeling which Seward shared, thinking, apparently, that he as Secretary of State would be the controlling power in the new administration — was soon dissipated. Perhaps no President of the United States ever so completely overshadowed his cabinet as did Lincoln, although it was made up of experienced and remarkably able men.

For a long time Lincoln was in doubt as to the wisdom of the Emancipation Proclamation, which had been discussed in the cabinet and which was a matter that many

people had close at heart. He heard all parties on the question and gave it the most careful consideration, finally issuing the proclamation on the 1st of January, 1863, settling a question that had long perplexed him.

At the dedication of the national cemetery at Gettysburg the oration was given by Edward Everett, the most polished speaker of his time. It is now forgotten. Lincoln spoke two minutes and said that which will always be remembered. These are his words:

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the great task remaining before us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth.

Lincoln was tender-hearted in the extreme. There are numberless instances to prove this. He could never resist the appeals of wives and mothers of soldiers who had got

into trouble. The following are a few illustrations of many, many cases.

Let the execution of —— be stayed until further orders.

A. LINCOLN.

Postpone the execution of —— two weeks. Hear what his friends have to say in mitigation and report to me. A. LINCOLN.

Suspend the execution of —— until further orders, and in meantime send me a record of his trial. A. LINCOLN.

The following extract from a letter is characteristic.

I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from your grief for a loss so overwhelming, but I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation which may be found in the thanks of the republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and the lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

"The war is over" was the announcement made on the 14th of April, 1865. The edition of the morning papers on the 15th stated that the President of the United States was mortally wounded. Two hours later his death was announced.

During the time that Lincoln was President he was maligned, abused, vilified, and ridiculed as perhaps no other man had ever been, but at his death all the nations of the earth paid tribute to his character. As the years have gone by the respect in which his memory is held has continually grown and deepened, till his place in history as one of the great benefactors of the world is universally recognized.

The feeling that Lincoln had done his work, and the regret that he could not have survived its accomplishment, is perhaps best expressed in the following poem by Walt Whitman.

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rock, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring.

But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells,
Rise up — for you the flag is flung — for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths — for you the shores a-crowding.
For you they call, the surging mass, their eager faces turning.

Here, Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arms, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchored safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won.

Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells!
But I with mournful tread
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

Peter Cooper

PETER COOPER

1791–1883

Peter Cooper, manufacturer, inventor, and philanthropist, was born on the 12th of February, 1791, in New York, which city he saw grow from a town of twenty-seven thousand inhabitants to the most important city of the New World, with a population exceeding a million.

Peter Cooper came of patriotic stock. His great-great-grandfather, Obadiah Cooper, came from England about 1662 and settled at Fishkill-on-the-Hudson. His father, John Cooper, served in the Revolution for four years as a lieutenant in the New York militia. His mother, Margaret Campbell, was the daughter of General Campbell, who served throughout the Revolution.

At the close of the Revolution Peter's father established himself as a hatter in New York City. He prospered, and accumulated what was for those days considerable property, but, like many another, he was not willing to let well enough alone. Instead of caring for his rapidly growing business in the city, he sought for an opportunity to make a home in the country, moved to Peekskill, which was then thought to have a great future, established a small hat factory, and opened a country store. Customers came from the surrounding country and for a time he prospered. An earnest Methodist, he built a church and invited all traveling

Methodist ministers to make his home their stopping place. The resources of the family were taxed to the utmost to care for the numerous visitors.

Money being scarce, few of the customers of the store or factory were able to pay in cash, so the good-hearted but improvident Mr. Cooper trusted the farmers, and his little fortune dwindled away in spite of hard work on the part of every member of the family. Little Peter was put at work in the factory pulling the hair out of rabbit skins before he was eight years old. This was the beginning of a long life of ceaseless labor, lightened by less than a year at school, all told. But many boys of his time who afterwards became successful men saw very little of schools.

Hoping to better the fortunes of the family, John Cooper began the brewing of ale. Peter delivered the full kegs and brought back the empty ones. This business, like the other, proving unsuccessful, the family moved through what was then almost a wilderness to Catskill, where Mr. Cooper engaged in the manufacture of brick, at which Peter as usual worked early and late.

But it seemed that nobody wanted brick. Hard work could not insure success to a hopeless enterprise. The family grew steadily poorer. Finally their debts were paid by Peter's grandmother, and the family moved to Brooklyn, then a little village of two thousand inhabitants, where they again undertook the business of brewing and again made a failure of it. The family moved once more, this time to Newburg, and for the third time entered the brewing business. This time it was a partial success, owing to the hard work and good management of Peter, who was now old enough to help in directing the business.

Peter was now sixteen years old. From his earliest recollection his life had been a hard and at times almost hopeless struggle. He had been at school but little. He had never had a real holiday. But the experience which would have crushed some was the training which led to his final success, for it gave him fixed habits of industry, economy, and perseverance.

Peter was always of an inventive turn of mind. He made a sort of washing machine for use in his own home. This was probably his first invention. He took an old shoe apart to see how it was put together, and after that made the family shoes and slippers, which were said to be as good as those in common use. Once he made a toy wagon and sold it for six dollars. In various ways he managed to save four dollars more. Ten dollars seemed to him an immense sum and he was at a loss to know what to do with it. Finally upon the advice of a relative he bought lottery tickets. They drew blanks, a result which he afterwards declared to be the most fortunate event of his life, as it kept him forever after from trying to make money through chance.

After this simple life of toil and hardship, Peter Cooper went to New York at seventeen years of age as apprentice to John Woodward, a carriage builder. He received twenty-five dollars a year and his board. On this he not only lived but even saved some money. He was at this time ignorant, uncouth, and awkward, but he was a thoughtful lad and had many shrewd ideas. Even at this early day he decided that the American people were willing to pay a high price for an extra quality of goods.

While learning his trade Peter took up ornamental wood carving, and earned some extra money by working at it out

of business hours. He also made several inventions, one of them of considerable value. This was a machine for mortising hubs, — a work which till then had been done by hand. His prudence and economy pleased Mr. Woodward so much that, when Peter was twenty-one, he said to him: "Peter, you have done good work for me. I will build you a shop and set you up in business for yourself. You may pay me when you can." This was highly complimentary and a very tempting offer, but Peter's boyhood experience had given him a horror of debt, so he declined it.

At the close of his apprenticeship he went to Hempstead to visit a brother, and while there secured employment in a factory for making machines for shearing cloth. He received a dollar and a half a day, which was very high wages for that time. At the end of three years he had saved enough money to enable him to purchase the right to make and use, in the state of New York, a patented machine for shearing cloth. He sold the first county right for these machines for five hundred dollars to Mr. Vassar of Poughkeepsie, the founder of Vassar College. In later years Mr. Cooper liked to tell how elated he was over this sale.

On his return from Poughkeepsie he stopped at Newburg to visit his parents. He found the family in great distress. His father had become involved in financial difficulties and was about to be sold out of house and home. Peter met the most pressing debts and became responsible for the others, which he finally had to pay.

About the time that he began the manufacture and sale of the cloth-shearing machines he married Miss Bedell, a lady of Huguenot descent. No act of Mr. Cooper's long and prosperous life proved more fortunate than this. She

was an excellent wife and mother, and for the fifty-six years that they lived together fulfilled all the duties of life in the most exemplary manner.

Many improvements in the cloth-shearing machine were made by its inventor, and the venture proved a very profitable one. The War of 1812, which stopped all commerce with England, greatly increased the manufacture of woolen goods in this country and so made a large sale for this machine. When at the close of the war the demand ceased, Mr. Cooper had accumulated sufficient means to enable him to go into other business.

Peter Cooper's payment of his father's debts was characteristic of the man. He had the highest sense of honor. In his old age he boasted that during a business career of more than sixty years there was never a month nor a week when every man working for him did not get his pay, though at times he had as many as twenty-five hundred in his employ. When it is remembered that during this long period there were several remarkable financial panics, — times when nearly every bank in the country suspended payment, — Mr. Cooper's financial integrity will be understood.

When the demand for cloth-shearing machines ceased, Mr. Cooper began the manufacture of cabinet ware and furniture. He soon sold this business and bought a twenty years' lease of two houses and six lots in New York where the Bible House now stands. Here he built four large wooden dwelling houses. Imagine wooden dwellings in that place now! He was successfully engaged in the grocery business for the next three years, but this was not the business for which he was best fitted. Long before he had held that the American people were willing to pay high

prices for excellent goods. He saw that this country did not make the best quality of goods. No satisfactory glue was made by Americans. He bought a twenty-one years' lease of a tract of land on what is now the section from Thirty-First to Thirty-Fourth streets but which was then far out of town on the old "Middle Road." Here he began the manufacture of glue, oil, whiting, prepared chalk, and isinglass. His factory stood where Park Avenue Hotel now stands. Through the excellence and cheapness of his product he soon controlled practically the whole trade of the country in glue and isinglass. His success was due not only to his inventive skill but also to his energy and industry.

For years he carried on his work without bookkeeper, agent, or salesman. He was at his factory at daylight to start the fires and prepare for the day's work. He went about with a team to gather the hoofs of slaughtered cattle. At noon he drove into the city to make necessary purchases. All his evenings were spent at home, where he found time to keep his books, answer correspondents, and study new inventions. In course of time the business grew to be so extensive and complicated that one man could no longer attend to it, and he associated with him his son Edward and his son-in-law, Abram S. Hewitt.

When his lease of the New York property expired the business had so grown that a much larger plant was necessary. Ten acres of land were bought in Brooklyn, on Maspeth Avenue, where the business is still carried on.

Mr. Cooper was too versatile and too energetic a man to confine his thoughts and energies to a single subject. For several years he had studied the iron industry of the country, and thought that he saw how it could be wonderfully

improved. In 1828 he bought three thousand acres of land within the city limits of Baltimore, on which he erected the Canton Iron Works. This was the first great enterprise of the kind in our country. At this time the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad was in process of construction. There were many difficulties to be overcome, the chief ones being heavy grades and sharp curves. Mr. Cooper's venture could not be a success if the road should be a failure. The English engineer Stephenson had said that locomotives could not be run on curves of a radius of less than seven hundred and fifty feet, but on this road was a curve with a radius of only one hundred and fifty feet. Mr. Cooper did not believe that the limit of invention had been reached. He planned and built a locomotive, the first in America which would make the required curve, thus saving the Baltimore and Ohio road from bankruptcy and himself from great loss.

A few years later Mr. Cooper sold the Canton Iron Works at a great advance on their cost, and took his pay in stock of the Baltimore and Ohio road at $45 a share, the par value being $100. Some years later he sold his stock for $230 a share. Nearly everything that Mr. Cooper undertook prospered, not because he was fortunate but because he studied conditions long and carefully before going into an undertaking. After selling his Canton property Mr. Cooper engaged in the manufacture of iron in New York, and succeeded in using anthracite coal in puddling iron. He also manufactured wire in Trenton, New Jersey, and operated at Philipsburg, Pennsylvania, the largest blast furnaces then in existence. In order to control the manufacture he bought the Andover iron mines and built a railroad eight miles long to bring the ore to

the furnaces. The whole plant was afterwards known as the Ironton Iron Works. It was here that the first wrought-iron beams for fireproof buildings were made.

Mr. Cooper was Mr. Field's ablest helper in building the Atlantic cable. When others became discouraged and advised abandoning the enterprise, he never lost heart. For twenty years he was president of the New York, Newfoundland and London Telegraph Company, and to him, as much as to any one man, is due the success of the Atlantic cable. Although the first one ceased to work after four or five hundred messages had been sent, and the second was lost when nearly laid, Mr. Cooper's courage did not fail him. He saw that the work of the first cable had demonstrated the practicability of the scheme and that success depended only upon working out details.

Mr. Cooper was always deeply interested in public affairs, particularly in the affairs of his own city. He served one year as alderman and three years as assistant alderman. He was instrumental in getting paid fire and police departments, a good water supply, and free schools. In the latter he took a great and lasting interest. He was a member of the first board of commissioners of public schools.

He was an enthusiastic supporter of the war for the Union, being the first man to pay money towards a war loan. Being too old to serve himself, he sent about twenty substitutes.

He believed that the general government should issue paper money exclusively, and holding these views, consented to become the candidate of the Greenback party for the Presidency.

Cooper Union

Cooper Union

Mr. Cooper's experience as a struggling apprentice had shown him the needs and the limitations of apprentices. No doubt it was his interest in this class that led to the establishment of Cooper Union. He wished to help those apprentices who tried to help themselves. He also wished to provide innocent and instructive amusements to take the place of those that were coarse or vicious. In 1854 he began the erection of a six-story, fireproof building. Fully completed and equipped it cost Mr. Cooper, with the land it occupied, more than $900,000.

Cooper Union was established for the advancement of science and art. At an annual meeting of the trustees Mr. Cooper said:

> Feeling, as I always have, my own want of education, and more especially my own want of scientific knowledge, as applicable to the various callings in which I have been engaged, it was this want of my own, which I felt so keenly, that led me, in deep sympathy for those who I knew would be subject to the same wants and inconveniences that I had encountered — it was this feeling which led me to provide an institution where a course of instruction would be open and free to all who felt a want of scientific knowledge, as applicable to any of the useful purposes of life.
>
> Having started in life with naked hands and an honest purpose, I persevered through long years of trial and effort to obtain the means to erect this building, which is now entirely devoted, with all its rents and revenue, of every name and nature, to the advancement of science and art. Believing, as I do, that science is a rule or law of God by which the movements of the material creation are rendered intelligible to man; that science itself is nothing more nor less than a knowledge of this law or rule actually demonstrated by the experience of mankind; believing this, I have given the labors of a long life to the

advancement and diffusion of scientific knowledge, feeling assured that when Christianity itself is felt in all its purity, power, and force, when it is relieved of all its creeds and systems of human device, it will then be found to be a simple system — a science or rule of life to guide and regulate the action of mankind.

It is difficult to estimate the value of Cooper Union ; this great institution with its lecture hall, where instruction on a great variety of subjects is absolutely free, its library, its reading room, its day and evening classes in engineering, chemistry, natural philosophy, photography, telegraphy, wood engraving, painting, and many other subjects. It is impossible to tell how many have here had their first inspiration in life, and how far reaching have been the consequences.

The reception of the news of Mr. Cooper's death showed what the world thinks of a good and unselfish man. People of all classes mourned his death. Ministers of all creeds praised him. Thousands paid personal respect to his memory. Courts, city councils, and legislatures adjourned, and business houses were closed on the day of his funeral. Three thousand five hundred students of Cooper Union dropped flowers on his coffin.

The life of such a man as Peter Cooper is inspiring. Contrast the life of a man who strives with untiring industry to accumulate a fortune to be used in doing good to his fellow-men with the life of one who accumulates a fortune by questionable means for selfish purposes and with nothing else in mind. Mr. Cooper will long be remembered. His good work will continue indefinitely. In no fair sense can he be said to be dead.

'T is ever wrong to say a good man dies.

Mary Lyon

MARY LYON

1797–1849

On the 28th of February, 1797, in the little town of Buckland, amid the mountains of western Massachusetts, was born one who was, all things considered, perhaps the most remarkable woman our country has produced. To Mary Lyon is due far greater honor than has yet been accorded her.

She was the fifth of seven children, only one of whom was a boy. They lived in a little one-story farmhouse. The father, Aaron Lyon, a good and earnest man, beloved by all his neighbors, struggled to win from a sterile Massachusetts farm support for a numerous family. He died at the age of forty-five, leaving his family well-nigh helpless. Mary was then not quite six years old.

The mother was a remarkable woman. She carried on the farm, supported the children, and kept the family together. Though she worked early and late she was always cheerful. There was no money for candy or toys for her little ones, but they always had a beautiful flower garden, which Mrs. Lyon said cost only a little extra work, and there was fruit in abundance. In after years Mary said, "No such strawberries ever grew anywhere else, never such rareripes, so large and so yellow, and never were peaches so delicious and so fair as grew on that favored farm."

One by one Mary's sisters married and left home. When Mary was fourteen her mother married again and moved to the state of New York, taking the two youngest girls with her. Mary remained and kept house for her brother, who was then twenty-three years of age. Later her brother married, but she made her home with him until she was twenty-one, when he moved to New York and the beloved home was given up.

Mary Lyon's opportunities for gaining an education were very limited. In her early days she had but little schooling. While she was her brother's housekeeper she received a dollar a week for her services. She used this money in buying books and preparing for more advanced education. She also earned, by spinning and weaving for the neighbors, some additional money, which was saved for the time when she could attend school.

There was little in her surroundings that tended to stimulate the young girl. No one in her town had ever been distinguished for education or for any accomplishment. It would not have been strange had she led the life of those around her. But she early showed that she possessed extraordinary ability. She had a quick mind and a memory that was phenomenal. In four days she learned what other pupils took a term to master. She committed the rules of Adams's Latin Grammar in three days. She made similar progress in arithmetic. She was fond of school and in love with learning, but the poverty of the family was so great that but little of her time could be spared for study. The greater part of her day was spent in sewing, knitting, and spinning.

When her brother married she was free to give her time wholly to securing the desired education. She taught for

a while for seventy-five cents a week and saved all the money. She also worked during her spare hours at sewing, spinning, and weaving. A friend said of her, "She is all intellect and does not know that she has a body to care for."

When she was twenty years old she had saved enough money to enable her to enter Sanderson Academy at Ashfield. This was the first good school she had ever attended. At the end of one term her money was all gone, but her work had been so remarkable that the trustees offered her free tuition for another term. She was by far the best scholar in the school. One of her teachers said, "I should like to see what she would make if she could be sent to college." But in those days there was not a college in all this broad land of ours that would open its doors to a woman. She left this school to engage in teaching, which she expected to make her life work. She was known as the most gifted pupil who had ever attended the academy. Between terms she studied, giving especial attention to one subject at a time. She spent some time studying science in the family of the Reverend Edward Hitchcock, afterwards president of Amherst College. She also devoted some time to drawing, painting, penmanship, and other subjects.

At twenty-four years of age, having saved some money, she attended a school at Byfield, kept by the Reverend Joseph Emerson. Immediately after completing her year at Byfield she was appointed an assistant teacher at Sanderson Academy, where she had once been a pupil. This was remarkable, because no woman had ever before held the position.

A little later, Miss Grant, one of the teachers at Byfield, started a school at Derry, New Hampshire, and chose Miss Lyon as her assistant. She was very happy in her work

there, but as the sessions were held in the summer only, she opened a school in her native town of Buckland. She had twenty-five pupils the first term, and ninety the last. A building was erected for the school. The pupils were boarded for a dollar and a quarter a week, and Miss Lyon charged twenty-five cents a week for tuition. In this way people of little means were enabled to secure an education.

She was asked to locate there permanently, and might have done so had not Miss Grant, who had had the summer school at Derry, opened a school at Ipswich, Massachusetts, and invited Miss Lyon to become her assistant. For six years they had a large and successful school. Miss Lyon proved to be a popular and stimulating teacher. She would often say:

> Young ladies, you are here at great expense. Your board and tuition cost a great deal, and your time ought to be worth more than both; but in order to get an equivalent for the money you are spending, you must be systematic, and that is impossible unless you have a regular hour for rising. . . . Persons who run around all day for the half hour they have lost in the morning never accomplish much. You may know them by the rip in the glove, a string pinned to the bonnet, a shawl left on the balustrade, which they had no time to hang up, they were in such a hurry to catch their lost thirty minutes. You will see them opening their books and trying to study at the time of general exercises in school, but it is a fruitless race, they will never overtake their lost half hour.

Mount Holyoke

It was while teaching at Ipswich that Miss Lyon formed the idea of establishing a school for the higher education of women. There was a prejudice against schools for girls. Many prominent people thought it wrong for girls to have

the same advantages in education as boys. Very few sympathized with Miss Lyon in her views regarding higher education for women. She was told that girls would never become lawyers, or doctors, or ministers, and that therefore they had no need of a higher education. She was asked if she thought women would be better housekeepers, or wives, or mothers, if they were liberally educated. In vain she talked with college presidents and learned ministers. Nearly all of them were without interest in the matter. But Mary Lyon was not one to become discouraged by opposition. She tried, but without success, to have the school at Ipswich endowed. For two years she thought and prayed over the matter.

She had the greatest sympathy for poor girls, and she wished for "a seminary which should be so moderate in its expenses as to be open to the daughters of farmers and artisans, and to teachers who might be mainly dependent for their support on their own exertions." She said that a school should be established in which the cost of tuition, room, board, lights, fuel, and washing should not exceed sixty dollars a year.

When about thirty years of age she received an offer of marriage that would mean for her a happy life. She said, "If I take the husband, I cannot have the seminary." She did not hesitate in her choice, and it is well for our country that she thought the seminary of the greater importance. Had she married, it is probable that higher education for women would have been delayed for a generation. Certainly there would have been no Mount Holyoke Seminary, and the inestimable good which that institution has done would have been lost.

Only here and there a person whom Mary Lyon consulted believed it wise to establish such a school as she had in mind. The more opposition she met with, the more determined she became. To a friend she wrote:

> During the past year my heart has so yearned over the adult female youth in the common walks of life that it has sometimes seemed as though a fire were shut up in my bones.

She resigned her position at Ipswich and went from house to house collecting funds for the new school. Women gave the first thousand dollars. In spite of indifference, opposition, and ignorance, the necessary funds were finally raised, and on the 3d of October, 1836, the corner stone of the building was laid. Miss Lyon wrote:

> It was a day of deep interest. The stones and brick and mortar speak a language which vibrates through my very soul. Had I a thousand lives I could sacrifice them all in suffering and hardship for the sake of Mount Holyoke Seminary. Did I possess the greatest fortune, I could readily relinquish it all, and become poor, and more than poor, if its prosperity should demand it.

Miss Lyon said that her salary should never be more than two hundred dollars a year with board, and no assistant could expect more than she received. She said that the girls, whether rich or poor, must do their part of the housework. Her ideas were ridiculed. People said that teachers could not be had for such salaries, and that girls would not go to school and do housework. The history of Mount Holyoke is the answer to these criticisms.

The school was opened in the fall of 1837. The grounds and buildings had cost about $70,000. While there were accommodations for only about eighty-five students, more

than three hundred applied for admission, and one hundred and sixteen were present at the opening. Three years later the buildings were sufficiently enlarged to accommodate two hundred and fifty students.

Students came not from Massachusetts alone but from nearly every state in the Union and from several foreign countries. While Miss Lyon had in mind the young women who were unable to attend expensive schools, and for that reason the expense was limited to one dollar and a quarter a week, from the outset there were many girls from wealthy families, and pupils left other popular and fashionable schools to attend Mount Holyoke. The intellectual tone and moral standing of the school were unexcelled.

Mary Lyon Hall

Miss Lyon died March 5, 1849, having contracted a contagious disease which broke out in the school a month before. The mourning caused by her death was widespread. All her pupils were her friends, and they were to be found in every state in the Union and in many foreign lands.

Few have done so much for others as did Mary Lyon, and still fewer have started movements that continue to grow and increase in usefulness. Her work has gone steadily on. The school has grown from year to year. Nearly half a million dollars is now invested in the institution. More than seven thousand students have been educated there, and nearly three fourths of them have become teachers or missionaries.

Mary Lyon is dead, but who can say when her influence will cease? Every American girl who has received or is receiving a higher education owes her a debt of gratitude which can never be paid but which may be recognized by "lending a hand" in forwarding the work which she began.

The work of Mary Lyon will be very inadequately measured if one considers merely her life work and the influence of Mount Holyoke, great as both of these are. The record of her life will ever stand as an inspiration for every ambitious American girl, and thousands will live higher, nobler, and more useful lives because of hers. That influence will never cease.

Few girls begin life under more unfavorable circumstances or have to surmount more formidable obstacles than did Mary Lyon. What girl would not think her life a grand success were she able to accomplish even a hundredth part as much good as did Miss Lyon?

She gave her life for others, that those others might know and have fuller, sweeter, and richer lives. The gift was not in vain. She aroused and inspired thousands in her lifetime, and they in turn touched others; so that we now have not only Mount Holyoke College but scores of similar institutions, all doing a grand work; and this has

come about sooner and the work is being better done because Mary Lyon lived, and lived the life she did.

Mary Lyon, Catherine Beecher, and Emma Willard are great names in the educational history of our country, but that of Mary Lyon is easily first.

One of the few immortal names
That were not born to die.

Horace Greeley

HORACE GREELEY

1811–1872

Horace Greeley, the third of seven children, was born on a farm near Amherst, New Hampshire, February 3, 1811. His father, Zaccheus Greeley, was of Scotch-Irish lineage, the stock from which so many successful Americans have sprung; while his mother, whose maiden name was Woodburn, was a woman of uncommon energy. She not only cared for the family but also worked in the garden, and on occasion in the field; it was even said of her that she could rake more hay than any man in the community.

Mrs. Greeley had a liking for books, and in the long evenings she would read aloud or tell stories or sing to her children. From her, Horace inherited his love of study. He says that she was his first teacher, and that the stories she told awakened in him a thirst for knowledge and a great interest in history. He did not remember the time when he could not read. His love for learning was instinctive, and at two years of age he would pore over the Bible and ask questions about the letters. He could read any child's book at three years of age, and any book at four.

He never attended other than a public school, and that no great length of time. He received the greater part of his schooling in a small one-story building containing one room, with two windows, a door at one end and a great

fireplace at the other. Along the sides of the room were a slanting shelf that served as a desk, and seats made of "slabs" supported by sticks set in auger holes. These seats had no backs. The girls sat on one side of the room and the boys on the other. The schoolhouse was unpainted and had no pictures or decorations. Plain as it was, it was not unlike most of the rural schools of the time.

The farm on which Horace Greeley was born consisted of fifty acres of rocky, wet, and uneven land four or five miles from the village of Amherst. The farmhouse, halfway up a high, steep, rocky hill, was small and unattractive. The Greeleys' neighbors were hard-working farmers, neither wealthy nor in want. It was a community of plain people with no ideas of inequality. The district school gave them their education, the village paper their ideas of the outside world. They were orthodox in their religious views and regular in their attendance at church. It was amidst such surroundings and under such conditions that young Greeley passed the first few years of his life.

He began school at three years of age and soon led his class in reading and spelling, studies in which he always excelled. He was a delicate but not a sickly child, towheaded, odd-mannered, with a lisping, whining voice. Then and all through his life he was good-natured and not easily provoked.

There were some twenty books in his father's house, which he had read again and again before he was six years old. Among the number was "Pilgrim's Progress." He had read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. It is said that he could spell every word in the Bible, but this, no doubt, is an exaggeration. As he grew older he borrowed and

read all the books to be had in a radius of seven miles. In the daytime he would lie under the shade of a tree and read for hours at a time, forgetting even his dinner, noting nothing till darkness came on. He would gather pine knots to give light for his evening reading, and be so absorbed that the neighbors would come and go, eating apples and drinking cider, without his having been conscious of their

Horace Greeley's Birthplace

presence. At a very early age he began to read the *Farmer's Cabinet*, a weekly paper published at Amherst, containing religious, agricultural and miscellaneous selections and a few brief editorials.

The father of Horace Greeley was no better financier than was his illustrious son in later years. Before Horace was ten years old his father had speculated in lumber in a small way and become bankrupt. His home and furniture

were sold by the sheriff, and he was obliged to leave the state to escape arrest. Some of the debts that were not settled then were paid by the son thirty years later.

A few weeks after the sale of their home the Greeleys moved to Rutland County, Vermont. The whole family and all the household goods that the law had left them were carried in one sleigh load. They were very poor, so poor that the children ate their porridge together from a single tin pan, sitting on the floor as they ate. In spite of their poverty they were happy, and worked hard and saved some money. They lived in the cheapest possible way. It is said that in the summer Horace wore only three articles of apparel, — a straw hat, usually in bad condition, a tow shirt, never buttoned, and a pair of linsey-woolsey trousers short in the legs, with one leg always shorter than the other. Possibly it was this life that led to Mr. Greeley's indifference in the matter of dress in later years.

Greeley's Apprenticeship

When only five or six years old Greeley had determined to become a printer, and he was grievously disappointed because at the age of eleven he was refused a position on account of his youth.

When he was fifteen an advertisement appeared in the *Northern Spectator*, published at East Poultney, Vermont, calling for an apprentice. One day Mr. Bliss, the manager of the paper, heard a thin, whining voice say, "Are you the man that carries on the printing office?"

Mr. Bliss saw before him a tow-headed, awkward, uncouth, ill-clad, large-headed youth.

"Do you want a boy to learn the trade?" the lad went on.

"Do you want to learn to print?" said Mr. Bliss.

"I've had some notion of it," was the reply.

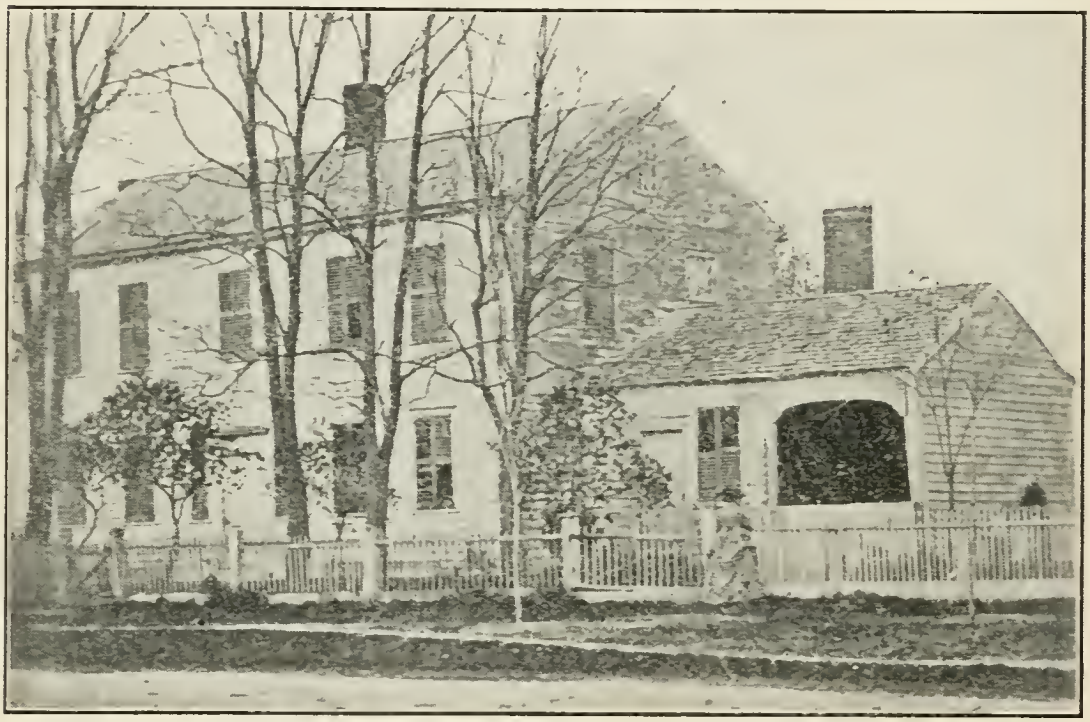
Mr. Bliss asked some questions, among others what the boy had read, to which Horace replied, "A little of 'most everything." "Further questions," said Mr. Bliss, "showed that he had a mind of no common order, that he had acquired an intelligence far beyond his years, and that he possessed a degree of single-mindedness, truthfulness, and common sense, which commanded respect and regard."

According to the terms of apprenticeship Horace was to work till he was twenty years old and to receive only his board for the first half year and his board and forty dollars a year for the remainder of the time.

There was a village library at East Poultney that gave Horace better opportunities for reading than he had ever before enjoyed, and he afterwards said that he never read with so much profit. He joined the village lyceum and was a frequent speaker at its meetings. His extensive reading, marvelous memory, and logical mind made him an effective debater. Though he had a high-pitched and whining voice, and possessed none of the graces of an orator, he was an interesting and fluent speaker.

People often made sport of young Greeley because of his poor clothing. This he always took good-naturedly, saying, "It is better to wear my old clothes than to run into debt for new ones." During the whole of his apprenticeship he lived in the most economical manner possible, sending all his savings to his father to help make a home in the wilderness of Pennsylvania, west of the Alleghanies. It is said that

Horace Greeley did not have fifty dollars' worth of clothes during the whole time from his birth till he was twenty-one years of age. He served as apprentice for five years, and in that time he visited his parents but twice. Each time he walked nearly the whole distance, about six hundred miles.



The House at East Poultney Vt., in which I learned what I know about Printing.

Horace Greeley

Greeley not only became the best printer in the office, but did much toward editing the paper, some of the numbers being almost wholly his work. In Poultney he was regarded as a walking encyclopedia, and well-informed men referred to him questions of history and politics. He was

positive in his convictions and ready to talk on any subject. He rarely attended church, usually spending Sunday in reading. He was a stanch Universalist, an ardent Whig, and a radical anti-mason. He never used tobacco or alcoholic drinks.

Early in the fifth year of his apprenticeship the paper on which he worked was discontinued and he was free to do what he chose. He had but little clothing and only twenty dollars in money; but he had a good trade, good habits, a strong, well-trained mind, and a great fund of information.

He first went to visit his parents and spent a few weeks with them. Then he worked a short time at Jamestown, New York, but was unable to get any pay, so went to Lodi, where he worked for a few weeks for very small wages. After this he went to Erie, Pennsylvania, and entered the office of the Erie *Gazette*, receiving twelve dollars a month and board. During the seven months he remained here he spent only six dollars. Of the eighty-four dollars earned during his seven months at Erie he kept fifteen and gave the rest to his father. After a few more days at home he went to New York in search of employment. Walking part of the time, and riding on canal boats and towboats when he could, Greeley reached New York on August 18, 1831, at six o'clock in the morning.

Many men who have achieved success in New York have boasted of their humble beginnings, but it may be doubted if any one ever began there under more unfavorable circumstances than did Horace Greeley. He had ten dollars in money, a few shabby clothes, and not a friend or an acquaintance in the whole city. He did not know a human being within two hundred miles. Neither his person nor his

address was calculated to give any one a favorable impression. He had no letters of recommendation, no certificate of his skill as a printer. In addition to all these hindrances he had little faculty for pushing himself and making his own way.

He engaged board for two dollars and a half a week at a combination of boarding house and grogshop kept by one McGolrick. For three days he sought employment in vain. His money was almost gone and he had resolved to leave the city, when a young Irishman told him that printers were wanted at John T. West's. Horace was at the place at half past five Monday morning, and sat on the steps nearly an hour and a half before the doors opened. One of the first of the workmen to come was a young Vermonter, who took an interest in Greeley because they came from the same state. He exerted himself in Greeley's behalf; but even with this advantage he would not have secured a place had there not been a job on hand that no other printer would take, — that of the composition of a polyglot Testament. It was very slow work and the best he was ever able to do by working from twelve to fourteen hours a day was to earn from five to six dollars a week; but after this work was completed he had several other jobs at various places. His work in New York as a journeyman printer lasted about a year and a half.

Greeley as Publisher and Editor

Mr. Greeley had made the necessary preparation for the success that was to come to him. He knew his trade thoroughly. He had read extensively, and digested and

remembered what he read. At the lyceum at East Poultney he had had an excellent drill in public speaking, and also some experience in writing for the papers. He had learned to do hard work easily, and disagreeable work without annoyance. He was economical and always good-tempered.

During 1832 Mr. Greeley had become acquainted with a Mr. Story, who was the foreman in the office of the *Spirit of the Times*. He had also made the acquaintance of Dr. Horatio D. Sheppard, the originator of the idea of a penny paper. After considerable consultation the firm of Greeley & Story was formed, and they agreed to publish a two-penny paper called the *Morning Post*. Dr. Sheppard was to pay them for their work at the end of each week. The enterprise did not pay and the paper was discontinued at the close of the third week, but its failure did not seriously interfere with the young firm. They were printing *Sylvester's Bank Note Reporter* and a small tri-weekly called the *Constitutionalist*.

Mr. Story was drowned a few months after the partnership was formed and his place was taken by his brother-in-law, Mr. Winchester; later a Mr. Sibbett was taken into the firm, which was now known as Greeley & Co.

For a long time Mr. Greeley had wished to edit a paper. The young firm had prospered and was worth about three thousand dollars. Its members believed that they could make a better family paper than was then in existence, and acting upon that belief they issued the first number of the *New Yorker* March 22, 1834. They started with only twelve subscribers, but sold one hundred copies of the first number and two hundred of the second. For three months they gained a hundred copies a week in their circulation,

and at the end of the first year they had four thousand five hundred subscribers. Ultimately the circulation rose to nine thousand. During the first year three hundred papers gave the *New Yorker* eulogistic notices, and both the paper and its editor became widely and favorably known. The *New Yorker* was in the main a literary paper, though it had a political department which was non-partisan. It came to be recognized as an authority on political statistics, as in later days was the *Tribune.* The first article by Dickens that appeared in this country was published in the first number of the *New Yorker.*

Although the *New Yorker* became famous and influential, it was never a financial success. This was partly because the firm made a better paper than they could afford for the price, but largely because of Greeley's poor financial management. Possibly the enterprise might have made more money had it not been for the great panic of 1837, known as "The Year of Ruin."

In the fall of 1838 Thurlow Weed and Lewis Benedict of Albany called upon Mr. Greeley and asked him to edit a campaign paper to be published at Albany for the purpose of furthering the Whig cause and especially to discuss such questions as the tariff and the United States Bank. It was a movement preliminary to the great campaign of 1840. The ousting of Mr. Van Buren was a matter of special interest. The political fortunes of William H. Seward were involved in the movement. The close relations of Weed, Seward, and Greeley, which existed so long, and which were ended years later by Mr. Greeley through a letter famous in political history, had their beginning at this time. A weekly paper called the *Jeffersonian* was

maintained for a year at the nominal subscription price of fifty cents, the deficiency being met by several wealthy Whigs. Mr. Greeley began the work with the understanding that he should be paid what his services proved to be worth, and he was finally given a thousand dollars. The paper contributed largely to the Whig success in the state that year, and to the election of Seward over Marcy for governor. It was conservative in tone and wholly free from personalities, in which respect it was the reverse of its successor, the *Log Cabin*.

During the campaign of 1840 Mr. Greeley edited the *Log Cabin*, one of the most remarkable and successful campaign papers ever published. Beginning with a circulation of nearly fifty thousand copies it grew to nearly one hundred thousand before the campaign ended. General Harrison was a poor man and at one time had lived in a log cabin. A Democratic journalist commenting on the man made this scoffing remark, "Give him a log cabin and a barrel of hard cider and he will be content without the Presidency." The phrase spread like wildfire. It led to the choice of the name for Greeley's campaign paper. There were log cabins in every political procession of the Whigs, and hard cider became a popular beverage.

The campaign was one of the most exciting ever known. There were mass meetings, log-cabin raisings, caricatures, epigrams, songs, jokes, Tippecanoe clubs, medals, badges, flags, handkerchiefs, almanacs, etc. But it was Horace Greeley and the *Log Cabin* that furnished the facts and arguments which did most to arouse and increase popular enthusiasm. Greeley comprehended the popular thought, and his style took the fancy of the public.

Mr. Greeley made but little money out of the *Log Cabin*, though he made a great reputation as an able editor, a zealous politician, and a statistical writer of great force, marvelous information, and marked ability.

The *Tribune*

Mr. Greeley had now prepared the way for the great work of his life. To the qualifications he had when he made his first business venture in partnership with Mr. Story he had added much experience as a writer, speaker, and editor. He was also widely known and had many influential friends. He resolved to establish a paper "removed alike from servile partisanship on the one hand and from gagged, mincing neutrality on the other." The time seemed ripe for such a movement. There were but two really live papers in New York at that time,—the *Sun*, not then a strong paper, and the *Herald*, which offended respectable people by its indecency. Both these papers, though nominally neutral, were in sympathy with the Democratic party. So there seemed to be an excellent opportunity to start a strong, clean paper, Whig in politics but moderate in tone. It was under such circumstances that the first number of the *Tribune* was issued on Saturday, the 10th of April, 1841.

Even in those early days it was an expensive undertaking to start a daily paper, but though Greeley had little money, he was known to be a man of ability, industry, experience, and the strictest integrity.

The paper began with six hundred subscribers. Five thousand copies of the first number were printed, which Mr. Greeley had considerable trouble in giving away. The

expenses for the first week were $525, the receipts $92. This was not an encouraging beginning, but Mr. Greeley did not belong to the class of men who give up easily. Then he had the not uncommon experience of being helped by his enemies. The *Sun* concocted a conspiracy to crush the *Tribune*. The *Sun* was a penny paper with an immense circulation, and it feared that the *Tribune*, also a penny paper and much better edited, would lessen its popularity, so attempts were made to bribe the carriers of the new paper to give up their routes; newsmen were threatened with the loss of the *Sun* if they sold the *Tribune;* boys were hired to flog the *Tribune* newsboys. The *Tribune* took steps to protect its carriers and told in its columns the story of the persecution that was going on. The American public always desires fair play, so subscriptions to the *Tribune* flowed in rapidly. Three hundred subscriptions a day were received for three weeks. The paper began its fourth week with an edition of six thousand, its seventeenth with eleven thousand, all that its presses could print. The amount of advertising had trebled notwithstanding the fact that the rate had been doubled.

Mr. Greeley soon associated with him Mr. Thomas McElrath, who had entire charge of all business matters, and the success of the *Tribune* has been due to his good business management hardly less than to the genius of Mr. Greeley. It was a happy combination.

The good fortune, or good management, of Mr. Greeley in securing efficient associates was shown in many other cases besides that of Mr. McElrath. There were George Ripley, "Father of literary criticism in the American Press"; Henry J. Raymond, who afterwards established

the New York *Times;* Charles A. Dana, noted later for his management of the *Sun;* Bayard Taylor, traveler, novelist, poet, historian, and diplomat, whose first contribution to the *Tribune* was *Letters Afoot;* Margaret Fuller, who wrote on art and literature; Richard Hildreth, historian; George W. Smalley, the noted correspondent; William Winter, dramatic critic; John Russell Young, one time managing editor of the *Tribune*, later editor of the *Herald*, and afterwards minister to China; Charles Nordhoff, noted author and correspondent, in recent years on the *Herald;* and many others hardly less able.

At the end of its second year the *Tribune* had a circulation of twenty thousand. Mr. Greeley began the *Tribune Almanac* in 1841, but until 1856 it was called the *Whig Almanac.* The *Log Cabin* and the *New Yorker* were consolidated to form the *Weekly Tribune*, the first number of which appeared September 20, 1841. From the very outset it was influential and successful. It became the most widely circulated paper in the United States, running into the hundreds of thousands. A semi-weekly edition of the *Tribune* was begun May 17, 1845.

Mr. Greeley has been called a man of "isms," but the facts hardly justify such a charge. He was a man with an open mind, ready for new ideas, and if convinced that a thing was right, he advocated it, no matter what others might do.

As he had been poor, very poor, himself, he felt keenly the hard conditions under which the poor struggled, and his sympathies led him to advocate any plan whereby their condition might be improved. He became interested in Fourierism, a sort of socialism, and entered into a controversy over it with Henry J. Raymond. Though Greeley

got the worst of the argument, the discussion brought about a better understanding of coöperation and did much good. The great development of life and fire insurance (a form of coöperation) was no doubt due in a large measure to the public interest aroused by this discussion.

From the first Mr. Greeley was an avowed and extreme protectionist. His hard struggle with bitter poverty no doubt intensified his ideas on this subject. He believed in, practiced, and advocated total abstinence, but was not at all extreme in his public utterances on that subject, as he sometimes was on the subject of the use of tobacco, which on one occasion he declared to be "the vilest and most detestable abuse of his corrupted sensual appetites whereof man is capable."

Above all else Mr. Greeley was a reformer. Incidentally he was an editor, lecturer, author, and politician. His views upon temperance, tariff, socialism, capital punishment, slavery, war, and all other subjects were determined by their supposed value to humanity. He was by heredity, training, and conviction a Puritan of the Puritans, but it was the puritanism of the New, not of the Old Testament.

Mr. Greeley had a horror of debt. On one occasion he said: "To be hungry, ragged, and penniless is not pleasant, but this is nothing to the horrors of bankruptcy." He very likely had in mind the bankruptcy of his father, which drove him from his native state and brought the family to extreme poverty, leaving debts to be paid many years later.

Mr. Greeley's penmanship was indescribably bad. It is said that a letter of dismissal to one of his employees was successfully used as a letter of recommendation. Numberless humorous stories are told regarding his handwriting.

From his young manhood Mr. Greeley was always overworked, doing for years what most people would have called too much for two men. The strain of a political campaign was the last straw, and the breakdown would no doubt have occurred had success instead of failure crowned his efforts.

Murat Halstead in contrasting Greeley and Bennett says: "James Gordon Bennett was a newsman; Horace Greeley a man of opinions — ideas, if you please. Bennett's paper had the larger circulation, Greeley's the greatest influence."

Mr. Greeley cared little for money. He always voted against any proposition to raise his own salary as manager of the *Tribune* and against declaring any dividend upon the *Tribune* stock, wishing to put all its earnings into improving the plant. Even from his boyhood he seems never to have been able to say No to a borrower. It is said that from time to time he loaned at least $50,000 on worthless pledges. He always knew that he was being imposed upon, and once said: "Nine tenths of those who solicit loans of strangers or casual acquaintances are thriftless vagabonds, who will never be any better off than at present, or scoundrels who would never pay if they were able."

Of all the books written by Mr. Greeley "The American Conflict" has probably the greatest merit, the first volume, which deals with the causes that led to the Civil War, being of especial value.

Mr. Greeley in Public Life

A sketch of Mr. Greeley that should omit his career as a public man would be very incomplete, yet it is difficult to sketch that phase of his life briefly or in such a way as to make clear his motives. He was always interested in public measures and in public life. If one remembers that measures were much to Mr. Greeley and men but little, his life will be better understood. One who would form a just estimate of him must not forget his devotion to principle, his love for his fellow-men, his hatred of sham, his lack of culture, his ignorance of social life and customs, and the persistence of early habits.

Mr. Greeley's first active part in politics in a large way was during the Harrison campaign, when he edited the *Log Cabin*. During the campaign of 1844 he threw into the contest all his strength and energy. He wrote, spoke, and worked for the election of Mr. Clay with an ability and endurance possessed by few men. He said: "From the day of his nomination in May to that of his defeat in November I gave every effort, every thought to his election. . . . I gave heart and soul to the canvass."

Four years later, when on the fourth ballot Taylor was nominated and Clay defeated in his efforts to secure the Presidential nomination of the Whig party, Mr. Greeley left the convention hall in disgust, and it was not till four months had passed that he could be induced to put the name of Taylor at the head of his columns.

Mr. Greeley had always regarded slavery as wrong, but considered it a question with which the North had little to do. The seizure of Texas and the war with Mexico changed

his opinion, and he said that these movements with their avowed purpose made the question of slavery one in which the North must be interested. The murder of Lovejoy, the death of Taylor, and the attitude of Fillmore drove Greeley from the ranks of the "moderates."

Mr. Greeley had always been an independent Whig, and with the disruption of that party went all that bound him within any strict party lines. Nominally a Republican, chiefly because of the attitude of that party on the tariff, he frequently opposed Republican measures.

In 1848 he was elected to Congress to fill a vacancy, and attended one short session of three months. Here the habits of a lifetime controlled him. He was not absent a day during the session and did not miss a single meeting of his committee. He introduced a bill to facilitate settling upon public lands. During the whole session he wrote for the *Tribune*. One article attacking the mileage system with its abuses created great excitement and led to several bitter debates in the House.

Before 1860 Greeley had broken with Seward and strongly opposed his nomination for the Presidency, though New York was enthusiastic for him. Greeley attended the convention as a delegate from Oregon, which favored the nomination of Bates of Missouri, for whom he worked with great earnestness, both because he believed him the best man to nominate and because he thought it the most effective way to defeat Seward. As frequently happens, neither man was nominated, but instead Abraham Lincoln of Illinois. Seward's friends felt, and rightly, that their defeat was due to the efforts of Mr. Greeley. The poor, friendless printer's apprentice had become one of the most

influential men of a great party, of the nation in fact. The bitterness growing out of this contest, and the denunciations of Greeley on the part of Seward's friends, led to the publishing of a letter written to Seward by Greeley November 11, 1854, announcing the "dissolution of the political firm of Seward, Weed, and Greeley by the withdrawal of the junior member." Perhaps no private letter ever made public created a greater sensation than did this.

Mr. Greeley was slow to believe that the South really meant to secede. He was convinced that when the time came to settle that question, if it ever did come, a majority in nearly every state would be opposed to it, and that the matter would end in talk. When it became evident that secession was to come, Mr. Greeley was in favor of letting the South go, not because he believed they had a right to secede, but because he thought it not wise to try to hold them by force. To understand his position at this time and reconcile it with that taken later one must not forget his exaggerated, almost fanatical ideas regarding individual liberty and his horror of bloodshed, which went so far that he could not tolerate the idea of capital punishment for any crime. At this same time with apparent inconsistency he said: "I deny to one state, or to a dozen different states, the right to dissolve this Union. It can only legally be dissolved as it was formed — by the free consent of all parties concerned."

After the war had begun the *Tribune* kept at the head of its columns "Forward to Richmond," and did much to create a public sentiment that made a premature movement necessary. This resulted in the disaster at Bull Run, which so affected Mr. Greeley that an attack of brain fever followed, prostrating him for six weeks.

Throughout the war Greeley and the *Tribune* were thorns in the side of the government. His criticisms of the actions of the administration and the movements of the armies no doubt afforded considerable comfort, if not aid, to the enemies of the North. His peace mission, his urging of emancipation, were premature, and harmed instead of helping, but a purer patriot was not to be found. His errors were those of the head and not of the heart.

Mr. Greeley opposed Mr. Lincoln's renomination. He had never thought Mr. Lincoln a strong man, and was not in sympathy with his ideas in regard to prosecuting the war. In considering Mr. Greeley's course during the Civil War one should remember that both his nature and his calling tended to impress him with a sense of his own infallibility. His frequent and sudden change of front was no doubt due to a combination of honesty and impulsiveness.

It is somewhat singular that while Greeley greatly offended his party by his criticisms of the administration, he was at the same time most bitterly hated by the South and its Northern sympathizers.

At the close of the war Greeley advocated universal amnesty and impartial suffrage and, with about twenty others, signed the bail bond of Davis, which act caused almost universal indignation at the North. The abuse of Mr. Greeley was unbounded, but he bore it like a hero, saying: "Seeing how passion cools, and wrath abates, I confidently look forward to the time when thousands who have cursed, will thank me for what I have done and dared in resistance to their own sanguinary impulses."

This act of Greeley's was the most magnanimous and disinterested of his whole life, and at the same time perfectly characteristic.

There was within the Republican party a strong opposition to the renomination of General Grant. Greeley was bitterly opposed to it, but as time went on it was seen to be inevitable, and a national convention of the Republicans who disapproved of Grant's candidacy was called. Many prominent Republicans were present. It was resolved to nominate an independent ticket. Among the men voted for for the presidential nomination were Charles Francis Adams, Lyman Trumbull, David Davis, Andrew Curtin, B. Gratz Brown, and Horace Greeley, — all Republicans who had been and were very prominent and able men. Mr. Greeley was nominated on the sixth ballot. He was not present and it is not believed that he expected or desired the nomination, but he threw his whole strength into the movement, as into everything in which he took an active interest. His nomination was indorsed by the Democrats and he would probably have been elected had they given him a cordial support, but he had been so bitter in his attacks on the Democratic party in the years gone by that it was not in human nature for all of them to forgive or forget. For the first time in the history of our country a Presidential candidate took the stump in his own behalf. Mr. Greeley spoke nearly every day for three months. He received nearly three millions of votes and General Grant something over half a million more. Mr. Greeley's defeat was due to a widespread distrust of his good judgment and to the wonderful hold of General Grant upon the American people.

The strain of the campaign upon Mr. Greeley had been greater than any one could pass through unharmed. His wife died a month before election, and for a month preceding her death it is said that he did not sleep more than one hour out of the twenty-four. This and the work of the campaign left him a broken-down old man, though only sixty-one years of age. Insomnia followed, which resulted in brain fever, and he died on the 20th of November, 1872.

The whole nation mourned Mr. Greeley's death. All partisan feeling vanished. The newspapers in all parts of the country paid tribute to his worth. The Union League, Lotos, and many other clubs and organizations of all kinds passed resolutions of sorrow. Cornell University, of which he was a trustee, did him honor. St. Louis, Albany, Indianapolis, Nashville, and many other cities held memorial meetings. John Bright sent a message of regret. Congress passed resolutions of respect for his "eminent services and personal purity and worth."

On the day of his funeral Fifth Avenue was blocked with people for a mile. Stores were closed; houses along the route of the procession were draped; flags in the harbor were at half-mast; bells tolled from one to three o'clock. There were in the funeral procession two hundred and fifty carriages, containing the President of the United States, governors of many states, senators, and other friends.

All this was in honor of one who had made his way unaided by fortune or friends; whose opportunities were only those of his own making; one who through all his life had thought more of others than of himself, and more of the truth than of all else; one who always dared to do the right as he saw it, whatever the result might be.

Greeley is a part of his country's history. Neither his name nor his acts will soon be forgotten. The *Tribune* which he established is his enduring monument. No life furnishes more of cheer and encouragement to the young man who has his own way to make in life and who is willing to work and wait, and work while he waits.

Cyrus H. McCormick

CYRUS HALL McCORMICK

1809–1884

It is probable that there are few intelligent people in this country to whom the name of Cyrus Hall McCormick is unfamiliar. We owe to him, more than to any other one person, what has been perhaps the greatest contribution to the material advancement of the United States.

He was born at Walnut Grove, Rockbridge County, Virginia, on the 15th of February, 1809. Of Scotch-Irish stock, he adds another to the list of successful Americans of that sturdy ancestry. His father, Robert, had eight children, of whom Cyrus was the eldest. Robert McCormick was a farmer, but had on his farm workshops of some importance, as well as a sawmill, a gristmill, and a blacksmith shop. These gave young McCormick experiences and advantages which most farmers' sons do not have, and which were well calculated to develop any latent inventive genius that the lad possessed. His father was a man of mechanical skill and inventive genius, and from him, no doubt, the son inherited a bent towards invention. Within themselves this family made in wood and iron many things necessary for daily life.

Robert McCormick invented and built a thresher and a hemp breaker. He also made some mill improvements, and in 1816 he constructed a mechanical reaper, which was

built upon impractical principles, and after failing in the field it was laid away, but Cyrus often saw this abandoned experiment. No doubt young McCormick's inventive genius was stimulated and directed by his father's experiments, and he had also the valuable training that comes only through hard work. Like all other workers on the farm, he was required at seedtime and harvest to be in the field at five o'clock in the morning. His only opportunity of obtaining an education was that offered by the "old field school" on his father's land.

He was very fond of watching his father's experiments and of experimenting for himself. At fifteen years of age he made a harvesting cradle, by the use of which he could keep up with an able-bodied workman. The first invention which he patented was a plow.

His father had expended a great deal of thought, time, and money on an effort to make a machine that would reap grain. Cyrus became interested in the same thing, and though his father warned him against wasting time and money upon an idle dream, the idea of doing away with much of the drudgery of harvesting led him to study the ineffective machine that his father had made. The more he studied the problem the more he became convinced that it could be solved.

After much experimenting he made a reaper which would cut straight grain very well, but which would not work if the grain were wet, lodged, or twisted. It was clear that such a machine was of little value. A satisfactory one must meet whatever conditions existed.

By 1831 Mr. McCormick had devised and made with his own hands a reaper which did very satisfactory work;

but it had some serious defects, so he made no effort to patent it. A year later he had so far perfected the machine that it cut fifty acres of wheat in a manner that fully established its practical value. Still McCormick was not satisfied. He made further improvements, and in 1834 took out a patent, but even then he was not ready to put the

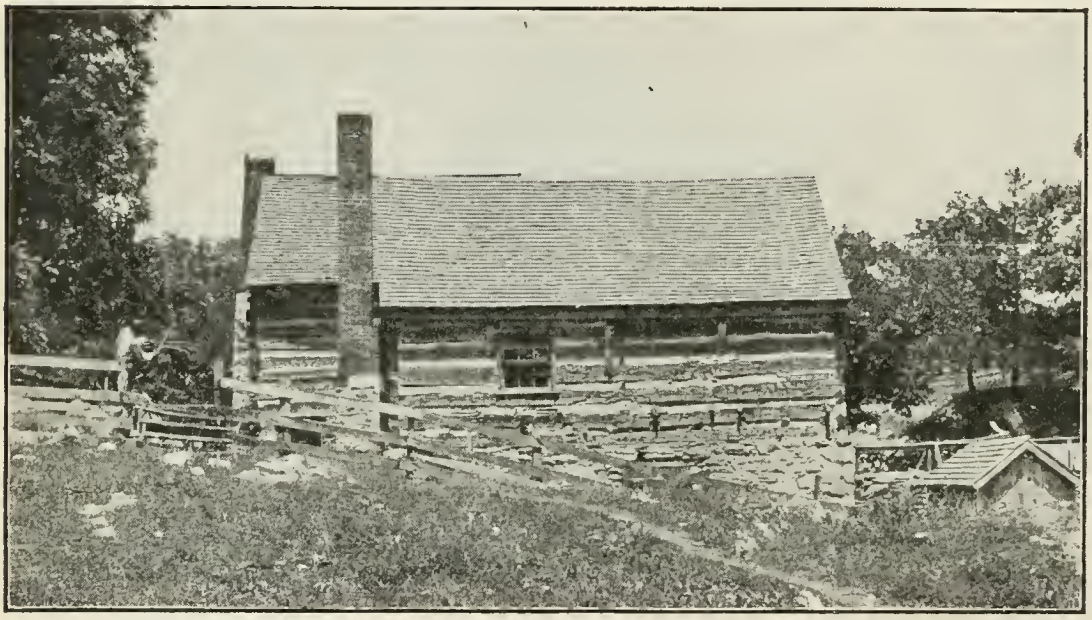
Cyrus McCormick's Birthplace

machine upon the market. It was not until 1840 that any were sold.

About 1835 the McCormicks engaged in smelting iron ore. That had become a very profitable business, and seemed to promise more financial gain than the reaper. Had their new business continued to prosper, it is quite possible that we should never have had the perfected reaper; but owing to the decline in iron and because the cost of transportation to market by wagon was more than

the value of the product, during the panic of 1837 their venture ended in disaster. Then young McCormick, with his father and brothers, began to manufacture reapers in their own shops on the farm. How often it happens that a seeming misfortune is a great blessing!

They had a primitive workshop at Walnut Grove and made fewer than fifty machines the first year. They worked at a great disadvantage, as certain heavy parts



Shop where First Reaper was made

had to be made at a furnace a considerable distance over the mountain and the matter of transportation was a serious one. In the case of the finished machines it was even worse, for it was in the West, with its great plains and immense grainfields, not in the East, with its uneven surface and small farms, that the reaper could be used to the best advantage. Therefore the machines had to be drawn by teams to the canal at Scottsville, from there floated to Richmond, then sent to the coast, and from there sent

on the ocean to New Orleans, and again reshipped and sent up the Mississippi and Ohio to Cincinnati for sale.

First McCormick Reaper

It was clear that it was a great waste of effort to manufacture in Virginia implements to be used in the West; so young McCormick started from home on horseback, with a little money placed in his pocket by his father, and went to Cincinnati with the view of arranging with some firm there to build the reapers under his supervision. Here he made a contract with a manufacturer to build some reapers, giving farmers' orders for reapers as security. Later he went to Brockport, New York, where he contracted with a firm to manufacture reapers for use in the wheat fields of western New York, the makers to pay a royalty on each machine sold.

Harvesting with Sickle in Algiers

In 1846 he began the manufacture of reapers in Chicago, experience showing that to be the point most favorable alike

for manufacture and transportation. Mr. McCormick continued to improve his reaper and the demand for it constantly increased. In 1847 he sold seven hundred machines, in 1848 more than twice that number.

Having associated his two brothers with him, Cyrus planned to introduce the reaper into Europe. In 1851 he exhibited it at the World's Fair at London, where it was the most important American exhibit, and was awarded the grand prize known as the Council Medal. The London

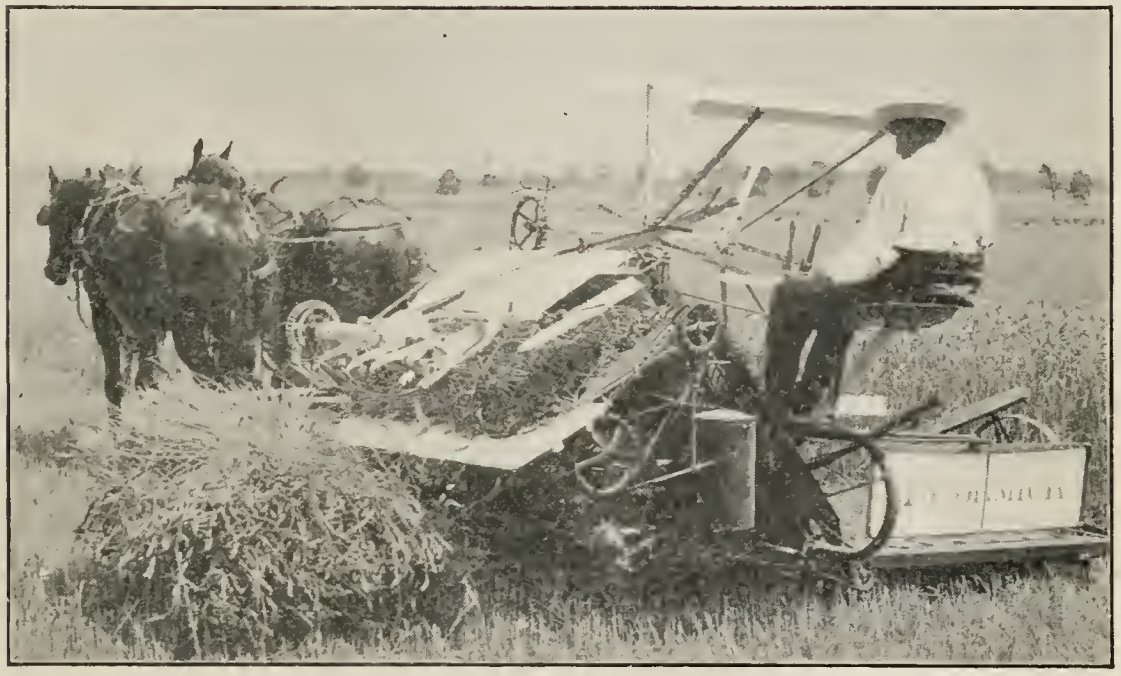
Harvesting with Cradle in West Virginia

Times said that the introduction of the McCormick reaper was worth to the farmers of Great Britain the whole cost of the fair. From that day to this the reaper has received the highest award at every fair and exposition at which it has been shown, and has steadily grown in favor all over the world.

The great Chicago fire in 1871 totally destroyed the McCormick works, but they were rebuilt within a year, and now cover more than sixty acres of floor space. The reapers go to all parts of the world, not only to the more

progressive countries, but to Egypt, India, and Persia as well. Thousands have been sent to Russia and Siberia.

It would be a difficult task to determine the value of the reaper to the world. As long ago as 1859 Reverdy Johnson, in an argument before the Commissioner of Patents, declared that the McCormick reaper was worth $55,000,000 a year to this country. If that was so, it is worth very much more now. About the same time William H. Seward



Modern Harvest Scene in New York

declared that the McCormick reaper moved the line of civilization westward thirty miles a year. Certainly it is not too much to say that great areas of the West that are now waving wheat fields would still be unsettled were it not for McCormick's invention. It is estimated that the use of the reaper saves in labor more than $100,000,000 annually, counting a man's wages at a dollar a day. Its inventor was elected a member of the Institute of France because he had, so the French Academy of Science declared, "done

more for the cause of agriculture than any other living man." An honor worthily bestowed.

Mr. McCormick was an inventor and manufacturer, but he was more. He interested himself in religion, education, journalism, and politics. He was especially helpful to his church and made valuable gifts to educational institutions.

The business, now carried on by his three sons, is growing in importance, and Cyrus Hall McCormick is still a potent force in the development of our country.

The settlement of the great West is due in no small measure to McCormick's great invention. We read every season of the difficulty in getting a sufficient number of laborers for the harvest. Suppose the great wheat crop had to be cut by hand instead of by the reaper and its modification, the great heading machine, that cuts, threshes, winnows, and puts into bags five thousand bushels of wheat in a day. Bearing this in mind and not forgetting the gang plow and seed drill, we will have some comprehension of what invention has done to make the great West of to-day possible. While no one invention could have brought about this condition of affairs, that of McCormick was by far the most important and far reaching in its consequences.

Inventions and various labor-saving devices supplement each other. The great wheat crops of the Northwest would not be possible without the invention of McCormick; but the crop could not be brought to market without the railroad, and the cost of transportation would be prohibitive but for the invention of Bessemer steel, and the full benefit of that invention would not have been reaped so far as its application to railroad transportation is concerned but for the air brake of Westinghouse.

It may well be said that Cyrus Hall McCormick is a part of his country's history, of that part of its history which will always constitute its chief glory,—the conquests of the arts of peace. The name of McCormick will always be among the very first in the long list of those who have contributed to the industrial development of our country.

Frances E. Willard

FRANCES ELIZABETH WILLARD

1839–1898

The ancestry of Frances Willard was such that it might have been expected she would concern herself more with the welfare of others than with her own prosperity or comfort. Among her ancestors on her father's side was Major Simon Willard, of Kent, England, who settled at Concord, Massachusetts, in 1634. His intellectual motto was "Truth for authority, not authority for truth." He occupied many public positions of trust and always had the confidence of the community in which he lived. Among his immediate descendants were two presidents of Harvard University, the Reverend Samuel Willard, pastor of the Old South Church, Boston, who opposed the hanging of witches, and Solomon Willard, of Quincy, Massachusetts, who designed Bunker Hill Monument and would accept no compensation for the work.

Miss Willard's great-grandfather was for forty years the pastor of the same church, and served as chaplain throughout the Revolution. Her father was a refined, intellectual, and religious man, possessing a fine mind and an inflexible will. Her mother, Mary Thompson Hill, came from a very gifted family whose ancestors were noted for moral courage. So Frances Willard's education began, as Oliver Wendell Holmes says every one's education should begin, a hundred years before she was born.

It was in Churchville, New York, on the 28th of September, 1839, that Frances Elizabeth Willard first saw the light of day. While she was very young her parents moved to Oberlin, Ohio, and in the spring of 1846 they moved to Janesville, Wisconsin, on the Rock River. Here they spent twelve happy years in their "forest home" of which Miss Willard has so often written and spoken. Their life was a very happy one. The children had to rely largely upon themselves for their entertainment, a thing that always tends to develop self-reliance. They had "Indian fights" and played "city" and "fort" and occupied their time very fully in other ways that did much to develop individuality. They always celebrated their Fourth of July, though not in the noisy manner with which most of us are familiar. Very little was made of Thanksgiving or Christmas, and nothing at all of New Year's.

Frances learned to read from *The Slaves' Friend* and so learned to hate slavery. All the children, when very young, signed the total-abstinence pledge inscribed in the family Bible. This was the pledge:

A pledge we make, no wine to take,
No brandy red that turns the head,
Nor fiery rum that ruins home,
Nor whisky hot that makes the sot,
Nor brewer's beer, for that we fear,
And cider, too, will never do;
To quench our thirst we'll always bring
Cold water from the well or spring.
So here we pledge perpetual hate
To all that can intoxicate.

Not only the ancestry but all the early life of Frances Willard tended to make her what she was. One could not

grow up in companionship with her father and mother, and live the life they lived, without hating that which was evil and loving that which was good.

When Frances was fourteen her father and one of his neighbors secured the building of a little schoolhouse in the woods about a mile from their home. Here she and her sister were instructed for a year, after which they made a visit to the old home in the East, and then attended a select school in Janesville. In 1857 they were students in the Milwaukee Female College, where their aunt, Miss Sarah Hill, was professor of history.

The two sisters hoped to continue their studies in Milwaukee, but their father desired a more strictly sectarian school for his children and sent them to the Northwestern Female College at Evanston, Illinois. Frances at this time was in her nineteenth year. She was soon an acknowledged leader in school and active in all phases of school life.

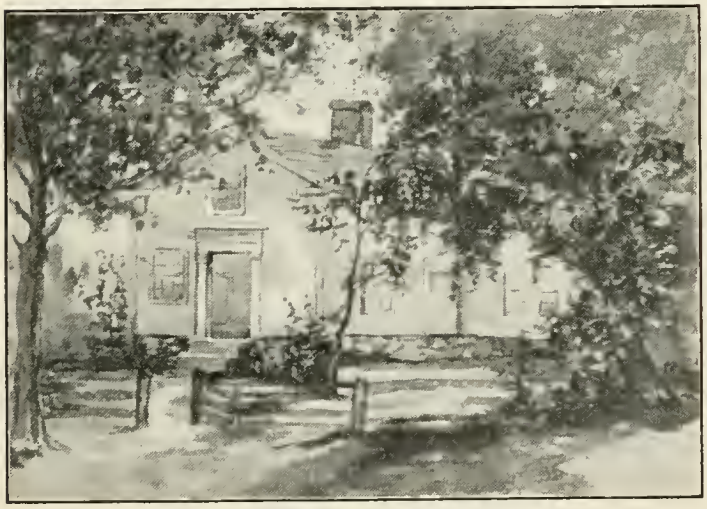
She had early determined to become in some way a force for good in the world, and as in those days there was little open to women save teaching, it is not to be wondered at that soon after graduation she began to teach school. In her autobiography she says :

> Between 1858, when I began, and 1874, when I forever ceased to be a pedagogue, I had thirteen separate seasons of teaching, in eleven separate institutions and six separate towns, my pupils in all numbering about two thousand.

In 1871 she was elected president of Evanston College for Ladies, for she was at this time becoming interested in the "woman question," or, as she preferred to call it, the "human question." It was because of the fact that the admission of women to many of the so-called co-educational colleges

was nominal rather than real that Miss Willard and others interested themselves in the establishment of a college for women.

While Miss Willard was dean of the Northwestern Female College the Woman's Temperance Crusade began. In Ohio the streets of many of the cities and towns were filled with women who went in processions to the saloons, singing, praying, and pleading with the liquor sellers. While Miss Willard took no part in this movement she was greatly interested in it and gave her pupils in rhetoric such themes as these: "John B. Gough," "Neal Dow," and "Does Prohibition Prohibit?"



Miss Willard's Birthplace

When the movement reached Chicago the women were rudely treated by bands of rough men, and this thoroughly aroused Miss Willard. Soon after she made a public address in which she said that this was "everybody's war." She declared that she was with the temperance women "heart, mind, and hand." She made several other addresses and her services were much in demand. She said at the time, "To serve such a cause would be utterly enthralling, if I only had more time, — if I were more free." The freedom soon came. She differed with the president of the university on matters of college government, and the difference was so radical that she resigned her position.

Her interest in the crusade led her to visit the East to study the temperance movement and confer with the temperance leaders in New York City, Boston, and Portland. She saw the mission temperance work in the slums of New York, attended at Old Orchard, Maine, the first gospel temperance camp meeting ever held, and listened to the story of the "Maine Law" as told by Neal Dow.

After this visit Miss Willard was at a loss as to what she should do. All her friends and acquaintances, save one, Mrs. Mary A. Livermore, advised her to continue teaching, especially as she was dependent upon her own exertions for her support. Mrs. Livermore advised her to join the temperance movement and predicted for her a great success.

While still undecided she received two letters the same day, one offering her the position of lady principal of a fine private school at a salary of $2400 a year, with the privilege of selecting such work as she chose, the other from Mrs. Louise S. Rounds, of Chicago, begging her to take the presidency of the Chicago branch of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, admitting that it lacked organization and financial resources, but saying, "It has come to me, as I believe, from the Lord, that you ought to be our president." She declined the salaried position with its many attractions and accepted the other. This was the turning point of her life.

Of her action at this time she says:

> No words can adequately characterize the change wrought in my life by this decision. Instead of peace I was to participate in war; instead of the sweetness of home, never more dearly loved than I had loved it, I was to become a wanderer on the face of the earth; instead of libraries, I was to frequent public halls and railway cars; instead

of scholarly and cultured men, I was to see the dregs of saloon, gambling house, and haunt of shame. But women who were among the fittest gospel survivals were to be my comrades; little children were to be gathered from near and far in the Loyal Temperance Legion; and whoever keeps such company should sing a psalm of joy, solemn as it is sweet. Hence I have felt that great promotion came to me when I was counted worthy to be a worker in the organized

House in which Miss Willard first taught School

crusade for "God and home and native land." Temporary differences may seem to separate some of us for a while, but I believe with all my heart that farther on we shall be found walking once more side by side.

Miss Willard entered upon her work with the utmost ardor. At first she would not consider the matter of compensation, but she had little means and she soon found herself walking miles because she had not five cents for car fare, and going to meetings hungry because she had not the price of a meal. When this became known she was paid a moderate salary.

In 1874 she was made corresponding secretary of the Illinois Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and in November of the same year, at a meeting held at Cleveland, Ohio, for the purpose of forming a permanent national organization, she was elected to the same office in that association. At this meeting Miss Willard offered the following resolution, which furnishes a clew to her spirit and principles.

Resolved, That, recognizing that our cause is and will be combated by mighty, determined, and relentless foes, we will, trusting in Him who is the Prince of Peace, meet argument with argument, misjudgment with patience, denunciation with kindness, and all our difficulties and dangers with prayer.

Within a few months after she undertook her work Miss Willard practically controlled the work of the Chicago, Illinois, and national organizations. In 1879 she was elected president of the National Union, which position she held till the time of her death.

It is not possible in this brief sketch to deal with the details of Miss Willard's work. With the White Ribbon movement, pioneer work in the West, visits to every province of Canada, a tour through the South, campaigns for constitutional amendments in many states, the editorship of the *Union Signal*, writing several books, working for the Temple, the National Temperance Hospital, and the Woman's Temperance Publishing Association, she did more than the work of three people and did it wonderfully well. She was a marvelous organizer and a remarkable presiding officer.

She believed in woman's suffrage, believed it to be right in any event, and to be absolutely necessary to the passage and enforcement of proper temperance legislation.

The culmination of Miss Willard's work was the organization of the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union, of which she was made president. The story of her visit to England and her work there is another illustration of the many-sided ability of the woman and of her tireless energy.

In February, 1898, Miss Willard was attacked by influenza, which her physician did not think serious; but the strain of long-continued work led to her death on the 17th of the month.

With the exception of Harriet Beecher Stowe, no other woman was so widely known, and perhaps none was so beloved. The influence of her life cannot be measured. She was an orator of great power and addressed more than four thousand audiences; she possessed great executive ability, and hundreds of thousands of people are now working together for common ends because of her efforts. She was lecturer, editor, preacher, presiding officer, organizer, correspondent, and traveler, and in each capacity touched and influenced thousands.

She was not interested in temperance alone, but worked for equal suffrage, social purity, labor reform, — for whatever she believed stood for the uplifting of humanity. It was not so much a movement or a cause that interested her as the welfare of mankind. Her sympathies and views were broad. Unlike many, perhaps most reformers, she was always free from bitterness, and to this fact not a little of her power was due.

A busier, purer, more devoted, and less selfish life has rarely been lived.

The life of Miss Willard shows the marvelous possibilities of a single person who is willing to devote his entire

energies to a single purpose. While Miss Willard was a woman of superior attainments, it was not so much her ability as her supreme devotion to her work that wrought the success she strove for. The same devotion on the part of persons of less ability has brought the same degree of success in many a narrower field.

Louisa M. Alcott

LOUISA M. ALCOTT

1832–1888

Louisa M. Alcott was well born. Although her father, Amos Bronson Alcott, was an impractical idealist, he was of good ancestry and a man of culture and refinement. Her mother had a fine physique, untiring energy, and superior intellect. She was fond of writing, her letters being remarkable for their wit and humor as well as for their keen criticism and fine moral sentiments. Mrs. Alcott was a daughter of Colonel Joseph May, a member of a noted family. Through her grandmother, Dorothy Sewell, she was connected with a family remarkable for its ability and virtue. With such an ancestry it might well be expected that Miss Alcott would be no ordinary woman.

The hardships and trials of her early life furnished her with experiences that she made large use of in her writings. They also contributed much towards her development.

Miss Alcott was perhaps the most popular writer for the young that this country has yet produced. Her influence has been great and beneficent. She has written effectively because she has written chiefly out of her own experiences and because her experiences have been similar to those of thousands of other young people. The storybook child speaks to the real child in a more effective manner than any grown person could do.

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Miss Alcott's Childhood

Louisa M. Alcott was born in Germantown, Pennsylvania, November 29, 1832. There were four other daughters in the family. Mr. Alcott went to Germantown to take charge of a school, but, like every other enterprise with which he had to do, it was a failure. In 1834 he moved to Boston where he again undertook the management of a school. Here for a time he was partially successful, and his family were fairly comfortable, though they lived to a large extent upon boiled rice without sugar and graham meal cooked and eaten without butter or molasses. This was partly due to their poverty, but more particularly to the fact that Mr. Alcott believed in a strictly vegetable diet. On one occasion, when he was discussing its advantages, he said that it would produce a sweet temper and good disposition. Little Louisa called out, "I don't know about that, father. I 've never eaten any meat, and I 'm often very cross."

The Alcotts allowed their children so much freedom that some of their friends thought sufficient care was not taken in regard to their associates. In reply to a question upon that subject Mrs. Alcott replied:

> I can trust my daughters, and this is the best way to teach them how to shun these sins and comfort these sorrows. They cannot escape the knowledge of them; better gain this under their father's roof and their mother's care, and so be protected by these experiences when their turn comes to face the world and its temptations.

Miss Alcott gives a charming picture of their early life. She says:

> Once we carried our breakfast to a starving family; once lent our dinner to a neighbor suddenly taken unprepared by distinguished

guests. Another time, one snowy Saturday night, when our wood was very low, a poor child came to beg a little, as the baby was sick and the father had spent all his wages. My mother hesitated a little at first, as we also had a baby. Very cold weather was upon us, and a Sunday to be got through before any more wood could be had. My father said, "Give half our stock and trust in Providence; the weather will moderate, or wood will come." Mother laughed and answered in her cheery way, "Well, their need is greater than ours, and if our half gives out we can go to bed and tell stories." So a generous half went to the poor neighbor, and a little later in the evening, while the storm still raged, and we were about to cover our fire to keep it, a knock came, and a farmer who usually supplied us appeared, saying anxiously, "I started for Boston with a load of wood, but it drifts so I want to go home. Should n't you like to have me drop the wood here? It would accommodate me, and you need not hurry about paying for it." "Yes," said father, and as the man went off he turned to mother with a look that much impressed us children with his gifts as a seer, saying, "Did n't I tell you the wood would come if the weather did not moderate?"

Mother's motto was "Hope and keep busy," and one of her sayings, "Cast your bread upon the waters, and after many days it will come back to you buttered."

Owing to Mr. Alcott's peculiar management the school at Boston dwindled in numbers till it consisted of his three daughters, a white boy, and a colored boy. In 1840 the family moved to Concord. The cottage in which they lived while there is described in "Little Women" as Meg's first home. There was a large barn, which was a favorite playing place for the Alcott children. They liked to act plays, and dramatized many fairy stories. These experiences were made use of by Miss Alcott in her books. While here she developed a great fondness for animals, which shows itself in her writings. She was very fond of out-of-door life and says :

I always thought I must have been a deer or a horse in some former state, because it was such a joy to run. No boy could be my friend till I had beaten him in a race, and no girl, if she refused to climb trees, leap fences, and be a tomboy.

Miss Alcott went to school with the children of Emerson, and so came to know him well and to love and revere him greatly. She knew him not as the wise philosopher but as the loving playfellow of young people, one who took them to gather berries, or to a picnic at Walden Pond, where he would tell them stories of Thoreau and his woodland pets.

She never liked arithmetic or grammar and dodged those lessons whenever it was possible. Inasmuch as her father was almost the only teacher she ever knew, it is easy to believe that she was generally successful in escaping any study she found disagreeable. She liked reading, writing, composition, history, and geography. One of her chief pleasures was to listen to her father when he read aloud. Her favorite books were "Pilgrim's Progress," Krummacher's "Parables," fairy tales, and the novels of Miss Edgeworth. She says:

On Sundays we had a simple service of Bible stories, hymns, and conversation about the state of our little consciences and the conduct of our childish lives, which will never be forgotten.

In 1842 Mr. Alcott went to England to meet friends who, like himself, were much wrought up over a scheme for a social life on a higher scale. In 1843 this company of idealists began life on a farm near Concord which they called "Fruitlands." The end of the experiment can easily be imagined. The life of the Alcotts there could not have been a happy one. Miss Alcott has told the story in her "Transcendental Wild Oats."

After the failure at "Fruitlands" the Alcotts returned to Concord, where for a time they were so poor that they had to be assisted by friends. A little later Mrs. Alcott inherited from her father a small sum of money, with which she purchased a place in Concord known as "Hillside," where Hawthorne afterwards lived. Louisa was now nine years old. The next seven years, which she passed in this

Home of Louisa M. Alcott

house, she declared to be the happiest of her life, notwithstanding the fact that it took the utmost efforts of all to keep the family clothed and fed. There was little work to be had in Concord of a kind for which either Mr. or Mrs. Alcott was fitted, and even the brave and cheery mother at last despaired. On the advice of a friend the Alcotts moved in 1848 to Boston, where Mrs. Alcott secured employment as a visitor of the poor for a benevolent society. A more suitable person for such a work could hardly have been found.

The relation between Miss Alcott and her mother was unusually close and sympathetic. Her mother often wrote notes to her and left them in her journal to be found and read when alone. Commenting on this custom Miss Alcott says:

> I found one of my mother's notes in my journal, so like those she used to write when she had more time. It always encourages me, and I wish some one would write as helpfully to her, for she needs cheering up with all the care she has. I often think what a hard life she has had since she married, — so full of wandering and all sorts of worry! so different from her early easy days, the youngest and most petted of her family. I think she is a very brave, good woman, and my dream is to have a lovely, quiet home for her; but I 'm afraid she will be in Heaven before I can do it.

This dream of making a happy home for her mother was never forgotten, and was always urging her on to greater efforts. No doubt her final financial success pleased her far more because of what it meant for others than because of what it would do for herself.

Miss Alcott's literary work did not easily meet with success. For many years she had to take up other pursuits in order to earn a living. She had much experience in teaching school, but it brought her no enjoyment. Again and again she speaks of it in her journal, and never with pleasure. On one occasion she says: "School is hard work, and I feel as if I should like to run away from it."

Once, when she was more than ordinarily wearied with the work of teaching, she went as a companion for an old man and his sister. Her unhappy experience is told in her sketch entitled "How I Went Out to Service." She earned considerable money by sewing. On one occasion she was

a household servant for about four months, receiving two dollars a week as wages. During this time her father was on a lecturing tour in the West, and her sister Anna was teaching, while her mother took boarders. She writes in her journal at the close of her term of service as follows:

> Pleasant letters from father and Anna. A hard year. Summer distasteful and lonely; winter tiresome with school, and people I did n't like. I miss Anna, my one bosom friend and comforter.

At this time Miss Alcott was anxious to become an actress and hoped to rival Mrs. Siddons. The struggles that she endured in her early life, and bore cheerfully, richly entitled her to all the success that later years could bring.

Miss Alcott as an Author

Miss Alcott received $5 for her first story, which was published when she was twenty years old. It had little merit, and the same is true of all her early writings. Other similar stories succeeded the first one at about the same compensation. She was satisfied with the small sums earned and the somewhat cheap notoriety her work brought her. It was not till much later in life that she wrote anything of real value. She came fully to realize the character of her earlier work and spoke of it as "trash and rubbish."

When she was twenty-two years of age Miss Alcott published her first volume, a book of sketches called "Flower Fables," for which she received $32. From this time on she made progress, though very slowly. About this time she gives one quarter's earnings as follows: teaching, $50; sewing, $50; stories, $20. When she was twenty-seven she wrote a story for the *Atlantic*, for which

she received $50. This was a decided advance in the amount of money earned, and a great one in recognition. She had been writing stories for various weeklies, and for these she received from five to ten dollars each.

Miss Alcott headed her diary for 1860 "A year of good luck." Her father, whose life had been a financial failure so far, was appointed superintendent of schools for the town of Concord. This was a position which was very congenial to him, and it afforded him a small income. Miss Alcott herself was doing better work and receiving higher compensation, while at the same time she was growing in reputation. During this year she began "Moods," her first novel. It was in this year that her sister Anna was happily married.

Miss Alcott was not a scholar, nor was she a systematic reader, but she read widely and with intelligent appreciation. Her books are not popular and successful because of her literary ability, but because of her skill in making use of her own experiences and in adding to these her close observation of the lives of others. Her sister Anna and her brother-in-law appear as the hero and heroine of "A Modern Cinderella," and are also found in "Little Women" and "Jo's Boys." She probably portrays her own nature, as she understands it, in the character of Sylvia in "Moods." In this connection the following from her journal is of interest:

> I think disappointment must be good for me, I get so much of it; and the constant thumping Fate gives me may be a mellowing process, so I shall be a ripe and sweet old pippin before I die.

In 1862, when thirty years of age, Miss Alcott went to Georgetown as an army nurse, but proved unequal to the

work. In a short time she was taken down with typhoid fever and came near dying. She was never so well afterwards, though all her important literary work was done later. Her vivid description of daily life in the hospital attracted much attention, and she gave the story in a most effective way in "Hospital Sketches," her first real literary success. The book was written at a time when every one was anxious to learn as much as possible of all the phases of army life and when the story of the sufferings of our soldiers touched every heart. The book was exceedingly popular. Previous to this she had experienced much difficulty in securing a publisher, but from this time on several publishers were constantly contending for her stories, and she was unable to write enough to meet their demands.

In 1865 she went to Europe as companion to an invalid lady. While abroad she met a young Polish lad in whom she became much interested. He was the original of Laurie in "Little Women." On her return she was asked by Roberts Brothers to write a book for girls. She began the work without enthusiasm and did not regard it as a success when it was finished, yet "Little Women" is beyond all question Miss Alcott's masterpiece. On receiving the first copy she said:

> It reads better than I expected. We really lived most of it, and if it succeeds that will be the reason of it.

It is now thirty-five years since the book appeared, and it is still the most popular girls' book that has been written in this country. It is published in England as well, and has been translated into several foreign languages, being everywhere popular.

At this time she was receiving $500 a year for the use of her name and a little editorial work on *Merry's Museum*, $20 apiece for two short stories each month for the *Youth's Companion*, and from $50 to $100 an article from other sources. She had become financially independent. The dream of being able to care for her loved ones had been realized. She says:

> For years we have not been so comfortable. May and I both earning. Anna has her good John to lean on. The old people in a cozy home of our own.

The success of "Hospital Sketches" and the continued receipts from "Little Women" enabled Miss Alcott to take a second trip to Europe. While there she wrote:

> No news save through N., who yesterday sent me a nice letter with July account of $6212, a neat little sum for "the Alcotts who can't make money." With $10,000 well invested and more coming in all the time, I think we may venture to enjoy ourselves, after the hard times we have all had.

One result of this trip to Europe was the publication of "Shawl Straps." Miss Alcott herself was the old lady of "Shawl Straps" and the Polly of the "Old-Fashioned Girl."

In 1872 Miss Alcott wrote "Work," which first appeared as a serial in the *Christian Union*. For this she received $3000. Earlier in the year, just after returning from Europe, she writes:

> Home, and begin a new task. Twenty years ago I resolved to make the family independent if I could. At forty that is done. Debts all paid, even the outlawed ones, and we have enough to be comfortable. It has cost me my health, perhaps, but as I still live, there is more for me to do, I suppose.

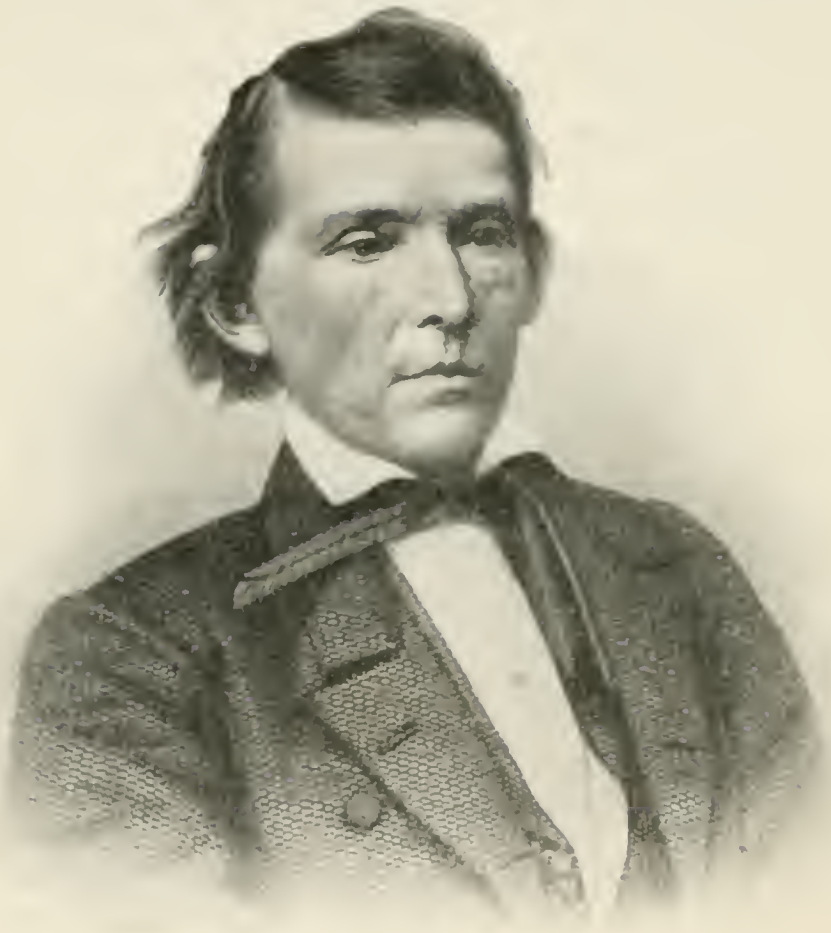
It is sad to think that success came to Miss Alcott after she was in a large degree unable to enjoy it on account of illness. She says:

When I had the youth I had no money; now I have the money I have no time; if I ever do I shall have no health to enjoy life.

Her kindly feeling for others, always prominent, finds expression as follows:

Roberts Brothers paid me $2022 for books. S. E. S. invested most of it with the $1000 F. sent. Gave C. M. $100, — a thank offering for my success. I like to help the class of "silent poor" to which we belonged for so many years, — needy, but respectable, and forgotten because too proud to beg. Work is difficult to find for such people, and life made very hard for want of a little money.

Miss Alcott died March 6, 1888, mourned by many and sincere friends. Through hundreds of short stories, as a writer for *St. Nicholas* and the *Youth's Companion*, as the author of many volumes, she was loved by hundreds of thousands of American boys and girls. "Little Women" is her great work. Among the most noted of her other books are "Little Men," "Work," "Hospital Sketches," "Old-Fashioned Girl," and "Shawl Straps." More than a million copies of her books were sold, and not less than $200,000 was paid her as royalty, a large part of which was used in adding to the happiness and comfort of others.



Alexander H. Stephens

ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS

1812–1883

At the close of the War of the Revolution a certain Captain Stephens of the patriot army found himself almost penniless. He had been one of the Jacobites who fled from England to America, and had taken part in the French and Indian War as well as in the later conflict. He settled in what is now Taliaferro County, Georgia, and brought up a family of eight children. One of his sons became a school-teacher, and with his earnings purchased a farm of one hundred acres, where on February 11, 1812, Alexander H. Stephens was born.

The boy was weak and delicate from his birth. His father was very poor, and from his earliest childhood Alexander had to work, doing whatever his tender years and frail body would permit. He had little opportunity for acquiring an education, partly because he must work, but chiefly because there were no schools save what were known as "field schools," which were usually presided over by very inefficient teachers. Under such circumstances the weak and sickly young Stephens, as a matter of course, failed to acquire much of an education. He worked in the field, the garden, and the kitchen. Up to the time of his sixteenth year he had little acquaintance with books. But during this time he had gained a practical knowledge, and had

passed through experiences that trained and disciplined him and prepared him for the struggles that were to come.

Cast upon his own resources while still a boy, he learned to endure pain and to fight against bodily weakness, and he acquired a strength of purpose and a determination to resist wrong beyond that which comes to many even at maturity. In his journal, written in later years, he says of the death of his father:

> I was young, without experience, knew nothing of men or their dealings; and when I stood by his bedside and saw him breathe his last, and with that last breath my last hope expire, such a flood of grief rushed into my heart as almost to burst it. No language can tell the deep anguish that filled a heart so young; the earth, grass, trees, sky, everything, looked dreary; life seemed not worth living, and I longed to take my peaceful sleep by my father's side.

After the death of his father young Stephens went to live with an uncle. He attended school and made very rapid progress; he also went to a Sunday school, where his unusual ability attracted the attention of two gentlemen connected with the school, as well as that of the minister. These gentlemen thought he might in time become a preacher, and so resolved to send him to the University of Georgia. Not knowing their purpose the young man gladly accepted the opportunity.

In later years he passed the favor on to others. He repaid those who educated him, and in the course of his life sent about thirty young men through college. In regard to these he once wrote to an inquiring friend:

> About one third of these I have taken from the stump and put through college. The other two thirds I assisted to graduation, most of them at a medical college. Out of the whole number only three have failed to refund the money. The three I have alluded to are, I

think, scamps, except perhaps one. Nine of the number I assisted are dead; five of these died before refunding — two while at school. Only four of the number studied law. Six are preachers — four Baptists, one Presbyterian, and one Methodist. One of them is (or was when last heard from) a man of distinction in Tennessee — a professor and an author. Another is at the head of a high school in Mississippi, and another at the head of a high school in Georgia. Take the whole lot, all in all, I think very well of them. The per cent of black sheep in the flock is small — not more than one in twelve, or thereabouts. Of the number I assisted in getting medical diplomas, there are now living in the state six, all clever physicians of good standing. Two of them died some years ago.

In one way and another Mr. Stephens assisted more than one hundred and fifty young men in getting an education.

Of his college life Stephens wrote:

During the four years that I spent at college I was never absent from roll call without a good excuse, was never fined, and, to the best of my belief, never had a demerit marked against me in college, or in the society — the Phi Kappa — to which I belonged. Not a word of censure, or even reproof, was ever addressed to me by professor or tutor; and, while I was on good terms with the faculty, I was not quite as good with the boys. . . . They were by far the happiest days of my life.

Mr. Stephens was graduated with the highest honors of his class. He was very poor, having hardly a penny in the world, so he gratefully accepted an offer to teach a high school at Madison, in his native state. He taught for a time, but found that for him teaching was not the road to success and decided to study law. He had saved enough to support him for three months if he exercised the greatest economy, and he determined to complete his law studies in that time and to take his examinations at the end of it. He succeeded in his efforts.

One of his earliest cases made him famous throughout a large section of the state. It was a suit by a mother to retain the possession of her child, whose guardian, its grandfather, claimed it. The counsel for the grandfather was a lawyer of wide reputation. Stephens prepared himself with care, and his great gift of eloquence was used to the best advantage. He appealed directly to the natural sympathy for the mother, but he stirred a no less natural sympathy for a young, inexperienced lawyer, slight and delicate, pitted against one of the ablest and most experienced men in the state. Stephens' address is said to have been remarkable both as a legal argument and as an eloquent appeal to the sympathies of the jury and the court. Women wept and strong men were moved. The case was won.

This established his fame as a lawyer, and from that time on he never lacked clients. He devoted himself to the practice of law till 1836, when he became a candidate for the legislature. He was a Whig, but very independent in his political action. He was opposed by many strong and influential men, but his popularity with the people secured his election. For several years he served in the legislature, part of the time in the lower and for a while in the upper House. In 1843 a vacancy occurred in the congressional delegation of his state and he received the Whig nomination. His opponent was James H. Starke, one of the best known Democrats in the South. In accordance with the custom of the time, young Stephens met his opponent in joint discussion, traveling all over the state. The result was the triumphant election of Stephens.

The first speech he made in Congress was characteristic of him. Members of Congress had been elected on a

general ticket, and the legislature of Georgia had refused to divide the state into districts in accordance with the congressional requirement. Having been elected on a general ticket, it was held by many prominent members of the House that he was not entitled to his seat. In the discussion that followed Mr. Stephens actually took sides with those who were trying to unseat him, and made a strong speech for the district system. A majority of the House, however, decided that the Georgia members had been legally elected, and Mr. Stephens retained his seat. He served seven terms in Congress before the war and five after it.

In 1866 Mr. Stephens was elected to the United States Senate, but was refused his seat because the reconstruction acts had not been fully complied with. An illustration of the independence of Mr. Stephens is seen in his action in supporting Mr. Winthrop of Massachusetts for Speaker when the contest was between Winthrop and Vinton of Ohio, and he knew that his constituents and nearly the whole South were opposed to the Massachusetts man.

We know more of Alexander Stephens, his real life and thought, through his correspondence with his half-brother, Linton Stephens, than in any other way. They maintained a long, voluminous, and sympathetic correspondence. When Stephens was in sorrow he wrote to his brother Linton for comfort; when he was happy he wished to share his happiness with him. Thousands of letters passed between them. They discussed politics, religion, social life, and every question in which either had an interest. Writing to his brother once he made use of the following language:

I am getting tired of this place, and am beginning to think that Congress is the last place that a man of honor and honorable ambition

should aspire to. There is a recklessness of purpose here perfectly disgusting and almost alarming. What will become of our country and institutions I do not know. The signs of the times to me are ominous of evil. I have ceased to take much interest in what is done in the House. All is done by party will and for party effect.

His affection for his brother is shown by the following extract from a letter, after the death of Linton Stephens, to his friend Richard Malcolm Johnston:

The bitterest pang I have is that all the world to me is now desolate I have no one to whom I can talk and unbosom my woes. Heretofore, whenever heavy afflictions of any sort came upon me, for thirty years or more, he was my prop and stay. To him my thoughts constantly turned for relief and comfort. Now that prop and stay is gone. I am indeed most miserable. All around me is dark, gloomy, cheerless, hopeless.

During Mr. Stephens' congressional service the question of the acquisition of California and Mexico as United States territories came up, and he took a very prominent part in opposition to such acquisition, against the wishes of many of his party friends. Judge Cone, one of the leading politicians of Georgia, was exceedingly bitter and was reported to have said that Stephens was a traitor to his country. Much controversy grew out of this, which culminated in a personal attack upon Stephens by Cone, who was a strong and powerful man. Stephens was stabbed eighteen times, one cut reaching to within a sixteenth of an inch of his heart. The doctors declared that he would surely die, but he recovered, though one hand was rendered nearly useless from the cuts received. Stephens refused to prosecute Cone, who escaped with a fine of $1000. Stephens never spoke bitterly of Cone. On one occasion when he was

writing with much difficulty he said: "Poor Cone! I'm sure he'd be sorry if he knew what trouble I have to write with these stiff fingers of mine."

Stephens was one of the first to fear the result of the agitation of the slavery question, and although he believed in the permanence of the institution, he never lost an opportunity to counsel moderation and forbearance.

After the election of 1860 Mr. Lincoln wrote to Stephens asking for a copy of a speech that he had made. In his reply Mr. Stephens concluded with these words: "The country is certainly in great peril, and no man ever had heavier or greater responsibilities than you have in the present momentous crisis."

Mr. Lincoln replied as follows, the letter not being made public till after Mr. Lincoln's death:

[For your own eye only.]

My dear Sir: Your very obliging answer to my short note is just received, for which please accept my thanks. I fully appreciate the present peril the country is in, and the weight of responsibility on me. Do the people of the South really entertain fears that a Republican administration would directly or indirectly interfere with the slaves, or with them about the slaves? If they do, I wish to assure you, as once a friend, and still, I hope, not an enemy, that there is no cause for such fears. The South would be in no more danger in this respect than it was in the days of Washington. I suppose, however, that does not meet the case. You think slavery is right and ought to be extended, while we think it is wrong and ought to be abolished. That, I suppose, is the rub. It is certainly the only substantial difference between us.

Very truly yours,

A. LINCOLN.

To the Hon. Alexander H. Stephens.

Mr. Stephens labored hard in public and in private to prevent secession, but without success. Like most men of the South he held himself bound by the action of his state and reluctantly joined in the effort for disunion. It was not his nature to do anything in a half-hearted way, and when his state voted for secession he put forth his best efforts for the success of the cause to which he felt himself in honor bound.

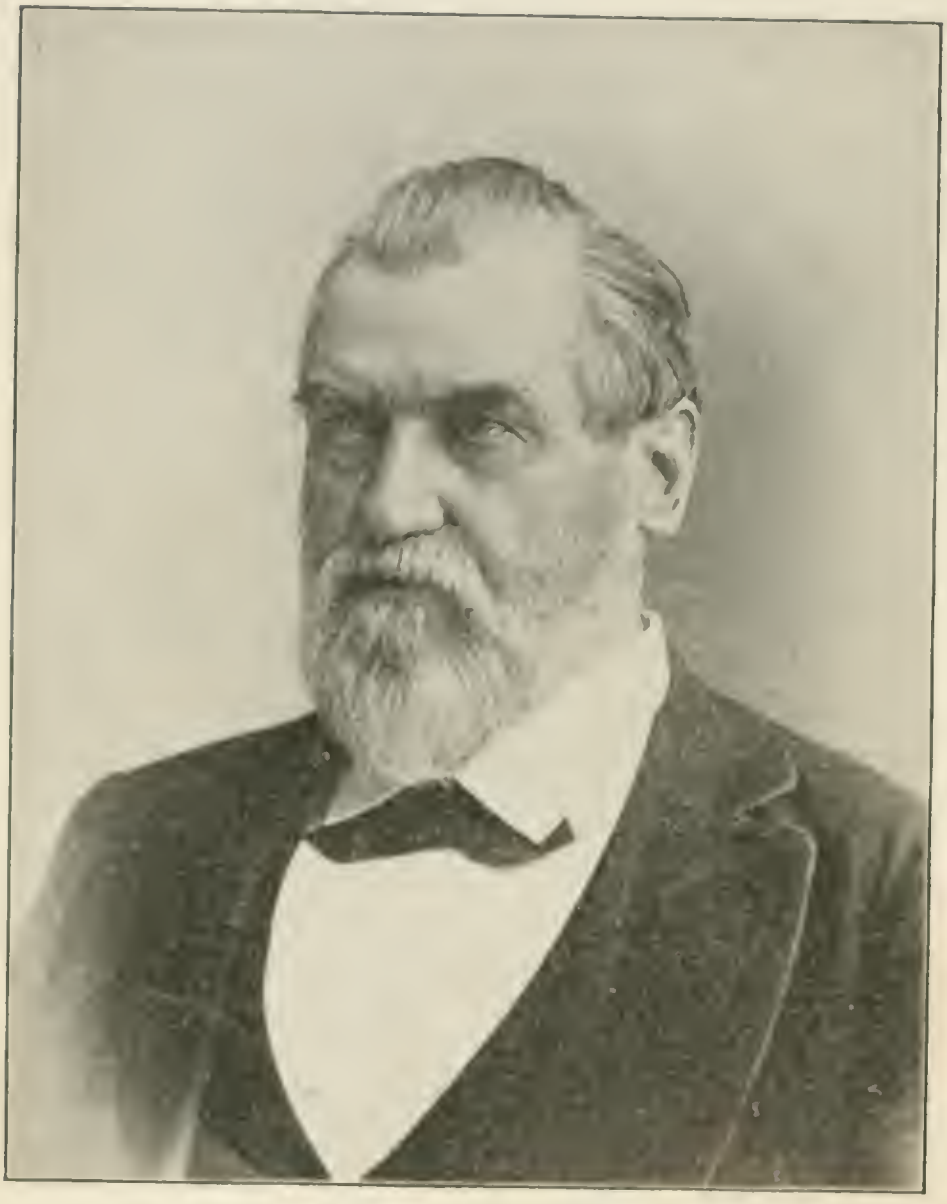
He was chosen vice president of the Confederacy and might have been its president had he felt physically able to bear the burden of that office. Of the result of that long and bitter contest this is no place to speak.

After the close of the war Mr. Stephens again served in Congress, making a faithful and wise representative. He wrote a history of the Civil War. To the end his life was an active one. For a time he edited a newspaper at Atlanta. He opposed the election of Greeley, for which he was bitterly denounced by Democrats, North and South. In 1882 he was elected governor of Georgia, but died before the close of his term of office. His funeral was attended by more than fifty thousand people. His memory was honored by the adjournment of courts and public councils and by the passage of resolutions throughout Georgia and in many towns and cities in other states.

Alexander H. Stephens had faults, as who has not. He made some mistakes, as all mortals will. He seemed at times to be vacillating, but it must be said that no man ever knew him well who failed to love him. He struggled with infirmities that would have crushed most men. He was generous and forgiving. He was a benefactor to many, and never intentionally did harm to any

one. His is a life that calls for much commendation and little reproof.

A careful study of the life of Mr. Stephens will be in many ways profitable. We will come to know a really great and good man who won success in spite of many obstacles and be stimulated thereby. We will become better acquainted with an important period of our history and learn to understand better than some of us now do the feelings of the Southern people just before and during the Civil War.



Leland Stanford

LELAND STANFORD

1824–1893

Leland Stanford is an excellent example of what can be accomplished by persistent effort. With no opportunities in early life beyond what most boys may have, he made himself one of the leaders in the development of our country and its resources.

The Stanfords are of English extraction. One of the family settled in the Mohawk Valley as early as 1720, and from him Leland Stanford was descended. Leland's father was a native of Massachusetts, but came to New York when he was a boy. Leland was born at Watervliet, New York, March 9, 1824. His father was an influential farmer, well read for the times and interested in the welfare of schools and churches. Leland's mother was a woman of good judgment, strong convictions, and very fond of her children, of whom there were eight, seven sons and one daughter.

Leland, the fourth son, was a good worker on the farm, though he loved books better than farming. He was energetic, quick-witted, and cheerful. He was eager to obtain a good education, and his parents were as eager as he, but the family was large and the income small, and it did not seem possible that they could send a son to college.

From boyhood Leland had an eye for business. When he was only six years old he and his brothers were required

to dig the horse-radish out of an old garden which it had overrun. When the work was finished Leland proposed that the roots should be washed and taken to Schenectady for sale. This was done and Leland's share of the proceeds was twenty-five cents. Two years later chestnuts were very plentiful, and Leland suggested that the brothers gather all that they could and hold them till the price was good. They realized twenty-five dollars from this work. Their father encouraged his boys in such enterprises, believing it a good preparation for the future business of life.

At fifteen years of age Leland was large and strong and able to do a man's work on the farm. When he was eighteen his father purchased an adjoining tract of woodland and told him that if he would clear the land he might have the wood and timber. Tall, vigorous, powerful, and eager to earn money so that he might secure a better education, he began the task. So hard did he work and so skillfully did he manage that when the land was cleared and all expenses were met he had left for himself the sum of $2600. He used some of this money to pay his tuition at an academy at Clinton, New York. He disliked Greek and Latin, but was interested in science, particularly in chemistry and geology. He was a great reader and especially liked to read the newspapers.

He had long been anxious to study law, and the way was now clear. After leaving the academy he entered the office of Wheaton, Doolittle, and Hadley, of Albany, and studied with them for three years. He attended all lectures that were given within his reach, and liked to discuss progressive subjects. Later in life he studied sociological subjects, reading such authors as Herbert Spencer and John

Stuart Mill. He was admitted to the bar in 1849. This was the year of the great excitement over the discovery of gold in California. Three of his brothers went to the gold fields and urged him to go with them, but instead he went to Port Washington, Wisconsin, where he opened a law office. He was prosperous, earning $1260 the first year. A year later he married Miss Jane Lathrop of Albany. He did not find the life of a country lawyer very congenial, yet very likely he would have spent his life there had not his house, office, and library been destroyed by fire in the following year. This apparent misfortune was a benefit not only to him but to his country.

His wife returned to Albany to care for an invalid father, and Mr. Stanford joined his brothers in California. For four years he had charge of a branch store among the miners in Placer County, besides being engaged in mining. He shirked no labor and shunned no privation. In his later life he spoke of these early days as follows:

> The true history of the Argonauts of the nineteenth century has to be written. They had no Jason to lead them, no oracles to prophesy success, nor enchantments to avert dangers; but, like self-reliant Americans, they pressed forward to the land of promise, and traveled thousands of miles when the Greek heroes traveled hundreds. They went by ship and by wagon, on horseback and on foot, — a mighty army, passing over mountains and deserts, enduring privations and sickness; they were the creators of a commonwealth, the builders of states.

While in California Mr. Stanford was elected justice of the peace, and though he had to deal with a turbulent population, he was universally respected and not one of his decisions was ever appealed from. He was energetic and

a hard worker, but pleasant and kindly to all, and especially thoughtful for those who had been less fortunate than himself. He studied his business carefully and made himself thoroughly familiar with the statistics of trade, the tariff laws, means of transportation, markets, and all matters that pertained to the successful prosecution of the work he had in hand. He prospered to such an extent that within three years he bought out his brothers and went east to bring his wife to the Pacific coast.

Mr. Stanford was deeply interested in the Republican party and was one of its founders. He was its first candidate for state treasurer in California, but was defeated, as his party was hopelessly in the minority. Three years later he was a candidate for governor, with like result for the same reason. He was a delegate to the convention that nominated Lincoln and worked earnestly for his success. He did more than any other man to keep California in the Union during the Civil War. James G. Blaine said:

> Jefferson Davis had expected, with a confidence amounting to certainty, and based, it is believed, on personal pledges, that the Pacific coast, if it did not actually join the South, would be disloyal to the Union, and would, from its remoteness and its superlative importance, require a large contingent of the national forces to hold it in subjection.

That this was not the case was due very largely to the efforts of Mr. Stanford.

In 1861 Mr. Stanford reluctantly consented to be again a candidate for governor. He received about six times as many votes as had been given him two years before and was elected. He was in close touch with the administration at Washington, and though there was at first much

disloyalty in California, he had at the end of his term of office the satisfaction of feeling that no state in the Union was more thoroughly loyal.

Under the management of Governor Stanford the state indebtedness was reduced one half, many improvements were made, the first normal school was built, and a state militia organized.

Mr. Stanford declined a renomination for the governorship because he wished to devote himself to building a railroad across the continent. At that time it was said that the idea of building a railroad across the snow-capped Sierras was "a wild scheme of visionary cranks," and indeed it seemed so. There were great heights to be scaled, wide, waterless deserts to be crossed, savage Indians to be contended with, and vast sums of money to be raised. But Leland Stanford was no visionary. No one knew better than he the difficulties on the one hand nor the future of such a road on the other.

Theodore J. Judah, a railroad engineer, C. P. Huntington and his partner Mark Hopkins, Charles Crocker, and others joined with Mr. Stanford in this great enterprise, the success of which meant so much to him, to them, to California, and to the Union. Mr. Stanford was chosen president; Mr. Huntington, vice president; Mark Hopkins, treasurer; James Bailey, secretary; and T. J. Judah, chief engineer.

At this time neither Mr. Stanford nor his associates had great wealth, but they had faith, energy, and force of character. They sought and obtained aid from Congress. They received nearly nine millions of acres of land in alternate sections along the line of their road, and from $16,000 to $48,000 a mile for the road built, the amount paid varying with the difficulty of construction. The enterprise was a

good one for the government, as it opened up vast tracts for settlement and greatly lessened the cost of transportation of government supplies; and it doubtless so bound together the East and the West as to prevent a secession of the Pacific states. The road was begun in 1863 and completed in 1869. At times failure seemed certain. The work was a great strain on those who had it in charge, and only Mr. Stanford never lost faith. His iron will never yielded.

With the completion of this road Mr. Stanford turned his attention elsewhere, becoming interested in other roads, in a line of steamships from San Francisco to China, street railways, woolen mills, and the manufacture of sugar. He purchased large tracts of land, in all nearly 100,000 acres. He bought over 8000 acres at Palo Alto, where he made his summer home. Here he sought to plant every variety of tree that would grow in California. Thousands were set out each year. He was fond of animals and especially so of horses, his establishment at Palo Alto for raising horses being the largest in the world. He spent $40,000 on experiments in instantaneous photography of horses, and published a book entitled "The Horse in Motion."

In 1885 Mr. Stanford was elected to the United States Senate and was reëlected at the close of his term. His most notable act was the introduction and advocacy of the Land-Loan Bill, which provided that the government should lend money to farmers, to half the value of their farms, on mortgages bearing two per cent interest. Whatever may be thought of the wisdom of the proposed act it certainly was evidence of a philanthropic spirit.

The Stanfords were greatly beloved in Washington for their cordiality and generosity. Every asylum and charity

hospital in Washington was remembered by them every Christmas, and they were constantly giving to all charitable and philanthropic objects. They gave an annual dinner to the Senate pages, and both then and at Christmas gave them all appropriate gifts. Each winter they gave a luncheon to the telegraph and messenger boys, also gifts of money, gloves, etc.

Mr. Stanford had one son, named for him, who died at Rome in his sixteenth year. From this loss Mr. Stanford

Leland Stanford University

never recovered. The young man was tall, handsome, fond of study, ambitious to be of use in the world, and of great promise. Mr. Stanford established the university at Palo Alto in his son's memory and named it for him.

Many friends had urged the Stanfords to give their money for some other purpose than that of education, saying that too much education would unfit people for labor; but Mr. Stanford thought differently, and at the opening of the university, speaking for himself and his wife, because she had been his active co-worker, said:

We do not believe there can be any superfluous education. As a man cannot have too much health and intelligence, so he cannot be

too highly educated. Whether in the discharge of responsible or humble duties, he will ever find the knowledge he has acquired through education not only of practical assistance to him but a factor in his personal happiness and a joy forever.

Mr. Stanford's kindly spirit was shown in the Senate on the occasion of the nomination of Mr. Lamar for associate

University Church, Leland Stanford University

justice of the Supreme Court. The nomination was opposed by many because Mr. Lamar had taken an active part against the United States during the Civil War. Mr. Stanford said:

No man sympathized more sincerely than myself with the cause of the Union, or deprecated more the cause of the South. I would have given fortune and life to have defeated that cause. But the war has terminated, and what this country needs now is absolute and profound peace. Lamar was a representative Southern man and adhered to

the convictions of his boyhood and manhood. There can never be pacification in this country until these war memories are obliterated by the action of the executive and of Congress.

Mr. Stanford was by turns farmer boy, lawyer, railroad builder, governor, and United States senator, but it is because of his generous gifts that he is best known and will be longest and most kindly remembered. And the greatest gift of all, one that will never cease to be a power for good, is the university founded in remembrance of his son, an institution where no tuition is charged, where all who will and who are properly fitted may attend. His magnificent gifts to this school, nobly supplemented by those of his wife, make it the most richly endowed university in America. Who can estimate the value of a life that culminates in such a grand work?

Charles Pratt

CHARLES PRATT

1830–1891

Charles Pratt was born at Watertown, Massachusetts, October 2, 1830. His father, Asa Pratt, had a family of ten children, and it was necessary that each child should learn to help himself as soon as possible. Charles left home to work for a near-by farmer when he was only ten years old. Here he worked for three years, going to school for three months each winter. Although he was not strong he was very ambitious, and when only thirteen years of age he went to Boston and worked in a grocery. After spending a year here he went to Newton and learned the trade of a machinist. All this time he was as economical as possible, hoping to save enough to enable him to get a better education. At length he was able to pay for a year's tuition at Wilbraham Academy, where he lived for a dollar a week.

At the close of his year at school he went to Boston as clerk in a paint and oil store. He had learned some things thoroughly, among others to rely upon himself, to utilize all his time, and to be exceedingly economical. All his life long he could not bear to see anything wasted, time least of all.

His year at school had intensified, instead of satisfying, his thirst for knowledge, and in Boston he could have access to the Public Library, where he spent most of his spare time.

At twenty-one years of age he went to New York and became a clerk for Schanck and Downing, dealers in oil, paint, and glass. Here, as always, he worked hard. It was his theory of life that work should be both a duty and a pleasure, and he fully realized his theory. Years afterwards, when he was very wealthy, he said:

> I am convinced that the great problem we are trying to solve is very much wrapped up in the thought of educating people to find happiness in a busy, active life, and that the occupation of the hour is of more importance than the wages received.

After working three years for Schanck and Downing, he and two others bought out the business and established the firm of Raynolds, Devoe, and Pratt, which continued for thirteen years, after which the firm was divided and the oil business carried on by Charles Pratt & Co.

When the oil fields of Pennsylvania began to be developed Mr. Pratt was one of the first to see the possibilities of the petroleum trade. He experimented in refining the oil and succeeded in producing what he called "Pratt's Astral Oil," probably the best on the market. He took great pride in it and was greatly pleased when he was told that the Russian convent on Mount Tabor was lighted with Pratt's Astral Oil. He said that he meant to see that the stamp "Pratt" should be as good as the stamp of the mint. For many years he was one of the officers of the Standard Oil Company and a large shareholder in it. Little could the delicate ten-year-old hired boy on a Massachusetts farm have dreamed that he would one day be worth his millions, the legitimate fruit of his own industry, enterprise, and forethought.

He lived simply, took no pleasure in display, and had no desire for a fine mansion. His home was to him the best place on earth. His business, his home, his church, and his philanthropy occupied his whole life. He was a man of few words and of great self-control. He never forgot that he had been a poor boy, and always sympathized with those who were struggling with adverse circumstances. He had no faith in any one who did not try to improve himself. It is said that a young man once came to him for advice as to whether or not he should go west. He questioned the young man as to how he used his time, what he did before and after business hours, and finding that he was doing nothing in the way of self-education, said to him, "No; don't go west. They don't want you."

Some of Charles Pratt's Sayings

There is no inherent reason why man should consider his daily labor, of whatever nature, as necessarily disagreeable and burdensome. The right view is one which makes work a delight, a source of real satisfaction and even pleasure.

The greatest humbug in the world is the idea that the mere possession of money can make any man happy. I never got any satisfaction out of mine until I began to do good with it.

The giving which counts is the giving of one's self.

A knowledge of household employments is thoroughly consistent with the grace and dignity and true womanliness of every American girl.

Home is the center from which the life of the nation emanates; and the highest product of modern civilization is a contented, happy home.

There is nothing under God's heaven so important to the individual as to acquire the power to earn his own living; to be able to stand alone if necessary; to be dependent upon no one; to be indispensable to some one.

Whatever I have done, whatever I hope to do, I have done trusting in the Power above.

Pratt Institute

For years Mr. Pratt had been thinking about industrial education. He knew that the great majority of men and women must struggle for a livelihood, and he believed that every one, rich or poor, should know how to be self-supporting. He therefore desired to found an institution that would aid people in their efforts to fit themselves to do their work in the best way. He sought all possible means of information as to the proper course to pursue. He traveled largely in this country, corresponded with the heads of the various technical and industrial schools, and visited England, France, Austria, Switzerland, and Germany to see what the Old World was doing to educate people to be self-helpful.

On his return from Europe he resolved to build an institute where any one who wished to engage in "mechanical, commercial, or artistic pursuits should receive theoretical and practical knowledge." In 1885 he began the erection of a building in Brooklyn. He provided a machine shop, a woodworking shop, a metal-working shop, forge and foundry rooms. A building for bricklaying, stone carving, plumbing, and the like was added. Later a high-school building was erected. There is also an art department with morning, afternoon, and evening classes. There are

courses in drawing, painting, clay modeling, architectural and mechanical drawing, designing, wood carving, art needlework, and domestic science. There are day and evening classes in phonography, typewriting, bookkeeping, commercial law, German, Spanish, and vocal music. There is a

Pratt Institute

kindergarten department with a training class for teachers and mothers. As many as twenty-eight hundred pupils have been enrolled in the domestic science department in a single year, and more than four thousand students in all are receiving instruction.

Mr. Pratt had found the Boston Public Library so helpful to him that when he came to New York he became greatly

interested in the Mercantile Library of that city. He felt so strongly regarding the helpful influence of good books that he established a library in connection with his Institute and later opened a school for librarians.

During his lifetime Mr. Pratt gave $3,700,000 to the Institute, but this was far from being his only good work. At Greenpoint he built a large apartment house, called the "Astral," which is rented at low rates to workingmen and the proceeds given towards the support of the Institute. In connection with the Astral is a public library, which at first was free to the occupants of the building only, but afterwards was made free to all residents of Greenpoint. Over the fireplace of the reading room of the Astral these words are cut in stone: "Waste neither time nor money."

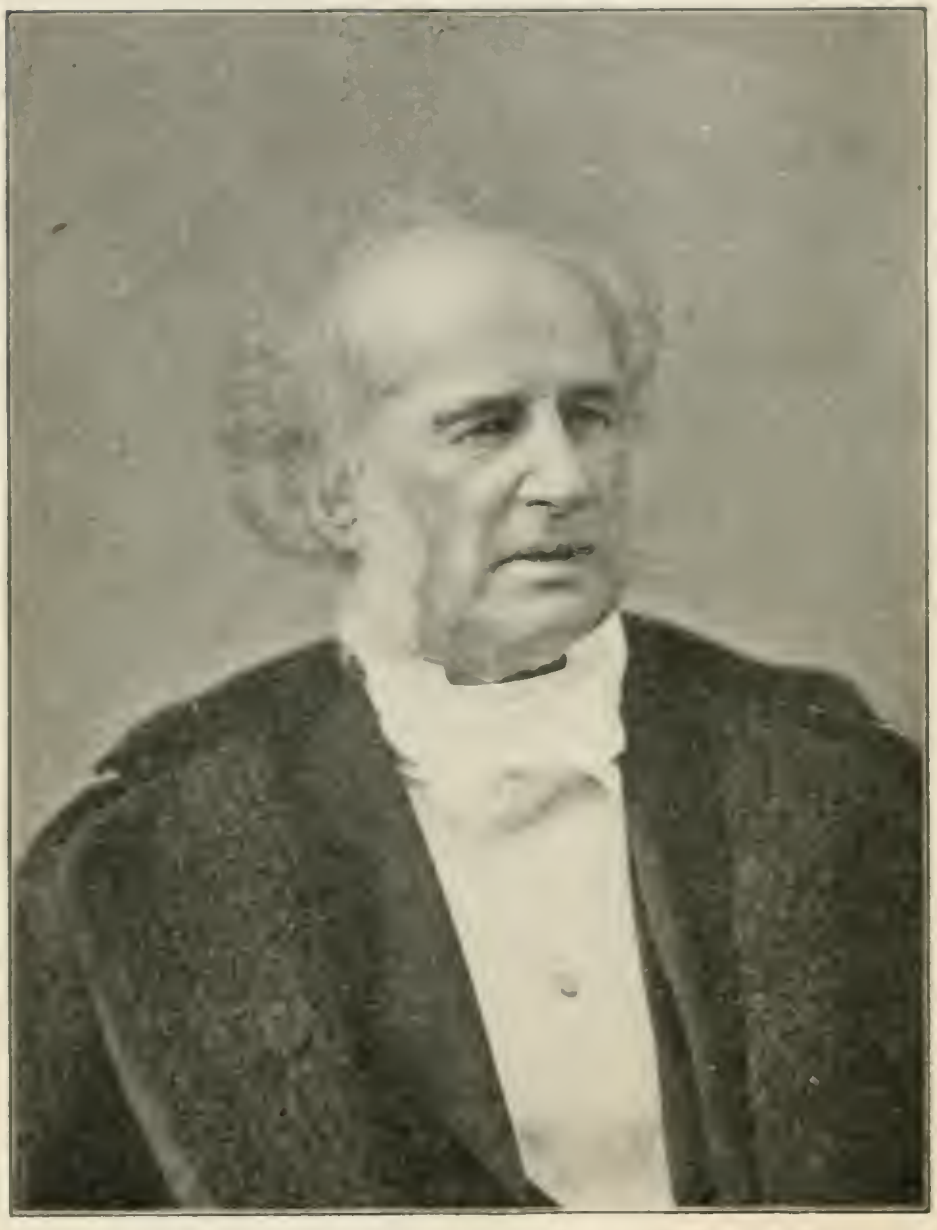
In closing his last address at the Institute, he said:

> To my sons and co-trustees who will have this work to carry on when I am gone I wish to say a word. The world will overestimate your ability, and will underestimate the value of your work; will be exacting of every promise made or implied; will be critical of your failings; will often misjudge your motives; and will hold you to a strict account for all your doings. Many pupils will make demands, and be forgetful of your service to them. Ingratitude will often be your reward. When the day is dark and full of discouragement and difficulty, you will need to look on the other side of the picture, which you will find full of hope and gladness.

Dr. Cuyler said of Mr. Pratt that from him "innumerable little rills of benevolence trickled into the homes of the needy and the hearts of the straitened and suffering." He gave to a great number of worthy causes, — to charity, to education, to needy and struggling churches. He died

while at work in his New York office, on the 4th of May, 1891. Almost the last words Mr. Pratt wrote were these characteristic ones, "I feel that life is so short that I am not satisfied unless I do each day the best I can." His last act was to sign a check for the benefit of the Brooklyn Bureau of Charities.

A beautiful memorial chapel has been erected by his family on his estate at Glen Cove, Long Island, but comparatively few will ever see it or know of it. His real monument is Pratt Institute, which will continue to be of immeasurable benefit to the citizens of the United States.



Cornelius Vanderbilt

CORNELIUS VANDERBILT

1794–1877

Cornelius Vanderbilt was one of the most remarkable men of business that this country has produced. His was a constructive work, and the skill required to construct is always greater than that required to destroy. It is said that Mr. Vanderbilt originated little, but that he had a genius for improving existing things and for foreseeing what the drift of business would be. The story of his life is interesting to all who care for the history of the industrial development of our country.

Mr. Vanderbilt was born near Stapleton, Staten Island, New York, May 27, 1794. He was descended from a Dutch immigrant, Jan Aertsen Van der Bilt, who came from Holland about 1650 and settled upon a farm near Brooklyn, New York. Jan's grandson, the great-grandfather of Cornelius, went over to Staten Island in 1715 and became the owner of a farm near New Dorp. The Vanderbilts continued to live on Staten Island till the time of Cornelius. The father of Cornelius was a farmer in moderate circumstances, who could have given his son a fair education, but the lad's interest lay in other ways. He learned to read and write, and that was about all, save that he had naturally a genius for arithmetic.

The early life of Cornelius was spent on the farm or in marketing its produce, the latter work leading him to

become very familiar with the water traffic about New York City. While still a mere boy he carried the produce of his father's farm to market in a boat which they owned; he also carried freight for others, and when opportunity offered carried passengers also. The produce was usually sold in advance, but often Cornelius was given discretion in the matter of sales, and early showed the business shrewdness so characteristic of him later in life. He became a close student of the market, and made little ventures of his own with such success that at the age of sixteen he became the owner of a better boat than his father's. By the time he was eighteen years old he owned two boats and was captain of a third. When he was nineteen he married his cousin, Sophia Johnson, who made a prudent, thrifty wife and who contributed largely towards the accumulation of his fortune. At the age of twenty-three he was worth $9000, and was captain of a steamboat at a salary of $1000 a year. This boat made trips between New York and Brunswick, New Jersey, where his wife kept a small hotel.

At a very early period in his career Mr. Vanderbilt began to make a careful study of the means of transportation between New York and the neighboring ports. He established lines from New York to several places on the Hudson River and Long Island Sound, for the purpose of carrying freight and passengers. He had boats built according to plans that were largely his own. These boats were the very best of their class in regard to speed, comfort, and capacity.

When he was only thirty-three he leased the ferry between New York and Elizabeth, New Jersey, and built new and

better boats for the service. He met with such success that two years later he entered into a successful competition for the transport service of the Hudson. His training from his early boyhood had fitted him for this task. He knew all the details of the work, was thoroughly familiar with the water ways about New York, knew where to find the best possible equipment, had a wide acquaintance with all classes of water men, and was therefore able to obtain the very best help for all positions. He secured the most satisfactory results from the work of his men because he always recognized and rewarded faithfulness and efficiency, and was utterly remorseless in regard to men who did not render effective service.

When he was forty-five years of age he was thought to be worth $500,000. He had so extensive a line of vessels that he was universally known as "Commodore." At this time he disposed of his Hudson River interests and devoted himself to extending and improving his traffic on Long Island Sound.

Upon the discovery of gold in California in 1849 there was widespread excitement, and thousands were anxious to reach California as soon as possible. Transportation was hard to secure. Vanderbilt immediately established a line of steamers on the Nicaragua route to San Francisco and made very large profits. Later he established a line between New York and Havre.

In 1853 he sold out his Nicaragua line upon what he considered very advantageous terms. He determined to take a vacation, having worked for more than forty years without rest and under circumstances that were very exacting. He built a steam yacht upon plans that were largely

his own, surpassing in size and equipment any then in existence. This vessel he called the *North Star*, and in it he took his family and a party of friends for a long pleasure trip to the Old World.

On his return to America he found that those to whom he had sold the Nicaragua line were trying to evade making the payments as agreed upon. Most men would have sought redress in the courts, but he at once established a competing line and with his great resources and better understanding of the business forced them into bankruptcy. This gave him the complete control of a business so valuable that in the next eleven years his profits amounted to $11,000,000. This made him one of the wealthiest men in America, and it was the result of legitimate business enterprise on the part of one who began life with good health, strength, tireless energy, and a genius for business, but without money, special training, or wealthy and influential friends. He had made his way unaided, in the face of determined and powerful opposition.

All great men make mistakes and Vanderbilt was no exception to the rule. At the outbreak of the Crimean War he entered into competition with England for the carrying trade between Europe and the United States, but owing to conditions which it is not necessary to discuss here, the enterprise failed.

Mr. Vanderbilt was not slow to see that the railroads were destined to interfere seriously with the water traffic on the Hudson River and Long Island Sound. As early as 1844 he began very quietly to buy shares in the New York and New Haven Railroad. It was not until after the close of the Crimean War in 1856 that it was observed

that he was drawing out of the Sound traffic. In all these years he had been quietly buying stock in the New York and Harlem Railroad. The stock in both the roads mentioned was bought at a very low figure.

Mr. Vanderbilt had still too much invested in steamships to put his energies into railroads, but the outbreak of the Civil War created such a demand for steamships that he was enabled to dispose of all the vessels he cared to part with, and in 1863, when he was sixty-nine years old, he entered upon a new career, one in which he was to achieve his greatest success, make the most radical changes, and accumulate an immense fortune. He became the greatest and most successful railroad manager the world had known. He differed from all railroad managers of that time in that he improved the roads he bought, and brought them to the highest degree of efficiency, while others made money by "wrecking" roads. His chief business maxim was "Do your business well, and don't tell anybody what you are going to do till you have done it."

The following incident illustrates Mr. Vanderbilt's decision and energy. With the first news of the appearance of the *Merrimac* Mr. Vanderbilt immediately gave to the government his steamer *Vanderbilt*, which cost nearly a million dollars, and which he believed to be both the strongest and swiftest ship afloat. He was sure that it could run down the *Merrimac*, though both vessels might be sunk by the collision. The success of the *Monitor* made the trial unnecessary, and the *Vanderbilt* was put to other service in which it was of great value to the government. For this gift Congress voted Mr. Vanderbilt a gold medal.

The Harlem Railroad had been so mismanaged that in 1863 its stock was selling at $10 a share. Mr. Vanderbilt bought a controlling interest in the road, and at the same time bought shares in the Hudson River road at $75 a share. This was the beginning of a battle royal between Vanderbilt and his business rivals. He obtained a charter for a system of street railways in New York to connect with his road, which sent its stock up to par; but prominent Wall Street operators and politicians entered into a combination against him, the politicians undertaking to secure the repeal of his charter, while the operators were to force down the price of the stock. This they succeeded in doing, the stock going lower and lower, but Vanderbilt kept buying it till he had the whole stock of the road, and the operators who had sold short had to settle with him on his own terms.

By this time he had secured a controlling interest in the Hudson River road, and he applied to the legislature for an act providing for a union of the Hudson River and Harlem roads under one management. Here he met the same kind of opposition as before from those who had not yet learned what kind of man they had to deal with. The stock went down, down below what it sold for before Mr. Vanderbilt took hold of it, and again he bought all that was offered. The contest went on until it was found that the men opposed to him had contracted to sell twenty-seven thousand more shares than had ever been issued. In order to avert a general panic the "commodore" had to settle with the "shorts," but he did it at a price that brought him immense profits. The two roads were made one, with Mr. Vanderbilt as president of the new company. He surprised old railroad men with the minuteness of his knowledge of railway construction.

Great improvements were made in every department. He insisted that only the very best appliances should be used, and that the employees should be well disciplined, faithful, and efficient. This was a revolution in railroad management.

Soon Mr. Vanderbilt began to buy stock in the Central road. Its managers decided to make war upon him and arranged to send as much of their freight and as many of their passengers as possible from Albany to New York by water. This did not prove to be a wise movement, for when the ice closed the river traffic Mr. Vanderbilt changed the terminus of his road from Albany to the other side of the river and refused to receive freight from the Central. The result was that the stock of the Central fell rapidly, the holders were anxious to sell, and Mr. Vanderbilt was soon able to unite the Central with his other roads.

After this there was a long contest with the Erie, in which Daniel Drew, Jay Gould, James Fiske, and others were his opponents. The result of the contest was that the Vanderbilt roads were left without an important rival for the traffic between Buffalo and New York. Later control of the Lake Shore, Canada Southern, and Michigan Central was obtained, and the magnificently equipped and well managed Vanderbilt system was complete.

Business is a commercial warfare and, like other forms of war, is not always conducted in the most humane manner. While individuals may have suffered through Mr. Vanderbilt's enterprises, the world at large is the better for his having lived. He contributed much to the permanent prosperity of our country and set on foot enterprises which continue to be of great value.

Eli Whitney

ELI WHITNEY

1765–1825

ELI WHITNEY will always be known to the general public as the inventor of the cotton gin, although his other inventions are also worthy of mention.

He was born in Westboro, Massachusetts, December 8, 1765. His father was an influential farmer, though not a rich one. Being a man of more than ordinary ingenuity, he had a shop in which he repaired agricultural machinery and sometimes, when he had spare time, made chairs and wheels. In this shop Eli early learned to handle tools. He made toy carts, sleds, kites, traps, and such other toys and implements as boys are interested in. From early boyhood he was known as a mechanical genius. When only twelve years old he made a very good violin. This attracted so much attention that people came miles to see it. From that time he did a very profitable business in repairing violins and other musical instruments.

He had long been very eager to examine his father's watch, and observing one Sunday morning that his father was going to leave the watch at home, he feigned sickness that he might have a chance to inspect it. He took it apart and put it together again so skillfully that his father had no suspicion that it had been touched. At that time Eli was only about twelve years old. When he was thirteen his

father married a second time. Eli's stepmother had a handsome set of table knives of which she was very proud and which she was very fond of exhibiting. On one occasion Eli said: "I could make as good ones if I had the tools, and I could make the tools if I had the common tools to begin with." This remark caused much laughter at Eli's expense, but it happened that one of the knives was broken a little later and Eli really did make one to replace it that was exactly like the others, save the stamp on the blade.

During the Revolutionary War nails were very scarce, and when he was sixteen years old Eli began to manufacture them. He carried on the work very profitably till the close of the war, after which they were imported at a price which made his labor unprofitable. Young Whitney also began the manufacture of hat pins, and succeeded so well that he soon had a practical monopoly of the business.

At nineteen years of age he determined to obtain a liberal education. He had long desired this and his father had sympathized with him, though he had been unable to give the lad an education beyond that offered in the schools of his own town. By the exercise of his mechanical skill and by teaching school Eli earned enough to enable him to prepare for Yale College, which he entered when he was twenty-four years old. Many of his friends tried to dissuade him, saying, "It is a great pity to spoil such ingenuity by going to college."

He was a hard-working student and completed his course in three years, standing well in his classes and excelling in mathematics and mechanics. He showed his mechanical skill when in college by repairing philosophical apparatus that no one else in the place could put in order.

At the close of his college course he went South to teach. On the steamer with him was the widow of General Greene, who was destined to have a great influence on his career. When he reached Savannah he found that the position of tutor, upon which he was counting, had been filled by another. Being without money, occupation, or friends, he was at a loss what to do. He made his situation known to Mrs. Greene, who invited him to make her house his home and advised him to study law. He accepted the home, but, fortunately for him and for the world, circumstances led him to abandon the study of law.

While he was making his home with Mrs. Greene he showed many times and in many ways his remarkable mechanical ingenuity. One day a number of gentlemen were discussing at her house the condition of agriculture in the South, and were expressing their regret that cotton raising was so unprofitable owing to the labor involved in separating the cotton from the seed. "It is a day's labor to separate a single pound of cotton from the seeds," said one. "What a pity that there is no mechanical device for doing the work!"

At this Mrs. Greene said, "Gentlemen, apply to my young friend here, Mr. Whitney. He can make anything."

It happened that Mr. Whitney had never seen any cotton as it comes from the plant, but when some was brought to him he undertook the task of making a suitable machine. He worked under great difficulties, as he had to make his own tools. There was no wire to be had in Savannah, and he was compelled to draw wire for his own use. After several months' work his machine was completed. With the exception of Mrs. Greene and a neighbor named Miller,

no one knew of his work. Mr. Miller, who afterwards married Mrs. Greene, was a native of Connecticut and, like Whitney, a graduate of Yale. He was a lawyer by profession and had a decided taste for mechanics.

Upon the completion of the cotton gin several prominent gentlemen from various parts of the state were invited to

Early Cotton Gin

be present at a test of its work. The experiment was a complete success. The machine would do the work of hundreds of men, and through its use cotton raising became immensely profitable. The value of this invention, especially to the South, can hardly be estimated. No other invention, unless it be the reaper, has added so much to the wealth of the country.

The cotton gin was invented in 1793. In 1791 the United States had exported less than 20,000 pounds of cotton. In 1828 the crop was 270,000,000 pounds. In 1860 it had increased to 4,669,770 bales; in 1899 to 11,335,383 bales, a bale weighing a little less than 500 pounds.

In 1815 the price of the cheapest kind of cotton cloth was thirty cents a yard. In 1830 it was ten cents; in 1840, eight cents; and it has sold as low as three cents a yard.

Mr. Whitney entered into partnership with Mrs. Greene and Mr. Miller to manufacture and sell the cotton gin, Mrs. Greene and Mr. Miller furnishing the capital. They established a factory in Connecticut, but before the preparations for manufacture were completed his workshop was broken into and his models stolen. Before his machines were on the market several others, inferior to his, but made from his stolen models, were on sale. He brought suits to protect his interests, but the power of money, the injustice of courts, and the devices of legal talent were so effective that more than sixty suits were brought in Georgia before a single decision could be obtained on the merits of his claim. He finally established his rights so far as the validity of his patent was concerned, but found it practically impossible to convict any one for the violation of it, as in the face of convincing evidence no jury would find a verdict for him. Early in the controversy the factory in Connecticut was burned and Whitney not only lost all that he had but found himself $4000 in debt besides.

Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina bought of Mr. Whitney the right to use the cotton gin in their respective states. North Carolina lived up to her agreement. South Carolina, after paying part of the sum due,

refused to pay more and brought suit to recover the amount that had been paid, although this action was rescinded later. Tennessee annulled her contract. So shamefully was Whitney treated, and to such legal expense was he put, that it is said that when he applied for the renewal of his patent in 1812 he had not received as much from his invention as was saved in one hour by the use of his machines then in operation.

It is almost inconceivable, considering the value of the invention, the trifling sum that Whitney made from it, and the trouble and expense that he was subjected to in maintaining his claim, that a renewal of the patent would be refused, yet such was the case.

The following extract from a letter from Whitney to Robert Fulton is of interest because it shows the feeling of the people of the South toward him and his invention.

> At one time but few men in Georgia dared to come into court and testify to the most simple facts within their knowledge relative to the use of the machine. In one instance I had great difficulty in proving that the machine had been used in Georgia, although at the same moment there were three separate sets of this machinery in motion within fifty yards of the building in which the court sat, and all so near that the rattling of the wheels was distinctly heard on the steps of the courthouse.

Mr. Whitney added hundreds of millions of dollars to the wealth of the country. The debts of the South were paid off by means of the cotton gin and its lands were trebled in value. For this he was rewarded by thirty years of ingratitude and injustice.

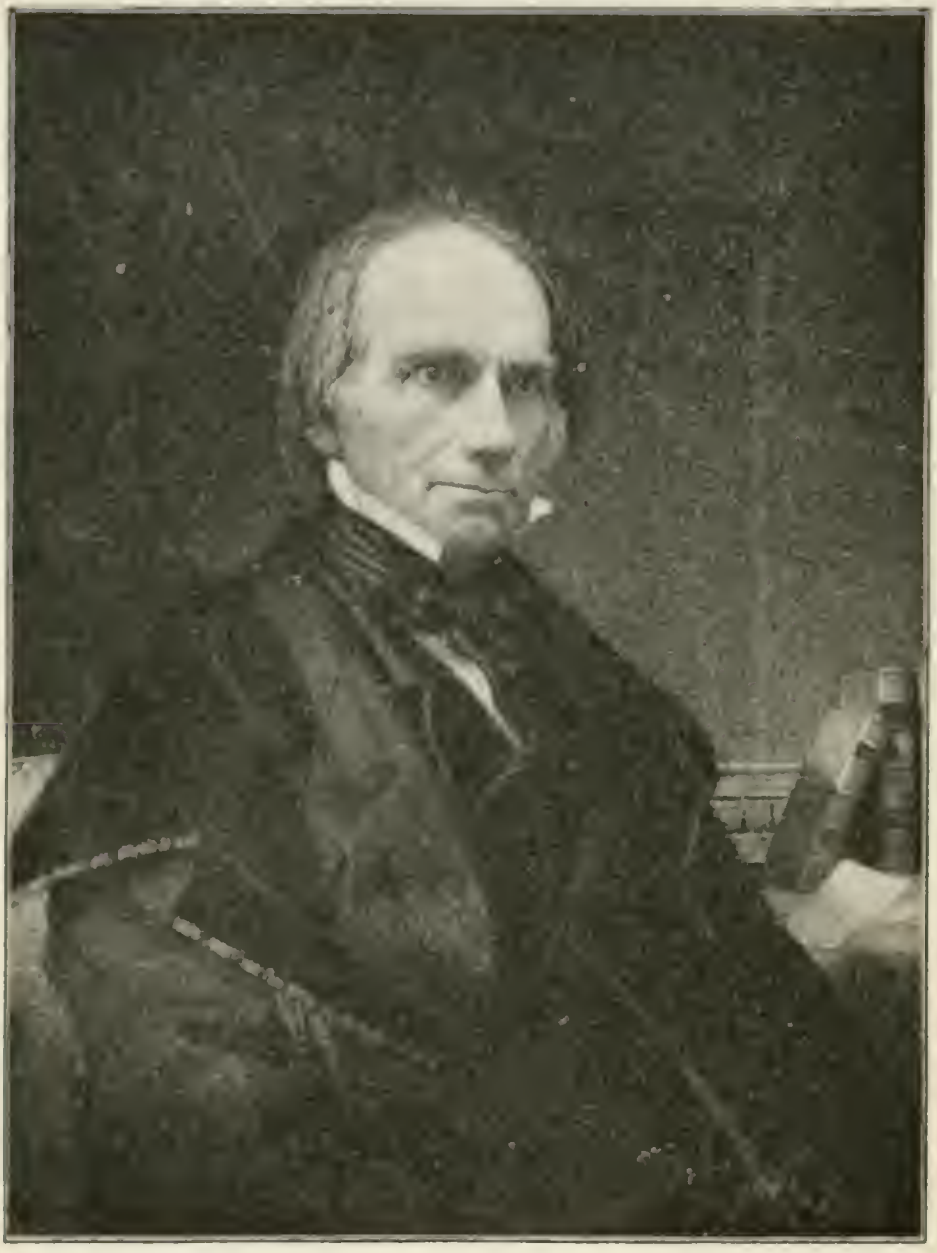
While this hurt Mr. Whitney it did not embitter him. As early as 1798 he felt that he had little hope of reaping any reward from his invention of the cotton gin, and he

began the manufacture of firearms, establishing his factory at East Rock, near New Haven, a place now known as Whitneyville. He received from time to time several contracts from the United States for the manufacture of muskets. He introduced many ingenious inventions in the manufacture of his guns, making them superior to any before in use. He was the first to divide labor so as to have one man make a single thing and so become very accurate in his work. His skill in this particular and his mechanical inventions enabled him to accumulate a fortune.

President Day of Yale College, in a eulogy delivered at the death of Whitney, said:

> The higher qualities of his mind, instead of unfitting him for ordinary duties, were firmly tempered with taste and judgment in the business of life. His manners were formed by an extensive intercourse with the best society. He had an energy of character that carried him through difficulties too formidable for ordinary minds. With these advantages he entered on the career of life; his efforts were crowned with success. He had gained the respect of all classes of the community; his opinions were regarded with peculiar deference by the man of science as well as the practical artist. His large and liberal views, his knowledge of the world, the wide range of his observations, his public spirit, and his acts of beneficence had given him a commanding influence in society.

There is, it must be said, a debit and a credit side to every account, and even the invention of the cotton gin was not an immediate and unmixed good. Previous to its invention slavery, as an institution, was dying out in the South because it was unprofitable. The enormous increase in cotton culture, however, made slavery very profitable; so that it is even possible to consider the cotton gin as one of the causes that led to the great Civil War.



Henry Clay

HENRY CLAY

1777–1852

HENRY CLAY was a man concerning whom great difference of opinion prevailed. Andrew Jackson, without doubt, thought him the incarnation of all that was evil in public life; his intimate friends believed him to be the impersonation of nearly all the virtues and talents committed to mankind. Between these two extremes were many differing opinions.

The study of such a life must be of interest to those who care for public affairs. Clay's long political career, covering the most exciting period of American history and dealing with the most intricate problems, notably that of slavery, could have no other effect than to make for him warm friends and bitter enemies. It was inevitable that any man under such circumstances would not always be right, would not always act wisely, would not always be consistent.

That Clay was patriotic and loved his country intensely cannot be doubted; that his very love for the Union may sometimes have led to his adoption of questionable compromises, to unwise change in views, or at least to unwise action, is perhaps true. It is not possible in this brief sketch to present a complete biography, for that would necessitate giving a history of the United States for nearly half a century. During his long political life there was no limit to

the abuse heaped upon Clay by his enemies, or to the admiration and laudation of his friends, who were affectionate, devoted, and enthusiastic to a degree never surpassed. At his defeat for the office of President strong men wept as over the loss of a near and dear friend.

Henry Clay was born April 12, 1777, in Hanover County, Virginia. His father, John Clay, was a Baptist minister, a man of excellent character and great dignity. He had a remarkable voice and a fine delivery, which his son also possessed. He preached to a poor congregation, receiving a meager salary, and at his death, which occurred when Henry was only four years old, his wife was left with the care of seven children and practically without means. She is said to have been a woman of great executive ability and many admirable qualities.

Under the circumstances Clay had little opportunity of attending school; two or three years in a log schoolhouse, presided over by a man of questionable reputation, could not have contributed much to his future greatness. When not in school he was following the plow barefooted, or riding a pony carrying corn or wheat to Daricott's mill on the Pamunkey River. On his way to the mill he had to pass through a swampy region known as the "Slashes," and because of this he was known afterwards as "The Mill Boy of the Slashes."

Clay was devoted to his mother, but he was separated from her early in life by her marriage to Henry Watkins, with whom she went to Kentucky. Mr. Watkins thought very much of the boy and secured him a place as assistant to Peter Tinsley, clerk of the High Court of Chancery. This was when Clay was about fourteen years old. For

the four years preceding this he had been a clerk in the retail store of Richard Denby, in Richmond.

In his new position Clay felt his lack of knowledge more than ever before, and put forth increased efforts to acquire an education. While with Mr. Tinsley he was thrown in contact with Chancellor Wythe, who became greatly interested in him and directed his studies. The chancellor thought Clay an uncommon young man and prophesied a brilliant future for him. After some years he advised Clay to read law, which he did, applying himself with such energy and enthusiasm that he was admitted to practice within a year and when he was only twenty years old. At this time Clay was a tall, thin, awkward, beardless youth, but remarkably bright and enterprising. His friends wished him to practice law in Richmond, but for some reason, possibly to be near his mother, he soon went to Kentucky. He settled at Lexington, near which place he spent most of his life.

He did not go to Kentucky with any extravagant expectations. When an old man he said, "I remember how comfortable I thought I should be if I could make a hundred pounds a year, and with what delight I received my first fifteen-shilling fee." For the purpose of improving in speaking he joined a debating society soon after going to Lexington, but owing to his modesty he took no part in the debates till one evening the president of the society called upon him to speak. He arose, greatly embarrassed, and said "Gentlemen of the jury," but noticing his mistake, and also that the audience sympathized with him, he rallied and made a brilliant speech. He was enthusiastically applauded and warmly congratulated.

He immediately began a lucrative practice. Even at that early age he was "one of the most fluent and eloquent speakers that ever addressed a jury." He early came in contact with such able lawyers as John Breckenridge, Felix Grundy, George Nicolas, and William Murray, and on the whole he was a greater power in the court room than any one of them, though he never ranked with the great lawyers of the country.

Clay was imaginative, eloquent, skillful in debate, ingenious in his grouping and statement of facts, and plausible in his reasoning. He was somewhat superficial; partly because of his lack of education, partly because he was too fond of society to give sufficient study to his cases, and partly because he was not willing in all cases to follow his reasoning to its logical conclusion. There is some force in the criticism once made of him, that he "was a declaimer rather than a reasoner," but it must be remembered that he was a very able man notwithstanding these faults, which he overcame in a measure in his later life.

From the first Clay was greatly interested in politics. When he had been in Kentucky but a short time a convention was called to draft a new constitution. Clay earnestly urged that provision be made for the gradual emancipation of slaves. In this he had almost no following, but he presented his views with great force. He said that he had always felt that slavery was wrong and a great curse to all concerned with it. For taking this position he was denounced as "a Southern man with Northern principles." This, however, did not seem to lessen his popularity. In fact there is in most cases admiration for a man who will stand by his convictions even when he knows he is hopelessly

in the minority. This Clay usually did regardless of the consequences to himself. If there seemed to be some exceptions to this when he was seeking the Presidency, he suffered enough for it, and it was contrary to the general tenor of his life. Later, on a famous occasion, he said, "I had rather be right than President."

During Clay's time dueling was universally upheld in the South, and under certain conditions a man had to fight or be socially ostracized. On two occasions Clay accepted a challenge, but he left no one in doubt as to his own convictions on the subject. He wrote:

> I owe it to the community to say that whatever I may have done, or by inevitable circumstances might be forced to do, no man in it holds in deeper abhorrence than I do the pernicious practice of dueling.

Clay was elected a member of the Kentucky legislature when only twenty-six years of age. Three years later he was chosen to serve out the unexpired term of John Adair in the United States Senate, being the youngest man ever chosen to that office. In fact when he was sworn in he lacked a little more than three months of reaching the constitutional age, but the question of age qualification seems not to have been thought of in his case.

Clay so prospered in his profession that when he had been at Lexington only two years he felt justified in marrying and buying an estate of six hundred acres near Lexington, which he called Ashland. As Clay increased in wealth he grew in popularity also, till he was by far the most popular man in the state. He never became very wealthy, because his hospitalities were always disproportioned to his means.

After serving out the unexpired term of Adair in the Senate he was again elected to the Kentucky legislature and chosen Speaker, which gave him the necessary training for the position which was to come to him in the future,

Ashland, the Home of Henry Clay

and in which he was to make his greatest reputation,—the Speakership of the House of Representatives. In the winter of 1809–1810 he was again sent to the United States Senate to serve out the unexpired term (two years) of Buckner Thurston. He made speeches in favor of encouraging American manufacturing industries, and was recognized as a rising man.

Upon the expiration of his term in the Senate he was chosen a member of the House of Representatives and elected Speaker. This was really the beginning of his great career, his other service having merely prepared him for it. At that time we were on the eve of a war with Great Britain. Clay deemed war inevitable, and he more than any other man was responsible for it. It is doubtful if war would have broken out if he had used his influence to prevent it. As it was, the majority in its favor was small both in the Senate and in the House of Representatives. Later Clay resigned the Speakership to act as one of the commissioners to arrange a treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States. The result of this treaty was to leave all matters as they were before the war, not one of our grievances having been redressed.

Upon the election of Monroe, Clay hoped to be made Secretary of State, but Webster was given that place, while Clay was offered the War Department and the Russian mission, both of which he declined. He was again elected to the House of Representatives and chosen Speaker by an almost unanimous vote. When first elected Speaker, at the age of thirty-seven, he was probably the most popular man in the country, and almost to the day of his death he was the most influential man in his party.

Clay was no doubt wise in declining the positions offered him by Monroe and remaining in the House of Representatives. The place that both nature and training had best fitted him to fill was one where eloquence and the power of swaying the feelings and passions of men counted for much, rather than a position that called for executive ability and the working out of details.

The war had brought taxes, and taxes are never popular. The question to be considered was what method of raising them would be least burdensome and offensive. Clay advocated a system of protective tariffs, which he termed the "American system." To the perfection of such a tariff he devoted himself at this time, and the subject was of great interest to him throughout his future political career.

He came into conflict with the administration over the question of internal improvements. Monroe contended that the Constitution did not warrant the expenditure of money for such purposes. This view was held of necessity by the extreme states-rights people. Clay proclaimed the great destiny of the republic and urged the need of internal improvements in order to develop the dormant wealth of the country. Practically Clay held that whatever needed to be done for the welfare of the country was constitutional, unless the Constitution directly prohibited it. This was the beginning of a long struggle between the "strict" and "loose" constructionists, a struggle in which the "loose" constructionists have usually won. Mr. Clay ever rang the changes on the importance of opening up the West to settlers from the East. In debating this question he said:

> Sir, it is a subject of peculiar delight to me to look forward to the proud and happy period, distant as it may be, when circulation and association between the Atlantic and the Pacific and the Mexican Gulf shall be as free and perfect as they are at this moment in England, the most highly improved country on the globe. Sir, a new world has come into being since the Constitution was adopted. . . . Are we to neglect and refuse the redemption of that vast wilderness which once stretched unbroken beyond the Allegheny?

The discussion over the admission of Missouri began in 1818. It was typical of those that followed for forty years.

The population of the North was growing much faster than that of the South, and the latter section felt the need of more slave states, that they might at least maintain control of the Senate. The result of a long and bitter controversy over the question was the admission of Missouri with no restriction as to slavery, but with an agreement that there should be no slavery in any other part of the territory ceded by France north of 36° 30′, this being the southern boundary of Missouri. This was the famous Missouri Compromise. This struggle brought out the best energies of Clay, who favored the compromise. He was untiring in his efforts, worked with committees, interviewed individuals, and made eloquent speeches in what he believed to be the interest of the country. Clay was thoroughly patriotic and desired above all else to preserve the Union, which he loved more than he hated slavery. Clay's action during this controversy won for him the title "the great pacificator."

In 1820 Clay retired from public life to retrieve his fortunes through the practice of his profession. Then, as now, few public officials could live upon their salaries if they took an active part in affairs. After three years of retirement Clay was again elected to Congress and chosen Speaker.

The great debates which led to the tariff of 1824 were participated in by Clay, notwithstanding the fact that he was Speaker. During this session he made a speech on what he called the "American System," which was the most elaborate he ever made. Of it Carl Schurz says:

> His skill of statement, his ingenuity in the grouping of facts and principles, his plausibility of reasoning, his brilliant imagination, the fervor of his diction, the warm patriotic tone of his appeals, make a great impression.

Clay, Adams, Crawford, and Jackson were candidates for the Presidency in 1824. No one of them received a majority of the electoral votes, so the election went to the House of Representatives, which had to choose from the three receiving the largest number of votes. This excluded Clay, as he stood fourth. Had the House been free to vote for whom they chose, Clay would probably have been elected. As it was, Clay cast his influence for Adams, who was chosen, to the great disappointment of Jackson, who had received the largest popular vote. Adams made Clay Secretary of State, and Jackson and his friends charged that there had been a secret bargain between Clay and Adams ; but it is clear now, and ought to have been then, that there was no truth in the charge. Jackson had always been a bitter enemy of Clay, and Crawford was a hopeless paralytic. It is evident, therefore, that Clay could not support any other candidate than Adams. The reasons for Adams's appointment of Clay as Secretary of State are given later in Adams's own words.

When Clay resigned the Speakership he received the formal but hearty thanks of the House. He had made an admirable presiding officer. It is doubtful if any holder of the position has ever excelled him. His knowledge of parliamentary law and tactics was such that he had never been overruled. He was prompt in his decisions. In the stormiest times he was fair, courteous, self-controlled, and held the House in order.

The bitter and persistent attacks on Clay and Adams that followed are worth reading as illustrating the theory that "a lie well stuck to is as good as the truth." It may be that such reading will render one less liable to be carried away by reckless charges against public officials. Towards

the close of his term of office Adams referred to the attacks on Clay in the following language:

> Upon him the foulest slanders have been showered. The Department of State itself was a station which, by its bestowal, could confer neither honor nor profit upon him, but upon which he has shed unfading honor by the manner in which he has discharged its duties. Prejudice and passion have charged him with obtaining that office by bargain and corruption. Before you, my fellow-citizens, in the presence of our country and Heaven, I pronounce that charge totally unfounded. As to my motives in tendering him the Department of State when I did, let the man who questions them come forward. Let him look around among the statesmen and legislators of the nation and of that day; let him then select and name the man whom, by his preëminent talents, by his splendid services, by his ardent patriotism, by his all-enduring public spirit, by his fervid eloquence in behalf of the rights and liberties of mankind, by his long experience in the offices of the Union, foreign and domestic, a President of the United States, intent only on the honor and welfare of his country, ought to have preferred to Henry Clay.

In 1828 Jackson was elected by an overwhelming majority. Washington, the Adamses, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe in forty-four years made seventy-four removals from office, mainly for cause. This was an average of less than two a year. In one year Jackson caused more than two thousand changes upon the theory that "to the victors belong the spoils." Clay foresaw the evil consequences that would arise from such a course and raised his voice against it. He said it was "a system of universal rapacity substituted for a system of responsibility, and favoritism for fitness." The course pursued by Jackson, the evils of which Clay saw clearly, proved one of the most harmful, and most enduring as well, of all the acts known to our political history.

In 1832 Jackson ran against Clay and was reëlected, receiving even a larger majority than four years before. Clay's defeat was due largely to the hostility of the South towards his tariff views, but in part also to the controversy over the United States Bank and to the anti-masonic movement. It seemed as if so crushing a defeat must end the political career of Clay, but he soon became again the most conspicuous of all the public men of the country.

The outcome of the Presidential contest was the introduction of a bill providing for a sweeping reduction of the tariff. After long and bitter discussion Clay introduced a compromise measure providing for a twenty-per-cent reduction. This was adopted, though not satisfactory to either the protectionists or the free traders.

A bitter debate ensued over the deposits in the United States Bank. It lasted three months, and such able men as Clay, Calhoun, Webster, and Ewing spoke against the administration; but Jackson carried his point and overthrew the bank through such exercise of power as no other President would have dared to exert. As a result of the various conflicts with the administration, and the removals from office which grew out of them, Clay moved that in all instances of appointment to office by the President, with the consent of the Senate, the power of removal should be exercised only by the consent of the Senate, save that the President might suspend an official during a recess of the Senate. He must, however, within a month from the beginning of its next session, report to the Senate such removal and the cause for the same, and if the Senate failed to approve, the official should be reinstated. Clay was induced not to urge his amendment, but substantially the same act

was passed during the administration of Johnson, more than thirty years later.

In 1836 the slavery question, which had been quieted by the Missouri Compromise, again arose in Congress, nevermore to be suppressed so long as slavery lasted in the United States. Congress was flooded with petitions praying for the abolition of slavery and the slave trade in the District of Columbia. Calhoun denounced the petitions as being incendiary documents and moved that they be not received. This was an arbitrary refusal of rights older than the government, an act that no free people would submit to, whatever their convictions might be on the subject of slavery. Recognizing this fact, Buchanan moved that they be received and denied without reference to any committee. Clay, believing in the right of petition and not believing in slavery, opposed both these motions, and moved that the petitions be received. This motion was carried, but later Buchanan's motion to deny the petitions without their having been referred to a committee was also carried.

The anti-slavery discussion soon took another form. The abolition societies began to circulate tracts and periodicals through the mails. In Charleston a mob broke open the post office and took such of these documents as they could find and destroyed them. At a public meeting at which the clergy of all denominations was represented the action of the mob was approved. The postmaster assumed the right to prevent the circulation of such literature and wrote to the postmaster at New York asking him not to forward it. He wrote for instructions to the postmaster-general, who disclaimed power to exclude such matter from the mails, but virtually advised the postmasters to do it on their own

responsibility. Calhoun introduced a bill to make it unlawful for any postmaster knowingly to deliver to any one any printed paper touching slavery, in any state or territory where such publications were prohibited. Clay denounced this bill, claiming that it was unconstitutional and fraught with danger to the liberty of the people. The bill was defeated by a decisive vote.

As the discussion over slavery went on Clay seemed gradually to come to the conviction that the Abolitionists were dangerous people; he also saw that he had greatly injured his popularity with the slaveholders. In February, 1839, he presented a petition from the inhabitants of Washington against the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and made a speech which appeared to be an effort to win back what he had lost in urging the right of petitioners to have their petitions presented and fairly dealt with. The truth probably is that slavery was wholly repugnant to Mr. Clay as a man, but as a politician he dared not always show his true feelings.

Clay failed to secure the nomination for the Presidency in 1840. Some of Webster's friends, the anti-masons, some of the anti-slavery Whigs, and those politicians who wanted the most "available" man, united on General Harrison, who was nominated and elected. Clay was angry and had some right to be. His friends were angry, grieved, and disappointed. Had Clay been nominated at this time, he would, without doubt, have been elected, for the great panic of 1837 and matters growing out of it made it impossible for Van Buren to be reëlected. Clay, notwithstanding his disappointment and his real grievances, gave a loyal support to the ticket.

Harrison offered Clay the position of Secretary of State, which he declined, preferring to remain in the Senate. When Congress assembled Clay introduced a bill to repeal the sub-treasury act, but the Democrats had a majority in the Senate and the bill failed. Harrison died a month after his inauguration and was succeeded by Tyler. Clay again introduced a bill to repeal the sub-treasury act, which passed and was signed. A bill to incorporate a new United States Bank was passed and vetoed. As a result of the veto all Tyler's cabinet save Webster resigned. The indignation of the Whigs was intense. They no longer recognized Tyler as a member of their party. The Whig papers throughout the country denounced him. He was burned in effigy in many places. Clay soon resigned from the Senate and went to his home at Ashland.

Tyler signed a treaty of annexation with Texas. The primary if not the sole purpose of annexation was the acquisition of more slave territory. The treaty was very unpopular at the North and correspondingly popular at the South. At this time Clay was making a tour of the country. He was at Raleigh, North Carolina, when the treaty was made public, and he immediately wrote a letter to the *National Intelligencer* protesting against it. This letter was, of course, unpopular at the South, and it was not liked at the North because it did not give the extension of slavery as the chief reason for opposing annexation.

In 1844 Clay was nominated by the Whigs, and Polk by the Democrats. The Liberty party nominated James G. Birney. Clay was again defeated, chiefly because of his letter to Stephen F. Miller of Alabama in which he disclaimed any personal objection to the annexation of Texas.

This, without doubt, cost him the vote of New York, and so the Presidency. Mr. Clay tried for the nomination again in 1848, but it went to General Taylor. In 1849 Clay again returned to the Senate and at once became foremost in all debates. As was always the case when the discussion of the slavery question became threatening, Clay had a compromise measure. This time he proposed, as measures to please the North, the admission of California as a free state and the abolition of slavery and the slave trade in the District of Columbia; to placate the South he recommended a more efficient law for the pursuit and capture of fugitive slaves, and that Utah and New Mexico should be left unrestricted as to slavery. He appealed to the North to make concessions, and to the South for peace. The debate that followed was participated in by all the great members of the Senate. The strongest speech against the measure was made by Calhoun, the great exponent and defender of slavery. It was in this debate that Webster disappointed, grieved, and angered many of his friends by denouncing the Abolitionists and greatly modifying his previously expressed views on the subject of slavery. Neither Clay nor Webster had kept pace with the growing anti-slavery sentiment in the North, and the time was ripe for new leaders who would more correctly represent the people of that section. Not only new leaders but also a new party was called for, and in this debate the leaders, the harbingers of the party, appeared, — Seward with his doctrine of a "higher law" and Chase with a similar doctrine. Clay and Webster had had their day. The Whig party had outlived its usefulness.

Clay's health was broken by the strain of this session of Congress, and he was far less active in the next. He went

to Cuba for his health, but derived no benefit from the trip. He died at Washington, June 29, 1852. For thirty years he had struggled unsuccessfully for the Presidency, which could have added nothing to his fame had he secured it, while failure to win it had brought him much unhappiness.

Clay in common with all mankind had his faults and failings; he compromised his convictions at times because of his craving for the Presidency, but always and everywhere his love for the Union was unshaken and his patriotism beyond suspicion. No man ever loved his country more or served her better through a long life. No other American ever exerted so great an influence for so long a time; no other name is more thoroughly or more honorably interwoven with his country's history. If one now wonders at Clay's apparently vacillating policy on the question of slavery, he should not forget that it is difficult, if not impossible, for those now living to appreciate the bitterness of those times and the great danger of the disruption of the government. Clay regarded the overthrow of the Union as the greatest possible evil, and he was prepared to make any necessary sacrifice to avert it. He said:

> I owe a paramount allegiance to the whole Union, — a subordinate one to my own state. When my state is right — when it has cause for resistance, when tyranny and wrong and oppression insufferable arise — I will then share her fortunes; but if she summons me to the battlefield, or to support her in any cause which is unjust, against the Union, never, never will I engage with her in such a cause.

Benjamin Franklin

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

1706–1790

For more than three centuries there lived in the little village of Ecton in Northamptonshire, England, a family by the name of Franklin. In every generation the eldest son became a blacksmith. Josiah, the father of Benjamin, was a dyer, but on coming to America he became a tallow chandler and soap boiler. Benjamin was his fifteenth child.

Franklin's mother was Abiah Folger and was Josiah's second wife. Her husband was a rather narrow-minded Puritan, although a man of sterling character, and it is not surprising, perhaps, that the young Franklin should have revolted against the rigid beliefs of his father.

The boy's early life was a struggle with poverty, difficulties, and hardships. The house in which he was born was a two-story building of four rooms, — a kitchen, an attic, and two other rooms, each twenty feet square. It is a little difficult to see how a family of the size of Franklin's could be made comfortable in such quarters, but it seems to have been a happy home. It is true that Benjamin quarreled with his half-brother James, and their relations seem not to have been very cordial after that ; but the Franklins were noted for strong family affection.

Benjamin had a good home, good instruction, and access to good books. He was a precocious boy and inordinately

fond of reading. When a man grown he said, "I do not remember when I could not read, so it must have been very early." In his boyhood he read Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" and "Holy War," Defoe's "Essay on Projects," Burton's "Historical Collections," Plutarch's "Lives," Mather's

Birthplace of Franklin

From Antique Views of Ye Towne of Boston

"Essay to do Good," and many other works. During his whole life Franklin was an omnivorous reader, notwithstanding that he advised people to "read much, but not too many books."

He was not a particularly promising young man, considered from either a religious or a moral standpoint. He

had no sympathy with the theological doctrines generally held in Boston in his time, and his conservative elders predicted that little good would be said of him.

When only seven years old Franklin was given his first spending money and allowed to use it as he chose. The following is his account of the affair:

When I was a child of seven years old, my friends, on a holiday, filled my pockets with coppers. I went directly to a shop where they sold toys for children, and being charmed with the sound of a whistle, that I met by the way in the hands of another boy, I voluntarily offered and gave all my money for one. I then came home and went whistling all over the house, much pleased with my whistle, but disturbing all the family. My brothers and sisters and cousins, understanding the bargain that I had made, told me that I had given four times as much for it as it was worth, put me in mind what good things I might have bought with the rest of my money, and laughed at me so much for my folly that I cried with vexation, and the reflection gave more chagrin than the whistle gave me pleasure.

This, however, was of use to me, the impression continuing on my mind; so that often when I was tempted to buy some unnecessary thing, I said to myself, "Don't give too much for the whistle"; so I saved my money.

As I grew up, came into the world, and observed the actions of men, I thought I met with many, very many, who gave too much for the whistle.

At eight years of age Franklin was sent to a grammar school. Afterwards he went to a famous school kept by George Brownell, to learn writing and arithmetic. At ten years of age he was taken from school and put at work in his father's shop. This he hated and wanted to go to sea, as some of his uncles had done. His passion for the sea was so strong that his father feared the lad would run away, so he looked about for some other business which might be

more congenial. He finally concluded that as Benjamin was so fond of reading he might like to become a printer, and accordingly apprenticed him to his half-brother James, who had recently returned from England, where he had learned the trade. James Franklin was an excellent printer and did some of the best work of his time.

Franklin was twelve years of age when he was apprenticed to his brother. He was to serve till he was twenty-one years old and to receive journeyman's wages during the last year only. One of the advantages of the new work to Franklin was the increased opportunities that it gave him for reading. From this time he earned his own living and relied upon himself. His brother, being a bachelor, had to pay for his apprentice's board, and Franklin, who had been greatly impressed by a book advocating a vegetable diet, offered to board himself if he might be allowed half of what his brother was then paying. Out of this small allowance Benjamin saved half and used it to buy books. At the same time he was forming the habit of living on simple fare, — a habit which he kept up for many years and which no doubt contributed to his long life and good health.

In 1729 James Franklin began the publication of a paper called the *New England Courant*, though his friends advised against it, saying that one paper was enough for America. That seems strange advice to us who are living at a time when there are about twenty-five thousand papers published in the United States. Benjamin wrote some anonymous articles for his brother's paper, which attracted considerable attention. About the same time he wrote some verses, among them "The Lighthouse Tragedy," which his brother printed, and which had a considerable sale. This made

Franklin a little vain, but his father read them over with him and pointed out the faults so clearly that Benjamin had no further desire to write verse. He then attempted prose, and a young man named Collins and himself carried on an argument through correspondence for mutual improvement in writing. This work Franklin's father also criticised, commending some things and condemning others. About this time Franklin came across an odd volume of the *Spectator*, and was so pleased with it that he resolved to copy its style. To do this he would first write out the story in verse, and then after he had almost forgotten the prose, turn the verse into prose and compare it with the original.

When Franklin was about sixteen years old, one of his brother's patrons, Matthew Adams, came to regard him as a very talented boy and invited him to make free use of his library. From that time, so long as he remained in Boston, Franklin reveled in books.

Soon after the establishment of the *New England Courant*, James Franklin became engaged in a controversy with some of the most prominent Boston clergymen, and printed an article which, by implication, reflected on the civil authorities. For this he was taken into custody, imprisoned for four weeks, and publicly censured. Neither the imprisonment nor the censure seems to have had much effect, for he continued to publish many articles which shocked the people and "injuriously reflected on the reverend and faithful ministers of the Gospel and his majesty's government." James was again imprisoned and forbidden to publish the *Courant*, or any pamphlet or paper of like nature, without its having been approved by the secretary of the province.

At this time Boston was a town of about twelve thousand inhabitants and was practically ruled by the Calvinistic ministers.

As James Franklin was not allowed to publish the *Courant*, it was decided to issue it in Benjamin's name. It would hardly have done to issue it in the name of an apprentice, for that would have been a very palpable evasion of the order of the Assembly; so Benjamin's indenture was canceled with the understanding that he was to sign new articles which should be kept secret. Franklin edited the paper during his brother's imprisonment, and was, perhaps, the youngest editor the country has ever known.

Although the brothers were agreed in the fight with the church and the state, they were at odds in most other respects. James was overbearing, ill-natured, and abusive. They had many quarrels and their father usually sided with Benjamin. Finally their quarrels grew so bitter that Benjamin, feeling sure that his brother would not dare to present the papers that had been kept secret, declared that his indenture had been canceled and that he was free to do as he chose. His brother, however, had sufficient influence to prevent his being employed by any one else in Boston. In this quarrel the father sided with James. Later in life Franklin admitted that he had been wrong, and also that he had given his brother much provocation. So strongly did he feel this that he made good what he thought had been James's financial loss in the matter.

Being unable to get work in Boston, Benjamin ran away, going by sloop to New York. Here also he was unable to obtain employment, so he went on to Philadelphia, where he was employed by a printer by the name of Samuel Keimer.

Franklin was a man of far greater skill than any printer then in Philadelphia, and was besides remarkable for his wit, good nature, and intelligence. His work attracted much attention. By chance a letter of his was brought to the notice of Sir William Keith, governor of the province. He thought Franklin a promising young man who should be encouraged, and advised him to start in business on his own account, promising him the public business if he did, and also to aid him in all other ways in his power.

Franklin doubted if he could obtain any assistance, but finally decided to return to Boston and see what he could accomplish. He took a letter from the governor to his father. His people were glad to see him, as they had heard nothing from him since he left and were fearful that he was dead. He received a warm welcome, but although his father was very much pleased with the governor's good report, he positively refused to give the young man any money. He advised him to return to Philadelphia and by hard work and strict economy to save money so that by the time he was twenty-one he might go into business for himself, promising to aid him then if necessary.

On his return Benjamin worked some time for Keimer, but finally went to England, Governor Keith agreeing to give him a letter of credit and letters of introduction to a number of his friends. Franklin reached London on Christmas Eve, 1724, only to find that he had been deceived and that Governor Keith was wholly without credit in that city. He at once secured employment at Palmer's, a famous printing house. Here he was known as "the water American," from the fact that he drank nothing stronger than water. The other workmen were "great

guzzlers of beer," Franklin tells us. He was asked if all Americans were like him in the matter of drink, and replied, "No, I am sorry to say that a great many of them are like you."

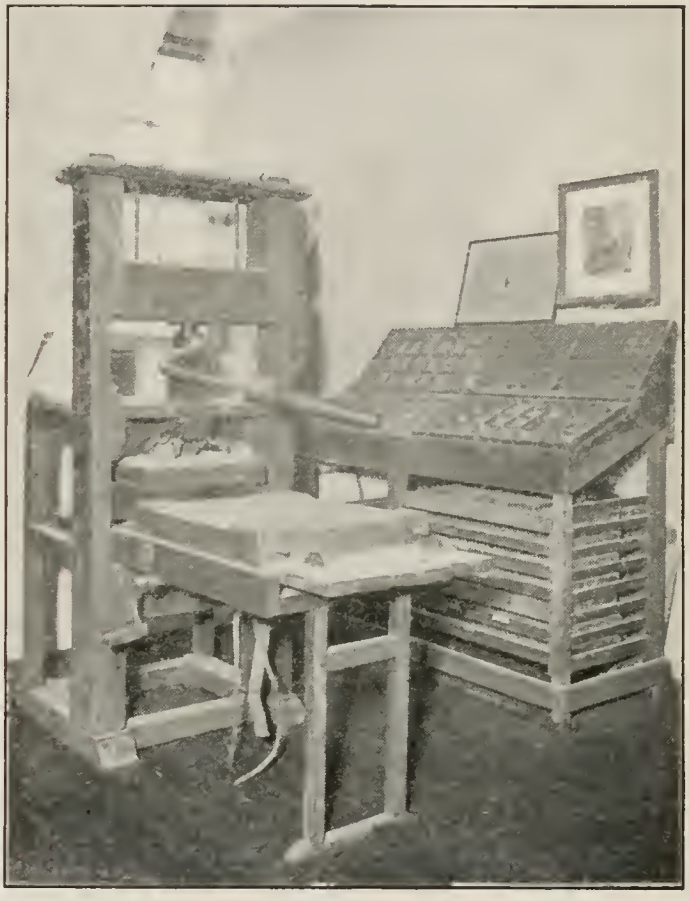
After spending eighteen months in London Franklin had a good business offer from a Philadelphia merchant and returned to that city; but his employer soon died and he was again without work.

Keimer offered him good wages to superintend his printing office and he accepted the position. He found that Keimer had a number of apprentices at very small pay but with an agreement to raise their wages as they increased in skill. Franklin saw that Keimer's plan was to stimulate his apprentices to make all possible progress, and then as soon as the business was in good working shape to dispense with his services, and it so proved. In fact, as soon as Keimer felt he could get on without him he provoked a quarrel and Franklin left, Keimer regretting that he had bound himself to keep him as long as he did.

Franklin now planned to return to Boston, but Hugh Meredith, one of Keimer's men, whose apprenticeship would soon expire, came to him and proposed that they go into partnership, Meredith's father to furnish the money. This was agreed upon, and in the summer of 1728 appeared the sign "B. Franklin and H. Meredith." They received some patronage from friends, but Franklin was not the kind of man to rely upon such support. In December the annual speech of the governor was printed by Andrew Bradford, the public printer, in a very slovenly and bungling manner. Franklin at once reprinted it, of course without pay, in the very best manner possible, and sent a copy to each

member of the Assembly. The contrast in the work was so great that Franklin secured the public printing for the following year. Through the excellence of their work the firm was given the public printing for Delaware and New Jersey as well.

Franklin, remembering his boyhood experience with the *New England Courant*, planned to start a paper, but Keimer, learning of it, forestalled him and late in 1728 issued the first number of the *Universal Instructor in All Arts and Sciences, the Pennsylvania Gazette*. It proved a losing venture, and when the thirty-ninth number was reached the paper was sold to Franklin, who kept only the latter part of the title, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. He made it a semi-weekly paper for a time; but there did not seem to be a demand for such frequent publication, and it was soon made a weekly again. The semi-weekly edition was the first published in America. The paper was very popular and its circulation reached from Virginia to New York, being larger than any other paper in the country. It was remarkable for its brilliant and original articles.



Franklin's Printing Press

Franklin achieved this great success when he was only twenty-three years old.

Franklin's most successful publication was "Poor Richard's Almanac." It was begun in December, 1732, and continued for twenty-five years with an average sale of ten thousand copies, which was very remarkable when we consider the conditions at that time. The population of the country was small and widely scattered. The mail facilities amounted to but little. Nearly all the people were poor, and there was comparatively little reading done. The almanac became one of the most influential publications in the world. Seventy-five editions have been printed in English, fifty-six in French, eleven in German, and nine in Italian. It has been translated into Spanish, Danish, Swedish, Welsh, Polish, Gaelic, Russian, Bohemian, Dutch, Catalan, Chinese, modern Greek, French, German, Italian, and phonetic writing. It has been printed more than four hundred times and is still popular.

Franklin established printing offices in other places, putting each in charge of some competent and promising journeyman printer, furnishing the capital and having a part of the profits. In nearly every case the printer prospered so that in a few years he was able to buy the establishment.

In Philadelphia Franklin organized a club known as the Junto, composed of bright young men who met every Friday evening. Each member, in turn, was required to bring for discussion some question of morals, politics, or natural philosophy. Once in three months each member was required to read an essay, taking whatever subject he chose. This club not only was of great value to its members but also became a power in Philadelphia.

In 1730 Franklin married Deborah Reid, with whom he lived happily for forty-four years. During their early married life they lived in the most frugal manner over his shop. Their furniture was limited in amount and of the plainest kind. For a long time Franklin's breakfast consisted of only bread and milk.

At thirty years of age Franklin had become one of the leading citizens of Philadelphia. He owned a printing establishment, edited and published the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, issued "Poor Richard's Almanac" annually, and was at the same time postmaster of the city and clerk of the Assembly.

While Franklin wrote much on a great variety of subjects and carried on an extensive correspondence with learned men and societies, he is best known by his autobiography and as the writer of "Poor Richard's Almanac." Among the brightest things written by Franklin are "The Whistle," "The Dialogue with the Gout," "The Morals of Chess," and several other essays written when he was in France for the amusement of his intimate friends and not intended for publication. He also wrote much on scientific subjects. His letters to his wife when he was in Europe are very interesting and are well worth reading.

The following extracts from "Poor Richard" show to what extent Franklin's sayings have entered into common use.

Many a little makes a mickle.
Little strokes fell great oaks.
Lost time is never found again.
There are no gains without pains.
One to-day is worth two to-morrows.
The doors of wisdom are never shut.
He that hath a trade hath an estate.
Constant dropping wears away stones.

A small leak will sink a great ship.
God helps them that help themselves.
Diligence is the mother of good luck.
Who dainties love shall beggars prove.

He that by the plow would thrive,
Himself must either hold or drive.

The sleeping fox catches no poultry.

Early to bed and early to rise,
Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.

For age and want save while you may ;
No morning sun lasts the whole day.

Three can keep a secret if two are dead.

Plow deep while sluggards sleep,
And you shall have corn to sell and keep.

Fools make feasts and wise men eat them.
Keep thy shop and thy shop will keep thee.
Drive thy business, let not that drive thee.
Creditors have better memories than debtors.
Virtue and a trade are a child's best portion.
Rather go to bed supperless than rise in debt.
Many have been ruined by buying good pennyworths.
Employ thy time well if thou meanst to gain leisure.
Sloth makes all things difficult, but industry all easy.
Want of care does us more damage than want of knowledge.
A life of leisure and a life of laziness are two things.
If you would be wealthy think of saving as well as getting.
The eye of the master will do more work than both his hands.
Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other.

Sloth, like rust, consumes faster than labor wears, while the used key is always bright.

He that riseth late must trot all day and shall scarce overtake his business at night.

But dost thou love life, then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of.

As Scientist and Inventor

At forty-two years of age Franklin took a partner to look after the printing, that he might devote himself to science. He was already widely known as a philosopher. From this time on his advancement in science was so rapid that he was soon widely known throughout America and Europe, and he became one of the most noted philosophers in the world. He was elected a member of the Royal Society of London in 1753, and the following year it bestowed upon him the Copley medal for his discoveries in electricity.

Both Yale and Harvard conferred upon him the degree of Master of Arts. The Academy of Science of Paris made him an associate member. All the learned societies of Europe admitted him to their ranks. Kant called him the "Prometheus of modern times." Later the universities of St. Andrews, London, and Edinburgh conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws. American universities, colleges, legislatures, and literary societies gave him their highest honors.

Franklin seemed to be always eager to know the why and wherefore of every occurrence the meaning of which was not clearly apparent. He sought at once to make every new discovery or idea of practical value to mankind. His mind was so alert, his grasp so remarkable, his disposition to turn everything to practical account so pronounced that had he lived in our time he might easily have rivaled Edison in the number of his inventions, and had he chosen to use his genius to make money his wealth might have been almost beyond belief. However, he never

patented anything or sought in any way to profit by his inventions. When the governor of Pennsylvania offered him a patent for his open stove he declined it, saying, "As we enjoy great advantages from the inventions of others, we should be glad of an opportunity to serve others by any inventions of ours; and this we should do freely and generously."

Just how generous this act was is shown by the fact that a London dealer made some slight changes in the stove, which Franklin claimed lessened rather than increased its value, patented it in England, and made a small fortune from it.

Franklin once said: "It is incredible the amount of good that may be done in a country by a single man who will make a business of it and not suffer himself to be diverted from that purpose by different avocations, studies, or amusements."

Perhaps he himself, though he had many avocations and studies to divert his mind, best illustrates his statement. The almost incredible activity of his mind and the great range of his thought are indicated by the following list — for there is not space in this sketch for more than a mere list — of the more important inventions and actions of Franklin. In considering this it should be borne in mind that this was the work of the leisure hours of a very busy man who not only had his private business to look after but who also devoted the best part of his life to the service of the public. Well might Paul Leicester Ford call him the "many-sided Franklin," and Bancroft say of him, "Not half his merits has been told." It seems incredible that one man could do so much.

He originated the lightning rod.
He promoted the early culture of silk.
He founded the American Philosophical Society.
He created the post-office system of America.
He was the first champion of reformed spelling.
He determined the temperature of the Gulf Stream.
He suggested the use of mineral fertilizers.
He introduced the basket willow into this country.
He was the first to make systematic use of advertising.
He recommended the use of white clothing for hot weather.
He laid the foundation for the University of Pennsylvania.
He discovered the identity of lightning and electricity.
He discovered that northeast storms may begin in the southwest.
He was the first to recommend the use of oil to make rough seas smooth.
He was the first to recommend building ships with water-tight compartments.
He founded the Philadelphia library, the parent of a thousand others.
He was the first to suggest that the aurora was an electrical manifestation.
He established and inspired the Junto, the most useful of all American clubs.
He established the first fire company and the first insurance company in Philadelphia.
He published "Poor Richard's Almanac," which made thousands of its readers better and stronger men.
He invented the Franklin stove, which heated rooms better than was possible before and with the consumption of much less fuel.
He performed countless experiments, the most famous one being that with the kite during a thunderstorm.

Franklin was in constant correspondence with scientific men in all parts of the world. He wrote much on such subjects as sun spots, shooting stars, light, heat, fire, electricity, air, evaporation, the tides, rainfall, geology, winds, whirlwinds, waterspouts, ventilation, and sound.

As Politician and Diplomat

In speaking of public office Franklin said: "I never refused one that I was capable of executing when public service was in question; and I never bargained for salary, but contented myself with whatever my constituents were pleased to allow me." On another occasion he said, "I shall never ask, never refuse, nor ever resign an office." Franklin believed in the doctrine "to the victors belong the spoils"; at least he practiced it. When he was postmaster-general he appointed one of his brothers postmaster of Boston and another postmaster of Philadelphia, and upon the death of the latter made his widow postmistress, probably the first woman in this country to hold a political office. Throughout his life Franklin secured many political offices for his relatives.

In 1736 he was chosen clerk of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania, a position that he held for fourteen years and one which gave him opportunity to widen his acquaintance with public men.

In 1737 Franklin was made postmaster of Philadelphia.

In 1753 he was made postmaster-general of the colonies for England.

In 1754 commissioners from the different colonies met at Albany to confer with the "Six Nations" in regard to defense against the French. At this Albany Congress there were present as delegates twenty-five of the leading men of the colonies, Franklin among the number. He presented a plan for a general government, to be administered by a president-general appointed and supported by the crown and a congress chosen by the assemblies of the

various colonies. This plan was unanimously adopted by the congress but rejected by the government in England.

In 1757 Franklin was sent to England as agent for the colony of Pennsylvania and acted in that capacity year after year. He also acted as agent for Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Georgia. He put forth his best efforts to prevent war between the colonies and the mother country, going so far at times as to be distrusted by both countries, but when war became inevitable he was foremost in all efforts looking to the success of the colonies. He urged their immediate union in the contest with England, as at an earlier date he had urged their union for mutual help in their contests with the French and Indians.

Franklin early said:

> I have long been of the opinion that the foundations of the future grandeur and stability of the British Empire lie in America; and though, like other foundations, they are low and little now, they are nevertheless broad, and strong enough to support the greatest political structure that human wisdom ever yet erected.

Just before the outbreak of the Revolution, and after it was evident that Franklin could no longer serve the colonies in England, he returned to America and was chosen a member of the Continental Congress. He was at this time sixty-nine years old and one of the most illustrious men in America. He was made postmaster-general and also a member of many important committees. As postmaster-general he made great improvements in the service, lowered the rate of postage, advertised unclaimed letters, increased the number of mails, lessened the time of transmission, and opened the mails to all newspapers. He personally visited every post office in the country save the one at Charleston.

He was elected a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly, chosen president of the Pennsylvania Convention, and made chairman of the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety, with duties similar to those of a governor.

Franklin was not a good speaker. He says of himself: "I was but a bad speaker, never eloquent, subject to much hesitation in the choice of my words, hardly correct in language, and yet I generally carried my points." Jefferson speaks of his service with Franklin and Washington and says: "I never heard either of them speak ten minutes at a time, nor to any but the main point, which was to decide the question."

It was desirable to cultivate the most friendly relations with France, and all agreed that Franklin was the man to send there. He had traveled in that country, had many friends there, and knew the language. The history of his efforts in France, which were crowned with success, is too long to be told in detail here. His influence with the French ministry was very great. A historian of American diplomacy says that Franklin is the only true diplomat that America has produced. His duties as minister to France were multifarious. He was practically Secretary of the Navy. He purchased supplies, fitted out expeditions, gave commissions, sold prizes, raised money, settled disputes, in fact he was the American government in France so far as such matters were concerned. He was the greatest financier of the Revolution. While his personal contributions were insignificant compared with those of Robert Morris, his success in getting financial aid from the French was marvelous, and without it the American cause must apparently have failed.

Franklin was so popular in France that his picture was found in thousands of French homes; and the Franklin stove was largely used, quite as much on account of its inventor as on account of its value. Poets wrote sonnets in his honor, noble dames addressed him in verse, and all classes sought every opportunity to speak with him or to see him.

Franklin was benevolent, sincere, and just in his dealings, abhorring deceit, flattery, falsehood, injustice, and dishonesty. He differed from most self-educated men in that he was broad and liberal in his views, respectful towards the opinions of others, even when he thought them wrong, and always open to new convictions. When he was in Europe he became intimately acquainted with Priestley, Price, Adam Smith, Hume, Robertson, Burke, Pratt, Lord Kames, Buffon, Voltaire, and many other noted men.

When chosen president of Pennsylvania at the age of seventy-nine he wrote to a friend in England:

> I had on my return some right to expect repose; and it was my intention to avoid all public business. But I had not firmness enough to resist the unanimous desire of my country folks, and I find myself harnessed again in their service for another year. They engrossed the prime of my life. They have eaten my flesh and now seem resolved to pick my bones.

The year proved to be three years, and at the end of that time, at the age of eighty-two, he was chosen a member of the constitutional convention, in which he rendered services as valuable as any given during his long life. Many of the more important features of the Constitution were proposed and urged by him.

On his return from France in 1785 he was in the very height of his fame. Every vessel brought him letters from

the most famous men of Europe. Every prominent person who traveled in America went to see him. Villages, towns, and counties were named in his honor. He was always mentioned with respect and regard. It was "the venerable Dr. Franklin," "the revered patriot, Dr. Franklin," "our illustrious countryman and friend of man," "the father of American independence," etc.

In 1787 he was chosen president of the first abolition society formed in this country. About five months before his death he signed, as president of the abolition society, a memorial to Congress in which he said: "That mankind are all formed by the same Almighty being, alike objects of his care, and equally designed for the enjoyment of happiness, the Christian religion teaches us to believe, and the political creed of the Americans fully coincides with that position."

Not long before his death Franklin wrote to President Washington, saying:

My malady renders my sitting up to write rather painful to me, but I cannot let my son-in-law, Mr. Bache, part for New York without congratulating you, by him, on the recovery of your health, so precious to us all, and on the growing strength of our new government under your administration. For my own personal ease I should have died two years ago; but though those years have been spent in excruciating pain, I am pleased to have lived them, since they have brought me to see our present situation. I am now finishing my eighty-fourth year, and probably with it my career in this life; but whatever state of existence I am placed in hereafter, if I retain any memory of what passed here, I shall with it retain the esteem, respect, and affection with which I have long been, my dear friend,

Yours most sincerely,

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

During Mr. Franklin's last illness Washington wrote him as follows: "If to be venerated for benevolence, if to be admired for talents, if to be esteemed for patriotism, if to be beloved for philanthropy can gratify the human mind, you must have the pleasing consolation to know that you have not lived in vain."

Franklin died on the 17th of April, 1790. Twenty thousand persons attended his funeral services. The bells of the city were muffled and tolled; flags on the shipping were at half-mast; cannon were discharged at the close of the funeral ceremonies. Congress and the National Assembly of France passed suitable resolutions. Scientific and political societies did honor to his memory. Members of Congress wore a black badge for thirty days. The National Assembly of France put on mourning. This body and the Community of Paris sent letters of condolence to the President of the United States, the first time that a public body of one country had paid homage to a private citizen of another. The city of Passy, where he lived when in France, gave his name to a street.

A list of the public positions held by Franklin will impress upon one, more forcibly perhaps than all that has been said, how large a part he had in making our country what it was at the time of his death.

Justice of the Peace.
Postmaster of Philadelphia.
Colonel of militia.
Clerk of the Pennsylvania Assembly.
Member of the Pennsylvania Assembly.
Member of the Common Council of Philadelphia.
Member of the Board of Aldermen of Philadelphia.
President of Pennsylvania.

Member of a Committee to Canada.
Member of the Continental Congress.
Minister to France during the Revolution.
Member of the Constitutional Convention.
Commissioner to negotiate a peace with England.
Member of the Secret Committee of Congress.
Chairman of the Committee of Safety for Pennsylvania.
Representative of Pennsylvania at the Colonial Congress at Albany.
Member of the Supreme Executive Committee of Pennsylvania.
Member of the Committee of Three to confer with Lord Howe.
Member of the Committee of Secret Correspondence of Congress.
One of a committee of five to draft the Declaration of Independence.
Agent to England for Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Georgia.

This constituted a part of the public work of a man who started out in life with no education beyond that obtained in an ordinary elementary school, one who had no influential friends, and who cared for himself from the time he was twelve years old. It is good to live in a country where such things are possible.

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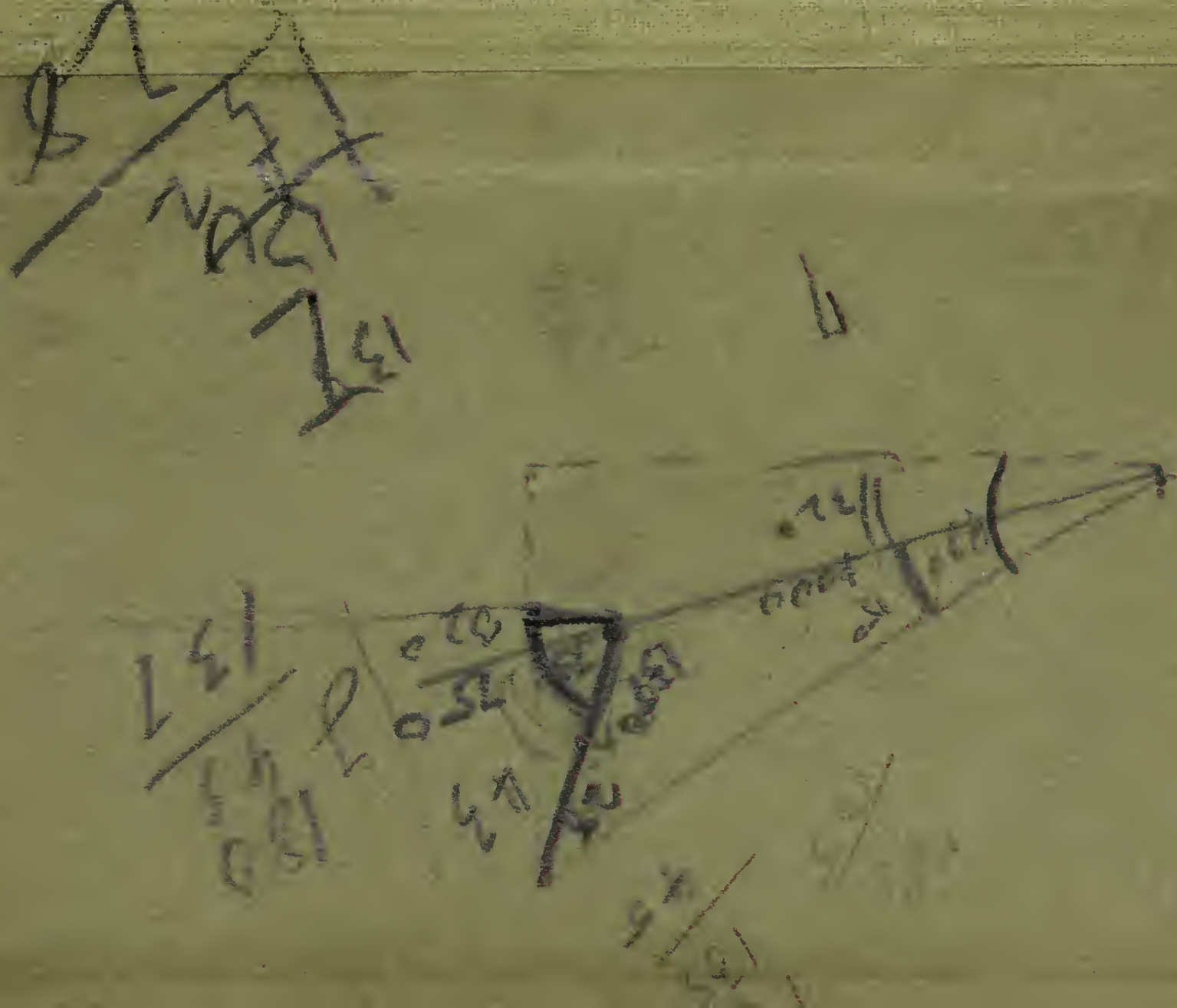

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