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LIVING
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BY

E. L. MAGOON,

AUTHOR OF "PROVERBS FOR THE PEOPLE," "ORATORS OF THE
AMERICAN REVOLUTION," &c.

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TO
THE YOUNG MEN OF AMERICA,
HEIRS OF THE
RICHEST DEPARTED WORTH,
AND
EMULATORS OF THE GRANDEST LIVING MERIT,
THIS WORK
IS FRATEERNALLY INSCRIBED.

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P R E F A C E.

ON last September was published the "ORATORS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION." Very kindly has that book been received in this country and in England. In accordance with the intimation given in the preface to that work, the present publication is made to the world with the hope that, like its predecessor, it may be deemed not altogether unworthy of discriminating scrutiny and generous regard.

Of the former volume, some have said that it would be improved if more copious extracts from the respective orators accompanied the author's analytical remarks. At the same time these critics have signified their doubts as to the possibility of procuring many authentic and characteristic specimens from some of the earliest and most efficient patriots of our land. Those doubts would deepen into despair, should the enthusiastic gentlemen referred to attempt to find what all would indeed be glad

to read. But, unfortunately, we have only here and there a torso to remind us of the consummate excellence long since mutilated by revolutions and wasted by time.

In the present instance, however, there is no such lack of well-authenticated materials. The chief difficulty lies in making a judicious selection therefrom, samples the most characteristic of each master, and calculated to exemplify in the most striking manner the peculiar qualities of each one's eloquence. The author may have failed in this respect, as in other important particulars; but, as he wished to succeed by doing justice to the subject every way, he has spared no pains.

The reader will understand that the production before him is not designed to be a book of examples merely, or of precepts alone, but rather of both combined. Taken with the volume referred to above, it is believed that we have arranged a complete circle of oratorical models, each one in his own individuality standing for a class, nearly approximating perfection of its kind, and in the aggregate presenting an array of exalted worthies whom the best talents would do well to emulate, and whom the loftiest genius can only by the most strenuous efforts hope to excel.

It is perhaps unnecessary to add that it has been the purpose of the author to maintain the strictest impar-

tiality in portraying the distinguished personages in this work, in all of whom he recognizes much to admire. If in any instance he has been indiscreet or unjust in what he has presumed to write, he begs pardon of those who may conceive themselves wronged. He believes, however, that a delicate regard to private feelings and personal worth will be found pervading every succeeding page.

In dedicating this work to the Young Men of America, the author would remind them of Cicero's beautiful exhortation to Brutus, after the death of Hortensius: "As you now seem to have been left the sole guardian of an orphan eloquence, let me conjure you to cherish her with a generous fidelity: discourage the addresses of her worthless and impertinent suitors: preserve her pure and unblemished in all her virgin charms; and secure her, to the utmost of your ability, from the lawless violence of every ruffian."

E. L. M.

Cincinnati, Feb. 22, 1849.

CHAPTER I.

DANIEL WEBSTER,

THE LOGICIAN.

ALL honor to "The Old Granite State!" The contracted and tempestuous territory of New Hampshire has given birth to as much refined genius and effective talent, perhaps, as any State on our continent. Nearly all the heroism, moral excellence, and ennobling literature of the world, has been produced by those who, in infancy and youth were fostered by the inspiration of exalted regions, where the turf is covered with a rude beauty, rocks and wilderness are piled in bold and inimitable shapes of savage grandeur, tinged with the hues of untold centuries, and over which awe-inspiring storms often sweep with thunders in their train. This is the influence which more than half created the Shakspeares, Miltons, Spencers, Wordsworths, Scotts, Coleridges, Shelleys, Irvings, Coopers, Bryants, and Websters of the world; and without much personal acquaintance with such scenes it is impossible for a reader to comprehend their highest individuality of character so as fully to relish the best qualities of their works.

In the present discussion, we propose to consider the

leading circumstances of Daniel Webster's youth ; trace the progress of his preparatory discipline ; sketch his professional career ; and portray the chief features of his eloquence.

In the first place, we remark that there is in the elements of our humanity a perpetual sympathy with the accompaniments of its first development ; the mind and deeds of strongly-marked individuals ever assimilate with the nature of their parent soil, and the impressions thereon first received. This rule is strikingly exemplified in the life and character of Mr. Webster. He was born in Salisbury, near the "White Hills" of New Hampshire, at the source of the river Merrimack, in 1782. His father, who was a farmer, served both in the old French war, and in the War of the Revolution. A company composed mostly of his neighbors and friends was under his command in the battle of Bennington, at White Plains, and at West Point, when Arnold's treason was discovered. He died about the year 1806, having worthily filled several public offices, and, among others, that of Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, for the State.

Salisbury, to this day, is a retired, though flourishing town, but at the time its distinguished son appeared, the smoke of its few cabins went up amidst the rugged and lonely wilderness of the North. To describe the temperature of the mountainous region of his advent, it is fitting that we should employ the language of Milton in his "Moscova." Says he : "The north parts of this country are so barren, that the inhabitants fetch their corn a thousand miles, and so cold in winter, that the

very sap of their wood-fuel burning on the fire freezes at the brand's end where it drops. The mariners which were left on ship-board in the first English voyage thither, in going up only from the cabins to the hatches, had their breath so congealed by the cold, that they fell down as it were stifled."

The best commentary to the genius of a people is a visit to the scenery encompassed by which they are born and trained. For instance, the mighty gloom of the Hartz Mountains, in Germany; the robber castles towering over the Rhine; the impressive remains of antique power scattered profusely over plain, hill, and forest; the thousand commingled associations rife in every scene; the imperial Roman, the furious Goth, the graceful cavaliers of feudal times, and the thrilling conceptions of an ideal world long anterior to them all, have alike their record and impulse to the student pilgrim, wandering, or at rest, and stamp their indelible features on all the youth of the land.

The tendency of wild, broken districts, darkened by mountains and savage forests, to raise in the mind those ideas of solemn, preternatural awe, which are the stamina of the most vigorous eloquence, and the adornment of the best poetry, has been noticed from the earliest ages. "Where is a lofty, and deeply-shaded grove," writes Seneca in one of his epistles, "filled with venerable trees, whose interlacing boughs shut out the face of heaven, the grandeur of the wood, the silence of the place, the shade so dense and uniform, infuse into the breast the notion of a divinity;" and thus the ancients, struck with the living magnificence of nature, which they could not

understand, peopled each grove, fountain, or grotto, with some local genius, or god. We shall refer more fully to this point, when we come to speak of the preparatory discipline which fitted Mr. Webster for effective public life. At present we only glance at the circumstances attending his birth which were calculated nobly to imbue his character and develop its worth. He arose where the two great elements of the universe, beauty and sublimity, are most palpably revealed in the Switzerland of America. It was fitting that our greatest statesman should there meet his first struggles, and learn his first lore in the home of virtuous industry, surrounded by scenery so grand. God made the human soul illustrious, and designed it for exalted pursuits and a glorious destiny. To expand our finite faculties, and afford them a culture both profound and elevating, Nature is spread around us, with all its stupendous proportions, and Divine Revelation speaks to us of an eternal augmentation of knowledge hereafter, for weal or woe. Above, beneath, and around us, open the avenues of infinite progression, through which we must forever advance without pause, and expand in capacity without limit. Here, on this dim arena of earth, an immortal essence throbs at our heart in harmony with the infinite and eternal. The day-star of thought arises on the soul, and, with our first rational exercise, begins an existence which may experience many vicissitudes, may pass through many transitions, but can never terminate. The soul, vivified with power to think, will outlive the universe which feeds its thought, and will be still practising its juvenile excursions at the mere outset of its opening career,

while suns and systems, shorn of their glories, shall sink,
in shattered ruins, to the caverns of eternal oblivion.
But the soul of man,

“Vital in every part,
Cannot, but by annihilation, die.”

Its two great faculties, correspondent to the two great natural elements mentioned above—the capacity to perceive the beautiful, and feel the sublime—are at once the products and proofs of our immortality. They indicate endowments which it is bliss to improve, and a destiny which it will be fearful indeed to neglect.

Dr. Clarke thought that the lofty genius of Alexander was nourished by the majestic presence of Mount Olympus, under the shadow of which he may be said to have been born and bred. If grand natural scenery tends permanently to affect the character of those cradled on its bosom, we need not wonder that New Hampshire is the nursery of patriotism the most firm, and eloquence the most sublime. Elastic as the air they breathe, free and joyous as the torrents that dash through their rural possessions, strong as the granite hills from the scanty soil of which they wring a hardy livelihood, her enterprising sons, noble and high-minded by natural endowment, are like the glorious regions of rugged adventure they love to occupy. This is an universal rule. The Foulahs dwelling on the high Alps of Africa, are as superior to the tribes living beneath, as the natives of Cashmere are above the Hindoos, or as the Tyrolese are nobler than the Arab race. The character of individuals and of nations is in a great mea-

sure influenced by their local position, circumstances of climate and education, popular traditions, and the scenery in the midst of which they arise. Popular manners and mental characteristics harmonize with the external objects with which they are surrounded. The transition from the monotonous plains of Lombardy to the bold precipices of Switzerland is, in physical nature, exactly like that, in moral character, from the crouching and squalid appearance of the brutalized peasant, to the independent air and indomitable energy of the free-born and intelligent mountaineer. The athletic form and fearless eye of the latter bespeak the freedom he has won to perpetuate and enjoy, the invigorating elements he buffets in hardy toil, and the daring aspirations he is fearless and fervid to indulge.

We proceed, secondly, to trace the youthful discipline which prepared Mr. Webster for the functions of public life. In the wild and uncultivated region where he was born, and in that age of savage warfare, it cannot be supposed that many facilities existed for procuring a refined education. But, ever since the first free school was established on the wilderness-covered peninsula of Boston, in 1636, New England schoolmasters have everywhere kept pace with the woodman in pioneering the progress of civilized life. Fortunately, the school found Mr. Webster in the wilderness, elicited his intellectual powers, and gave direction to his splendid career. Had it not been for the wise policy of our fathers, in opening free instruction to all classes on their domain, this master-mind of New England would probably have lain dormant and unknown to the present hour. This

fact he seems himself ever to have felt, as we may infer from the remarks which, in the maturity of his greatness, he made in the Convention of Massachusetts, when, in reference to popular education, he said :—

“ In this particular, we may be allowed to claim a merit of a very high and peculiar character. This commonwealth, with other of the New England States, early adopted, and has constantly maintained, the principle, that it is the undoubted right, and the bounden duty of government, to provide for the instruction of all youth. That which is elsewhere left to chance, or to charity, we secure by law. For the purpose of public instruction, we hold every man subject to taxation, in proportion to his property, and we look not to the question, whether he, himself, have, or have not children to be benefitted by the education for which he pays. We regard it as a wise and liberal system of police, by which property, and life, and the peace of society are secured. We seek to prevent, in some measure, the extension of the penal code, by inspiring a salutary and conservative principle of virtue, and of knowledge, in an early age. We hope to excite a feeling of respectability, and a sense of character, by enlarging the capacity, and increasing the sphere of intellectual enjoyment. By general instruction, we seek, as far as possible, to purify the whole moral atmosphere ; to keep good sentiments uppermost, and to turn the strong current of feeling and opinion, as well as the censurés of the law, and the denunciations of religion against immorality and crime. We hope for a security beyond the law, and above the law, in the prevalence of enlightened and well-prin-

cipled moral sentiment. We hope to continue and to prolong the time, when, in the villages and farm-houses of New England, there may be undisturbed sleep, within unbarred doors. And knowing that our government rests directly on the public will, that we may preserve it, we endeavor to give a safe and proper direction to that public will. We do not, indeed, expect all men to be philosophers, or statesmen; but we confidently trust, and our expectation of the duration of our system of government rests on that trust, that by the diffusion of general knowledge, and good and virtuous sentiments, the political fabric may be secure, as well against open violence and overthrow, as against the slow but sure undermining of licentiousness."

"I rejoice, Sir, that every man in this community may call all property his own, so far as he has occasion for it, to furnish for himself and his children the blessings of religious instruction, and the elements of knowledge. This celestial and this earthly light he is entitled to by the fundamental laws. It is every poor man's undoubted birth-right, it is the great blessing which this Constitution has secured to him, it is his solace in life, and it may well be his consolation in death, that his country stands pledged, by the faith which it has plighted to all its citizens, to protect his children from ignorance, barbarism, and vice."

When sixteen years old, after a very imperfect preparation, he entered Dartmouth College, and graduated there in 1801. The industry of his pursuits, and the tokens he gave of coming fame, we shall notice hereafter.

Mr. Webster finished the study of his profession in Boston, and was there admitted to the bar in 1805. Mr. Gore, in whose office he had read law, ventured, on presenting him, to make a prediction to the court respecting his pupil's future eminence, which, sanguine as it was, all the world knows has been more than fulfilled. His first practice in his profession was in Boscawen, a small village near the place of his birth; but in 1807, he removed to Portsmouth, where he struggled for some time, was finally burned out, and moved to Boston, with the hope of bettering his fortunes.

Up to this period, his perpetual strife with penury, obscurity, and misfortune, was no holiday work. Let us inquire into the effects produced by severe and protracted discipline upon his mental character and public influence. The circumstances of his family compelled him to rely on his own exertions mainly for support. The labors he performed, and the sacrifices to which he submitted, for the sake of his own and a brother's education, are said to be among the most remarkable achievements of even his remarkable life. It would seem as if he was determined to act for himself, as he advised the government to act in reference to the war of 1812; "*if need be, to accompany your own flag throughout the world, with the protection of your own cannon.*"

The first thing to be remarked under this head, is, that as a student, Mr. Webster was exceedingly diligent. One of his classmates has attested with the liveliest interest to the generous and magnanimous spirit he showed among his early competitors, in the midst of

whom, he at the outset manifested aspirations entirely beyond his condition, and which soon enabled him to leave all rivalship far in his rear. He possessed too much native force to rely implicitly on any master, but at the same time profited by all the resources the most diligent study could command, and wrought them into his own type of excellence, as Michael Angelo broke the marble with his chisel, and thence elicited the ideal colossus first projected within his own soul. Said that great sculptor to a promising pupil, "Learn to sketch before you attempt to finish." This was Webster's practice. He incessantly cultivated the habit of distinct conception, and clearly defined thought in diversified composition. The greatest faculties are much more frequently evaporated in indolence than in exertion; while it is the latter only that confers true happiness, and guarantees permanent success. The luxury which young genius enjoys in contemplating its own outlines vigorously conceived, creates the strongest passion for elaborated execution, and prompts to the most untiring efforts after a graceful finish of its own magnificent plans.

Another important matter to mention under this head is, that Mr. Webster has always labored to attain a manly, as well as a mental education. Milton said: "I call a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skillfully, and magnanimously, all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war." This is comprehensive, and as a general definition, is as good as any that can be given.

To educate is to develop; not to make one man all

Latin, another all mathematics ; it is to unfold *a man* indeed, himself all developed. A pupil is educated when he is made a hero in his own individuality ; a soul powerful in acts, fruitful in grand results ; an adult in intellect, a rational creature well trained, *who will, who can, who does.*

One of the renowned philosophers of antiquity beautifully said of the intellectual faculties, "I call them not *mine* but *me*. It is these which make the man ; which are the man." Now, that system of education which most effectually reaches the latent powers of mankind, and brings them out in vigorous discipline, is the most manly and the best. Men are valuable, not in proportion to what they know, but to what they can do. Every youth has a *can do* in him. It is the office of education to reach that, and impart to it the potency of practical exercise. The versatile pen, the delicate pencil, the creative chisel, and the eloquent tongue seem wonderful to one contemplating their facility and power. But everything about them is perfectly simple and easy to him who possesses and has cultivated his own *can do*.

The process by which an efficient education is attained, is not the tame passivity of the pupil to pedantic dogmatizings. "How many young men," said Coleridge, "are anxiously and expensively be-schoolmastered, be-tutored, be-lectured, anything but educated ; who have received arms and amunition, instead of skill, strength, and courage ; varnished rather than polished ; perilously over-civilized, and most pitiably uncultivated. And all from inattention to the method dictated by nature herself, to the simple truth, that as the forms of all

organized existence, so must all true and living knowledge, proceed from within ; that it may be trained, supported, fed, excited, but can never be infused nor impressed."

This is a luminous statement of what we should never forget. We are not to shape the mind by external pressure, paint it over with artificial hues, or mechanize its powers ; but to start its germs by genial teaching, and prompt its natural and majestic growth from the centre outward, as the acorn expands into an oak. The main thing is to awaken the principle and method of self-development, not so much by conveying information into the mind as to invigorate in it the power of sending thought out. The human soul is not a mere depôt, a passive receptacle for all sorts of trumpery that may therein be stowed by the arbitrary will of some mental baggage-master ; but it is a living and self-producing agent, which is to be carefully placed in such relations to appropriate aliment, as to excite the latent, original power that craves only such knowledge as it can appropriate to itself, and can re-produce in shapes and excellence all its own. Now to attain this end, due attention must be paid to our physical, mental, and moral culture.

First of all, good heed must be given to the education of the body ; a kind of cultivation as imperious as any other, since the body is as susceptible of improvement as the mind. Our person, with all its complicated and diversified faculties, physical and mental, is an unit, and does not admit of being developed in fragments. Man must grow up harmoniously, if he would rise to usefulness, with simultaneous expansion in trunk, branch and

foliage, as grows a tree ; the sap of immortal energy must circulate without hindrance in every fibre, maturing fruits perennial and divine.

Two laws are manifest in the constitution of our nature, a due regard to which cannot but conduce to our welfare and elevate our conceptions of the Supreme BEING. In the first place, in proportion as the physical nature of a man is healthfully developed by suitable discipline, winning the greatest vigor of limb, and the greatest acuteness of sense, he will derive important aids to the intellect and moral powers from the perfections of his outward frame. Moreover, by a delightful re-action, the mind, in proportion as it is invigorated and beautified, gives strength and elegance to the body, and enlarges the sphere of action and enjoyment. These laws have been recognized and observed by the best educators of the world. At Athens, the gymnasia became temples of the Graces. They were not merely places of exercise for the young, but drew to their halls, porticoes, baths, and groves, the most distinguished votaries of every art and science. The scenes of this kind most celebrated were the Academy where Plato taught, the Lyceum where Aristotle lectured, and the Kynosargy. In these the refined Greek could gratify his fondness for the beautiful, by the sight of the finest figures, in the prime of youth, exercising amidst objects and associations of the greatest elegance. Surrounded on every hand by the combined charms of nature and art, the young men were seen exhilarated with athletic sports, and the old imparting wisdom in the presence of the most splendid ideal forms. Then and there physical

education began with life and constantly augmented its force. Every festival of childhood was made enchanting with flowers and music; the barge, as it was pushed in boyish sport on the lake, was crowded with garlands; the oars were moved to the sound of "sweet recorders," and the patriotic mother at home sang an inspiring lullaby, as she rocked her infant to sleep in the broad shield of its father. There were wrestlings in the open palaestra, as well as races and heroic games; there were gay revels on the mountain sides, and moonlight dances in the groves.

The field of Olympia was to the Greeks the most sacred enclosure of the gods. The games thereon practiced, among other uses, promoted manly education, by teaching that the body has its honors as well as the intellect. They felt that vast importance belongs to physical agility and strength, not only that the mind may be thus aided in energetic action, but that a firm basis be laid in a sound body for the exercise of manly virtues. Without physical vigor, the feeble flickerings of the mind are only "a gilded halo hovering round decay."

The national games described in the twenty-fourth book of the *Iliad*, the eighth of the *Odyssey*, and by Virgil in the fifth book of the *Æneid*, all relate to important elements in a manly education. Those ancient festivals had the finest influence upon the inhabitants of the metropolis, and upon those who dwelt the most remote. Every pilgrim through such lands, to such shrines, became Briareus-handed and Argus-eyed: the beautiful scenes, full of patriotic and refined associations which

everywhere arrested his attention, gave him the traveller's "thirsty eye," filled his mind with thrilling reminiscences, and caused him to return to his home glowing with brilliant descriptions and burdened with exalted thoughts. It was thus that the youthful Greek mingled with his studies pedestrian exercise and acute observation, formed his body to fatigue, while he stored his mind with lofty ideas, and became equally skilled in handling a sword, building a temple, or subduing a horse.

In the festival of the Panathenæa, as the name imports, all the people of Attica engaged in the celebration, wearing their chaplets of flowers. The sports began early in the morning, with races on the banks of the Ilissus, in which the sons of the most distinguished citizens contended for the palm. Next came the wrestling and gymnastic contests in the Stadium, succeeded by still more refined competitions in the Odeum, where the most exquisite musicians executed rival pieces on the flute or cithara, while others sang and accompanied their voices with the sweetest instruments. The theme presented to the competitors was the eulogy of Hermodius, Aristogeiton, and Thrasybulus, who had rescued the republic from the yoke of tyranny. Thus the popular pastimes of the Athenians tended to commemorate the patriots who had served their country, as well as to excite the spectators to an emulation of their virtues. Painters exhibited the fruits of their skill; sculptors adorned the road-side, the groves, and the temples of the gods; poets contended for the dramatic prize, each being allowed to

produce four pieces ; and the eloquence of history fired with rapture thousands of exulting hearts.

The procession to the temple of Pythian Apollo, which closed the day with religious rites, was composed of different classes of citizens, adorned with garlands, among whom were seen old men of majestic mien, bearing branches of olive ; others of middle age, armed with lances and bucklers as if ready to engage in war ; youths, who sang hymns in honor of Minerva ; beautiful boys, clad in a graceful tunic ; and lastly girls, selected from the first families in Athens, attracting every eye by their unequalled charms.

At night there was a torch-race of the most agile youth, stationed at equal distances, the first of whom, on a signal given by the shout of the multitude, lighted his flambeau at the altar of Prometheus, and at the top of his speed handed it to the second, who transmitted it in the same manner to the third, and so on in rapid succession to the last. He who suffered his torch to be extinguished was excluded from the lists, and they who slackened in their pace were exposed to the railleries and blows of the populace. It was necessary to pass through all the stations with success, in order to gain the prize. How hard it is to over-estimate the amount of vigor, bodily and mental, which was won from such chaste and inspiring recreations !

The ludicrous remark of Frederick the Great, that man "seems more adapted by nature for a postillion than a philosopher," is not without foundation ; but there is no necessary incompatibility between great mental activity and habitual good health, provided proper atten-

tion is paid to physical culture. The old maxim that "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," is quite true. There is health of mind in innocent hilarity. There is health in bodily sports which combine animated exercise with amusement. There is health of soul in the contemplation of nature, when he who contemplates, adores, and early learns to "look through nature up to nature's God." The benefit of moderate excitement is often very great on the moral constitution and physical frame, and should be temperately indulged in by all, according to the predispositions of each. Some inherit a passion for the gun, and others for the angle; some are fond of equestrian excursions, while others love to foot it along the quiet shores of lakes, and on sublime mountain tops. Shakspeare gave us a maxim of wisdom in literary pursuits, when he said, "Study what you most affect;" and in our recreations we should pursue what is most congenial to native tastes. Hard study should be succeeded by hardy exercise in some appropriate form. The foot-ball at Rugby, and the regatta at Eaton, bowling at Harrow, and cricket at Westminster, succeeded by all those invigorating exercises in constant practice at Oxford and Cambridge, give to England the most elegant and able-bodied scholars in the world.

But vigorous mental development is a prime quality in a manly education. Man is not all soul, therefore he is not conditioned as an angel; neither is he all body, and for this reason he cannot with impunity live as a brute. We have sensibilities as well as senses, spirit as well as flesh. We are a compound of earth and heaven;

dust tempered with tears, and quickened with a spark unquenchable ; a spirit exiled in a prison of clay, and both tenant and tabernacle must be cared for. It is ignoble to be, like a wild hunter, all exercise and no thought ; it is equally suicidal to dignified excellence to be, like too many votaries of science, all thought and no exercise. A sound mind in a sound body was long since deemed the great desideratum ; and this we should be most strenuous to attain. To be successful, we must “ be in eye of every exercise.” We must feel that it is better to have a reed that will do us some service than a pike that we have neither the strength nor skill to heave :

“ Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,
Which we ascribe to heaven ; the fated sky
Gives us free scope ; only doth backward pull
Our slow designs when we ourselves are dull.”

One must not only be a zealous worshipper of knowledge, but he must learn to pluck the fruit fresh from the tree with a vigorous hand. He must be a devout and active student in the great university of nature, where one can gather materials such as dogmatism and “dried preparations” never afford. Careful scrutiny of the world and profound meditation constitute the most ancient and infallible road to the soundest learning ; he who pursues his manly career therein, will not be of that feeble class whose listless hand “hangs like dead bone within its withered skin,” but vigorously will he grow, refreshed by the purest fountains, and enriched with the most valuable stores. Deep and passionate love of

knowledge for its own sake indicates the soul of true scholarship. This is the sun of the heaven within us, around which the elements of our mental being gather in delightful harmony and concentrate their force. Warmed into action by this luminary, and transfigured by its beams, the mind goes forth in action like the son of Tydeus, with glory blazing round it, kindling astonishment and emulous delight. The grand object of schooling is never attained until all the priceless powers of our nature are quickened and fortified by the true, the beautiful, the good and the grand; until each faculty, in its own place and proportion, is thoroughly trained, and our physical and mental energies are moulded to a symmetrical whole, of the purest, holiest and most enchanting harmony.

Education is soul-excitement, and that is the best discipline for spiritual faculties which most effectually stimulates their growth, moulds their awakening energies, elicits and augments their strength. The main question is not what will make youth pedants, or bigots, or partisans, but what will make them *men*? This will demand concentration of purpose and liberality of feeling. Concentration is essential to profitable acquisition. The stream, divided into many channels, ceases to flow either deep or strong. To waste one's strength in frivolous endeavors is to covet the transient dazzle of an exploded rocket, rather than the perpetual blaze of the unquenchable sun. Many men of great natural capacities, for want of persevering fixedness of purpose, are utterly lost to the world; men whose intellect is emi-

nently original and creative, competent under suitable discipline to upraise

“ A WILDERNESS of building, sinking far,
And self-withdrawn into a wondrous depth,
Far sinking into splendor, without end.”

Unfortunately, however, for themselves and the world, too many neglect wholesome training, and supinely waste their fine energies in “one long day of summer indolence.” But mental action cannot be intense unless all the faculties are made to play within a narrow range. The electric fluid is as impotent as the unbounded air it sleeps in, until concentrated in a thunder-cloud. Nature has closely confined the muscles in our frame, in order to give them the highest degree of power in combined action; and in the same way our spiritual capacities, to attain their full force, must be brought to bear on a single point, and work within exclusive limits. It is necessary that even solar heat should be converged to a focus of ten thousand beams ere it will burn.

Education is not an abstract theory, a lifeless creed, stored away in the torpid brain like obsolete relics deposited on musty shelves; it is concrete power, generated by the collision of great truths and vital principles, as lightning is elicited by the contact of opposing clouds, and must be brought to bear with instantaneous and irresistible fulminations on the intellect and heart of mankind. Now the source and secret of this master endowment is generosity of feeling. Its possessor will seek knowledge and influence, not for personal aggrandizement, but for the public good. He is not of that dry,

phlegmatic and miserable class of professed scholars, "plunged to the hilt in musty tomes, and rusted in," who industriously accumulate their petty stores, and are forever "bristling up with small facts," but who labor only for self, and consequently win only contempt. An old author has said that "we fatten a sheep with grass, not in order to obtain a crop of hay from his back, but in the hope he will feed us with mutton, and clothe us with wool." We should replenish the mind with sound principles, and seek the discipline of severe study, in order more successfully to conquer the chicanery of the bar, the sophistry of the senate, the stupidity of the pulpit, and the sinfulness of the world. Education is the armor of the mind ; but that armor will be worse than none if it be inflexible from rust, or too ponderous for the wearer's use.

The professed man of letters, who constantly acquires and yet never has the force of genius to produce, acts the ridiculous part of an architect who never executes a plan, or a sculptor who never clips a stone. Of all idlers he is the most contemptible who fritters away talent and existence under such professions. What use is it to be forever familiarizing one's self with books, those "monuments of vanished minds," as D'Avenant well called them, and yet never be vivified with an original thought. This is to resemble Pharaoh's lean kine, constantly eating and constantly poor, rather than the more useful worm that spins from its own bowels the robes of grandest monarchs, transforming every leaf it eats into resplendent and practical usefulness. In national armories we sometimes see large quantities of martial imple-

ments curiously arranged in fantastic forms. How much more impressive they would be if seen glittering in quick motion on the field, and how much more potent would be their use when grasped by well-disciplined legions, rushing to the final charge. A single weapon wielded by a chivalrous and resolute hero would be more effective than the holiday show of all the martial weapons in repose on earth.

We have mentioned two prominent traits in the early discipline practiced by Mr. Webster, severe mental toil accompanied with vigorous physical exercise. It is important to remark, thirdly, that while he was thus diligent in mastering knowledge and acquiring strength of every kind, he was equally critical and constant in watching the conduct of the wise, and in emulating the best professional models. We have been told that, for years before he became distinguished at the bar, and long afterwards, he was constant in his attendance on all business, with his note-book before him, listening attentively to the best counsel, and writing down carefully every sagacious remark from the bench. It is a great advantage and auspicious omen for a young man, quietly to listen to his superiors, while in doing so he deliberately resolves to emulate their excellence, and, if possible, exceed them in both power and speed.

At an early day, Mr. Webster formed the habit of thinking with a pen in his hand, and of inscribing his thought before him, in the simplest and most perspicuous form ; in this way, he acquired a wonderful facility in conceiving and expressing his ideas in the most luminous and forcible style. He may have learned from

Aristotle, that, of the four elements of education, *design* is to be placed on a level with *grammar*. At any rate, more than any other orator living, probably, he has always been most studious of clearness and accuracy in constructing the basis and outlines of his discourse. It was thus, that from the beginning he cultivated correct habits of thought, perpetually subdued himself to philosophical propriety and critical analysis, reined in his more impetuous faculties, made reason supreme, and combined elaborated meditation with logical truth. This spirit of grand conception, habitual research, and fervid enthusiasm, ambitious only for the execution of loftiest purposes, is the sure prognostic of consummate excellence, and the only foundation for lasting fame. The great architect and adorer of the Parthenon possessed it, and hence, "Nothing is more perfect than Phidias," says Cicero: "You cannot praise him enough," says Pliny: "He made gods better than men," says Quintilian; the secret of all which capacity and worth is stated by Plato who testifies that "Phidias was skillful in beauty." Although he executed figures of the most exalted beings only, and these in gigantic forms, every feature and limb were invested with dignified splendor, because he always wrought in the most valuable materials, according to the strictest rules and with the greatest care.

Thus disciplined, we cannot wonder that his law-teacher prophesied for young Webster great success, and that at a subsequent period, in noticing his translation to the highest American forum, the Boston Courier should say: "The election has placed in the Senate of the United States a man who will ably defend the mea-

asures of the National Administration, so far as they can be justified by a liberal construction of the Constitution, and tend to promote the prosperity of the whole country." This brings us to our

Third general point, viz., a sketch of Mr. Webster's professional career. "Great wits in every age," says Lord Bacon, "have been overborne, and in a sort, tyrannized over; whilst men of capacity and comprehension above the vulgar, (yet consulting their own credit and reputation,) have submitted themselves to the over-swaying judgment of time and multitude. Therefore, if in any time and place, more profound contemplations have perchance emerged and revealed themselves, they have been forthwith lost and extinguished by the winds and tempests of popular opinions." This will hardly apply to our statesman-orator, who has the more triumphantly succeeded, because from the beginning he never designed to raise a splendid structure on a quicksand, but on a solid foundation, acquired by habitual precision of thought, fixedness of purpose, and indomitable energy of pursuit. From the time he moved to Portsmouth, in 1807, his career was a steady advance towards the highest functions and the widest influence. The wisest judge in the State, the late Gov. Smith, and the strongest lawyer, Mr. Mason, recently deceased, were his professional rivals and admiring friends. Called in early manhood to antagonize with veterans of the amplest resources, and of the quickest penetration; he battled bravely with men whose comprehensive mental grasp, rigid logic, and apt illustration, left no safety or hope, to their young adversary, but in equal vigor,

industry, and skill. In this wholesome school of severe and rugged professional practice, Mr. Webster doubtless acquired much of that intellectual training and power, which subsequently rendered him greatly superior to most advocates, and inferior to none.

His first political office was the one to which he was elected in 1812, when he was hardly thirty years old, as a member of the thirteenth Congress of the United States. Among the debates in which he distinguished himself, the bill for "encouraging enlistments," in January, 1814, drew from him a highly patriotic speech, of which the following is an extract :

"The humble aid which it would be in my power to render to measures of government, shall be given cheerfully, if government will pursue measures which I can conscientiously support. If, even now, failing in an honest and sincere attempt to procure a just and honorable peace, it will return to measures of defence and protection, such as reason, and common sense, and the public opinion, all call for, my vote shall not be withholden from the means. Give up your futile projects of invasion. Extinguish the fires that blaze on your inland frontiers. Establish perfect safety and defence there by adequate force. Let every man that sleeps on your soil sleep in security. Stop the blood that flows from the veins of unarmed yeomanry, and women and children. Give to the living time to bury and lament their dead, in the quietness of private sorrow. Having performed this work of beneficence and mercy on your inland border, turn and look with the eye of justice and compassion on your vast population along the coast.

Unclench the iron grasp of your embargo. Take measures for that end, before another sun sets upon you. With all the war of the enemy on your commerce, if you would cease to make war upon it yourselves, you would still have some commerce. That commerce would give you some revenue. Apply that revenue to the augmentation of your navy. That navy, in turn, will protect your commerce. Let it no longer be said, that not one ship of force, built by your hands since the war, yet floats upon the ocean. Turn the current of your efforts into the channel, which national sentiment has already worn broad and deep to receive it. A naval force, competent to defend your coast against considerable armaments, to convoy your trade, and perhaps raise the blockade of your rivers, is not a chimera. It may be realized. If, then, the war must continue, go to the ocean. If you are seriously contending for maritime rights, go to the theatre where alone those rights can be defended. Thither every indication of your fortunes points you. There the united wishes and exertions of the nation will go with you. Even our party divisions, acrimonious as they are, cease at the water's edge. They are lost in attachment to the national character, on the element where that character is made respectable. In protecting naval interests by naval means, you will arm yourselves with the whole power of national sentiment, and may command the whole abundance of the national resource. In time you may be enabled to redress injuries in the place where they may be offered; and, if need be, to accompany your own flag throughout the world with the protection of your own cannon."

Later, in the same Congress, he contributed very much to the establishment of a sound currency, by the overthrow of the paper-bank system. He was re-elected to New Hampshire for the fourteenth Congress, and sat there during the sessions of 1815-16, and 1816-17. It was during this period that he introduced and carried a Resolution, still a part of the law of the United States, the effect of which was to require the revenue to be received only in the legal currency of the country, or in bills equal to that currency in value.

His income at Portsmouth being insufficient to repair the heavy loss he had sustained in the great fire of 1813, Mr. Webster now retired for a season from public life, and, in 1816, removed to Boston, in search of wider practice in his profession and ampler revenues. For six or eight years, he refused to accept office, avoided all political discussion, and gave his entire energies to the business of the bar. He had now distinguished himself as a lawyer in Massachusetts, as well as in his native State, and two terms in Congress had caused him to be widely known as a distinguished statesman, young as he was. But the hour now came, when his rank as a jurist, was to be no less clearly determined and widely proclaimed. On the 10th of March, 1818, before the Supreme Court of the United States, at Washington, he made his argument in behalf of Dartmouth College. It is said the court-room was excessively crowded, not only with a large assemblage of the most eminent lawyers of the Union, but with many of its leading statesmen,—drawn there no less by the importance of the cause, and the wide results that would follow its decision,

than by the known eloquence of Mr. Hopkinson and Mr. Wirt, both of whom were engaged in it. Mr. Webster opened the discussion, on behalf of the college. A spectator describes the scene as follows. "He opened his cause, as he always does, with perfect simplicity in the general statement of its facts ; and then went on to unfold the topics of his argument, in a lucid order, which made each position sustain every other. The logic and the law were rendered irresistible. But, as he advanced, his heart warmed to the subject and the occasion. Thoughts and feelings, that had grown old with his best affections, rose unbidden to his lips. He remembered that the institution he was defending, was the one where his own youth had been nurtured ; and the moral tenderness and beauty this gave to the grandeur of his thoughts ; the sort of religious sensibility it imparted to his urgent appeals and demands for the stern fulfilment of what law and justice required, wrought up the whole audience to an extraordinary state of excitement. Many betrayed strong agitation ; many were dissolved in tears. When he ceased to speak, there was a perceptible interval before any one was willing to break the silence ; and, when that vast crowd separated, not one person of the whole number doubted, that the man who had that day so moved, astonished, and controlled them, had vindicated for himself a place at the side of the first jurists of the country."

The Massachusetts Reports, and the Reports in the Circuit and Supreme Courts of the United States, show that at this period, Mr. Webster's professional labors and success were very great. But his fame and usefulness

were not confined to the bar. In 1820-21, a convention of delegates was assembled in Boston, to revise the constitution of Massachusetts. The venerable John Adams, then eighty-five years old, represented his native village; Justice Story, of the Supreme Court of the United States, was a delegate from Salem; Judge Davis, of the District Court of the United States, and the majority of the judicial officers and most influential citizens of the State were there. It was the most dignified and talented assembly ever collected in New England, in which Mr. Webster bore a distinguished part. Of his eloquence developed therein, we shall speak in the sequel.

The people of Boston repeatedly urged that such talents and acquirements as Mr. Webster possessed, should again be in the service of the whole country. He had already declined an offer of a seat in the Senate, but, in 1822, he accepted a seat as their Representative in Congress. His labors in the years 1823-4, and his great work of digesting and causing to be adopted the Crimes Act in 1825, can now be referred to only. In 1826, by a very large majority of both houses in the Legislature of Massachusetts, he was chosen to fill a vacancy in the Senate of the United States. Of his career in that body, and of his great diplomatic services recently performed, it would be superfluous to give details, as they are all before the world, highly appreciated and everywhere known. We shall have occasion to recur to several of them, while we proceed,

Fourthly, to portray some of the chief features of Mr. Webster's eloquence. We think that distinct perception, accurate combination, severe deduction, and forci-

ble illustration, are the chief elements blended in his composition, which we will endeavor to verify by specific analysis, and pertinent examples from his social addresses, congressional speeches, literary productions, and forensic arguments.

In the first place, let us consider Mr. Webster's distinctness of mental perception. All qualities of oratorical excellence concur in this one elemental principle, as a focal-point—clearness of insight, and facility of execution. No excellence of finish can atone for meanness of design ; and he alone can conceive vividly and compose effectively, who sees the whole of his work before him at the beginning. Mr. Webster's mind is one of that rare class which aspires to the serenest heights, expatiates over the widest and most diversified domain, embracing at once the two poles of human intelligence, imagination the most imperial, and science the most exact. Of perhaps the greatest living French savan and orator, whom our countryman in physical and mental character much resembles, Vericour has said, "Unlike many orators who *will* speak on all subjects, M. Arago only speaks on subjects that he has studied—questions possessing either the interest of political circumstances, or the attraction of science. When he ascends the tribune, his noble figure and fine head awe the assembly into attention. If he confines himself to the narration of facts, his eloquence has the natural grace of simplicity ; when face to face with a question of paramount importance to the liberty of his country, or with one of science, whether in the Chamber or in the professional chair, he contemplates his subject with earnestness,

unravels its subtleties, and evinces a power of comprehension and elucidation which bespeaks the superior mind; proceeding, he begins to employ a splendid phraseology—his voice swells—his style grows richer and richer, and his eloquence rises to the grandeur of his theme. M. Arago's speeches have both generality and actuality; they equally address themselves to the intelligence and passions of his audience; when he enters upon any question or matter, whether scientific or political, he clears it of its difficulties and technicalities, and renders it so precise and perceptible, that the most ignorant and dull are enabled to comprehend it. He is one of the most luminous intellects of the age."

This strikingly describes Mr. Webster's mental structure and habits, inasmuch as sublimity of conception, grandeur of outline, breadth of meaning, and a severe classical tone, are the most habitual features of his style, always mighty, and often quite elegant. For instance, in Nov., 1828, he was called upon to open the course of Lectures before the Boston Mechanics' Institution, and surprised all by his profound knowledge of art the most useful and severely grand:—"Architecture, I have said, is an art that unites, in a singular manner, the useful and the beautiful. It is not to be inferred from this, that everything in architecture is beautiful, or is to be so esteemed, in exact proportion to its apparent utility. No more is meant, than that nothing which evidently thwarts utility, can, or ought to be accounted beautiful; because, in every work of art, the design is to be regarded, and what defeats that design, cannot be considered as well done. The French rhetoricians have a

maxim, that in literary composition, "nothing is beautiful which is not true." They do not intend to say, that strict and literal truth is alone beautiful in poetry or oratory ; but they mean that that which grossly offends against probability is not in good taste in either. The same relation subsists between beauty and utility in architecture, as between truth and imagination in poetry. Utility is not to be obviously sacrificed to beauty, in the one case ; truth and probability are not to be outraged for the cause of fiction and fancy, in the other. In the severer styles of architecture, beauty and utility approach, so as to be almost identical. Where utility is more strongly than ordinary the main design, the proportions which produce it, raise the sense or feeling of beauty, by a sort of reflection or deduction of the mind. It is said that ancient Rome had, perhaps, no finer specimens of the classic Doric, than were in the sewers which ran under her streets, and which were, of course, always to be covered from human observation ; so true is it, that cultivated taste is always pleased with justness of proportion ; and that design, seen to be accomplished, gives pleasure. The discovery, and fast increasing use of a noble material, found in vast abundance, nearer to our cities than the Pentelican quarries to Athens, may well awaken, as they do, new attention to architectural improvement. If this material be not entirely well-suited to the elegant Ionic, or the rich Corinthian, it is yet fitted, beyond marble, beyond perhaps almost any other material, for the Doric, of which the appropriate character is strength, and for the Gothic, of which the appropriate character is grandeur.

“It is not more than justice, perhaps, to our ancestors, to call the Gothic the English classic architecture ; for in England, probably, are its most distinguished specimens. As its leading characteristic is grandeur ; its main use would seem to be sacred. It had its origin, indeed, in ecclesiastical architecture. Its evident design was to surpass the ancient orders, by the size of the structure, and its far greater heights ; to excite perceptions of beauty, by the branching traceries and the gorgeous tabernacles within ; and to inspire religious awe and reverence by the lofty pointed arches ;—the flying buttresses, the spires, and the pinnacles, springing from beneath, stretching upwards towards the heavens with the prayers of the worshippers. Architectural beauty having always a direct reference to utility, edifices, whether civil or sacred, must of course undergo different changes, in different places, on account of climate, and in different ages, on account of the different states of other arts, or different notions of convenience. The hypæthral temple, for example, or temple without a roof, is not to be thought of in our latitudes ; and the use of glass, a thing not now to be dispensed with, is also to be accommodated, as well as it may be, to the architectural structure. These necessary variations, and many more admissible ones, give room for improvements to an indefinite extent, without departing from the principles of true taste. May we not hope, then, to see our own city celebrated as the city of architectural excellence. May we not hope to see our native granite reposing in the ever-during strength of the Doric, or springing up in the grand and lofty Gothic, in forms

which beauty and utility, the eye and the judgment, taste and devotion, shall unite to approve and to admire?"

When a public speaker is left to choose his themes, he will be likely to select such as are genial to his own taste, and analogous to the structure of his intellect. The above instance is an apt illustration. As in architecture, the rule is, that the most beautiful should stand on the most firm, such seems to be the law of Mr. Webster's mind. We often meet with works whose vigor of execution can be equalled only by their imbecility and incongruity of conception, but such is not the case with the great master now under review. If we mistake not, the most eminent of all his qualities is a clear perception of what he would do, and the best way of doing it. Having invented his stand-point, he accurately estimates its force, expands its power of persuasiveness through all the projected argument, clothes the compact skeleton with the elasticity and symmetrical charms of vigorous life, and sets forth a perfected work, the organ of sublimity, not less pleasing to the taste than impressive to the understanding. His chief position, once clearly perceived, and stated in the simplest and most rigid terms, he thenceforth becomes the efficient servant of what he himself created ; as Homer, at the very threshold of his epic, proclaims himself only the herald of his Zeus, of whose almighty will he is the free and rejoicing bard.

Mr. Webster early won accuracy of view, and confidence of hand, by protracted and careful practice, so that he eventually came with great facility to idealize with exactness and power. He waited for the chance reve-

lation of no secret in composition, but the secrets of toilsome meditation ; he employed no tricks, but abstruse investigation without limit, and practical application of his resources without end. For the basis and perpetual momentum of this excellence, we must revert to the circumstances of his youth, and the habits then formed. He found beauty and strength, physical hardihood and mental acuteness as well as force, in the stern visitations of the wintry regions wherein he was born. His soul was indeed ripened under that northern sky. The best blood of all lowlands, at no remote period, came from higher regions, where the hardy and unvitiated mountain influence and elements for ever remain the source of that invincible strength, which bids defiance to all obstacles, and reduces to subjugation every antagonist. There the stupendous forms of creation are in unison with the swelling thoughts of predestined artists, statesmen, and divines, toiling in the ravines, scaling hills, and struggling through drifting snows, to reach the rustic school ; and at night studious by the pine-wood flame, while tempests wildly howl without. In such regions, the finest genius is produced and vigorously tempered, like the most brilliant gems in obscurest caverns, and on stormiest coasts ; or rather like sweetest flowers under Alpine glaciers, the more sensitive but enduring as the cold is more severe. Intellect, thus originating, is never fatally chilled, because the latent spirit of enterprise, generated by salubrious air, and the inspiration of sublime scenery, tend perpetually to kindle the soul and keep it in a blaze. The mental eye is rendered piercing as lightning, and the brain, mightily vitalized, generates

thunders which burst with simultaneous peals and add grandeur to every celestial stroke.

To distinct perception, accurate combination is conjoined, and forms a bold feature in Mr. Webster's mind. Some students begin their career with a theory, beautiful, graceful, yet indistinct; others, with one general and essentially grand without detail, as if attention to minutiae were beneath them; and others still, with an ambition keen, sagacious, grappling, and on the direct road to sound acquisitions, but lack perseverance in elaborating and skillfully combining their ideas. They accumulate copious materials, it may be, but where is the solid ground for the machinery of Archimedes? Nothing really powerful is produced, because there is no controlling law positive, clear, and well-defined. Grandeur of style does not consist in the omission of all details, but in the wise selection and combination of the leading ones. It is only by first ascertaining particulars that are pertinent, that we can discover essentials that are effective. The union of simplicity and variety produces harmony; while confusion commences where a due blending of these is neglected, or either is allowed too extravagantly to preponderate. In the best style, erudition and illustration are introduced only so far as they can be made subservient to intrinsic excellence and lucid expression. \ For example, the writer or speaker must obtain a perfect conception of a tree in its entireness, before he proceeds to disentangle its branches or burnish its leaves. To clear the accidental from the essential, requires the greatest perspicacity of reasoning power, and the habit of perpetually recurring to the

first principles of things. At every step in the construction of a discourse, knowledge should serve as the basis, judgment as the guide, and cautious taste characterize the selection. In every valuable composition, *unity* is the soul and key-note ; upon this depends the effective harmony of all subordinate parts, as the tone of the first instrument in a concert tunes and governs all the rest. This is well exemplified in Mr. Webster, who never suffers the blandishments of his rhetoric to absorb important meaning, or supplant logical expression and exactness of form. However succinct and rapid his argument may sometimes be, every word is poised by characteristic precision, and can only be the result of deliberate inquiry and minute examination. Every touch of his clear and concentrated mind on the leading points of his subject is a separate thought, each additional one a brighter token of extended genius and predestined triumph.

“ Artificial life

Lives in these touches, livelier than life.”

As an example, take the close of Mr. Webster's oration, at the laying of the corner stone of the Bunker Hill Monument, June 17, 1825. “ An immense multitude was assembled. They stood on the consecrated spot, with only the heavens over their heads, and beneath their feet the bones of their fathers ; amidst the visible remains of the very redoubt thrown up by Prescott, and defended by him to the very last desperate extremity ; and with the names of Warren, Putnam, Stark, and Brooks, and the other leaders or victims of that great day frequent and familiar on their lips. In the midst of

such a scene and with such recollections, starting like the spirits of the dead from the very sods of that hill-side, it may well be imagined, that words like the following, addressed to a vast audience,—composed in no small degree of the survivors of the battle, their children and their grand-children,—produced an effect, which only the hand of death can efface.” Said the orator :

“We know, indeed, that the record of illustrious actions is most safely deposited in the universal remembrance of mankind. We know, that if we could cause this structure to ascend, not only till it reached the skies, but till it pierced them, its broad surfaces could still contain but part of that which, in an age of knowledge, hath already been spread over the earth, and which history charges itself with making known to all future times. We know, that no inscription on entablatures less broad than the earth itself, can carry information of the events we commemorate, where it has not already gone : and that no structure, which shall not outlive the duration of letters and knowledge among men, can prolong the memorial. But our object is, by this edifice, to show our own deep sense of the value and importance of the achievements of our ancestors ; and, by presenting this work of gratitude to the eye, to keep alive similar sentiments, and to foster a constant regard for the principles of the Revolution. Human beings are composed not of reason only, but of imagination also, and sentiment ; and that is neither wasted nor misapplied which is appropriated to the purpose of giving right direction to sentiments, and opening proper springs of feeling in the heart. Let it not be supposed that our

object is to perpetuate national hostility, or even to cherish a mere military spirit. It is higher, purer, nobler. We consecrate our work to the spirit of national independence, and we wish that the light of peace may rest upon it for ever. We rear a memorial of our conviction of that unmeasured benefit, which has been conferred on our own land, and of the happy influences, which have been produced, by the same events, on the general interests of mankind. We come, as Americans, to mark a spot, which must for ever be dear to us and our posterity. We wish, that whosoever, in all coming time, shall turn his eye hither, may behold that the place is not undistinguished, where the first great battle of the Revolution was fought. We wish, that this structure may proclaim the magnitude and importance of that event, to every class and every age. We wish, that infancy may learn the purpose of its erection from maternal lips, and that weary and withered age may behold it, and be solaced by the recollections which it suggests. We wish, that labor may look up here, and be proud, in the midst of its toil. We wish, that, in those days of disaster, which, as they come on all nations, must be expected to come on us also, desponding patriotism may turn its eyes hitherward, and be assured that the foundations of our national power still stand strong. We wish, that this column, rising towards heaven among the pointed spires of so many temples dedicated to God, may, contribute also to produce, in all minds, a pious feeling of dependence and gratitude. We wish, finally, that the last object on the sight of him who leaves his native shore, and the first to gladden his who revisits it,

may be something which may remind him of the liberty and glory of his country. Let it rise, till it meet the sun in his coming ; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit."

To distinct perception, and accurate combination, we mention, thirdly, severe deduction, as the most prominent trait in Mr. Webster's oratorical character. That speaker will succeed most triumphantly, or fail with greatest dignity, who presents the principal feature of his subject in the boldest manner, to the neglect of all subordinates, rather than he who fritters away all his talent upon secondary topics, and retains little or no capacity to execute the chief. Mr. Webster has produced great excellence in every department of elaborate composition ; but the highest order of logical compactness in *forensic* warfare alone unites his various energies in a glorious aggregate ; as the grace of Nireus, the dignity of Agamemnon, the impetuosity of Hector, the magnitude of the great, the furiousness of the lesser Ajax, the perseverance of Ulysses, and the intrepidity of Diomede, are the emanations of the same transcendant intellect, which in the single person of Achilles, find their splendid centre and perfect embodiment. He has written occasional orations of the highest merit, but which seem to have been regarded by their author as unworthy of the severer exercise of his faculties ; like the great secretary and patriot under Cromwell, who, having thrown on the world the masterly production of the greatest genius, continued his labors, as if he had given nothing to mankind—as if

Paradise Lost was a forgotten pamphlet, about which neither he nor any one else need to care.

Mr. Webster's eloquence we regard as epic in character, rather than dramatic, lyrical, or historical. It is that kind which relates to those high and abstract principles which elevate our nature in thought or moral action, and which are allied to any power, natural or supernatural, of elemental or political revolution, the absolute resistance of which is impossible. The highest range which this, the first order of the sublime in speech ever assumes, is when the mind, soaring above the entanglements of earth, and vicissitudes of time, defies the destruction of both, impelled by some all-absorbing affection, noble sentiment, grand public benefit, or great moral principle. Such sublimity is something independent of material elements ; it is a glory that will survive when these shall melt with fervent heat, and will light the firmament when the sun is shrouded in sackcloth of hair.

“ His thoughts all great and solemn and serene,
Like the immensest features of an orb,
Whose eyes are blue seas, and whose clear broad brow
Some cultured continent, come ever round
From truth to truth—day bringing as they come.”

He who perceives beautiful and majestic thought as an actual substance, and zealously embodies what he sees in clear and substantial language, will naturally become the most forcible and enduring orator. A firm and distinct outline is an invariable characteristic of all good composition, and he who can best command this, will be sure to express his ideas with most correctness,

pleasure and energy. The greatest merit lies not in the elaborate finish of minute details, but in that enlarged comprehension which contemplates the whole extent and bearings of a subject at the outset, combined with a facility of execution which boldly stamps a definite and adequate expression on every part. As a deep knowledge of the human form is the basis of the knowledge of all other forms, and the capacity to draw the human frame accurately the foundation of the highest practical skill in every department of artistic excellence; so is a critical understanding of human language in its philosophical elements and dextrous combinations, a department of the noblest study, and source of the greatest power. Michael Angelo spent twelve years in dissecting, that he might worthily express the material features of man; Daniel Webster has spent a whole life in the most earnest analysis of language that he might more effectively express the fairest and boldest features of eloquence, and long since attained a wonderful capacity for embodying ideas the most rich and glowing in forms of sculpturesque severity. He was evidently born to give the world more enlarged and exalted conceptions,

“And uttered in a sound and homely tongue,
Fit to be used by all who think while speaking.”

Longinus believed that the sublime, as it is the highest excellence to which human composition can attain, abundantly compensates the absence of every other beauty. According to this rule, Mr. Webster never seeks the aid of meretricious ornaments, however elegant or graceful, but binds the language he employs

strictly within the logical confines of the propositions he would demonstrate. He preserves a senatorial dignity throughout, and is by nature and education an orator unrivalled in the skill of unravelling subtleties, and of wielding the weapons of searching and inexorable dialectics. He uses words as the means, not as the end ; language in his hands is the instrument, conviction is the work. No one can doubt the copiousness of his mental resources ; but he deals out his abundance with a steady and cautious hand, with that wise reserve which is not ambitious to display either its wealth or its art. His own mental character and habits as an orator are best described in his own well-known language applied to another. Said he :

“The eloquence of Mr. Adams resembled his general character, and formed, indeed, a part of it. It was bold, manly, and energetic ; and such the crisis required. When public bodies are to be addressed on momentous occasions, when great interests are at stake, and strong passions excited, nothing is valuable, in speech, farther than it is connected with high intellectual and moral endowments. Clearness, force, and earnestness, are the qualities which produce conviction. True eloquence, indeed, does not consist in speech. It cannot be brought from far. Labor and learning may toil for it, but they will toil in vain. Words and phrases may be marshalled in every way, but they cannot compass it. It must exist in the man, in the subject, and in the occasion. Affected passion, intense expression, the pomp of declamation, all may aspire after it, they cannot reach it. It comes, if it come at all, like the outbreking of a fountain

from the earth, or the bursting forth of volcanic fires, with spontaneous, original, native force. The graces taught in the schools, the costly ornaments, and studied contrivances of speech, shock and disgust men, when their own lives, and the fate of their wives, their children, and their country, hang on the decision of the hour. Then words have lost their power, rhetoric is vain, and all elaborate oratory contemptible. Even genius itself then feels rebuked and subdued, as in the presence of higher qualities. Then, patriotism is eloquent; then self-devotion is eloquent. The clear conception, out-running the deductions of logic, the high purpose, the firm resolve, the dauntless spirit, speaking on the tongue, beaming from the eye, informing every feature, and urging the whole man onward, right onward to his object,—this, this is eloquence; or rather it is something greater and higher than eloquence, it is action, noble, sublime, god-like action.”

This clearness, freshness, and force, which Mr. Webster so much valued, he had acquired by a perpetual and profound study of simplicity; knowing that this one element, when pure, is better than a mixture of many of a gaudier tone. The highest merit of the best orations consists mainly in a perfection of the whole, resulting from the just proportion of the several component parts. The longer we study such masterpieces, the more admirable traits we discover in them to admire; as the enthusiastic antiquary exhumes a Phidian statue, and traces images of Olympian *athletæ* thereon. In order to attain a general effect of grandeur, all trifling adjuncts must be avoided, so that the central idea may

preponderate throughout, and cause an air of simple dignity to prevail over all the parts, "As the snow-headed mountain rises o'er the lightning, and applies itself to heaven." This unity of purpose, subordinating infinite diversity to its particular aim, and urging forward all its auxiliaries to the execution of a single grand design, ordinarily produces the majestic oneness of a shared passion in the audience subjected to its force. They are all filled with one thought, captured and impelled by one potent influence, as innumerable billows of the ocean roll, and myriad sons of the forest bend before the same breath of omnipotence.

We have quoted Mr. Webster's definition of eloquence, and will here present an illustration of his own rule, from the famous debate on the resolution offered by Mr. Foote, in the Senate, on the 29th of December, 1829, as follows:

"Resolved,—That the committee on Public Lands be instructed to inquire and report the quantity of public lands remaining unsold within each State and Territory. And whether it be expedient to limit, for a certain period, the sales of the public lands to such lands only as have heretofore been offered for sale, and are now subject to entry at the minimum price. And, also, whether the offices of Surveyor General, and some of the land offices, may not be abolished without detriment to the public interest ; or whether it be expedient to adopt measures to hasten the sales, and extend more rapidly the surveys of the public lands."

On the 18th of January, Mr. Benton, of Missouri, addressed the Senate ; and on the 19th, Mr. Hayne, of

South Carolina, proceeded in the debate, and spoke at considerable length. After he had concluded, Mr. Webster rose to reply, but gave way, on the motion of Mr. Benton for an adjournment. When the doors of the Senate-chamber were opened on the morning of the 20th, says a spectator, "The rush for admittance was unprecedented. Mr. Webster had the floor, and rose. The first division of his speech is in reply to parts and details of his adversary's personal assault,—and is a happy, though severe specimen of the keenest spirit of genuine debate and retort; for Mr. Webster is one of those dangerous adversaries, who are never so formidable or so brilliant, as when they are most rudely pressed;—for then, as in the phosphorescence of the ocean, the degree of the violence urged, may always be taken as the measure of the brightness that is to follow. On the present occasion, his manner was cool, entirely self-possessed, and perfectly decided, and carried his irony as far as irony can go. There are portions of this first day's discussion, like the passage relating to the charge of sleeping on the speech, he had answered; the one in allusion to Banquo's ghost, which had been unhappily conjured up by his adversary; and the rejoinder respecting "one Nathan Dane, of Beverly, in Massachusetts,"—which will not be forgotten. The very tones in which they were uttered, still vibrate in the ears of those who heard them. There are, also, other and graver portions of it,—like those which respect the course of legislation in regard to the new States; the conduct of the North in regard to slavery, and the doctrine of internal improvements,—which are in the most powerful style of parlia-

mentary debate. As he approaches the conclusion of this first great division of his speech, he rises to the loftiest tone of national feeling, entirely above the dim, misty region of sectional or party passion and prejudice :

“ The eulogium pronounced on the character of the State of South Carolina, by the honorable gentleman, for her revolutionary and other merits, meets my hearty concurrence. I shall not acknowledge that the honorable member goes before me in regard for whatever of distinguished talent, or distinguished character, South Carolina has produced. I claim part of the honor, I partake in the pride, of her great names. I claim them for my countrymen, one and all. The Laurenses, the Rutledges, the Pinckneys, the Sumpters, the Marions—Americans, all—whose fame is no more to be hemmed in by State lines, than their talents and patriotism were capable of being circumscribed within the same narrow limits. In their day and generation, they served and honored the country, and the whole country ; and their renown is of the treasures of the whole country. Him, whose honored name the gentleman himself bears—does he esteem me less capable of gratitude for his patriotism, or sympathy for his sufferings, than if his eyes had first opened upon the light of Massachusetts, instead of South Carolina ? Sir, does he suppose it in his power to exhibit a Carolina name, so bright, as to produce envy in my bosom ? No, Sir, increased gratification and delight, rather. I thank God, that, if I am gifted with little of the spirit which is able to raise mortals to the skies, I have yet none, as I trust, of that other spirit,

which would drag angels down. When I shall be found, Sir, in my place here, in the Senate, or elsewhere, to sneer at public merit, because it happens to spring up beyond the little limits of my own State, or neighborhood; when I refuse for any such cause, or for any cause, the homage due to American talent, to elevated patriotism, to sincere devotion to liberty and the country; or, if I see an uncommon endowment of Heaven—if I see extraordinary capacity and virtue in any son of the South—and if, moved by local prejudice, or gangrened by State jealousy, I get up here to abate the tithe of a hair from his just character and just fame, may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!

“Sir, let me recur to pleasing recollections—let me indulge in refreshing remembrance of the past—let me remind you that in early times, no States cherished greater harmony, both of principle and feeling, than Massachusetts and South Carolina. Would to God that harmony might again return! Shoulder to shoulder they went through the Revolution—hand in hand they stood round the administration of Washington, and felt his own great arm lean on them for support. Unkind feeling, if it exist, alienation and distrust, are the growth, unnatural to such soils, of false principles since sown. They are weeds, the seeds of which that same great arm never scattered.

“Mr. President, I shall enter on no encomium upon Massachusetts—she needs none. There she is—behold her and judge for yourselves. There is her history: the world knows it by heart. The past, at least, is secure. There is Boston, and Concord, and Lexington, and

Bunker Hill—and there they will remain for ever. The bones of her sons, falling in the great struggle for independence, now lie mingled with the soil of every State, from New England to Georgia; and there they will lie for ever. And, Sir, where American liberty raised its first voice; and where its youth was nurtured and sustained, there it still lives, in the strength of its manhood, and full of its original spirit. If discord and disunion shall wound it—if party strife and blind ambition shall hawk at and tear it—if folly and madness—if uneasiness, under salutary and necessary restraint—shall succeed to separate it from that union, by which alone its existence is made sure, it will stand, in the end, by the side of that cradle in which its infancy was rocked; it will stretch forth its arm with whatever of vigor it may still retain, over the friends who gather round it; and it will fall at last, if fall it must, amidst the proudest monuments of its own glory, and on the very spot of its origin.”

We have endeavored to describe and exemplify from his own productions, the distinct perception, accurate combination, and severe deduction, which so palpably characterize the oratory of Mr. Webster. We now come to speak of the forcible illustration he so frequently employs.

The best works in the world are those wherein rugged vitality and ideal beauty are most harmoniously combined. The true master can infuse his sensibility to beauty into reposing and simple subjects, as well as manifest the highest energy and worth in a more exalted range, and knows how in every department he culti-

vates, to temper and control the passionate outbreak of impulsive feelings. Without this perpetual sovereignty of reason, public speech sinks to empty declamation, and is "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." Whenever the verbiage of a work obscures the subject by its opaqueness, or absorbs it in its splendor, the result is degraded to an inferior rank. Mr. Webster seldom or never falls into this fault, but preserves the golden mean between inert solidity and senseless inflation. The decided bias of his great latent power is to create excellence in majestic shapes, but these are imbued with flexible energy and not the apathy of impotence. Reason and imagination dwell in his mind, and characterize its soarings, "like to a pair of eagles in one nest." His reason, obeying only its own iron force, seems reckless of every obstacle, and shining through a medium translucent as light, yet invincible as the avalanche, is destined, we believe, as long as the English language endures, to subsist unimpaired in the creations of its native grandeur, "as the changeless sea, rolling the same in every age as now." Observe that his imagination is something more powerful as well as more glorious, than the mere prettiness of puerile fancy; it is elementary fire, half rejoicing in its own permeating and purifying flames, creative of sublimity the most exalted, and superbly decorative of the worlds it has formed. The coalition of these two extraordinary attributes produces superlative completeness in oratorical power; that unity which is essential to the most enduring excellence, its basis and crowning charm, and is symbolized, not by the butterfly fluttering round a cot-

tage garden, but the eagle soaring above mountains and serenely basking in the sun.

“ Who can mistake great thoughts ?
They seize upon the mind—arrest, and search,
And shake it—bow the tall soul as by wind—
Rush over it like rivers over reeds,
Which quaver in the current—turn us cold,
And pale, and voiceless ; leaving in the brain
A rocking and a ringing.”

As the best illustration of our remarks on Mr. Webster's imagination, we subjoin his thrilling apostrophe to Warren on Bunker Hill. It is the more remarkable as containing a grammatical inaccuracy, produced by passing from the third person to the second in the same sentence, and is at once the most natural consequence of transcendent ardor and the most unequivocal proof of unpremeditated excellence. When the sentence commenced, “ But,—ah,—him,” it was evidently in the mind of the orator, to end by saying, “ how shall I commemorate him ?” But in the progress of the sentence, unconscious of the words, but inflamed with the thought ; beholding, as he stood near the spot where the hero fell, his beloved and beautiful image rising up from beneath the sod, “ with the rose of heaven upon his cheek, and the fire of liberty in his eye,—the blood of his gallant heart still pouring from his wound,”—the vividness of his imagination and the fervor of his patriotic sensibility no longer permit the rapt orator to speak *of* him ; he must speak *to* him. Thenceforth he attempts not to tell his audience what Warren was, but seeing the martyr-

patriot before him, on the spot where he perished, he portrays what immortal worth is. But the whole passage should be quoted :—

“ Venerable men ! You have come down to us from a former generation. Heaven has bounteously lengthened out your lives, that you may behold this joyous day. You are now, where you stood fifty years ago, this very hour, with your brothers and your neighbors, shoulder to shoulder, in the strife for your country. Behold, how altered ! The same heavens are indeed over your head ; the same ocean rolls at your feet ; but all else, how changed ! You hear now no roar of hostile cannon. You see no mixed volumes of smoke and flame rising from burning Charlestown. The ground strewn with the dead and dying ; the impetuous charge ; the steady and successful repulse ; the loud call to repeated assault ; the summoning of all that is manly to repeated resistance ; a thousand bosoms freely and fearlessly bared in an instant to whatever of terror there may be in war and death ;—all these you have witnessed, but you witness them no more. All is peace. The heights of yonder metropolis, its towers and roofs, which you then saw filled with wives and children, and countrymen in distress and terror, and looking with unutterable emotions for the issue of the combat, have presented you to-day with the sight of its whole happy population, come out to welcome and greet you, with an universal jubilee. Yonder proud ships, by a felicity of position, appropriately lying at the foot of this mount, and seeming fondly to cling around it, are not means of annoyance to you, but your country’s own means of distinc-

tion and defence. All is peace ; and God has granted you this sight of your country's happiness, ere you slumber in the grave for ever. He has allowed you to behold and to partake the reward of your patriotic toils ; and he has allowed us, your sons and countrymen, to meet you here, and in the name of the present generation, in the name of your country, in the name of liberty, to thank you !

“ But, alas, you are not all here ! Time and the sword have thinned your ranks. Prescott, Putnam, Stark, Brooks, Read, Pomeroy, Bridge ! Our eyes seek for you in vain amidst this broken band. You are gathered to your fathers, and live only to your country in her grateful remembrance, and your own bright example. But let us not too much grieve, that you have met the common fate of men. You lived, at least, long enough to know that your work had been nobly and successfully accomplished. You lived to see your country's independence established, and to sheathe your swords from war. On the light of Liberty you saw arise the light of Peace, like

‘ another morn,
Risen on mid-noon ;’—

and the sky on which you closed your eyes was cloudless.

“ But—ah !—Him ! the first great Martyr in this great cause ! Him ! the premature victim of his own self-devoting heart ! Him ! the head of our civil councils, and the destined leader of our military bands ; whom nothing brought hither, but the unquenchable fire of his

own spirit; Him! cut off by Providence, in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom; falling ere he saw the star of his country rise; pouring out his generous blood, like water, before he knew whether it would fertilize a land of freedom or of bondage! how shall I struggle with the emotions, that stifle the utterance of thy name!—Our poor work may perish; but thine shall endure! This monument may moulder away; the solid ground it rests upon may sink down to a level with the sea; but thy memory shall not fail! Wheresoever among men a heart shall be found, that beats to the transports of patriotism and liberty, its aspirations shall be to claim kindred with thy spirit!”

This patriotic ardor, as Mr. Whipple finely remarks, has given intensity to the purposes of the great statesman of New England, and lent the richest glow to his genius. “It has made his eloquence a language of the heart; felt and understood over every portion of the land it consecrates. On Plymouth Rock, on Bunker Hill, at Mount Vernon, by the tombs of Hamilton, and Adams, and Jefferson, and Jay, we are reminded of Daniel Webster. He has done what no national poet has yet succeeded in doing,—associated his own great genius with all in our country’s history and scenery, which makes us rejoice that we are Americans. He has made the dead past a living present. Over all those events in our history which are heroical, he has cast the hues of strong feeling and vivid imagination. He cannot stand on one spot of ground, hallowed by liberty or religion, without being kindled by the genius of the place; he cannot mention a name, consecrated by

self-devotion and patriotism, without doing it eloquent homage. Seeing clearly, and feeling deeply, he makes us see and feel with him.

“That scene of the landing of the Pilgrims, in which his imagination conjures up the forms and emotions of our New England ancestry, will ever live in the national memory. We see with him, the ‘little, bark with the interesting group on its deck, make its slow progress to the shore.’ We feel, with him, ‘the cold which benumbed,’ and listen with him, ‘to the winds which pierced them.’ Carver, and Bradford, and Standish, and Brewster, and Allerton, look out upon us from the pictured page, in all the dignity with which virtue and freedom invest their martyrs; and we see, too, ‘chilled and shivering childhood, houseless but for a mother’s arms, couchless but for a mother’s breast, till our own blood almost freezes.’

“The readiness with which the orator compels our sympathies to follow his own, is again illustrated in the orations at Bunker Hill, and in the discourse in honor of Adams and Jefferson. In reading them, we feel proud of our country, and of the great men and great principles it has cherished. The mind feels an unwonted elevation, and the heart is stirred with emotions of more than common depth, by their majesty and power. Some passages are so graphic and true, ~~that they~~ seem gifted with a voice, and to speak to us from the page they illumine. The intensity of feeling with which they are pervaded, rises at times with confident hope to prophecy, and lifts the soul as with wings. In that splendid close to a remarkable passage in the oration on

Adams and Jefferson, what American does not feel assured, with the orator, that their fame will be immortal?"

"Although no sculptured marble should rise to their memory, nor engraved stone bear record of their deeds, yet will their remembrance be as lasting as the land they honored. Marble columns may, indeed, moulder into dust, time may erase all impress from the crumbling stone, but their fame remains ; for with AMERICAN LIBERTY it rose, and with AMERICAN LIBERTY ONLY can it perish. It was the last swelling peal of yonder choir, 'THEIR BODIES ARE BURIED IN PEACE, BUT THEIR NAME LIVETH EVERMORE.' I catch that solemn song, I echo that lofty strain of funeral triumph, 'THEIR NAME LIVETH EVERMORE.'"

In reviewing the mental traits and oratorical productions of Mr. Webster, we think that in his eloquence there are three distinct styles,—the narrative, the senatorial, and the impassioned. The first is a slow, deliberate manner, employed in stating simple facts, or plain argument ; like an admirable reader, distinct and forcible, but with no display of excited elocution. This is exceedingly beautiful, because it is the nearest approach to sublimity of character, expressed in pure form, independent of all passion or emotion. "Slow seems their speed whose thoughts before them run."

His second style, is when he is interested in the discussion of some important subject, in the forum of high debate, where by the action of his own aroused mind in conflict with powerful antagonists, he has become warmed and animated. His elocution as well as his reasoning then is often magnificent, presenting altogether his best and most powerful manner. Under

ordinary circumstances, Mr. Webster may truly say, "My mind my kingdom is," and to the most casual eye, he seems born "to set a throne or chair of state in the understandings of other men." But when popular passions are furiously aroused, and the bravest champions tremble before the deepening storm, he becomes the more serenely self-possessed, and, in the unfoldings of native grandeur, instinctively assumes a look of calm, unalterable energy, "above all pain, all passion, and all pride." Such was his appearance at the opening of the great Nullification debate, when he stood erect and fearless in the general consternation, invincibly armed from head to foot, to defend the Constitution which fled to him for shelter, and palpitated in his breast.

The greatest effect ever produced by a consummate orator is achieved by his preserving the aspect and advantage of repose amidst the tempest in which he is involved, showing that he is at the same time master of the stormy elements which agitate others and swell within himself. This is not the repose of inanition or irresolution, but the repose of magnificent energy disciplined to the most practical use by self-possession. It produces the consciousness of duty performed, when evils are eradicated and victory won, is most diligent in slaying the worst monsters, and stands at length embodied before the world in Hercules leaning on his club.

Many collisions and conquests at the Capitol of this nation, justify the allusion here made. Therein Mr. Webster has repeatedly manifested a grasp and potency of mind which, we think, are found in no other living orator in the new world or old. On occasions of the

highest forensic gladiatorship, there is in him, such an impressiveness of countenance, such startling intonations of voice, such depth of argument, lucid and palpable to every entranced faculty of the spell-bound audience, that eloquence seems magical and persuasive to a degree the most divine. The care taken before-hand, skillfully to construct the plan of attack, and arrange in order his diversified forces, adds calmest confidence to the deliberate execution and all the more certainly insures ultimate success; as Napoleon gained the battle of to-morrow by spending a sleepless night himself, in projecting his plans before the bivouac fire, while he sent his army to sound repose, well clad, and full of good bread and wine. His arguments, like the Grecian phalanx, are in close array, each one firmly wedged in between its companions; so that the defensive points of his logic, like their spears, present a front impenetrable to all attacks. Each subordinate topic is a link whereby the chain of his thoughts is connected, the articulations of the body of his argument, without which it would be stiff, lame and ungainly.

“ All things within it
Are so digested, fitted and composed
As it shows Wit had married Order.”

A noble simplicity and spontaneous force are the characteristic features of Mr. Webster's eloquence; and hence, though colors fade, and language in time becomes obsolete, the chasteness of its form, and substance of immortal thought can never decay. His ordinary delivery is not the rushing torrent of impetuous declamation,

foaming and upturning everything in its course, but the calm and grand flow of a noble, unimpeded stream. By this, it is not meant that our orator is never excited in his higher efforts,—no man is more so. But his excitement does not so much embody the idea of physical violence, as latent power. Veins may be seen in the breast of a god, for centuries one of the glories of the Parthenon, and now in the British Museum. This is by no means absurd, but highly natural. Phidias did not think of deifying a hero by depriving him of his essential human characteristics; and blood is as requisite to invincible force as muscle, bone as mind. The osseous system is undoubtedly the foundation of all highly organized forms, consolidating and defining the particular shape, but is of itself by no means the perfected being. It is far from producing the rounded symmetry, and graceful finish, which, as the veil and integument of an exalted organization, we call beauty. Webster, first of all, is most careful with respect to the basis of his argument; but when he has firmly secured all that is fundamental, he is far from being indifferent to whatever is judiciously decorative. He combines in himself not only the bone and muscle of mighty argument, but he has also its throbbing flesh and bounding blood. He is excited, but never distorted, and in this respect, he, of all moderns, most strikingly resembles the best models of classical antiquity. The Apollo is animated; the Niobe is absorbed; the Warrior of Agasias is excited; the dying Gladiator is depressed; the Laocoon is convulsed; but in all this variety of exhilaration or suffering, there is a power of self-control manifest and supreme. Even

when passion or anguish becomes too big for utterance the wisdom of the ancients borrowed a feature of tranquillity, though not its air. Minds of the order we are now considering, always require great stimulus to develop their best energies, and are most luminous when most exalted.

“ The clouds which hide
The mental mountains rising nighest Heaven,
Are full of finest lightning, and a breath
Can give those gathered shadows fearful life,
And launch their light in thunder o’er the world.”

We have spoken of Mr. Webster’s narrative style, and of his more exalted forensic manner ; it remains, in conclusion, to notice a third style, sometimes exemplified by him, but as unlike the two former as it is possible to conceive. This is seen in him when exasperated by the conduct of others, or by something ungenerous and impertinent which has been drawn into the debate. He then is exceedingly rapid in utterance, and violent in action ; pours forth a torrent of words, on a high key, and with sharp, shrill emphasis, like the percussion of small arms. Now deadly pale with emotion, and anon flushed with deep crimson to the topmost bend of his awful brows, with tones that are the more impressive from a slight trembling of proud scorn, enforced by a visage all inflamed, he hurls defiance at his foes. Then those indescribable eye-balls of his become terrible in their expression, matched only by the compressed lips and impending temples, all combined in suggesting unspeakable contempt, and “Revolving lightnings like a

world on fire." This, however, is the exception rather than the rule with our orator, and is seen when he not only convinces, but overpowers and oppresses the hearer. This latter style completes a happy variety of manner, suited to every kind of subject, every class of adversaries, every frame of mind, and undoubtedly is one great secret of his unequalled power, since the mode of his address, always springs naturally out of the subject or occasion, and is most effective because it is never assumed. Eloquent discourse is the conveying *thoughts* in language which most resembles *things*; the more perfect the *thing* represented, the more impressive will be the thought *conveyed*. Mr. Webster is superlatively eloquent in his happier inspirations, because his outward excitement is exactly proportioned to the inward; if he is not aroused by the action of the subject on his own soul, no audience in the world can inflame him, and when he is really impassioned, it is ever with natural fire and no mortal powers can withstand the fury of its blaze. His imagination permeates and energizes the indomitable arms of his logic, as the poetry of Cromwell lay only in his facts and in his sword. Close, firm, and irresistibly argumentative, the substance of his speech is luminous truth, and his habitual style deep and grave, like history inscribed on monuments.

Pliny says that Aristonidas, the Theban, mixed metals with the materials of his art; and Alcon formed a Hercules of iron, to express the strength and durability of the god. Such, we think, is the character of Mr. Webster's mind. His reasonings are more the

exertions of study than the effects of impulse. A severe and learned simplicity is his most natural tone, in the exercise of which he breathes and creates the graceful majesty of the antique. Disproportion of parts may be an element of hugeness, but only as connected with elaborated proportion does true grandeur exist. Egyptian architecture is huge, but the Grecian, alone, is grand. Eloquence of the Websterian order is not something hollow and artificial, but firm and natural; an ethereal and invincible essence, developed in sincere belief and fervid feelings, and which no conventional rules can either analyze, estimate, or produce. The peculiar breadth and potency of his style resembles the movement of a mighty sea; waves arise, approach, and break on the shore, but in their rise and fall, emerging and bursting into spray, perpetually impress the spectator with the image of that omnipotent hand that rouses, impels, and yet controls them. As the two greatest artists that ever lived, Phidias and Michael Angelo, were painters as well as sculptors, they combined in their best productions the highest measure of force and most perfect knowledge of effect; thus in magnificence of conception, and poetry of character, in a happy selection of subject, and fearless execution of hand, they remain, to all the world, unsurpassed. Precisely of the same stamp is the mind of Daniel Webster. Nothing in nature, art, history, philosophy, or morals, is foreign to his clear and comprehensive design; every department of knowledge, mastered by a long and studious life, is made to contribute a beam of truth to the torch which he grasps like a giant, and holds forth to

irradiate the course of his demonstration, at the same time consummating oratorical excellence and unequalled statesmanship.

An intelligent English traveller has recorded the following personal sketch:—

“The forehead of Mr. Webster is high, broad, and advancing. The cavity beneath the eyebrow is remarkably large. The eye is deeply set, but full, dark, and penetrating in the highest degree; the nose prominent and well defined; the mouth marked by that rigid compression of the lips by which the New Englanders are distinguished. When Mr. Webster’s countenance is in repose, its expression struck me as cold and forbidding, but in conversation it lightens up; and when he smiles, the whole impression it communicates is at once changed. His voice is clear, sharp, and firm, without much variety of modulation; but when animated, it rings on the ear like a clarion.”

To this we may add the remark of another observer, touching his sense of personal propriety:—“Mr. Webster never appears before an audience without a due preparation. The habits of his mind partake of those in respect to his person. On all occasions when he is to be the chief speaker, he is carefully and tastefully dressed. I have seen him often in the U. S. Senate, and in the Court of the Supreme Judicial Tribunal—a glance at his person is sufficient to indicate whether or not he is to speak. A blue coat and buff vest, similar to that worn by Mr. Fox in Parliament, is his favorite dress for great occasions in the Senate; a black suit is chosen for the bar.”

The great writer, statesman, patriot, and orator, whom we have thus considered, is now in the zenith of his fame and strength. Painting has never done justice to his massy figure and impressive features, nor has language yet adequately portrayed his extraordinary eloquence. There is a Doric substantiability about all his person, inimitable and unwasting, a loftiness of character in harmony with the divinest art, and which sculpture alone can fitly express. In coming centuries his noble form, wrought by kindred genius in speaking marble, towering from a colossal base of New England granite, and draped in that simple majesty which commands the admiring world, will rise to meet the sun in his coming; the earliest light of the morning shall gild it, and the parting day of American freedom "linger and play on its summit."

CHAPTER II.

EDWARD EVERETT,

THE RHETORICIAN.

A RIPE scholar, graceful speaker, and consummate master of rhetorical art, is EDWARD EVERETT, of Massachusetts. Before the illustration of these points, we will present a few historical statements.

He was born in Dorchester, Norfolk County, on the 11th of April, 1794. Edward was the fourth in a family of eight children, and lost his father, a highly respectable clergyman, when he was but eight years old. His education, till he was thirteen years of age, was obtained almost exclusively at the public schools in Dorchester and Boston, to which latter place the family removed after his father's decease. In the Academy, at Exeter, N. H., under the tuition of Dr. Abbott, he completed his preparation for college. He entered Harvard University in August, 1807, and graduated in 1811, with the highest honors of his class.

Under the influence and instruction of Rev. J. S. Buckminster and President Kirkland, he was induced to select the profession of theology. In 1812 he was appointed Latin tutor in the University. In the

autumn of 1813, being then less than nineteen years of age, he was settled, as the successor of Buckminster, over the Brattle Street Church, in Boston. In addition to the ordinary duties of the ministry, he wrote and published a *Defence of Christianity*, which was regarded as an elaborate and able work.

Having been appointed by the Corporation and Overseers of Harvard University, Professor of Greek Literature, he obtained a dismissal from his congregation, and assumed his new functions at Cambridge, when under twenty-one years of age. To improve his health, and perfect his qualifications for the chair to which he had been called, he was permitted and enabled, by the corporation, to travel in Europe, and to reside some time at the principal foreign universities.

He embarked from Boston in the spring of 1815, immediately after the conclusion of peace with Great Britain. On arriving in Liverpool, he heard of the escape of Napoleon from Elba, and was in London when the battle of Waterloo was fought. From England he went to Germany, passed a few days at Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Leyden, and the other Dutch cities, and proceeded through Westphalia to Gottingen, in the kingdom of Hanover.

At this most celebrated German University he spent two years in assiduous study, and employed the vacations in excursions to the principal cities and universities of the North.

The winter of 1817 he spent in Paris, acquiring the Italian and modern Greek languages. Here he enjoyed the society of many eminent men, and acquainted him-

self with several new branches of knowledge. In 1818, he again visited England, spent some time at Oxford and Cambridge; made excursions to Wales and the Lakes, Edinburgh, and the Highlands, passed a few days with Sir Walter, at Abbotsford, and became acquainted with Dugald Stewart, as well as with many other distinguished characters of England and Scotland.

In the autumn of 1818, he returned to France, and proceeded to Switzerland and Italy. He passed by the way of Lyons, Geneva, Chamouni, and the glaciers of Mont Blanc; made a circuit through Lausanne, Berne, Lucerne, Altdorf, and the Valais; crossed the Simplon to Milan; went through Lombardy to Venice, and then back over the Appenines to Florence. The winter was spent in Rome, in antiquarian research, and converse with distinguished men.

In the spring of 1819, he went to Naples; and after visiting the most interesting localities in that vicinity, crossed over to Bari, on the Adriatic; and thence travelled on horseback by the way of Lecce to Otranto. Thence he took passage to Corfu, and the coast of Albania. Bearing letters to Ali Pacha from Lord Byron, he was received by that famous chieftain, at Yanina, with great kindness. Crossing Mount Pindus, and going north as far as the Vale of Tempé, he returned through Thessaly to Thermopylæ, passing by Pharsalia, over Mount Parnassus to Delphi, Thebes, and Athens. He then made an excursion over the Isthmus of Corinth to Sparta, and returning to the north, embarked in the Gulf of Volo for the Dardanelles, visiting the site of Troy and Constantinople.

In June, 1819, he passed the Balkan Mountains, and crossing the Danube at Nicopol, went through Wallachia to Bucharest, and entered Austria through the great pass in the Carpathian Mountains. After spending some time at Vienna, he traversed Austria, the Tyrol, and Bavaria. Returning by the way of Paris and London, he took passage for America, September, 1819. The record from which we have condensed the above sketch, says, that the whole time spent by Mr. Everett, in his travels and studies in Europe and Asia, was nearly four years and seven months.

Having thus briefly indicated the fullness and variety of classical attainment received by Mr. Everett, preparatory to the duties of his Professorship at Cambridge, we now proceed more particularly to notice his literary career at home.

Near the close of 1819, he was solicited to assume the editorial charge of the North American Review. Its number of subscribers, at that time, was inconsiderable, but a great change in its style and fortunes immediately took place. A new series commenced, in which the miscellaneous department was omitted, and the work conformed throughout to the type of European publications of the same character. Many of its numbers passed into a second and even a third edition. Under the administration of the new editor, its circulation increased with so much rapidity that it became necessary to reprint several editions of the first series, in order to supply the augmented demand for the whole. He gave it an American character and spirit, so that it commanded not only the admiration and support of his own

countrymen, but the respectful regards of foreign critics and scholars. His editorship of this leading American Review continued four years ; but he has occasionally contributed to its pages ever since.

The lectures on Greek literature, delivered by Mr. Everett to the students of Harvard University, says a literary friend, "are remembered with respectful gratitude by all whose privilege it was to be connected with the college during his continuance in office there. At the same time he delivered two courses of lectures in Boston on ancient art, which, as well as his collegiate lectures, remain still unpublished. When, after having received such corrections and additions as his mature experience and leisure may enable him to bestow upon them, they shall be given to the world, those who heard them are confident that they will be regarded as one of the noblest contributions ever made to our literature.

"While residing at Cambridge, he kept up a correspondence with his learned friends abroad, particularly with the scholars and patriots of Greece ; and by his zealous exertions did much to awaken the interest which, throughout the country, and in the halls of Congress, was expressed in behalf of that renowned people in their long and glorious struggle for liberty and independence. In the discharge of his duties as Professor at Cambridge he was faithful, constant, and eminently successful."

The publications of Mr. Everett are numerous. His early theological work has been referred to. At a subsequent period, in addition to the eloquent, erudite, and patriotic articles which he contributed to the North American Review, and other periodicals, he prepared a

Greek grammar and a Greek class book for the use of students, while Professor at Cambridge. His various orations we shall have occasion to refer to copiously under another head.

We have spoken of Mr. Everett as a divine, and as a scholar; it remains, thirdly, to sketch his progress as a politician. In 1824, a vacancy occurred in the Congressional District to which Cambridge belongs; and Mr. Everett was put in nomination to fill the place. To the astonishment of all, he was elected by a decisive majority. Contrary to his expectation at the time of accepting a nomination, it is said, his connection with the University, as an instructor, ceased on his election to Congress; but he was immediately chosen by the overseers as a member of their board.

In December, 1825, Mr. Everett first entered upon his duties at Washington, and was re-elected for five successive Congresses by large majorities. His legislative labors were numerous and effective. For ten years continuously, he was on the committee of Foreign Affairs, and much of the time its chairman. Among the many reports which he drew up, that on the Panama mission occupies a conspicuous place. He collected all the facts and arguments in reference to that vexed question into a volume; and much of the credit for having finally procured the final adjustment of our claims upon foreign powers for spoliation is undoubtedly due to him.

“He was chairman of the Select Committee, during Mr. Adams’ Presidency, on the Georgia controversy; and always took a leading part, while in Congress, in

the efforts that were made to protect the Indians from injustice. In the spring of 1827 he addressed a series of letters to Mr. Canning on the subject of the colonial trade, which were extensively re-published. He always served on the Library Committee, and generally on that for the Public Buildings; together with John Sergeant, he constituted the minority on the famous Retrenchment Committee. He drew the report for the Committee in favor of the heirs of Fulton. Together with Governor Ellsworth, of Connecticut, he constituted the minority of the Bank investigating Committee, which was despatched to Philadelphia, and wrote the minority report. He wrote the minority report of the Committee of Foreign Relations, in reference to the controversy with France, in the spring of 1835; distinguished himself by the high ground he took on the subject in debate, and supplied, in the last clause of his report, the words of the resolution unanimously passed, in reference to it, by the House of Representatives. He also, at the same session, prepared a statement on French spoliations prior to 1800, which was printed by order of the House."

In the spring of 1835, Mr. Everett took his leave of the House of Representatives, having declined a re-election. On the election of Governor Davis to the Senate of the United States, in the same year, he became his successor in the gubernatorial office. In 1836, and again in 1837, he was re-elected to the same exalted functions. At a subsequent period he became the American Minister at the Court of St. James, which office he held for several

years. On his return he was chosen President of Harvard University, which station he has just resigned.

Having viewed Mr. Everett as a student, divine, professor, and politician, let us now more deliberately contemplate him as an orator. In this exalted sphere, he widely established his fame as early as 1824, when he delivered his oration before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Cambridge. General Lafayette was among the auditors, to whom, at the close, he referred as follows :

“ Meantime, the years are rapidly passing away and gathering importance in their course. With the present year, will be completed the half century from that most important era in human history, the commencement of our revolutionary war. The jubilee of our national existence is at hand. The space of time that has elapsed since that momentous date, has laid down in the dust, which the blood of many of them had already hallowed, most of the great men to whom, under Providence, we owe our national existence and privileges. A few still survive among us, to reap the rich fruits of their labors and sufferings ; and ONE has yielded himself to the united voice of a people, and returned in his age, to receive the gratitude of the nation, to whom he devoted his youth. It is recorded on the pages of American history, that when this friend of our country applied to our commissioners at Paris, in 1776, for a passage in the first ship they should despatch to America, they were obliged to answer him, (so low and abject was then our dear native land) that they possessed not the means nor the credit sufficient for providing a single vessel, in all the ports of France. ‘ Then,’ exclaimed the

youthful hero, 'I will provide my own ;' and it is a literal fact, that when all America was too poor to offer him so much as a passage to her shores, he left, in his tender youth, the bosom of home, of happiness, of wealth, of rank, to plunge in the dust and blood of our inauspicious struggle !

“ Welcome, friend of our fathers, to our shores ! Happy are our eyes that behold those venerable features. Enjoy a triumph such as never conqueror nor monarch enjoyed, the assurance that throughout America, there is not a bosom, which does not beat with joy and gratitude at the sound of your name. You have already met and saluted, or will soon meet, the few that remain, of the ardent patriots, prudent counsellors, and brave warriors, with whom you were associated in achieving our liberty. But you have looked round in vain for the faces of many, who would have lived years of pleasure on a day like this, with their old companion in arms and brother in peril. Lincoln, and Greene, and Knox, and Hamilton, are gone ; the heroes of Saratoga and Yorktown have fallen, before the only foe they could not meet. Above all, the first of heroes and of men, the friend of your youth, the more than friend of his country, rests in the bosom of the soil he redeemed. On the banks of his Potomac, he lies in glory and peace. You will revisit the hospitable shades of Mount Vernon, but him whom you venerated as we did, you will not meet at its door. His voice of consolation, which reached you in the Austrian dungeons, cannot now break its silence, to bid you welcome to his own roof. But the grateful children of America will bid you welcome in his name.

Welcome, thrice welcome to our shores ; and whithersoever throughout the limits of the continent your course shall take you, the ear that hears you shall bless you, the eye that sees you shall bear witness to you, and every tongue exclaim, with heartfelt joy, welcome, welcome La Fayette !”

Preparatory to a critical analysis of Mr. Everett’s eloquence, we will select several specimens from his occasional addresses, exemplifying his imagination, his sensibility to patriotic associations, and his appreciation of exalted personal worth. In the first place, to illustrate his imagination, we will adduce examples from among his first and last orations. Near the close of his remarks at Plymouth Rock, December 22d, 1824, Mr. Everett said :

“ Methinks I see it now, that one solitary, adventurous vessel, the Mayflower of a forlorn hope, freighted with the prospects of a future state, and bound across the unknown sea. I behold it pursuing, with a thousand misgivings, the uncertain, the tedious voyage. Suns rise and set, and weeks and months pass, and winter surprises them on the deep, but brings them not the sight of the wished-for shore. I see them now scantily supplied with provisions, crowded almost to suffocation in their ill-stored prison, delayed by calms, pursuing a circuitous route ;—and now driven in fury before the raging tempest, on the high and giddy waves. The awful voice of the storm howls through the rigging. The laboring masts seem straining from their base ;—the dismal sound of the pumps is heard ;—the ship leaps, as it were, madly, from billow to billow ;—the ocean

breaks, and settles with engulfing floods over the floating deck, and beats with deadening weight, against the staggered vessel. I see them, escaped from these perils, pursuing their all but desperate undertaking, and landed at last, after a five months' passage, on the ice-clad rocks of Plymouth,—weak and weary from the voyage,—poorly armed, scantily provisioned, depending on the charity of their ship-master for a draft of beer on board, drinking nothing but water on shore,—without shelter,—without means,—surrounded by hostile tribes. Shut now the volume of history, and tell me, on any principle of human probability, what shall be the fate of this handful of adventurers. Tell me, man of military science, in how many months were they all swept off by the thirty savage tribes, enumerated within the early limits of New England? Tell me, politician, how long did this shadow of a colony, on which your conventions and treaties had not smiled, languish on the distant coast? Student of history, compare for me the baffled projects, the deserted settlements, the abandoned adventures, of other times, and find the parallel of this. Was it the winter's storm, beating upon the houseless heads of women and children; was it hard labor and spare meals;—was it disease,—was it the tomahawk,—was it the deep malady of a blighted hope, a ruined enterprise, and a broken heart, aching in its last moments, at the recollection of the loved and left, beyond the sea; was it some, or all of these united, that hurried this forsaken company to their melancholy fate?—And is it possible, that neither of these causes, that not all combined, were able to blast this bud of hope? Is it possible, that from

a beginning so feeble, so frail, so worthy, not so much of admiration as of pity, there has gone forth a progress so steady, a growth so wonderful, a reality so important, a promise yet to be fulfilled, so glorious?"

In the address delivered at Bloody Brook, in South Deerfield, Massachusetts, September 30, 1835, in commemoration of the "Flower of Essex" who fell at that spot, in King Philip's war, September 18, (O. S.) 1675, Mr. Everett began as follows:

"Gathered in this temple not made with hands, to unroll the venerable record of our father's history, let our first thoughts ascend to Him, whose heavens are spread out, as a glorious canopy, above our heads. As our eyes look up to the everlasting hills which rise before us, let us remember that in the dark and eventful days we commemorate, the hand that lifted their eternal pillars to the clouds, was the sole stay and support of our afflicted sires. While we contemplate the lovely scene around us,—once covered with the gloomy forest and the tangled swamps, through which the victims of this day pursued their unsuspecting path to the field of slaughter,—let us bow in gratitude to Him, beneath whose paternal care a little one has become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation. Assembled under the shadow of this venerable tree, let us bear a thankful recollection, that at the period when its sturdy limbs which now spread over us, hung with nature's rich and verdant tapestry, were all folded up within the narrow compass of their seminal germ,—the thousand settlements of our beloved country, teeming with the life, energy, and power of prosperous millions, were struggling with unimagined

hardships for a doubtful existence, in a score of feeble plantations scattered through the hostile wilderness. Alas, it was not alone the genial showers, and the gentle dews, and the native richness of the soil, which nourished the growth of this stately tree. The sod from which it sprung, was moistened with the blood of brave men who fell for their country, and the ashes of peaceful dwellings are mingled with the consecrated earth. In like manner, it is not alone the wisdom and the courage, the piety and the virtue of our fathers,—not alone the prudence with which they laid the foundations of the State, to which we are indebted for its happy growth and all-pervading prosperity. No, we ought never to forget, we ought this day especially to remember, that it was in their sacrifices and trials, their heart-rending sorrows, their ever-renewed tribulations, their wanderings, their conflicts, their wants and their woes,—that the corner-stone of our privileges and blessings was laid.

“As I stand on this hallowed spot, my mind filled with the traditions of that disastrous day, surrounded by these enduring natural memorials, impressed with the touching ceremonies we have just witnessed,—the affecting incidents of the bloody scene crowd upon my imagination. This compact and prosperous village disappears, and a few scattered log cabins are seen, in the bosom of the primeval forest, clustering for protection around the rude block-house in the centre. A corn-field or two has been rescued from the all-surrounding wilderness, and here and there the yellow husks are heard to rustle in the breeze, that comes loaded with the mournful sighs

of the melancholy pine woods. Beyond, the interminable forest spreads in every direction, the covert of the wolf, of the rattle-snake, of the savage ; and between its gloomy copses, what is now a fertile and cultivated meadow, stretches out a dreary expanse of unreclaimed morass. I look,—I listen. All is still,—solemnly,—frightfully still. No voice of human activity or enjoyment breaks the dreary silence of nature, or mingles with the dirge of the woods and water-courses. All *seems* peaceful and still :—and yet there is a strange heaviness in the fall of the leaves in the wood that skirts the road ; there is an unnatural flitting in those shadows ; there is a plashing sound in the waters of that brook, which makes the flesh creep with horror. Hark ! it is the click of a gun-lock from that thicket ;—no, it is a pebble, that has dropped from the over-hanging cliff, upon the rock beneath. It is, it is the gleaming blade of a scalping-knife ;—no, it is a sun-beam thrown off from that dancing ripple. It is, it is the red feather of a savage chief, peeping from behind that maple tree ;—no, it is a leaf, which September has touched with her many-tinted pencil. And now a distant drum is heard ; yes, that is a sound of life,—conscious, proud life. A single fife breaks upon the ear,—a stirring strain. It is one of the marches, to which the stern warriors of Cromwell moved over the field at Naseby and Worcester. There are no loyal ears, to take offence at a puritanical march in a transatlantic forest ; and hard by, at Hadley, there is a grey-haired fugitive, who followed the cheering strain, at the head of his division in the army of the great usurper. The warlike note grows

louder ; I hear the tread of armed men :—but I run before my story.”

The gentle order of imagination peculiar to Mr. Everett's mind, enables him to excel in picturesque description. A good specimen of history fancifully embellished is presented in his “Three Pictures of Boston :”

“To understand the character of the commerce of our own city, we must not look merely at one point, but at the whole circuit of country, of which it is the business centre. We must not contemplate it only at this present moment of time, but we must bring before our imaginations, as in the shifting scenes of a diorama, at least three successive historical and topographical pictures ; and truly instructive I think it would be to see them delineated on canvas. We must survey the first of them in the company of the venerable John Winthrop, the founder of the State. Let us go up with him, on the day of his landing, the seventeenth of June, 1630, to the heights of yonder peninsula, as yet without a name. Landward stretches a dismal forest ; seaward, a waste of waters, unspotted with a sail, except that of his own ship. At the foot of the hill you see the cabins of Walford and the Spragues, who—the latter a year before, the former still earlier—had adventured to this spot, untenanted else by any child of civilization. On the other side of the river lies Mr. Blackstone's farm. It comprises three goodly hills, converted by a spring-tide into three wood-crowned islets ; and it is mainly valued for a noble spring of fresh water, which gushes from the northern slope of one of these hills, and which furnished in the course of the summer, the motive for transferring

the seat of the infant settlement. This shall be the first picture.

“ The second shall be contemplated from the same spot—the heights of Charlestown—on the same day, the eventful seventeenth of June, one hundred and forty years later, namely, in the year 1775. A terrific scene of war rages on the top of the hill. Wait for a favorable moment, when the volumes of fiery smoke roll away, and over the masts of that sixty-gun ship, whose batteries are blazing upon the hill, you behold Mr. Blackstone’s farm changed to an ill-built town of about two thousand dwelling houses, mostly of wood; with scarce any public buildings, but eight or nine churches, the old State House, and Faneuil Hall; Roxbury beyond, an insignificant village; a vacant marsh in all the space now occupied by Cambridgeport and East Cambridge, by Chelsea and East Boston; and beneath your feet the town of Charlestown, consisting in the morning of a line of about three hundred houses, wrapped in a sheet of flames at noon, and reduced at even-tide to a heap of ashes.

“ But those fires are kindled on the altar of liberty. American Independence is established. American Commerce smiles on the spot; and now from the top of one of the triple hills of Mr. Blackstone’s farm, a stately edifice arises, which seems to invite us as to an observatory. As we look down from this lofty structure, we behold the third picture—a crowded, busy scene. We see beneath us a city containing eighty or ninety thousand inhabitants, and mainly built of brick and granite. Vessels of every description are moored at

the wharves. Long lines of commodious and even stately houses cover a space which, within the memory of man, was in a state of nature. Substantial blocks of warehouses and stores have forced their way to the channel. Faneuil Hall itself, the consecrated and unchangeable, has swelled to twice its original dimensions. Atheneums, hospitals, asylums, and infirmaries, adorn the streets. The school house rears its modest front in every quarter of the city, and sixty or seventy churches attest the children are content to walk in the good old ways of their fathers. Connected with the city by eight bridges, avenues, or ferries, you behold a range of towns most of them municipally distinct, but all of them in reality forming, with Boston, one vast metropolis, animated by one commercial life. Shading off from these, you see that most lovely back-ground, a succession of happy settlements, spotted with villas, farm houses, and cottages; united to Boston by a constant intercourse; sustaining the capital from their fields and gardens, and prosperous in the reflux of the city's wealth. Of the social life included within this circuit, and of all that in times past has adorned and ennobled it, commercial industry has been an active element, and has exalted itself by an intimate association with every thing else we hold dear. Within this circuit what memorials strike the eye!—what recollections—what institutions—what patriotic treasures and names that cannot die! There lie the canonized precincts of Lexington and Concord; there rise the sacred heights of Dorchester and Concord; there is Harvard, the ancient and venerable, foster-child of public and private liberality

in every part of the State ; to whose existence Charlestown gave the first impulse, to whose growth and usefulness the opulence of Boston has at all times ministered with open hand. Still farther on than the eye can reach, four lines of communication by railroad and steam have within our own day united with the capital, by bands of iron, a still broader circuit of towns and villages. Hark to the voice of life and business which sounds along the lines ! While we speak, one of them is shooting onward to the illimitable West, and all are uniting with the other kindred enterprises, to form one harmonious and prosperous whole, in which town and country, agriculture and manufactures, labor and capital, art and nature—wrought and compacted into one grand system—are constantly gathering and diffusing, concentrating and radiating the economical, the social, the moral blessings of a liberal and diffusive commerce.”

The second strong feature in the mind of Mr. Everett, is his acute sensibility to patriotic associations. He has developed this on several great historical occasions. For instance, on laying the corner-stone of the monument at Concord, Massachusetts, April 19, 1825, he described the utility of such memorials in the following eloquent strain :—

“ There is not a people on earth so abject, as to think that national courtesy requires them to hush up the tale of the glorious exploits of their fathers and countrymen. France is at peace with Austria and Prussia ; but she does not demolish her beautiful bridges, baptized with the names of the battle fields, where Napoleon annihilated their armies ; nor tear down the columns, moulten

out of the heaps of their captured artillery. England is at peace with France and Spain, but does she suppress the names of Trafalgar and the Nile ; does she overthrow the towers of Blenheim castle, eternal monuments of the disasters of France ; does she tear down from the rafters of her chapels, where they have for ages waved in triumph, consecrated to the God of battles, the banners of Cressy and Agincourt ?—No ; she is wiser ; wiser, did I say ? she is truer, juster to the memory of her fathers and the spirit of her children. The national character, in some of its most important elements, must be formed, elevated, and strengthened from the materials which history presents. Are we to be eternally ringing the changes upon Marathon and Thermopylæ ; and going back to find in obscure texts of Greek and Latin the great exemplars of patriotic virtue ? I rejoice that we can find them nearer home, in our own country, on our own soil ;—that strains of the noblest sentiment, that ever swelled in the breast of man, are breathing to us out of every page of our country's history, in the native eloquence of our mother tongue ;—that the colonial and the provincial councils of America, exhibit to us models of the spirit and character, which gave Greece and Rome their name and their praise among the nation. Here we ought to go for our instruction ;—the lesson is plain, it is clear, it is applicable. When we go to ancient history, we are bewildered with the difference of manners and institutions. We are willing to pay our tribute of applause to the memory of Leonidas, who fell nobly for his country, in the face of the foe. But when we trace him to his

home, we are confounded at the reflection, that the same Spartan heroism to which he sacrificed himself at Thermopylæ, would have led him to tear his only child, it happened to be a sickly babe,—the very object for which all that is kind and good in man rise up to plead,—from the bosom of its mother, and carry it out to be eaten by the wolves of Taygetus. We feel a glow of admiration at the heroism displayed at Marathon, by the ten thousand champions of invaded Greece; but we cannot forget that the tenth part of the number were slaves, unchained from the work-shops and door-posts of their masters, to go and fight the battles of freedom. I do not mean that these examples are to destroy the interest with which we read the history of ancient times; they possibly increase that interest, by the singular contrast they exhibit. But they do warn us, if we need the warning, to seek our great practical lessons of patriotism at home; out of the exploits and sacrifices, of which our own country is the theatre; out of the characters of our own fathers. Them we know, the high-souled, natural, unaffected,—the citizen heroes. We know what happy firesides they left for the cheerless camp. We know with what pacific habits they dared the perils of the field. There is no mystery, no romance, no madness, under the name of chivalry, about them. It is all resolute, manly resistance,—for conscience' and liberty's sake,—not merely of an overwhelming power, but of all the force of long-rooted habits, and the native love of order and peace.

“Above all, their blood calls to us from the soil which we tread; it beats in our veins; it cries to us, not

merely in the thrilling words of one of the first victims in the cause,—‘My sons scorn to be slaves;’—but it cries with a still more moving eloquence,—‘My sons, forget not your fathers.’”

On a like occasion, at Lexington, the 19th (20th) of April, 1835, he expressed himself in a similar strain :

“And you, brave and patriotic men, whose ashes are gathered in this humble place of deposit, no time shall rob you of the well-deserved meed of praise ! You, too, perceived not less clearly than the more illustrious patriots whose spirit you caught, that the decisive hour had come. You felt with them that it could not,—must not be shunned. You had resolved it should not. Reasoning, remonstrance had been tried ; from your own town-meetings, from the pulpit, from beneath the arches of Faneuil Hall, every note of argument, of appeal, of adjuration, had sounded to the foot of the throne, and in vain. The wheels of destiny rolled on ; the great design of Providence must be fulfilled ; the issue must be nobly met, or basely shunned. Strange it seemed, inscrutable it was, that your remote and quiet village should be the chosen altar of the first great sacrifice. But so it was ;—the summons came and found you waiting ; and here in the centre of your dwelling places, within sight of the homes you were to enter no more, between the village church where your fathers worshipped, and the grave-yard where they lay at rest, bravely and meekly, like Christian heroes, you sealed the cause with your blood. Parker, Munroe, Hadley, the Harringtons, Muzzy, Brown : alas, ye cannot hear my words ;—no voice, but that of the archangel, shall pene-

trate your urns ; but to the end of time your remembrance shall be preserved ! To the end of time, the soil whereon ye fell is holy ; and shall be trod with reverence, while America has a name among the nations !

“ And now ye are going to lie down beneath yon simple stone, which marks the place of your mortal agony. Fit spot for your last repose !

Where should the soldier rest, but where he fell !

“ For ages to come, the characters graven in the enduring marble shall tell the unadorned tale of your sacrifice ; and ages after that stone itself has crumbled into dust, as inexpressive as yours, history,—undying history,—shall transmit the record ! Aye, while the language we speak retains its meaning in the ears of men ;—while a sod of what is now the soil of America shall be trod by the foot of a freeman, your names and your memory shall be cherished !”

Connected with Mr. Everett’s imagination and refined sensibility to patriotic associations, is a third attribute yet more dignified ; it consists of a capacity and disposition to appreciate every form of exalted worth. Numerous instances might be adduced, but we shall quote only two or three. In his address before the Literary Societies of Amherst College, August 25, 1835, he described the death of one great man, and the mental glories of several others, in the following eloquent style :

“ It is plain that Copernicus, like his great contemporary Columbus, though fully conscious of the boldness and the novelty of his doctrine, saw but a part of the changes it was to effect in science. After harboring in

his bosom for long, long years, that pernicious heresy,—the solar system,—he died on the day of the appearance of his book from the press. The closing scene of his life, with a little help from the imagination, would furnish a noble subject for an artist. For twenty-five years, he has resolved and matured in his mind, his system of the heavens. A natural mildness of disposition, bordering on timidity, a reluctance to encounter controversy, and a dread of persecution, have led him to withhold his work from the press ; and to make known his system but to a few confidential disciples and friends. At length he draws near his end ; he is seventy-three years of age, and he yields his work on ‘the revolutions of the heavenly orbs’ to his friends for publication. The day, at last, has come, on which it is to be ushered into the world. It is the twenty-fourth of May, 1543. On that day,—the effect, no doubt, of the intense excitement of his mind, operating upon an exhausted frame,—an effusion of blood brings him to the gates of the grave. His last hour has come ; he lies stretched upon the couch, from which he will never rise, in his apartment at the Canonry at Frauenberg, in East Prussia. The beams of the setting sun glance through the gothic windows of his chamber ; near his bed-side is the armillary sphere, which he has contrived, to represent his theory of the heavens,—his picture, painted by himself, the amusement of his earlier years, hangs before him ; beneath it is his astrolabe and other imperfect astronomical instruments ; and around him are gathered his sorrowing disciples. The door of his apartment opens ;—the eye of the departing sage is turned to see who enters : it is a

friend, who brings him the first printed copy of his immortal treatise. He knows that in that book he contradicts all that had ever been distinctly taught by former philosophers;—he knows that he has rebelled against the sway of Ptolemy, which the scientific world had acknowledged for a thousand years;—he knows that the popular mind will be shocked by his innovations;—he knows, that the attempt will be made to press even religion into the service against him;—but he knows that his book is true. He is dying, but he leaves a glorious truth, as his dying bequest, to the world. He bids the friend who has brought it, place himself between his window and his bed-side, that the sun's rays may fall upon the precious volume, and he may behold it once, before his eye grows dim. He looks upon it, takes it in his hands, presses it to his breast, and expires. But no, he is not wholly gone! A smile lights up his dying countenance;—a beam of returning intelligence kindles in his eye;—his lips move;—and the friend, who leans over him, can hear him faintly murmur the beautiful sentiments, which the Christian lyrist, of a later age, has so finely expressed in verse:—

‘Ye golden lamps of heaven, farewell, with all your feeble light!
Farewell, thou ever-changing moon, pale empress of the night!
And thou, refulgent orb of day, in brighter flames arrayed,
My soul, which springs beyond thy sphere, no more demands
thy aid.

Ye stars are but the shining dust of my divine abode,
The pavements of those heavenly courts, where I shall reign
with God.’

“So died the great Columbus of the heavens. His doctrine, at first, for want of a general diffusion of

knowledge, forced its way with difficulty against the deep-rooted prejudices of the age. Tycho Brahe attempted to restore the absurdities of the Ptolemaic system ; but Kepler, with a sagacity, which more than atones for all his strange fancies, laid hold of the theory of Copernicus, with a grasp of iron, and dragged it into repute. Galileo turned his telescope to the heavens, and observed the phases of Venus, which Copernicus boldly predicted must be discovered, as his theory required their appearance ; and lastly Newton arose, like a glorious sun, scattering the mist of doubt and opposition, and ascended the heavens full orb'd and cloudless, establishing at once his own renown and that of his predecessors, and crowned with the applauses of the world ; but declaring, with that angelic modesty which marked his character, ‘ I do not know what I may appear to the world ; but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy, playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself in finding now and then a pebble, or prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.’ ”

But of all Mr. Everett's eloquent productions, the one most pertinent to the topic now under consideration, is his eulogy on Adams and Jefferson, delivered at Charlestown, August 1, 1826. In this he said :

“ The jubilee of America is turned into mourning. Its joy is mingled with sadness ; its silver trumpet breathes a mingled strain. Henceforward and for ever, while America exists among the nations of the earth, the first emotion on the Fourth of July, shall be of joy and triumph in the great event which immortalizes the

day,—the second shall be one of chastised and tender recollection of the venerable men, who departed on the morning of the jubilee. This mingled emotion of triumph and sadness has sealed the moral beauty and sublimity of our great anniversary. In the simple commemoration of a victorious political achievement, there seems not enough to occupy all our purest and best feelings. The fourth of July was before a day of unshaded triumph, exultation, and national pride; but the angel of death has mingled in the all-glorious pageant, to teach us we are men. Had our venerated fathers left us on any other day, the day of the united departure of two such men would henceforward have been remembered but as a day of mourning. But now, while their decease has gently chastened the exultations of the triumphant festival; the banner of independence will wave cheerfully over the spot where they repose. The whole nation feels, as with one heart, that since it must sooner or later have been bereaved of its revered fathers, it could not have wished that any other had been the day of their decease. Our anniversary festival was before triumphant; it is now triumphant and sacred. It before called out the young and ardent, to join in the public rejoicings; it now also speaks, in a touching voice, to the retired, to the grey-headed, to the mild and peaceful spirits, to the whole family of sober freemen. With some appeal of joy, of admiration, of tenderness, it henceforth addresses every American heart. It is henceforward, what the dying Adams pronounced it, a great and a good day. It is full of greatness, and full of goodness. It is absolute and complete.

The death of the men, who declared our independence—their death on the day of the jubilee, was all that was wanting to the fourth of July. To die on that day, and to die together, was all that was wanting to Jefferson and Adams.

“Think not, fellow citizens, that in the mere formal discharge of my duty this day, I would overrate the melancholy interest of the great occasion. Heaven knows, I do anything but intentionally overrate it. I labor only for words, to do justice to your feelings and to mine. I can say nothing, which does not sound as cold, as tame, and as inadequate to myself as to you. The theme is too great and too surprising, the men are too great and good to be spoken of, in this cursory manner. There is too much in the contemplation of their united characters, their services, the day and coincidence of their death, to be properly described, or to be fully felt at once. I dare not come here and dismiss, in a few summary paragraphs, the characters of men, who have filled such a space in the history of their age. It would be a disrespectful familiarity with men of their lofty spirits, their rich endowments, their deep counsels, and wise measures, their long and honorable lives, to endeavor thus to weigh and estimate them. I leave that arduous task, to the genius of kindred elevation, by whom to-morrow it will be discharged.* I feel the mournful contrast in the fortunes of the first and best of men, that after a life in the highest walks of usefulness; after conferring benefits, not merely on a neighborhood,

* An Eulogy was delivered on Adams and Jefferson, on the following day, in Faneuil Hall, by Daniel Webster.

a city, or even a state, but on a whole continent, and a posterity of kindred men ; after having stood in the first estimation for talents, services, and influence, among millions of fellow citizens, a day should come, which closes all up ; pronounces a brief blessing on their memory ; gives an hour to the actions of a crowded life ; describes in a sentence what it took years to bring to pass, and what is destined for years and ages to continue and operate on posterity ; forces into a few words the riches of busy days of action and weary nights of meditation ; passes forgetfully over many traits of character, many counsels and measures, which it cost perhaps years of discipline and effort to mature ; utters a funeral prayer ; chants a mournful anthem ; and then dismisses all into the dark chambers of death and forgetfulness.

“ But, no, fellow citizens, we dismiss them not to the chambers of forgetfulness and death. What we admired, and prized, and venerated in them, can never die, nor dying, be forgotten. I had almost said that they are now beginning to live ; to live that life of unimpaired influence, of unclouded fame, of unmingled happiness, for which their talents and services were destined. They were of the select few, the least portion of whose life dwells in their physical existence ; whose hearts have watched, while their senses have slept ; whose souls have grown up into a higher being ; whose pleasure is to be useful ; whose wealth is an unblemished reputation ; who respire the breath of honorable fame ; who have deliberately and consciously put what is called life to hazard, that they may live in the hearts of those who

come after. Such men do not, cannot die. To be cold, and motionless, and breathless ; to feel not and speak, not ; this is not the end of existence to the men who have breathed their spirits into the institutions of their country, who have stamped their characters on the pillars of the age, who have poured their hearts' blood into the channels of the public prosperity. Tell me, ye, who tread the sods of yon sacred height, is Warren dead ? Can you not still see him, not pale and prostrate, the blood of his gallant heart pouring out of his ghastly wound, but moving resplendent over the field of honor, with the rose of heaven upon his cheek, and the fire of liberty in his eye ? Tell me, ye, who make your pious pilgrimage to the shades of Vernon, is Washington indeed shut up in that cold and narrow house ? That which made these men, and men like these, cannot die. The hand that traced the charter of independence is indeed motionless, the eloquent lips that sustained it are hushed ; but the lofty spirits that conceived, resolved, matured, maintained it, and which alone to such men, 'make it life to live,' these cannot expire ;—

‘ These shall resist the empire of decay,
When time is o’er, and worlds have passed away :
Cold in the dust, the perished heart may lie,
But that, which warmed it once, can never die.’ ”

Having presented the foregoing outlines of Mr. Everett's professional career, with diversified extracts from his works to exemplify the more prominent traits of his mind, we come now to the more delicate task of projecting a specific analysis of his eloquence. We

have endeavored to show what he has been and is as a scholar, divine, professor, politician, and popular writer: it remains to inquire into his merits as an orator. If we mistake not, they will be found to consist mainly in natural taste, cultivated talent, and consummate art.

In the first place, it is evident that Mr. Everett was naturally endowed with acute and discriminating taste. This quality highly refined, and grace of conception, are among his best elements of oratorical character; and, as we shall see in the sequel, these go hand in hand with elaborate execution and delicate finish. They are attributes both elegant and appropriate, "like to those hanging locks of young Apollo."

He may have more of that taste which is skillful to use, than of the genius which is powerful to originate; but this regulating faculty is doubtless of great value; indeed, without it genius itself is but sublime madness. It is an attribute which, in its perfection, is as uncommon as it is useful; since, as Chateaubriand remarks, "the sure touch which draws from the lyre the exact tone it ought to render, is more rare than even the faculty that creates." Talent and genius, diversely diffused, latent and unrecognized, as Montesquieu says, "frequently pass through us without unpacking," they exist in equal proportions in all ages, but in the course of those ages, it is only among certain natures, and at certain periods of time, that taste is developed in its purity. Before this period arrives, and after its conclusion, all will be imperfect through deficiency or excess. Hence the reason why finished productions are so rare; for they must necessarily emanate from the happy union

of taste and genius. But this rare concurrence, like the concurrence of certain stars, seems to require the revolution of ages for its consummation, and then its duration is but momentary."

Suppose a clear and gentle stream flowing through a cultivated glade, on a bed of the purest gravel; its bank generally smooth and level, sometimes indented and varied in height, but with all rudeness concealed by tufts of flowers, fragrant shrubs, elegant trees, and trailing plants hanging over the clear waters; while all the delicious objects are rendered yet more soft and enchanting by the clear mirror that reflects them, like Milton's limped fountain in Paradise

" Spread

Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved,
Pure as the expanse of heaven :"

and in such a picture we have a fair type of Mr. Everett's mind. Like all his faculties, his taste is doubtless greatly indebted to intense and protracted cultivation, but its latent source in his own bosom has always been open, flowing, and pure. His earliest compositions were highly poetical in both spirit and form, and to this day everything from his pen is "veined with gold and dusted o'er with gems." Glancing back through all his brilliant career to its obscure beginning, he undoubtedly may say :

" Oh, I remember well !

When, like a sea-shell with its sea-born strain,
My soul aye rang with music of the lyre ;
And my heart shed its love as leaves their dew—
A honey dew, and throve on what it shed."

Secondly, in addition to native taste, it is evident that Mr. Everett possesses a large measure of cultivated talent. He is not only endowed by nature with great acuteness of mental perception and moral sensibility, but he has laboriously acquired that fidelity of hand which, aided by these powers, imparts precision, symmetry, and beauty to all his works. He is an illustrious instance showing what perseverance, study, observation and patronage can achieve to develop genius or supply its spontaneous worth.

Hazlitt has said that great natural advantages are seldom combined with great acquired ones, because they render the labor requisite to attain the last superfluous and irksome. It is only necessary to be admired ; and if we are admired for the graces of our persons, we shall not be at much pains to adorn our minds. To substantiate this position, he adds that if Pope had been a beautiful youth, he would not have written the Rape of the Lock ; and that a beautiful woman, who has only to show herself to be admired ; and is famous by nature, will be in no danger of becoming a *blue stocking*, to attract notice by her learning, or to hide her defects. To this it may be replied that Milton was a beautiful youth, and yet he wrote Paradise Lost ; moreover, that the greatest poets, artists, scholars and orators of every age, have been the most industrious in acquiring and composing ; however brilliant their imaginations, however intense their capacities, or harmonious their expressions, it was the superior power of arranging their materials, which rendered their genius most useful to their fellow-beings. Without the *lucidus ordo* of Horace, the most

superb ideas are of little use to the world. "He hath no power, who hath no power to use," and this mastership is acquired only by long practice.

Not that labor alone can produce perfection. Industry will improve mediocrity, but can never elevate it to the highest excellence, by endowing it with the power to invent. Susceptibility to the beauty of expression, or the vivid portraiture of the passions, may be keenly felt by the spirit naturally of a delicate tone, but cannot be taught, even if the teacher were an angel from heaven. Still, we think it truly said above, that persons in every exalted sphere who are by native attributes best endowed, are generally the most industrious. No men are more conscious of the weakness of human nature than they, and none feel more deeply that whatever their latent genius may be, nothing but the most incessant industry and application, can fully reveal it. For instance, to refer to an artist, whom our orator in many respects greatly resembles, Claude never left his pictures, or his studies on the banks of the Tiber, to go in search of meaner enjoyments, or ceased to gaze upon the glittering sunny vales and distant hills; and while his eye, naturally acute, became still better educated, while he scanned the clear sparkling hues and lovely forms of Nature, his hand delineated them on the lucid canvass in colors that seem destined never to decay.

The career of Mr. Everett shows that while yet a youth, he comprehended and acted upon the great principle of Apelles—" *Nulla dies sine lineâ* ;"* and still more glorious maxim of Napoleon—" *Une heure perdue est*

* Not a day without practice.

une chance pour le malheur de l'avenir."* Thus feeling and acting, like all brave souls before him, he has demonstrated in his own person that no force of law, prejudice, or penury can arrest the predestined hero in his strenuous pursuit, or prevent him from gratifying his burning ambition to advance the divine art he was born to honor, and of which he is the impassioned devotee. To such a votary, excellence is truly "a ruling passion," and closes his eyes at night with aspirations for ultimate success; haunts his slumbers with dreams of unattained perfection, and flashes invincible energy on his brain at the dawn of every morning thought. It was under this influence that Shakspeare saw the ghost of a king: Puck put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes; Ariel drank the air before him; Homer measured the gigantic stride of the shade of Achilles in hell, when Ulysses told him his son was worthy of his sire. It was when thus inspired, that blind Milton saw and portrayed the effulgent blaze of Satan, in the midst of his astonished council, after his success on earth; Virgil that glorious vision of Minerva, shouting to the Greeks in the flames of Troy; and Tasso that exquisite conception of the angel Gabriel tipping the hills as the sun arose with commingled hues of silver and gold. To attain the highest order of success, undoubtedly a stupendous power must be acquired, and all but insurmountable anxieties, labors and struggles, must be overcome. But if the aspirant proceed humbly, and yet firmly, on his upward way, his reward

* One hour idled away jeopardizes the happiness of all the future.

will be both sure and great, for his mind will become impregnated with power, and his hand fearless by practice, so that glorious visions cannot rise more rapidly on his fancy than he will shower them with inspired profusion on the enraptured hearts and understandings of mankind.

Mr. Everett early began to "hold high converse with the mighty dead ;" and while he aimed to become a finished writer and effective public speaker, he understood what were the objects to be promoted, and the duties to be performed, in order to the complete attainment of the excellence he desired. He saw what pains were thought due by a Roman statesman and orator, to the acquisition of the art, as he read in his favorite author, the following extract from *De Claris Oratoribus* :

"The other chief orators of the day," says Cicero, "being then in the magistracy, were almost daily heard by me in their public discourses. Curio was then tribune of the people, but never spoke, having once been deserted by his audience in a mass. Quintus Metellus Celer, though not an orator, was not wholly unable to speak ; Varius, Carbo, and Pomponius were eloquent, and they were continually upon the rostrum. Caius Julius, also, the curule ædile, almost daily made a set speech. My passion for listening received its first disappointment when Cotta was banished ; but in diligent attendance on the other orators, I not only devoted a part of each day to reading, writing, and discussing ; but extended my studies beyond the exercises of oratory, to philosophy and the law. In the following year, Varius was banished under his own law. In the study of the civil law, I em-

ployed myself under Scaevola, who, although he did not formally receive pupils, was willing to admit those who desired it, to be present while he gave legal opinions to his clients. The next year, Sylla and Pompey were consuls, and I formed an intimate acquaintance with the whole art of public speaking, in listening to the daily harangues of the tribune Sulpicius. At the same time, Philo, the head of the academy, having, with the rest of the aristocracy of Athens, fled to Rome in the Mithridatic war, I gave myself wholly up to him and the study of philosophy, not merely from the delight I felt in the variety and magnitude of the subject, but because the career of judicial eloquence seemed for ever shut up. Sulpicius had fallen that year, and in the next, three other orators were most cruelly slain; Catulus, Antony, and Julius. The same year, I employed myself under the direction of Molo the Rhodian, a consummate pleader and teacher. I mention these things, Brutus, although somewhat aside from our purpose, that you might, as you desired, become acquainted with my course, and perceive the manner in which I followed in the steps of Hortensius. For three years, the city had respite from war, but the orators were deceased, retired, or banished; even Crassus and the two Lentuli were absent. Hortensius then took the lead as counsel; Antistius daily rose in reputation; Piso spoke often, Pomponius less frequently, Carbo rarely, Philippus once or twice. All this time, I was occupied day and night, in every kind of study. I studied with the stoic Diodotus, who, after having long lived with me, lately died at my house. By him I was trained, among other things, in logic, itself a

kind of close and compendous eloquence, without which even you, Brutus, have admitted, that the true eloquence, which is but expanded logic, cannot be acquired. With this teacher, in his numerous and various branches, I was so assiduous, that I did not miss a day in oratorical exercises. I had also a declamatory discussion, (to use the present phrase) with Piso often, and with Quintus Pompey, or some one else, every day. This was frequently in Latin, but oftener in Greek; both because the Greek language, in itself more adapted to ornament, tended to form the habit of an elegant Latin manner, and because, unless I used the Greek language, I could neither receive instruction nor correction from eminent Greek teachers. Meantime followed the tumults for the restoration of the republic; the cruel deaths of the three orators, Scaevola, Carbo, and Antistius; the return of Cotta, Curio, Crassus, the Lentuli, and Pompey; the establishment of the laws and the tribunals; in a word, the restoration of the Commonwealth. Of the orators, however, Pomponius, Censorinus, and Murena, perished. I then, for the first time, undertook the pleading both of public and private causes; not, as is commonly done, learning my profession in the practice of it, but, as far as I had been able to effect it, entering the forum with my profession learned. At the same time I studied under Molo, who had come to Rome, in Sylla's dictatorship, on business of the Rhodians. My first public cause, therefore, the defence of Sextus Roscius, was so commended, that there was none which I was not thought competent to undertake. Many causes were

now put into my hands, which I brought into court, not merely diligently, but laboriously prepared.

“And now, since you seem to wish to learn my history thoroughly, I will mention some things, which might otherwise seem unimportant. At this period, I labored under extreme emaciation and weakness of body ; my neck was long and slender, and my whole frame and constitution such as are usually thought to render the violent exercise of the lungs fatal. This circumstance was matter of the greater anxiety to my friends, because I was in the habit of speaking everything on a high key, without variety, with the utmost power of voice and exertion of my body. When, therefore, my friends and physicians advised me to abandon pleading, I determined to encounter any danger, rather than give up the renown which I hoped to acquire as an orator. Having, however, come to the conclusion, that by reducing and managing the voice, and changing my mode of speaking, I could escape the impending danger, I determined, for the sake of altering my manner, to visit Asia. Accordingly, after having been two years in the practice of my profession, and acquiring a standing in the forum, I left Rome. When I came to Athens, I devoted myself six months, under Antiochus, a most noble and prudent sage of the old academy, to the study of philosophy, a study which I had early cultivated, had never lost sight of, and now renewed under this admirable teacher. At the same time, however, I practised speaking diligently, under Demetrius, the Syrian, an experienced and respectable teacher of the art. I afterwards made the tour of Asia, with orators of the first celebrity, under

whom, with their full assent, I regularly exercised myself in speaking. The chief of these was Menippus of Stratonice, in my opinion the most eloquent Asiatic orator of his time, and, if to be free from everything offensive or impertinent be the test of Atticism, not unworthy to be reckoned among Attic orators. I was, also constantly with Dionysius, of Magnesia, Æschylus, of Enidus, and Xenocles, of Adramyttium; the principal rhetoricians at that time in Asia. Not satisfied with these, I repaired to Rhodes, and applied myself to Milo, who had instructed me at Rome, who was not only a pleader himself, in real causes, and an eminent writer, but most discreet in remarking and correcting faults as an instructor. He exerted himself, as far as possible, to reduce my manner, redundant as it was, and overflowing with juvenile license and excess; and sought to bring it within proper limits. After spending two years in this way, I returned, not merely trained, but altered. The extreme effort of my voice in speaking was reduced. My style had become temperate, my lungs strong, and my general health tolerable."

The above description bears a strong resemblance to the taste and studies of the American Cicero, in his early days, and vividly portrays the maturity which he, too, attained by means of his European and Asiatic tour.

We come now, in the third place, to consider the consummate art which Mr. Everett displays in all his eloquence, written or spoken. His personal appearance in public is exceedingly neat, appropriate and conciliating. Everything about him is so well arranged that, although an edging of silver marks his hair, and mantles

his pensive brow, one cannot but feel that he has not yet entirely dismissed his Lothario recollections. The moment he rises to speak, it is easy to perceive that he is an accomplished gentleman; and before he has uttered many sentences, the intelligent hearer is equally convinced that he is an accomplished orator. His voice and placid manner of delivery are in harmony with the mild character of his sentiments. A calm richness pervades his style, by means of which he soon throws a spell over the hearts of listeners, leading them inwardly to exclaim,

“Thy talk is the sweet extract of all speech,
And holds mine ear in blissful slavery.”

Mr. Everett's originality is evinced less in the violent outbursts of rugged and irrepressible affluence, than in his artistic power over materials deliberately gathered—in his calm command over the resources of language, and in the suavity of his style, which is seldom surpassed. It is not congenial for him to be severe—his good taste and labored care will still be manifest. Witness the following memorable extract. Some one in the London Quarterly Review, for January, 1828, had slurringly intimated that the first emigrants to America were criminals in character, and mercenary in design. To this Mr. Everett replied:

“A late English writer has permitted himself to say, that the original inhabitants of the United States, and that of the colony of Botany Bay, were pretty nearly modelled on the same plan. The meaning of this slanderous insinuation is, that the United States were settled

by deported convicts, in like manner as New South Wales has been settled by felons, whose punishment by death has been commuted into transportation. It is doubtless true, that at one period, the English government was in the habit of condemning to hard labor as servants in the colonies, a portion of those who had received the sentence of the law. If this practice makes it proper to compare America with Botany Bay, the same comparison might be made of England herself, before the practice of transportation began, and even now ; inasmuch as a large portion of her convicts are held to labor within her own bosom. In one sense, indeed, we might doubt whether the allegation were more of a reproach or a compliment. During the time that the colonization of America was going on the most rapidly, the best citizens of England,—if it be any part of good citizenship to resist oppression,—were immured in her prisons of state, or lying at the mercy of the law.

“Such were the convicts by which America was settled :—men convicted of fearing God, more than they feared man ; of sacrificing property, ease, and all the comforts of life, to a sense of duty, and the dictates of conscience ;—men, convicted of pure lives, brave hearts, and simple manners. The enterprise was led by RALEIGH, the chivalrous convict, who unfortunately believed that his royal master had the heart of a man, and would not let a sentence of death, which had slumbered for sixteen years, revive and take effect, after so long an interval of employment and favor. But *nullum tempus occurrit regi*. The felons who followed next,

were the heroic and long-suffering church of ROBINSON, at Leyden,—CARVER, BREWSTER, BRADFORD, and their pious associates, convicted of worshipping God according to the dictates of their consciences, and of giving up all,—country, property, and the tombs of their fathers,—that they might do it, unmolested. Not content with having driven the Puritans from her soil, England next enacted, or put in force, the oppressive laws, which colonized Maryland with Catholics, and Pennsylvania with Quakers. Nor was it long before the American plantations were recruited by the Germans, convicted of inhabiting the Palatinate, when the merciless armies of Louis XIV. were turned into that devoted region; and by the Huguenots, convicted of holding what they deemed the simple truth of Christianity, when it pleased the mistress of Louis XIV. to be very zealous for the Catholic faith. These were followed, in the next century, by the Highlanders, convicted of the enormous crime under a monarchical government, of loyalty to their hereditary prince, on the plains of Culloden; and the Irish, convicted of supporting the rights of their country, against what they deemed an oppressive external power. Such are the convicts by whom America was settled.”

We have seen that Mr. Everett was of humble origin, and dependent upon the common schools of Massachusetts for his first mental culture, but thus fostered, and thence soaring, he has arrived at the first academical honors of the land. Reminiscences of his own intellectual progress often blend with his speech and ennoble its worth. Take the following example :

“Contemplate, at this season of the year, one of the magnificent oak trees of the forest, covered with thousands and thousands of acorns. There is not one of those acorns that does not carry within itself the germ of a perfect oak, as lofty and as wide spreading as the parent stock ; which does not enfold the rudiments of a tree that would strike its roots in the soil, and lift its branches toward the heavens, and brave the storms of a hundred winters. It needs for this but a handful of soil, to receive the acorn as it falls, a little moisture to nourish it, and protection from violence till the root is struck. It needs but these ; and these it does need, and these it must have ; and for want of them, trifling as they seem, there is not one out of a thousand of those innumerable acorns, which is destined to become a tree.

“Look abroad through the cities, the towns, the villages of our beloved country, and think of what materials their population, in many parts already dense, and everywhere rapidly growing, is, for the most part, made up. It is not lifeless enginery, it is not animated machines, it is not brute beasts, trained to subdue the earth : it is rational, intellectual beings. There is not a mind, of the hundreds of thousands in our community, that is not capable of making large progress in useful knowledge ; and no one can presume to tell or limit the number of those who are gifted with all the talent required for the noblest discoveries. They have naturally all the sense and all the faculties—I do not say in as high a degree, but who shall say in no degree?—possessed by Newton, or Franklin, or Fulton. It is but a little which is wanted to awaken every one of these minds to the conscious

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possession and the active exercise of its wonderful powers. But this little, generally speaking, is indispensable. How much more wonderful an instrument is an eye than a telescope! Providence has furnished this eye; but art must contribute the telescope, or the wonders of the heavens remain unnoticed. It is for want of the little, that human means must add to the wonderful capacity for improvement born in man, that by far the greatest part of the intellect, innate in our race, perishes undeveloped and unknown. When an acorn falls upon an unfavorable spot, and decays there, we know the extent of the loss;—it is that of a tree, like the one from which it fell;—but when the intellect of a rational being, for want of culture, is lost to the great ends for which it was created, it is a loss which no one can measure, either for time or for eternity.”

Again, with a like appreciation of the worth of *man* in every age and clime, and with a similar eloquence of statement with respect to the importance of fostering the aspirations of all with genial education, Mr. Everett said at New Haven:

“The *La Place* of this generation did not come into life, with the knowledge possessed and recorded by the Newtons the Keplers, and the Pythagorases of other days. It is doubtful, whether, at three years old, he could count much beyond ten;—and if at six, he was acquainted with any other cycloidal curves, than those generated by the trundling of his hoop, he was a prodigy indeed. But by the time he was twenty-one, he had mastered all the discoveries of all the philosophers who preceded him, and was prepared to build upon them the

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splendid superstructure of his own. In like manner, the whole race of men, who thirty years hence are to be the active members of society, and some of them its guides and leaders, its Mansfields and Burkes, its Ellsworths, Marshalls, and Websters,—the entire educated and intelligent population, which will have prepared itself with the knowledge requisite for carrying on the business of life is, at this moment, enacting the part of

the whining school-boy with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school :—

our future Ciceros are mewling infants ; and our Arkwrights and Fultons, who are hereafter to unfold to our children new properties of matter ;—new forces of the elements ;—new applications of the mechanical powers, which may change the condition of things, are now, under the tuition of a careful nurse, with the safeguard of a pair of leading strings, attempting the perilous experiment of putting one foot before the other. Yes, the ashes that now moulder in yonder grave-yard, the sole remains on earth of what was Whitney,—are not more unconscious of the stretch of the mighty mind which they once enclosed ;—than the infant understandings of those now springing into life, who are destined to follow in the luminous track of his genius, to new and still more brilliant results, in the service of man !”

In the foregoing pages, it has been our purpose to describe the manner and material of Mr. Everett’s eloquence, by presenting the outlines of his mental portraiture, and personal characteristics together, with di-

versified specimens of his published orations. In view of the aggregate thus brought before us, we are reminded of the character given by Cicero of one of his cotemporaries who, he said, expressed "refined and profound thought in soft transparent diction."

We deem Mr. Everett to be a rhetorician *par excellence*. What Canova was among sculptors, our erudite countryman is among orators. Since Praxitiles, no man has attained the power to change marble into flesh like the amiable and coldly graceful Italian ; whatever may be thought of the dignity and force of his designs, it is clear that, excepting Powers, no modern has excelled him in elaborate execution. The exception just made, will remind the reader of a much higher range of worth. One may poise his line between the grace of Correggio and the energy of M. Angelo, in the blended result producing dignified elegance ; but if he does not combine warm blood drawn from the one in vital muscles taken from the other, he will be sure to degenerate into imbecile affectation and limited esteem. Where there is not deep feeling, there can be no strong and permanent effects produced by art of any kind. Sensibility is the mother of sympathy, the creator of beauty, and source of that melting energy which fills the eye with the dew of humanity, the ear with tones of thrilling power, the heart with generous regard, and the soul with conceptions the most sublime. Upon this power latent within ourselves, depends all our influence in public speech, addressed to our fellow-men. Hence it has been truly said, that Shakspeare wept, trembled,

laughed first at what now sways an audience ; and when he did not, he is stale, outrageous and disgusting.

No genuine eloquence ever was, or ever can be produced, but for its own sake ; if the orator do not create and express thought to please himself, he never will succeed in pleasing the world. His art, like love, cannot be perfect, unless it excludes all competition, and absorbs the whole man. Nothing on earth presents such a fascination to the sight, and gratification to the mind as the union of naturalness and ideality perfected in high eloquence. This, however, is found only where a warm heart and rugged intellect conceive and strike with simultaneous power. The merits of such a speaker depend less on his characteristics of frigid exactness and dull uniformity, than on bold originality and invincible force. He has not only a manner which floats on the surface, but a soul which pervades all his faculties and renders every subject he handles luminous like himself. He does not attempt to people a barren fancy and heart of ice with images and sympathies won by formal explorations in the arid regions of defunct lore, but imbibes the living elements all around, becomes potent in the use of what radiates within himself, and is instinctively best proportioned and attractive, when he least aims at elegance. It is not very difficult for one to be measured, uniform, and coldly correct, when he has feeble passions to rule, and hackneyed themes to analyze. Of this order of critics was Laharpe, of whom Vericour has well said that "His history of literature resembles an immense cemetery ; he rakes up in succession the slumbering remains, weighs them in his finical balance, and consigns

them again to repose, without inquiring what they had been, of what nature was the life and blood that animated them, what moral vicissitudes they had undergone. This scholastic criticism has undoubtedly its advantages, we allow; it assigns the precise rules of good taste; points out the delicacies of pure language, proves mathematically the laws of grammar and rhetoric, and may check all proneness to exaggerations or innovations. But, as applied to a literary work, it is a mere dissection or cutting up, as we sometimes behold a fair flower plucked, mutilated, torn to pieces, in order to show the delicacy and secrets of its arrangement and formation. Still this forms but a limited study, in many cases an isolated ramification; others happily come, and show us the flower in all its native beauty and freshness, elegantly supported by its stem, and surrounded by all the harmonies in the midst of which nature has placed it."

Of this latter class we reckon Edward Everett. From his writing, and style of speaking we would infer that his most genial sphere is where

"Universal Pan

Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
Leads on the eternal spring."

All his works glow with a mild and gentle radiance, but seldom burst out with prophetic fire. His flight is not that of the eagle in stormy skies, with searching glance and fierce wild scream; on the contrary, he is mild as the dove, and prefers an atmosphere superlatively pure and calm. Such compositions may be admirable

for the wealth of intellect they display, but have not the greatest power to touch the heart or impel the judgment, being deficient alike in soul-stirring thought and depth of feeling. They may be full of labored smoothness and harmonized erudition, but they are, after all, inefficient on the general mind, because they are sterile of genuine pathos and melody. A loftier endowment is requisite to substitute in the place of cold admiration the more ardent sentiments of sympathetic love and resistless force. Classical richness, combined with artistic elegance, copious acquisitions embodied in a style pure and mellifluous, sentences abounding in learned rhythm more than in spontaneous vigor, form the main features of this orator's eloquence and his best claims to popular esteem.

Rhetorical grace is to composition and delivery, what female figures are to history-pictures—however exquisite the color, and perfect the light and shade, however touching the expression, heroical the forms, and full of majestic action, the result will but feebly interest the hearts of mankind, if the rays of beauty do not irradiate at least some portion of the scene. Over this element no one has a more supreme control than Mr. Everett. His is “the soft precision of the clear Vandyke,” and he has executed works which, of their kind, are “inimitable on earth by model, or by shading pencil drawn.” But there is danger of being too uniformly placid and smooth. Writers on art have observed that roughness, in its different modes and degrees, is the ornament, the fringe of beauty, that which gives it life and spirit, and preserves it from baldness and insipidity. If the shaft

of a column is smooth, the more ornamental part, the capital, is rough ; the facing of the smoothest building has a frieze and cornice rough and abruptly projecting : it is the same in vases, and in everything that admits of ornament. Hence Dryden, when describing the cup that contained the heart of Guiscard, calls it “ a goblet rich with gems, and *rough* with gold.” The permanent attraction of an oration, like that of a temple or landscape, depends upon the happy union of warm and cool tints, of smooth parts and rough, picturesque and severely graceful, solemn and gay. The most striking effects are produced by bringing together features totally opposite to each other ; but these must be skillfully arranged and blended in various degrees, in order to produce that charm of combination, which is manifest in the consummate works of art and nature.

“ Like to some goddess hewn in stone,
With blooming garlands bound.”

Too many speakers, like the majority of painters, in modern schools, instead of emulating the great masters of Roman art, ape the Tuscans, the main body of whom, equally inattentive to expression, character, contrast, and propriety of form, it was long ago said contented themselves with giving to tame and puerile ideas, obvious and common-place conceptions, a kind of importance by mastery of execution and a bold but monotonous and mannered outline. Here men, like their examples in Holland, finish their works so carefully, because there is a want of substantial and striking worth in them, and they can only be made interesting by the

accurate delicacy of their execution. This, however, is not the fault of Mr. Everett. True, his language falls softly like a snow-flake, and his sentences are "like autumn leaves distained with dusky gold ;" but his works, if cool, are not absolutely cold, and his style, if subdued, is yet rich with meaning.

"However bright or beautiful itself
The theme he touched, he made it more so by
His own light, like a fire-fly on a flower."

True eloquence transports the mind "beyond the ignorant present," to ages past, or ages yet to come. It leads the willing hearer by turns to the dark antiquity of Egypt, to the tranquillity of Arcadian scenes and fairy lands, or to the environs of the great capitals of Greece and Rome, and depicts the universal objects of literary and heroic worth so precious and thrilling to every enlightened and cultivated taste. This power, also, Mr. Everett possesses to a good degree, but it is as a rhetorician mainly that his charms are wrought. His taste, his learning, and his elocution combine powerfully to enchant the organs of his hearers, not for amusement only, but the more effectually to conduct reason and motives to the intellect and heart. His manner, like his matter, is elaborated with the greatest care, but it does not divert the public eye from higher beauties to be absorbed by its lures; by so doing it would be degraded to a mere vehicle of sensual pleasure, a trifling bauble, or a splendid fault.

The connection between mere beauty and insipidity, naturalness and deformity, is so very close, that it requires the acutest eye habitually to observe what "thin

partitions do their bounds divide." It is an interesting fact, that while beauty of the highest kind was attributed by mythological nations to all the superior goddesses, and the ancient artists were required to express it in their representations of them, Venus, the most effeminate of that class, was the only one invested with unsubstantial blandishments only; whereas Juno, Pallas, Diana, and other deities were characterized with nobler traits, having a mixture of awful majesty, savoring of wisdom, warlike valor, and rigid chastity. Beauty and force coalesce in true eloquence and glow with wholesome strength, like the masculine cheek of Minerva, tinged with maidenly modesty. Such an orator, imbued with elegant thought and tender sensibilities, appears before an audience much as Theseus did before Ariadne. Philostratus represents him as being adorned with a plain purple robe, wearing a garland of roses. His whole air is that of one intoxicated with love, calm in its fullness, and absorbed in the admiration of beauty. Every attribute is laid aside, not perfectly in keeping with the subject and place. He has discarded the florid garment, the soft doe skin, and the thyrsus. In him is seen only the refined and yet impassioned lover. His companions are in harmony with himself. The Bacchants do not clash their cymbals, the Fauns refrain from their flutes, and Pan moderates his leaps, so as not unnecessarily to alarm the beloved. She already feels the charm of the god's presence, and will soon be conducted by him over the rocky plain, to cultivated, fragrant hills, where, surrounded with readiest service and celestial joys, she will taste of love that will never end.



HENRY CLAY.

R. Michelin's lith. 111 Nassau St. N.Y.

CHAPTER III.

HENRY CLAY,

THE POLITICIAN.

THE facts and events which mark the career of Mr. Clay have frequently been portrayed. Some of the most important of these it will be necessary to recite at the outset ; though biographical detail forms but quite a subordinate element of our present design.

The father of our orator was a very respectable Baptist preacher, in the County of Hanover, Virginia, commonly known as "The Slashes," where, on the 12th of April, 1777, his fifth child, Henry, was born. At an early age, he was left without father or fortune to buffet adverse storms, and to become inured to manual toil. At the age of fourteen he entered a small drug store in Richmond, Virginia, kept by Mr. Richard Denny. His stay there was short, and at the commencement of 1792 he entered the office of Mr. Peter Tinsley, clerk of the High Court of Chancery. In this situation he, of course, came into personal contact with the most distinguished men in the State, and attracted their attention so strongly by his talents and amiable qualities, that some of them, particularly Chancellor Wythe and

Governor Brooke, persuaded him, at the age of nineteen, to undertake the study of the law. The state of society, and of the bar rules at this period, afforded great facilities for entering on the profession, and Mr. Clay, after a year's study, was admitted to practice at the age of twenty. He removed soon after to Lexington, Kentucky, where he has since resided. He continued his studies at this place about a year longer, and during this period exercised himself in speaking at the meetings of the Debating Society. At his first attempt he exhibited the fluency and fervor, which have since formed the character of his maturer eloquence. "He rose," says Mr. Prentice, "under some embarrassment, and addressed the President of the Society by the title of *Gentlemen of the Jury*, but he gradually gained confidence from his own efforts, and, finally, concentrating all his powers upon the subject in debate, he surprised his audience with a beauty and compass of voice, an exuberance of eloquence, and a force of argument well worthy of a veteran orator. A gentleman who heard this speech has assured us, that it would hardly suffer in comparison with the most brilliant efforts made by its author in after life. His reputation as a speaker was of course established, and he became immediately a leading champion in all the debates of the Society."

Mr. Clay entered on the duties of his profession at Lexington, under not the most flattering auspices, as appears from his speech of June, 1842, made at the same place. In this, he says he "was without patrons, without friends, and destitute of the means of paying his weekly board. I remember how comfortable I

thought I should be, if I could make £100, Virginia money, per annum, and with what delight I received the first fifteen shilling fee. My hopes were more than realized ; I immediately rushed into a lucrative practice."

Mr. Clay's political career began as early as 1797, when he openly portrayed the evils of domestic slavery. His youthful ardor resisted every restraint upon freedom, as was manifest in the manner of his resistance to the odious Alien and Sedition laws, enacted in 1798-9. In 1803, he was elected to the Legislature of Kentucky, and almost immediately on entering upon the functions of this, his first political office, he won no little notoriety in a severe and successful conflict with Felix Grundy, a forensic antagonist of great force and skill. In 1806, General Adair, one of the Senators of the State in Congress, having resigned his place, Mr. Clay was elected to occupy it for the remainder of the term, which was only one year. It was in this capacity that he first appeared at Washington. At the moment of his arrival, the Senate was engaged in a debate respecting the expediency of authorizing the construction of a bridge over the Potomac, into which discussion Mr. Clay immediately entered and made a very effective speech. On returning to Kentucky, after the expiration of his term in the Senate, he was immediately re-elected to the State Legislature, and at the opening of the next session was chosen speaker of the General Assembly, which office he held for several successive years. In 1809, Mr. Thurston, another Senator in Congress, having resigned his place, Mr. Clay was called upon to

occupy it for the remainder of his term, which was two years, and took his seat accordingly in the Senate, at the close of that year. The leading questions of the two sessions of 1810, and 1811, were the occupation of West Florida, and the renewal of the charter of the Bank. On these, and other topics which came before the Senate, Mr. Clay distinguished himself as one of the ablest champions of the party then in power. On the expiration of his term of service in the Senate in 1811, he returned to Kentucky, and was immediately after elected a member of the House of Representatives of the United States, where he took his seat in the winter of the same year. "Mr. Clay was at this time about thirty-five years of age, a period of life when the intellectual powers of most men have just attained their full maturity, and are beginning to mark out for them the place which they are to occupy in the opinion of the world. So much, however, had Mr. Clay anticipated the usual progress, and such already was the extent of his influence, not merely in his own State, but on the wider theatre of national politics, that, on his first appearance as a new member in the House of Representatives, he was chosen Speaker by a vote of nearly two to one over two opposing candidates. No mark of respect and confidence at all equal to this has ever been bestowed by the House of Representatives upon any other person, and the best proof that it was not the result of any combination of accidental circumstances or momentary caprice, is to be found in the fact, that the confidence thus bestowed, was never afterwards withdrawn or shaken. During the long period of Mr. Clay's congres-

sional career, which lasted, with two short intervals, from this time till his entrance into the Department of State, in 1825, he was regularly elected Speaker of each successive House of Representatives, we believe, without opposition. It is admitted, in fact, by all, that in discharging the arduous and honorable duties of this place, he was singularly successful. Though eminently prompt, firm, and decisive, the frankness and urbanity of his manner prevented any one from taking offence, and rendered him a general favorite." At the beginning of the year 1814, he was appointed one of the Commissioners to treat for peace with Great Britain, and having accepted the trust, retired, of course, from the Speaker's chair. The circumstances attending his resignation, which are stated in the following extract from one of his biographers, strongly evince the extent of his influence over his political associates, and his general popularity with the members of all parties:

"The official duties which now devolved upon Mr. Clay, required him to resign the Speaker's chair. At this time, his influence in the House of Representatives was equal to that which he had exercised, some years before, in the Legislature of his adopted State. His friends and his enemies agree in the remark, that his power was almost unlimited. His party was a majority in the House, and, so unbounded was the confidence which its members reposed in his wisdom and integrity, that he could sway them by a motion of his hand. Whenever the course of a discussion failed to meet his approbation, he descended from the chair, and, by mingling in the debate, gave, at once, a new character to

the proceedings. His resignation was tendered on the 16th of January, and accompanied by a beautiful and affecting speech, which touched every heart in the assembly, and unsealed many a fountain of tears. In the generous feelings of the hour, even the federalists wept freely, that a master-spirit was going out from among them. A resolution, thanking him in fervid language for the impartiality with which he had administered the arduous duties of office, was passed almost unanimously; only eight or nine members voting against it. Probably there was no other man in the nation, who, at that stormy period, could have presided with such signal energy over the deliberations of the popular branch of Congress, and yet have commanded the approbation of so vast a majority of both political parties."

During his absence on the mission to Ghent, Mr. Clay visited several of the most interesting portions of Europe, and was everywhere received with marked attention. On his return to the United States, he was greeted with great enthusiasm, particularly in his own State. He was immediately re-elected to Congress, and from this time, until his retirement from public life, in 1842, may be regarded as the leading statesman in the councils of the Union.

From this condensed biographical sketch of Mr. Clay, we turn more particularly to notice his mental adroitness, ardent nationality of spirit, and impressive manner of address.

In the first place, we remark, a bold and effective quality in the personal character of Mr. Clay, is adroit-

ness, or tact, in conducting important business. This is a trait quite prominent in his constitution and career, exemplified by him in a way which verifies the following pointed description :

“Talent is something, but tact is everything. Talent is serious, sober, grave and respectable ; tact is all that, and more too. It is not a sixth sense, but it is the life of all the five. It is the open eye, the quick ear, the judging taste, the keen smell, and the lively touch ; the interpreter of all riddles, the surmounter of all difficulties, the remover of all obstacles. It is useful in all places, and at all times. It is useful in solitude, for it shows a man the way *into* the world ; it is useful in society, for it shows him his way through the world. Talent is power ; tact is skill. Talent is weight ; tact is momentum. Talent knows *what* to do, tact knows *how* to do it. Talent makes a man respectable ; tact will make him respected. Talent is wealth ; tact is ready money. For the practical purposes of life, tact carries it against talent, ten to one. There is no want of dramatic tact or talent, but they are seldom together ; so we have successful pieces which are not respectable, and respectable pieces which are not successful. Take them to the bar, and let them shake their learned curls at each other in legal rivalry ; talent sees its way clearly, but tact is first at its journey’s end. Talent has many a compliment from the bench ; but tact touches fees from attorneys and clients. Talent speaks learnedly and logically ; tact, triumphantly. Talent makes the world wonder that it gets along no faster ; tact excites astonishment that it gets along so fast. The secret is, it has no

weight to carry ; it makes no false steps ; it hits the right nail on the head ; it takes all hints.

“Take them into the church. Talent has always something worth hearing ; tact is sure of abundance of hearers. Talent may obtain a living ; tact will make one. Talent gets a good name, but tact gets a great one. Talent conceives ; tact converts. Talent is an honor to the profession ; tact gains honor from the profession.

“Take them to court. Talent feels its way ; tact makes its way. Talent commands ; tact is obeyed. Talent is honored with approbation ; tact is blessed with preferment.

“Place them in the Senate. Talent has the ear of the house ; but tact wins its heart and gains its votes. Talent is fit for employment ; but tact is fitted for it. It has a knack of slipping into place, with a sweet silence and glibness of movement, as a billiard ball insinuates itself into the pocket. It seems to know everything, without learning anything. It wants no drilling. It has no left hand, no deaf ear, no blind side. It puts on no looks of wondrous wisdom, it has no air of profundity ; but plays with the details of place as dexterously as a well taught hand flourishes over the keys of a piano-forte. It has all the air of common place, and all the force and power of genius. Talent calculates clearly ; reasons logically. Tact refutes without contradicting, puzzles the profound without profundity, and without wit, outwits the wise.

“Set them together on a race for popularity, pen in hand, and tact will distance talent by half the course.

Talent brings to market that which is needed ; tact produces that which is wished for. Talent instructs ; tact enlightens. Talent leads where no one follows ; tact follows where the humor leads. Talent toils for posterity ; tact catches the passion of the passing hour. Talent is a fine thing to talk about, and be proud of ; but tact is useful, portable, always alive, always marketable. It is the talent of talents, the availableness of resources, the applicability of power, the eye of discrimination, the right hand of intellect."

The adroitness so peculiar to Mr. Clay, was manifested by him from the commencement of his brilliant practice at the bar. We will select a few examples. Two Germans, father and son, were indicted for murder, and were tried in Harrison County. The act of killing was proven by evidence so clear and strong, that it was considered not only a case of murder, but an exceedingly aggravated one. The trial lasted five days, "at the close of which he addressed the jury in the most impassioned and eloquent manner, who were so moved by his pathetic appeals that they rendered a verdict of manslaughter only. After another hard day's struggle he succeeded in obtaining an arrest of judgment, by which his clients were set at liberty. They expressed their gratitude in the warmest terms to their deliverer, in which they were joined by an old ill-favored female, the wife of one and the mother of the other, who adopted a different mode, however, of tendering her thanks, which was by throwing her arms around Mr. Clay's neck and repeatedly kissing him, in the presence of the court and spectators. Respecting her feelings, he did not attempt

to repulse her, but submitted with such grace and dignity to her caresses as to elicit outbursts of applause."

This sagacious advocate was equally adroit in discovering and turning to his advantage, a technical law-point, involving doubt. For instance, a client of his, by the name of Willis, indicted for murder, was put on trial. By a mighty effort, Mr. Clay succeeded, in almost direct defiance of testimony, in creating a division of the jury, as to the nature of the defendant's crime. The Attorney for the Commonwealth obtained a new trial. When his turn came to speak, "Mr. Clay rose, and commenced with assuming the position, that, whatever opinion the jury might have of the guilt or innocence of the prisoner, it was too late to convict him, for he had been *once tried*, and the law required that no man should be put twice in jeopardy of his life for the same offence. The Court was startled at this assumption, and peremptorily prohibited the speaker from proceeding in the argument to maintain it. Mr. Clay drew himself proudly up, and remarking, that, if he was not allowed to argue the whole case to the jury, he could have nothing more to say, made a formal bow to the Court, put his books into his green bag, and, with Roman dignity, left the hall, followed by his associate counsel. The consequence was as he had foreseen. He had not been at his lodgings more than five or ten minutes, when he was waited on by a messenger from the Court, requesting his return, and assuring him that he should be permitted to argue the case in his own way. Instantly he made his re-appearance in the hall, pressed, with the utmost vehemence, the point he had

before attempted to establish, and, on the ground that his client had once been tried, prevailed on the jury to give him his liberty, without any reference whatever to the testimony against him. Such a decision could not now be obtained in Kentucky,—and, at the period in question, was obviously contrary to law.”

Although frequently employed in criminal cases, he was, says his biographer, not less successful in civil suits. The decision and promptitude of his practice are curiously illustrated in the following anecdote:

“In suits that involved the land laws of Virginia and Kentucky, he had no rival. But it would be in vain to attempt even an enumeration of the cases, in which, during the early years of his practice, he gathered a rich harvest of gold and fame. In a short biographical notice that was given of him about three years ago, we find mention of an incident in his professional life, which was certainly a striking illustration of the rapidity of his intellectual combinations, and his power of seizing intuitively upon the strong points of a case. We give it as a single specimen of what he could do. In conjunction with another attorney of eminence, whose name we have forgotten, he was employed to argue in the Fayette Circuit Court, a question of great difficulty,—one, in which the interests of the litigant parties were both deeply involved. At the opening of the Court, something occurred to call him away, and the whole management of the case devolved on his associate counsel. Two days were spent in discussing the points of law, which were to govern the instructions of the Court to the jury, and on each of these points Mr. Clay’s

colleague was foiled by his antagonist. At the end of the second day Mr. Clay re-entered the Court. He had not heard a word of the testimony, and knew nothing of the course which the discussion had taken, but, after holding a very short consultation with his colleague, he drew up a statement of the form in which he wished the instructions of the Court to be given to the jury, and accompanied his petition with a few observations so novel and satisfactory, that it was granted without the least hesitation. A corresponding verdict was instantly returned by the jury; and thus the case, which had been on the very point of being decided against Mr. Clay's client, was decided in his favor, in less than half an hour after Mr. Clay entered the Court-House."

When Mr. Clay began to aspire to the attainment of political distinction, he was obliged, in common with other candidates, to resort to stump speaking, and in the sphere of mental adroitness, showed himself as expert as he had already appeared at the bar. An incident is related, which illustrates his happy tact in seizing and turning to good account trivial circumstances with great effect. Says an acquaintance: "He had been engaged in speaking some time, when a company of riflemen, who had been performing military exercise, attracted by his attitude, concluded to go and hear what that fellow had to say, as they termed it, and accordingly drew near. They listened with respectful attention and evidently with deep interest, until he closed; when one of their number, a man about fifty years of age, who had evidently seen much backwoods service, stood leaning on his rifle, regarding the young speaker with a fixed

and most sagacious look. He was apparently the Nimrod of the company, for he exhibited every characteristic of a mighty hunter,—buckskin breeches and hunting shirt, coon-skin cap, black bushy beard, and a visage which, had it been in juxtaposition with his leathern bullet pouch, might have been taken for part and parcel of the same. At his belt hung the knife and hatchet, and the huge indispensable powder-horn across a breast bare and brown as the bleak hills he often traversed, yet which concealed as brave and noble a heart as ever beat beneath a fairer covering. He beckoned with his hand to Mr. Clay to approach him, who immediately complied. ‘Young man,’ said he, ‘you want to go to the legislature, I see?’ ‘Why, yes,’ replied Mr. Clay, ‘yes, I should like to go, since my friends have seen proper to put me up as a candidate before the people; I do not wish to be defeated.’ ‘Are you a good shot?’ ‘The best in the country.’ ‘Then you shall go; but you must give us a specimen of your skill; we must see you shoot.’ ‘I never shoot any rifle but my own, and that is at home.’ ‘No matter, here is old Bess, she never fails in the hands of a marksman; she has often sent death through a squirrel’s head one hundred yards, and daylight through many a red skin twice that distance; if you can shoot any gun you can shoot old Bess.’ ‘Well, put up your mark, put up your mark,’ replied Mr. Clay. The target was placed at a distance of about eighty yards, when, with all the steadiness of an old experienced marksman, he drew old Bess to his shoulder and fired. The bullet pierced the target near the centre. ‘Oh, a chance shot! a chance shot!’ exclaimed several of his political oppo-

nents. 'A chance shot! He might shoot all day and not hit the mark again; let him try it over, let him try it over.' 'No; beat that, beat that, and then I will,' retorted Mr. Clay. But as no one seemed disposed to make the attempt, it was considered that he had given satisfactory proof of being the best shot in the county; and this unimportant incident gained him the vote of every hunter and marksman in the assembly, which was composed principally of that class of persons, as well as the support of the same throughout the county. The most remarkable feature respecting the whole transaction is yet to be told. Said Mr. Clay, 'I had never before fired a rifle, and have not since.' The result of the election proved Mr. Clay much more popular than it had been supposed he was; he was elected almost by acclamation. Our astonishment may well be excited, when we consider that this was the first time that he was a candidate for an office, and the circumstances under which it took place. It must be certain that he was esteemed a young man of great promise and ability."

Another instance is related similar to the above. During a particular canvas, Mr. Clay met an old hunter who had previously been his devoted friend, but who now opposed him because of his action on the passage of the Compensation Bill.

"Have you a good rifle, my friend?" asked Mr. Clay. "Yes." "Does it ever flash?" "Once only." "What did you do with it, throw it away?" "No, I picked the flint, tried it again, and brought down the game." "Have I ever flashed but on the Compensation Bill?" "No." "Will you throw me away?" "No! no!"

quickly replied the hunter, nearly overwhelmed by his enthusiastic feelings, "*I will pick the flint and try you again!*" Ever afterwards he was the unwavering friend of Mr. Clay.

Under another head, we shall have occasion to refer to our orator's wonderful expertness at management with the loftiest patriotism, in the emergencies when he introduced and carried his several compromise bills. We are now referring in particular to his sagacious self-control, and power of conciliating the most prejudiced foes. Take the following case of his own stating, which occurred in 1828, while he was travelling in Virginia, accompanied by some friends. "We halted," said he, "at night, at a tavern kept by an aged gentleman, who, after supper sat down by me, and, without hearing my name, but understanding that I was from Kentucky, remarked, that he had four sons in that State, and that he was very sorry they were divided in politics, two being for Adams and two for Jackson. He wished they were all for Jackson. Why? I asked him. 'Because,' he said, 'that fellow *Clay, and Adams, had cheated Jackson out of the Presidency.*' Have you ever seen any evidence, my old friend, said I, of that? 'No,' he replied, '*none, and he wanted to see none.*' But, I observed, looking him directly and steadily in the face, suppose Mr. Clay were to come here and assure you, upon his honor, that it was all a vile calumny, and not a word of truth in it, would you believe him? 'No,' replied the old man, promptly and emphatically. I said to him, in conclusion, will you be good enough to show me to bed, and bade him good night. The next morn-

ing, having in the interval learnt my name, he came to me full of apologies, but I at once put him at his ease, by assuring him that I did not feel, in the slightest degree, hurt or offended with him."

But it was not so easy for others to repress their feelings under Mr. Clay's pungent insinuations, as the following example will show: On the 2d of September, 1841, Mr. Buchanan took occasion to say that Mr. Tyler had shown himself "a man of mettle," by his veto on the Bank. Mr. Clay replied:

"Rumor had said, that a party of the opposition had visited the President's house, the night after the veto. He (Mr. Clay) did not know as to the fact. But he would *suppose* a case. There, he would imagine, among those gathered for the great congratulation, was the senator from South Carolina, (Mr. Calhoun) looking as if he were deducting the nicest abstraction that had ever issued from his metaphysical brain. There, he presumed, was the senator from Alabama, (Mr. King) ready to settle, in the most positive manner, any question of order that might arise. He supposed many others were present. There, too, was the senator from Pennsylvania, (Mr. Buchanan) as their distinguished leader, addressing the President in something like the following manner:

" ' May it please your Excellency, my political friends and myself have come this afternoon to deposit at your Excellency's feet the evidences of our loyalty and devotion. We have come more particularly to express to your Excellency the congratulations to which we think you are entitled, for having relieved the country from

the danger of a violation of its constitution, by the establishment of a Bank of the United States; and we owe to your Excellency our especial acknowledgments for the veto with which you have favored the country to-day; and for *special* reasons, we struggled against your Excellency's friends in both houses of Congress, for days and weeks together; we exhausted all our powers of logic and arguments to defeat the alarming measure; but, in spite of that, the friends of your Excellency, in both Houses, proved too strong for us, and carried it against our united exertions; and we come now to thank your Excellency, that you have done that against your friends, which we could not accomplish with all our exertions.' "

It is said that Mr. Benton came in for his share of this castigation, and that while Mr. Clay was describing his hypothetical part with graphic power, he rose, and denied with great vehemence that he was there. "It was only a *supposition*," said Mr. Clay. Mr. Buchanan betrayed much feeling when he rose to rejoin. Mr. King colored, and Mr. Calhoun flatly denied. Mr. Clay desired each of them to consider that it was only an hypothesis. Rumor adds that Mr. Buchanan had much trouble to convince his constituents that he did not make that speech to his "Excellency."

We shall have occasion to witness the mental adroitness of Mr. Clay developed in its noblest forms, while we proceed to notice, secondly, his ardent nationality of spirit.

One of the earliest topics that engrossed this great patriot's attention, was that of the character and influ-

ence of American slavery. This matter has frequently been discussed by him in the course of his public life. On Jan. 20, 1827, in a speech delivered at Washington, he said : " If I could be instrumental in eradicating this deepest stain upon the character of our country, and removing all cause of reproach on account of it, by foreign nations ; if I could only be instrumental in ridding of this foul blot that revered State that gave me birth, or that not less beloved State which kindly adopted me as her son, *I would not exchange the proud satisfaction which I should enjoy, for the honor of all the triumphs ever decreed to the most successful conqueror.*"

* * * * *

" We are reproached with doing mischief by the agitating of this question (slavery.) Collateral consequences we are not responsible for. It is not this society, which has produced the great moral revolution, which the age exhibits. What would they, who thus reproach us, have done ? If they would repress all tendencies towards liberty, and ultimate emancipation, they must do more than put down the benevolent efforts of this society. They must go back to the era of our liberty and independence, and muzzle the cannon which thunders its annual joyous return. They must revive the slave trade, with all its train of atrocities. They must blow out the moral lights around us, and extinguish that greatest torch of all, which America presents to a benighted world, pointing the way to their rights, their liberties, and their happiness. And when they have achieved all these purposes, their work will yet be incomplete. They must penetrate the human soul, and

eradicate the light of reason, and the love of liberty. Then, and not till then, when universal darkness and despair prevail, can you perpetuate slavery, and repress all sympathies, and all humane and benevolent efforts among freemen, in behalf of the unhappy portion of our race doomed to bondage."

Thus acutely alive to the enormities of slavery of every form, Mr. Clay was not constituted to look with indifference upon British aggression upon our national rights and fame. He witnessed with irrepressible indignation the systematic crusade gotten up to extinguish our growing commerce, to resist which infamous proceeding occasioned the war of 1812. Great Britain, among other illegalities and cruelties practiced towards us, adopted the execrable custom of impressment, and thus carried seven thousand American freemen into captivity, as appeared from official reports made during a single session of Congress. This barbarous system grew more and more insufferable continually. Scarcely a breeze came across the Atlantic without wafting to our shores news of some fresh enormity. Redress was sought by mild measures, without effect or even respect. Madison, Pinckney, and Munroe, in their correspondence with the British government, had remonstrated again and again, but only to embolden the aggressor in his outrageous proceedings. Mr. Clay, and those who sympathized with him, felt that there was no alternative left the United States but to arm in righteous defence, and chastise the insolence of an overbearing foe. But there were some who stood in awe of the maritime force of England, and who deemed it impossible that

our young nation, with feeble munitions of war, and no navy, could compete with an antagonist then haughtily careering over every sea, and blockading all the ports of Europe. These affected to believe that the interests of the country would not be subserved, whether the war eventuated in her, or that of her enemy ; they could see nothing to be gained by it ; to whom Mr. Clay said, "I will ask what are we not to lose by peace ?—commerce, character, a nation's best treasure and honor ! If pecuniary considerations alone are to govern, there are sufficient motives for the war. Our revenue is reduced by the operation of the belligerent edicts to about six millions of dollars. The year preceding the embargo, it was sixteen. Take away the orders in council, it will again mount up to sixteen millions. By continuing, therefore, in peace—if the mongrel situation in which we are deserves that denomination—we lose annually, in revenue alone, ten millions of dollars. Gentlemen will say, repeal the law of non-importation. If the United States were capable of that perfidy, the revenue would not be restored to its former state, the orders in council continuing. Without an export trade, which these orders prevent, inevitable ruin will ensue if we import as freely as we did prior to the embargo. A nation that carries on an import trade without an export trade to support it, must in the end be as certainly bankrupt, as the individual would be who incurred an annual expenditure without an income."

Mr. Clay contended that England, in assigning the cause of her aggressions to be the punishment of France,

with whom she was at war, was practicing a deceptive part; that this was her ostensible and not real course. It was her inordinate desire of supremacy on the seas, which could not brook any appearance of rivalry, that prompted her hostilities. She saw in your numberless ships which whitened every sea, in your hundred and twenty thousand gallant tars, the seeds of a naval force, which, in thirty years, would rival her on her own element. *She therefore commenced the odious system of impressment, of which no language can paint my execration! She DARED to attempt the subversion of the personal freedom of your mariners!*"

He closed by expressing his decided conviction of the justice of the undertaking, and hoping that unless redress was obtained by peaceable means speedily, war would be resorted to before the close of the session.

In subsequent speeches, he expressed himself convinced that the declaration of war was the most provident measure that could under the then existing circumstances be adopted, and advocated it with the greatest energy and zeal. He demonstrated its necessity, not only to the Atlantic States, but to the vast west. "If," said he, "there be a point more than any other in the United States, demanding the aid of naval protection, that point is the mouth of the Mississippi. The population of the whole western country are dependent on this single outlet for their surplus productions. These productions can be transported in no other way. Close the mouth of the Mississippi, and their export trade is annihilated. Abandon all idea of protecting by maritime force the mouth of the Mississippi, and we shall

hold the inestimable right of the navigation of that river by the most precarious tenure. The whole commerce of the Mississippi, a commerce that is destined to be the richest that was ever borne by a single stream, is placed at the mercy of a single ship lying off the Balize! Can gentlemen, particularly from the western country, contemplate such possible, nay, probable events, without desiring to see at least the commencement of such a naval establishment as will effectually protect the Mississippi?" He showed the intimate connection of commerce with a navy, by saying that "a marine is the natural, the appropriate guardian of foreign commerce. The shepherd and his faithful dog are not more necessary to guard the flocks that browse and gambol on the neighboring mountain. Neglect to provide the one, and you must abandon the other. Suppose the expected war with Great Britain is commenced—you enter and subjugate Canada, and she still refuses to do you justice—what other possible mode will remain to operate on the enemy, but upon that element where alone you can come in contact with her? And if you do not prepare to protect there your own commerce and to assail his, will he not sweep from the ocean every vessel bearing your flag, and destroy even the coasting trade?" To the argument that foreign trade was not worth protecting, he asked, "What is this foreign commerce that has suddenly become so inconsiderable? It has with very trifling aid from other sources, defrayed the expenses of the government ever since the adoption of the present constitution, maintained an expensive and successful war with the Indians, a war with the Barbary powers, a

quasi war with France, sustained the charges of suppressing two insurrections, and extinguishing upwards of forty-six millions of the public debt. In revenue, it has since the year 1789 yielded one hundred and ninety-one millions of dollars." Alluding to the eminent danger of our commercial metropolis, he remarked, "Is there a reflecting man in the nation who would not charge Congress with a culpable neglect of its duty, if for the want of such a force a single ship were to bombard one of our cities? Would not every honorable member of the committee inflict on himself the bitterest reproaches, if by failing to make an inconsiderable addition to our gallant little navy, a single British vessel should place New York under contribution?"

Interested partisans, overlooking the great and enduring advantages won in the war which Mr. Clay did so much to sustain, reflected on his course in relation thereto. To such, on January 29th, 1816, he replied with patriotic triumph as follows: "I gave a vote for the declaration of war. I exerted all the little influence and talents I could command to make the war. The war was made. It is terminated; and I declare with perfect sincerity, if it had been permitted to me to lift the veil of futurity, and to have foreseen the precise series of events which has occurred, my vote would have been unchanged. We had been insulted and outraged, and spoliated upon by nearly all Europe; by Great Britain, by France, Spain, Denmark, Naples, and, to cap the climax, by the little contemptible power of Algiers. We had submitted too long and too much. We had be-

come the scorn of foreign powers, and the derision of our own citizens."

In August, 1814, Mr. Clay with other commissioners on the part of America met Lord Gambier, Henry Goulborne, and William Adamos, on the part of the British government, assembled at Ghent to negotiate a peace. In executing this task, our countryman showed his ardent nationality of spirit in every proceeding. For instance, he reciprocated an act of kindness of Mr. Goulborne, who had sent him a British periodical containing an account of the taking of Washington by the arms of his nation, by sending him some American papers which he had recently received, describing a splendid victory won on Lake Champlain or Lake Erie, by the navy of *his* country over that of the British.

While he was at London the battle of Waterloo was fought, and he witnessed the public rejoicings on account of its favorable termination to the British. He was one day dining at Lord Castlereagh's house in company with many of the nobility, when the conversation turned on the late victory, and the whereabouts of Napoleon, as it was not known where he had gone. Some intimated that he had sailed for America. "If he goes there," said Lord Liverpool to Mr. Clay, "will he not give you much trouble?" "None whatever," instantly replied Mr. Clay, "we shall be glad to receive such a distinguished, though unfortunate exile, and we shall soon make a good democrat of him."

After the close of the war by the treaty of Ghent, Mr. Clay took up with great ardor the cause of South American independence. To him undoubtedly belongs

the credit of having first called the attention of Congress and the people to this great subject; and of having contributed an earlier and a greater share, than any other person, to the weight of argument and the power of persuasion, by which the public sentiment on the subject was eventually fixed. It was in one of the first speeches made on this subject, that he said "he would leave the honorable gentleman from Delaware (Mr. Horsey) to bewail the fallen fortunes of the King of Spain, without stopping to inquire whether their loss was occasioned by treachery or not, or whether it could be traced to any agency of the American government. He confessed that he had little sympathy for princes, but that it was reserved for *the people*, the great mass of mankind, and did not hesitate to declare that the people of Spain had it most unreservedly and most sincerely."

At a subsequent period Mr. Clay was accused of aiming to ferment a war between the colonies of South America and Spain. To this he replied, that if the latter ever possessed a legal claim to the allegiance of the former, she had forfeited it by withholding that protection requisite to entitle her to it, and that consequently the people of Spanish America were contending for nothing more than their legal and natural rights. "But," said Mr. Clay, "I take a broader, bolder position. I maintain that an oppressed people are authorized, whenever they can, to rise and break their fetters. This was the great principle of the English revolution. It was the great principle of our own. We must therefore pass sentence of condemnation upon the founders of our liberty, say that they were rebels and traitors, and that

we are at this moment legislating without competent powers, before we can condemn the course of Spanish America." He contended that if we were justified in our attempts at independence, much more was she, who had writhed beneath the scourge of oppression so long, so much longer than we ; that if they were worthy of success, if they were entitled to succeed from the justness of their cause, then surely we ought to wish it, especially when we consider the barbarous character of the war. He maintained that we were deeply interested, in recognizing their independence. Even then our commerce with those provinces was considerable, and would greatly increase after they should become permanently settled as free and independent nations. The act would attach them to us, nay, it would bind them to us, by relations as intimate as those of kindred ; they would become our powerful allies. Mr. Clay said he took this ground, not because he desired to force our principles where they were not wished, but simply from feelings of sympathy. We knew by experience how sweet it was to receive that, when we were in circumstances that tried men's souls. There could be no danger, nor objection to stretch out towards their people the hand of friendly sympathy, to present to those abused and oppressed communities an expression of our good will, to make them a tender of those great principles which we have adopted as the basis of our institutions. Their ignorance and inability had been brought forward, by those opposing the measure, as completely incapacitating them for self-government. These, he contended, had been greatly magnified, but admitting them to be as un-

qualifying as they had been represented to be, the fact ought rather to increase our pity for them, and to urge us to seek the more earnestly, by all reasonable and just means within our reach, their liberation from that detestable system which chained them to such a servile state. He ridiculed the idea that recognition could be made a just pretext for war. "Recognition," said he, "without aid, is no just cause of war; with aid, it is not because of the recognition, but because of the aid, as aid without recognition is cause of war." Mr. Clay's efforts were not successful at this time; no minister was despatched to South America; the friendly mission was deferred until 1821, when he submitted, on the tenth of February, a resolution to the house, "declaring that the House of Representatives participated with the people of the United States in the deep interest which they felt for the success of the Spanish provinces of South America, which were struggling to establish their liberty and independence, and that it would give its constitutional support to the President of the United States, whenever he might deem it expedient to recognize the sovereignty and independence of those provinces."

On the 28th of March, 1822, the vote of recognition which Mr. Clay had so long struggled for, was passed with but one dissenting voice. Thus, after a long struggle on the part of this patriotic statesman, his efforts were crowned with success as complete as they had been persevering. It is said, that during the forensic strife, his speeches were frequently read at the head of the patriot army, and the effect was always to increase their intrepidity and valor. The name of Clay became associ-

ated with everything dear and valuable in freedom, and was pronounced by both officer and soldier with reverence; and many were the epistolary notices which he received, of the high estimation in which his services were held, by that suffering, but successfully struggling people. The following is a specimen :

BOGOTÁ, 21st November, 1827.

“SIR,—I cannot omit availing myself of the opportunity afforded me by the departure of Colonel Watts, *chargé d'affaires* of the United States, of taking the liberty to address your Excellency. This desire has long been entertained by me, for the purpose of expressing my admiration of your Excellency's brilliant talents and ardent love of liberty. All America, Colombia, and myself, owe your Excellency our purest gratitude, for the incomparable services you have rendered to us, by sustaining our course with a sublime enthusiasm. Accept, therefore, this sincere and cordial testimony, which I hasten to offer your Excellency and to the government of the United States, who has so greatly contributed to the emancipation of your southern brethren.

“I have the honor to offer to your Excellency my distinguished consideration.

“Your Excellency's obedient servant.

“BOLIVAR.”

The ardent nationality of spirit so predominant in Mr. Clay, was strikingly developed in his action on the Missouri question. He reached Washington on the sixteenth of January, 1821, and found Congress in the

greatest excitement and confusion. Both political parties were excessively envenomed and belligerent. The services of an adroit and magnanimous peace-maker were requisite, or national disunion threatened to be the inevitable result. The opposition which the people of Missouri had encountered in their efforts to be admitted as a State had roused their anger; they inserted a clause in their constitution which was most obnoxious to the rest of the Union. It ran as follows :

“It shall be the duty of the General Assembly, as soon as may be, to pass such laws as may be necessary to *prevent free negroes and mulattoes from coming to or settling in this State*, under any pretext whatsoever.”

On the 10th of February, Mr. Clay reported and submitted the following resolution :

“*Resolved*, That the State of Missouri be admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the original States, in all respects whatever, *upon the fundamental condition*, that the said State shall never pass any law preventing any description of persons from coming to and settling in the said State, who now are, or may hereafter become, citizens of any of the States of this Union.”

The compromise was founded on this resolution, and was mainly effected by the temper, sagacity, and indefatigable zeal of Mr. Clay.

A still more memorable act of pacification, was the *Compromise Bill*, of February, 1833. The Legislature of South Carolina ratified an ordinance, passed by a State Convention, at Columbia, in November, 1832, declaring the tariff acts unconstitutional, and utterly null and void.

President Jackson promptly issued his proclamation, denouncing the doctrines of nullification, and declared that the entire military force of the United States, if necessary, should be employed to put down all opposition to the General Government. His remonstrances, however, were unheeded. Governor Hayne immediately issued a counter proclamation, and the greatest national perils became more imminent every hour. A bill to enforce the collection of the revenue, was brought before the Senate, directing coercive measures to be employed, in case of resistance. At this critical juncture, when the political heavens gathered in thickest gloom, Mr. Clay stepped forth to disperse the darkness, and wave the olive branch of peace over the distracted nation. Never, perhaps, were greater talent and skill needed, than in this crisis, and never were they more successfully employed. Those who heard his closing appeals to the Senate, on the subject, will never forget the effect produced by sentiments like the following :

“Statesmen should regulate their conduct, and adapt their measures to the exigencies of the times in which they live. They cannot, indeed, transcend the limits of the constitutional rule ; but with respect to those systems of policy which fall within its scope, they should arrange them according to the interests, the wants, and the prejudices of the people. Two great dangers threaten the public safety. The true patriot will not stop to inquire how they have been brought about, but will fly to the deliverance of his country. The difference between the friends and the foes of the compromise, under consideration, is, that they would, in the enforcing

act, send forth alone a flaming sword. We would send out that also, but along with it the olive branch, as a messenger of peace. They cry out, the law! the law! the law! Power! power! power! We, too, reverence the law, and bow to the supremacy of its obligation; but we are in favor of the law executed in mildness, and a power tempered with mercy. They, as we think, would hazard a civil commotion, beginning in South Carolina, and extending, God only knows where. While we would vindicate the Federal Government, we are for peace, if possible, union, and liberty. We want no war, above all, no civil war, no family strife. We want no sacked cities, no desolated fields, no smoking ruins, no streams of American blood shed by American arms!

“I have been accused of ambition in presenting this measure. Ambition! inordinate ambition! If I had thought of myself only, I should have never brought it forward. I know well the perils to which I expose myself; the risk of alienating faithful and valued friends, with but little prospect of making new ones, if any new ones could compensate for the loss of those whom we have long tried and loved; and the honest misconceptions both of friends and foes. Ambition! If I had listened to its soft and seducing whispers; if I had yielded myself to the dictates of a cold, calculating, and prudential policy, I would have stood still and unmoved. I might even have silently gazed on the raging storm, enjoyed its loudest thunders, and left those who are charged with the care of the vessel of State, to conduct it as they could. I have been heretofore often unjustly

accused of ambition. Low, grovelling souls, who are utterly incapable of elevating themselves to the higher and nobler duties of pure patriotism—beings, who, for ever keeping their own selfish aims in view, decide all public measures by their presumed influence on their aggrandizement—judge me by the venal rule which they prescribe to themselves. I have given to the winds those false accusations, as I consign that which now impeaches my motives. I have no desire for office, not even the highest. The most exalted is but a prison, in which the incarcerated incumbent daily receives his cold, heartless visitants, marks his weary hours, and is cut off from the practical enjoyment of all the blessings of genuine freedom. I am no candidate for any office in the gift of the people of these States, united or separated; I never wish, never expect to be. Pass this bill, tranquillize the country, restore confidence and affection in the Union, and I am willing to go home to Ashland, and renounce public service for ever. I should there find, in its groves, under its shades, on its lawns, amidst my flocks and herds, in the bosom of my family, sincerity and truth, attachment, and fidelity, and gratitude, which I have not always found in the walks of public life. Yes, I have ambition; but it is the ambition of being the humble instrument, in the hands of Providence, to reconcile a divided people; once more to revive concord and harmony in a distracted land—the pleasing ambition of contemplating the glorious spectacle of a free, united, prosperous, and fraternal people!”

During the famous debate on the Deposites question in the Senate, near the close of April, 1833, Mr. Leigh,

of Virginia, paid Mr. Clay a rich and merited compliment, for his services in allaying the spirit of Southern nullification. "I cannot but remember," said he, "when all men were trembling under the apprehension of civil war—trembling from the conviction, that if such a contest should arise, let it terminate how it might, it would put our present institutions in jeopardy, and end either in consolidation or disunion; for I am persuaded that the first drop of blood which shall be shed in a civil strife between the Federal Government and any State, will flow from an irremediable wound, that none may ever hope to see healed. I cannot but remember, that the President, though wielding such a vast power and influence, never contributed the least aid to bring about the compromise that saved us from the evils which all men, I believe, and I, certainly, so much dreaded. The men are not present to whom we are chiefly indebted for that compromise; and I am glad they are absent, since it enables me to speak of their conduct, as I feel I might not without, from a sense of delicacy. I raise my humble voice in gratitude for that service, to *Henry Clay* of the Senate, and *Robert P. Letcher*, of the House of Representatives."

Before leaving the consideration of Mr. Clay's ardent nationality of spirit, we will subjoin one more extract, which is at once a good specimen of his style, and an admirable exposition of his own character as a politician. It is from an unpremeditated rejoinder to Mr. Rives, in the Senate, August 19th, 1841, in which he gave his famous definition of *public virtue*.

"I rose not to say one word which should wound the

feelings of President Tyler. The senator says that, if placed in like circumstances, I would have been the last man to avoid putting a direct veto upon the Bill, had it met my disapprobation ; and he does me the honor to attribute to me high qualities of stern and unbending intrepidity. I hope, that in all that relates to personal firmness, all that concerns a just appreciation of the insignificance of human life—whatever may be attempted to threaten or alarm a soul not easily swayed by opposition, or awed or intimidated by menace—a stout heart and a steady eye, that can survey, unmoved and undaunted, any mere personal perils that assail this poor, transient, perishing frame, I may, without disparagement, compare with other men. But there is a sort of courage, which, I frankly confess it, I do not possess, a boldness to which I dare not aspire, a valor which I cannot covet. I cannot lay myself down in the way of the welfare and happiness of my country. That I cannot, I have not the courage to do. I cannot interpose the power with which I may be invested, a power conferred not for my personal benefit, nor for my aggrandizement, but for my country's good, to check her onward march to greatness and glory. I have not courage enough, I am too cowardly for that. I would not, I dare not, in the exercise of such a trust, lie down, and place my body across the path that leads my country to prosperity and happiness. This is a sort of courage widely different from that which a man may display in his private conduct and personal relations. Personal or private courage is totally distinct from that higher and nobler courage which

prompts the patriot to offer himself a voluntary sacrifice to his country's good."

"Nor did I say, as the senator represents, that the President should have resigned. I intimated no personal wish or desire that he should resign. I referred to the fact of a memorable resignation in his public life. And what I did say was, that there were other alternatives before him besides Vetoing the Bill; and that it was worthy of his consideration whether consistency did not require that the example which he had set when he had a constituency of one State, should not be followed when he had a constituency commensurate with the whole Union. Another alternative was, to suffer the Bill, without his signature, to pass into a law under the provisions of the Constitution. And I must confess, I see, in this, no such escaping by the back door, no such jumping out of the window, as the senator talks about. Apprehensions of the imputation of the want of firmness sometimes impels us to perform rash and inconsiderate acts. It is the greatest courage to be able to bear the imputation of the want of courage. But pride, vanity, egotism, so unamiable and offensive in private life, are vices which partake of the character of crimes, in the conduct of public affairs. The unfortunate victim of these passions cannot see beyond the little, petty, contemptible circle of his own personal interests. All his thoughts are withdrawn from his country, and concentrated on his consistency, his firmness, himself. *The high, the exalted, the sublime emotions of a patriotism, which, soaring toward heaven, rises far above all mean, low, or selfish things, and is absorbed by one soul-trans-*

porting thought of the good and the glory of one's country, are never felt in his impenetrable bosom. That patriotism which, catching its inspirations from the immortal God, and leaving at an immeasurable distance below all lesser, grovelling, personal interests and feelings, animates and prompts to deeds of self-sacrifice, of valor, of devotion, and of death itself—that is public virtue; that is the noblest, the sublimest of all public virtues!”

Two prominent characteristics in Mr. Clay, we have already considered; it remains, thirdly, to portray his impressive manner of address. In doing this it will be necessary to describe his person, his elocution, and the chief sources of his eloquence.

In the first place, we would remark that perhaps the best general description of Mr. Clay's person is found in *Uncle Sam's Letters*, and is as follows:

“There is a tall, light-haired, blue-eyed, individual, sixty years old or more, who occupies a seat in the Senate, at the Capitol. He has not what would be called a handsome face, but one of the liveliest, or, if we may so speak, one of the most *looking* faces that ever fronted a head. It is because he has a *looking* organization. You catch not him asleep or moping. He seems to see everybody that comes in or goes out, and besides to have an eye on, and an ear for, whatever honorable senator may occupy the field of debate. If his own marked political game is on foot, he is then NIMROD, a mighty hunter. He can see just what fissure of inconsistency, nook of sophism or covert of rhetoric, is made a hiding-place. At the right moment, he aims a rifle

pretty sure to hit, if his powder is good ; and his friends say, that he uses the best. Grand fun it is, to stand by, and see this keen sportsman crack off, and especially to hear him wind "the mellow, mellow horn," which his mother gave him a long while ago, to leave our hunting-ground metaphor, for the plain beaten way, this individual veteran statesman from Kentucky. Now just come and look at his head, or seek his portrait, at least. You will see how his *perceptives* put themselves forth in front, as if they were reaching after their objects, as it were, for a long pull, and a strong pull, to fetch them into keeping. Then, in speech, with what ease, grace, order, and effect, he can fling forth his gatherings. His mind has been developed by the exciting circumstances of active life, rather than by the speculations of quiet books. Henry Clay is therefore a *practical* man. He is pre-eminently perceptive. He knows the whom, the what, the where, the when, the which first, and the how many, as well, perhaps, as any public man living. A very long political life has put him to the test. We do not aver that he never made mistakes, or that he is politically and positively right ; we intimate, moreover, nothing to the contrary. We would simply convey, that of all the great statesmen of our country, he particularly illustrates the faculties just had under review."

From this general statement, let us descend to more particular detail. Mr. Clay is reported to be exactly six feet one inch high ; he is not stout, but the opposite ; has long arms, and small hands ; is always upright in standing, walking, or talking ; and is particu-

larly erect when engaged in debate. Seen in front, his countenance is impressive ; his profile is very striking. His visage is spare, mouth large, lips compressed, nose prominent, forehead retreating, hair light and thin, eyes rather small, blue, and, when kindled, sparkling with electric fire. Other traits will be more fully portrayed as we notice

Secondly, his elocution. Mr. Clay is less graceful, than earnest, impressive and unrestrained ; free and wild as the elk of the forest, it is said all his gestures were in early manhood. A manifest harmony existed between the suggestions of his mind and the movements of his limbs, and this imparted an indescribable charm to his action. He did not vociferate with weary lungs and sweating brow, at the same time standing with listless hands, and elbows turned to his hips. Whenever he is in earnest, he talks all over, and there is a language in his limbs which says as clearly as that of the lips, "these were given to clasp the beautiful and cleave the wave." He seems exhilarated, like one mounted on a high-mettled courser ; not that he seeks display, but a little curvetting accords well with his native spirits, and withal he is a little proud of his glorious steed. Its snort, its whinny, its impatient pawing of the earth, the elasticity of all its motions, and the full confidence the excited rider feels in its speed and force, elate him. He knows the steed beneath him will carry him anywhere—leap any barrier, however formidable—will distance any competitor, however fleet. In this orator especially, free will is but necessity in play.

“The clattering of the golden reins which guide
The thunder-footed couriers of the sun.”

Mr. Clay's voice has prodigious power, compass, and richness ; all its variations are captivating, but some of its base tones thrill through one's whole frame. To those who have never heard the living melody, no verbal description can convey an adequate idea of the diversified effect of those intonations which in one strain of sentiment fall in whispering gentleness, “like the first words of love upon a maiden's lips,” and anon, in sterner utterances, “ring with the maddening music of the main.” The magician is well aware of the seductive power of his voice, and employs it with great effect in the moderate, as well as the more impassioned portions of his speeches. Such is its fascination, that the most familiar expressions take from it an air of novelty and dignity, and the more excitable in the audience, waiting for an eloquential pause, would say :

“Thy sweet words drop upon the ear as soft
As rose leaves on a well : and I could listen,
As though the immortal melody of Heaven
Were wrought into one word—that word a whisper,
That whisper all I want from all I love.”

Consummate eloquence is the rarest, as well as the most valuable of gifts, because it is so uncommon to meet with one who has no less oratory in the tones of his voice, in the language of his eyes, and in the general air of his person, than in the profusion of his wisdom and the choice of his words. In such rare instances, every sentiment will have an intonation

peculiar to itself, and both gestures and looks will be in exact keeping with what in language is expressed. It is this relation, true or false, that makes all the difference between the agreeable and disagreeable, pleasing and displeasing, among public speakers. Fortunate indeed is he who has received from nature an engaging face and figure, a strong memory, vivid imagination, and sonorous tones of voice capable of being modulated with varied compass, so as to stimulate and excite an audience with the indescribable effects which have often been produced by Mr. Clay. His look and action vividly interpret his thought while he speaks, as Michael Angelo found in the depth of his own mind and grandeur of conception, the means of rendering the immediate effect of will and power intuitive in the creation of Adam, by darting life from the finger of Omnipotence in an effulgent ray; and as the coalition of light and darkness opened to the entranced eye of Correggio the means of embodying the Mosaic sentence "Let there be light," in that stream of glory which, issuing from the Divine Infant in his Notte, proclaims a God.

Natural expression is the luminous image of actual passion, its spontaneous language and speaking portrait, always composed of simplicity, propriety, and energy, as its three invariable and most intelligent elements. This is a great forte with Mr. Clay; he can "light at will expression's brightest blaze." Mental vivacity animates the features, attitudes, and gestures, which nature has prompted, and long practice improved. Deep emotions, whose inward energy penetrate and

invest his supple form, render him exceedingly commanding in action, and forcible in speech. Nothing can be more captivating than the smiles that sometimes light up his countenance while speaking, not unfrequently succeeded by frowns as impressive, which outward language is as intimately mixed and strikingly expressed as the latent emotions of his mind. It presents a pleasing series of effects, constituting diversified transitions and perpetual progress, each gleam, when its end is attained, giving place to another, and leaving no trace behind :

“Brief as the lightning in the collied night,
That in a spleen unfolds both heaven and earth ;
And ere a man has time to say, behold !
The jaws of darkness do devour it up.”

Hazlitt has finely discriminated between nature elevated by genius and nature literally copied by talent, in his parallel between Raphael and Hogarth. The figures of the former, he says, are sustained by ideas ; those of the latter are distorted by mechanical habits and instincts. “It is elevation of thought that gives grandeur and delicacy of expression to passion. The expansion and refinement of the soul are seen in the face, as in a mirror. An enlargement of purpose gives corresponding enlargement of form. The *mind*, as it were, acts over the whole body, and animates it equally, while petty and local interests seize on particular parts, and distract it by contrary and mean expressions. Now, if mental expression has this superior grandeur and grace, we can account at once for the superiority of

Raphael. For there is no doubt, that it is more difficult to give a whole continuously and proportionably than to give the parts separate and disjointed, or to diffuse the same subtle but powerful expression over a large mass than to caricature it in a single part or feature. The actions in Raphael are like a branch of a tree swept by the surging blast; those in Hogarth like straws whirled and twitched about in the gusts and eddies of passion."

What the great Italian was among artists, we hold Henry Clay to be among orators. He has a fine person, striking features, and, as we have said, a most fascinating manner of address; but these are far from being his only or chief attributes. There is a *mind* in him, a moral power far more valuable to a statesman than all the vaunted arts of elaborated grace or affected elocution. Nature has given him a strong and clear understanding, which he has vigorously exercised on a great variety of political and moral topics. He has read many valuable authors, and pondered much on their principles. And yet he has never carried the habits of private meditation so far as to render him professional and didactic in his public life—has ever maintained the freedom and force of an energetic leader, without assuming the part of an astute essayist or tiresome pedant. His speeches are more in conformity with the prevailing spirit and characteristics of the American people than any other extant; wildly beautiful and earnestly grand, yet alternately gay and solemnly compressed to an extraordinary degree. Whenever he appears on the rostrum to discuss a great and exciting question, there is such clearness in his thought

and witchery in his manner that the entranced listener is inclined to say,

“ I love that voice
Dipping more softly on the subject ear
Than that calm kiss the willow gives the wave—
A soft, rich tone, a rainbow of sweet sounds,
Just spanning the soothed sense.”

This leads us, in the third place, to consider some of the chief sources of Mr. Clay's eloquence. These are, we think, native enterprise, an ardent temperament, sagacious patriotism, and indomitable perseverance. We will illustrate these points in the order named.

And first, had not Mr. Clay come into the world with a soul thoroughly imbued with the spirit of enterprise, he would have perished in the deep obscurity of his origin, unhonored and unsung. In a touching piece of auto-biography, contained in a speech delivered by him at Lexington, June 9, 1842, on the occasion of his retirement from public life, Mr. Clay puts this matter in a strong light. Said he :

“ In looking back upon my origin and progress through life, I have great reason to be thankful. My father died in 1781, leaving me an infant of too tender years to retain any recollection of his smiles or endearments. My surviving parent removed to this State in 1792, leaving me a boy of fifteen years of age, in the office of the High Court of Chancery, in the city of Richmond, without guardian, without pecuniary means of support, to steer my course as I might or could. A neglected education was improved by my own irregular

exertions, without the benefit of systematic instruction. I studied law principally in the office of a lamented friend, the late Governor Brooke, then Attorney General of Virginia, and also under the auspices of the venerable and lamented Chancellor Wythe, for whom I had acted as an amanuensis. I obtained a license to practice the profession from the Judges of the Court of Appeals, of Virginia, and established myself in Lexington, in 1797, without patrons, without the favor or countenance of the great or opulent, without the means of paying my weekly board, and in the midst of a bar uncommonly distinguished by eminent members. I remember how comfortable I thought I should be, if I could make one hundred pounds Virginia money, per year, and with what delight I received the first fifteen shillings fee. My hopes were more than realized. I immediately rushed into a successful and lucrative practice.

“In 1803 or 4, when I was absent from the county of Fayette at the Olympian Springs, without my knowledge or previous consent, I was brought forward as a candidate, and elected to the general assembly of this State. I served in that body several years, and was then transferred to the senate, and afterwards to the House of Representatives of the United States. I will not dwell on the subsequent events of my political life, or enumerate the offices which I have filled. During my public career, I have had bitter, implacable, reckless enemies. But if I have been the object of misrepresentation and unmerited calumny, no man has been beloved or honored by more devoted, faithful, and enthusiastic friends. I have no reproaches, none, to make towards my coun-

try, which has distinguished and elevated me far beyond what I had any right to expect. I forgive my enemies, and hope they may live to obtain the forgiveness of their own hearts."

Intimately associated with this native spirit of magnanimous enterprise in Mr. Clay, is his ardent temperament. These are qualities which happily unite in him,

"Like rays of stars that meet in space,
And mingle in a bright embrace."

The ardor of Mr. Clay's nature was strongly developed, and foretokened his fame, from the time he emigrated to Kentucky, "now nearly forty-five years ago," as he said on a memorable occasion. "I went as an orphan boy who had not yet attained the age of majority ; who had never recognized a father's smile, nor felt his warm caresses ; poor, penniless, without the favor of the great, with an imperfect and neglected education, hardly sufficient for the ordinary business and common pursuits of life ; but scarce had I set my foot upon her generous soil, when I was embraced with parental fondness, caressed as though I had been a favorite child, and patronized with liberal and unbounded munificence. From that period the highest honors of the State have been freely bestowed upon me ; and when, in the darkest hour of calumny and detraction, I seemed to be assailed by all the rest of the world, she interposed her broad and impenetrable shield, repelled the poisoned shafts that were aimed for my destruction, and vindicated my good name from every malignant and unfounded aspersion. I return with indescribable pleasure to linger a while

longer, and mingle with the warm-hearted and whole-souled people of that State ; and, when the last scene shall for ever close upon me, I hope that my earthly remains will be laid under her green sod with those of her gallant and patriotic sons."

The Alien and Sedition Laws occasioned one of his earliest and most brilliant popular harangues. It is related that on a certain occasion, the people were assembled in large numbers in a grove near Lexington, to listen to a discussion to come off between the advocates and opposers of these laws. The greatest interest had been awakened, extensive preparation made by the combatants, and with the most inflammatory zeal they entered the lists. The historian of the scene goes on to say :

"The assemblage was first addressed by Mr. George Nicholas, a gentleman of distinguished ability and commanding eloquence. His effort is represented as having been one of great vigor, and characterized by that logical and philosophical acumen, for which he was so celebrated. When he ceased, the populace, wrought up to the highest degree of enthusiasm, poured out their rapturous applause. 'Clay,' 'Clay,' was now loudly called from all directions, and as he ascended the stand, it was clearly perceptible by his eagle eye and compressed lips, that no ordinary emotions were struggling in his bosom. As the spirit of the tempest finds the ocean when he descends in his mightiest energy, so he found the boisterous mass swelling to and fro like the surges of the deep. But he was at home, doing his legitimate work, pouring the oil of eloquence over a turbulent

sea of passion, until its tumultuous heavings subsided and left one quiet, calm, and unruffled surface. The subject in his hands, appeared in a new light, and he soon succeeded in securing for it that attention which is accompanied with feelings too deep for utterance ; like those experienced by one standing on the edge of a crater, gazing down into its fiery abyss. His predecessor had poured a flood of sunshine over the multitude, which caused those heartfelt, spontaneous out-gushings of joyful emotion, which are its usual concomitants. But his office was that of the lightning's flash and thunder peal, hushing, awing, and subduing. When he closed there were no clamorous expressions, no deafening shouts of applause, but something far more significant, he read in the quivering lips, indignant looks, and frowning brows around him ; and heard, in the deep low growl that came up, a much more flattering tribute to his talents. He was followed by Mr. William Murray, an orator of great popularity, and well qualified to exhibit acceptably the merits of those laws, if indeed they possessed any. His efforts, however, were futile. The conviction of their pernicious tendency had been planted too deep in the minds of the people by Mr. Clay, to permit them to listen to their merits, or to allow them to believe that they had any. He would not have been suffered to proceed had not the previous speakers urgently solicited permission. Another attempt was made to reply, but the people could be restrained no longer, and made a furious rush towards the place occupied by the speaker, who was compelled to make a precipitate retreat to escape personal violence. They

now seized Nicholas and Clay, bore them on their shoulders to a carriage, and amid the most enthusiastic cheering, drew them through the streets of Lexington. A proud day was this for Mr. Clay ; a day in which he earned a far more glorious title than any that royal hands could confer upon him, that of the ‘great commoner.’ It was the first of the bright days of the years of his fame—the sure precursor of that unfading chaplet which time was destined to bind about his brow.”

While yet young, Mr. Clay’s eloquence partook of the warmth of his blood ; his speech was the fire of passion, tinged by the imagination of the South. When he entered the State Legislature, he immediately became a notable star. The fixed gaze of antagonists, excited crowds in the galleries, and earnest attention everywhere, attested the advent of one of those grand actors in the political drama of the world, destined powerfully to agitate all parties, be applauded to the echo by millions, and at the same time, the penalty of all true greatness, be the object of most malignant hate. This is the result of extraordinary native force, the first look or syllable of which in a moment elevates its possessor immensely above all common men. The mode in which this truth was exemplified by Mr. Clay while in the Legislature of Kentucky, is forcibly described by one intimately acquainted with him. ‘He appears to have been the pervading spirit of the whole body. He never came to the debates without the knowledge necessary to the perfect elucidation of his subject, and he always had the power of making his knowledge so practical, and lighting it so brightly up with the fire of eloquence, and

the living soul of intellect, that without resorting to the arts of insidiousness, he could generally control the movements of the Legislature at will. His was not an undue influence; it was the simple ascendancy of mind over mind. The bills which originated with him, instead of being characterized by the eccentricities and ambitious innovations which are too often visible in the course of young men of genius suddenly elevated to power and influence, were remarkable only for their plain common sense, and their tendency to advance the substantial interests of the State. Though he carried his plans into effect by the aid of the magical incantations of the orator, he always conceived them with the coolness and discretion of a philosopher. No subject was so great as to baffle his powers, none so minute as to elude them. He could handle the telescope and the microscope with equal skill. In him the haughty demagogues of the Legislature found an antagonist who never failed to foil them in their bold projects, and the intriguers of lower degree were baffled with equal certainty whenever they attempted to get any petty measure through the house for their own personal gratification or that of their friends. The people, therefore, justly regarded him as emphatically their own."

In some of the debates he conducted in those days, he must have been very effective. A gentleman who was present, describes his speech, as having been a perfect model. "Every muscle of the orator's face was at work; his whole body seemed agitated, as if each part was instinct with a separate life; and his small white hand, with its blue veins apparently distended almost to

bursting, moved gracefully, but with all the energy of rapid and vehement gesture. The appearance of the speaker seemed that of a pure intellect, wrought up to its mightiest energies, and brightly glowing through the thin and transparent veil of flesh that enrobed it. His control over his auditory was most absolute and astonishing—now bathing them in tears, and now convulsing them with laughter, causing them to alternate between hope and fear, love and hate, at his bidding. When he concluded, scarcely a vestige of opposition remained, and the amended resolution was adopted, almost by acclamation.”

This talismanic power, so manifest in the eloquence of Mr. Clay, is not to be accredited to any one great faculty, but to the skillful use of many. In him no “lifeless heap of embryo knowledge rests,” but instead thereof, there is a great fund of practical wisdom, saturated with acute emotion, by which in the most powerful manner, he is ever ready “passion to paint, and sentiment unfold.” He neither indulges in long strains of vapid declamation, nor wearies with dry and insufferable details, but sagaciously mingles the two, knowing “that vice alike resides in each extreme.” He thus most admirably conforms to nature, and in the progress of an extended demonstration banishes all tedium, by alternately painting “her midnight shadow, her meridian glow.”

When we look out on the mighty landscape, we see that rich, ample, and flowing robe which nature should wear on her throned eminence, hill united to hill, with sweeping train of forest, with prodigality of shade, as

she stands revealed in primitive magnificence, and not curtailed of her fair proportions, pinched and squeezed into artificial shapes by the contracted and prim notions of man. And so the spirit of true eloquence, adapting itself to different occasions and diversified styles, subdues by simplicity, commands by dignity, persuades by propriety, assuages by repose, charms by contrast, enlivens by emotion, and renovates by truth. Reason is the potent leader, and all subordinates are imbued with the light and force that emanate from this centre, enrapturing all with a cheerful gleam, and sometimes startling with a fearful flash. Nothing is beautiful and effective in popular speech that is not allied to light and shadow in the physical world, and is united to color and form.

“’Tis still one principle through all extends,
And leads through different ways to different ends.
Whate’er its essence, or whate’er its name,
Whate’er its modes, ’tis still in all the same :
’Tis just congruity of parts combined,
To please the sense and satisfy the mind.”

Mr. Clay’s eloquence, like the firm trunk of a gnarled oak, adorned and half concealed by honeysuckles and wild roses, reverses the image of Iole dressed in the Lion’s skin—it is the club of Hercules adorned by her with wreaths of flowers. His style is of a new order, conceived and executed in a very bold and difficult manner, the aggregated beauty and magnificence of Grecian symmetry, Gothic picturesqueness, and the irregular firmness of a feudal castle. Some of his speeches

suggest the idea of easy and rapid motion, like Milton's battle of the angels :

“Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew.
From their foundations loos'ning to and fro,
They pluck'd the seated hills with all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops,
Uplifting, bore them in their hands.”

Others impress with the grandeur of massiveness, resistance to motion, if not absolute immobility, as is finely marked in the same book :

“Under his burning wheels
The steadfast empyrean shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God.”

Sagacious patriotism was the third element which we mentioned as a prolific source of Mr. Clay's eloquence. From his first entrance upon political life, he seems strongly and habitually to have felt the power of reason upon the masses, and always to have treated the popular judgment with profound respect. Hence he has been frank and fearless in avowing his principles on all occasions, to all men. All his faculties were early trained for popular discussion: even his enthusiasm was rendered skillful and reflective in dealing out arguments and appeals indiscriminately to those who came in his way. He is said to have been the first man who went through a stumping campaign with unwavering dignity.

Mr. Clay has ever been true to his own conceptions; and such a speaker, if he is not always right, is certain to be always strong. Of all Americans, he is the orator

of political actualities; never dreamy or metaphysical; seldom embodying the largest or the highest philosophical dogmas, but applying the simplest principles to the most comprehensive concerns of his countrymen in their clashing interests, and continual conflicts, and in these patriotic efforts working out, with a power rarely surpassed, the objects which he aimed to accomplish. Contemplate him, for instance, when he braved the arrogance of England, in the beginning, progress and end of the war of 1812. His chivalrous bearing, patriotic indignation, and diplomatic skill, remind one of Michael, chief of the heavenly warriors, sent to banish the guilty pair from Paradise.

“ Not in his shape celestial, but as man
Clad to meet man : over his lucid arms
While military vest of purple flow'd ;
His starry helm unbuckled show'd him prime
In manhood, where youth ended ; by his side,
As in a glist'ning zodiac, hung the sword,
Satan's dire dread, and in his hand the spear.”

Moreover, Mr. Clay never underrates the connection between words and deeds, nor forgets the power which speech ever exercises on the common mind, and that most extensively in times of great excitement and national convulsion. As he had introduced into congressional affairs an element of high moral enthusiasm, springing from his own ardent and magnanimous spirit, so was he in turn acted upon by the kindled passions of the people at large as well as by his dignified associates, and in a few years attained the dizzy height whereon he was recognized by all the world as the sagacious patriot who,

in a pre-eminent degree, impersonated the cause of America. Reliance on exalted principles, and resolute action guided by them, had conferred on him a glory and a name, "known, sun like, in all nations." This well-earned reputation he not only preserved but enhanced when, to allay the consternation kindled by South Carolina, with a bold and masterly hand he sketched the outlines of an honorable compromise, and colored the design with the most soothing hues of loftiest patriotism.

But the hour when Mr. Clay seems most to have felt that the eyes of the world were upon him, when he most unfolded the native majesty of his character, and stood serenely on the sublimest height, was the memorable scene when he took leave of the Senate, March 31, 1842. Art and eloquence have made that event historical and attractive for ever. The closing paragraphs of Mr. Clay's address were as follows:

"That my nature is warm, my temper ardent, my disposition, especially in relation to the public service, enthusiastic, I am ready to own; and those who suppose that I have been assuming the dictatorship, have only mistaken for arrogance or assumption that ardor and devotion which are natural to my constitution, and which I may have displayed with too little regard to cold, calculating, and cautious prudence, in sustaining and zealously supporting important national measures of policy which I have presented and espoused.

"In the course of a long and arduous public service, especially during the last eleven years in which I have held a seat in the Senate, from the same ardor and enthusiasm of character, I have no doubt, in the heat of

debate, and in an honest endeavor to maintain my opinions against adverse opinions alike honestly entertained, as to the best course to be adopted for the public welfare, I may have often inadvertently and unintentionally, in moments of excited debate, made use of language that has been offensive, and susceptible of injurious interpretation toward my brother Senators. If there be any here who retain wounded feelings of injury or dissatisfaction produced on such occasions, I beg to assure them that I now offer the most ample apology for any departure on my part from the established rules of parliamentary decorum and courtesy. On the other hand, I assure the Senators, one and all, without exception and without reserve, that I retire from this chamber without carrying with me a single feeling of resentment or dissatisfaction to the Senate or any one of its members.

“I go from this place under the hope that we shall mutually consign to perpetual oblivion whatever personal collisions may at any time unfortunately have occurred between us; and that our recollections shall dwell in future only on those conflicts of mind with mind, those intellectual struggles, those noble exhibitions of the powers of logic, argument, and eloquence, honorable to the Senate and to the nation, in which each has sought and contended for what he deemed the best mode of accomplishing one common object, the interests and happiness of our beloved country. To these thrilling and delightful scenes it will be my pleasure and my pride to look back in my retirement with unmeasured satisfaction.

“May the most precious blessings of Heaven rest

upon the whole Senate, and each member of it, and may the labors of every one redound to the benefit of the nation and the advancement of his own fame and renown. And when you shall retire to the bosom of your constituents, may you receive that most cheering and gratifying of all human rewards—their cordial greeting of, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant.’

“And now, Mr. President, and Senators, I bid you all a long, a lasting, and a friendly farewell.”

In delineating the sources of Mr. Clay’s eloquence, we have spoken of his enterprising spirit, his ardent temperament, and sagacious patriotism. In conclusion, let us glance at the fourth, and a fundamental quality, his indomitable perseverance.

Confidence or courage is conscious ability—the sense of power—which it is often difficult to attain, but which is a quality indispensable to eminent success. A well known anecdote commemorates the timidity natural to genius in its first efforts, and under which Mr. Clay was embarrassed in the commencement of his public career. In a debating society of which he for sometime had been an observant but silent member, a question had been discussed at considerable length and apparently with much ability, on which the customary vote was about to be taken, when he observed in an under tone to a person seated by him, “the subject does not seem to be exhausted.” The individual addressed, exclaimed, “do not put the question yet, Mr. Clay will speak.” The chairman by a smile and nod of the head signified his willingness to allow the discussion to be continued by him, who thereupon arose under every appearance of

trepidation and embarrassment. The first words that fell from his lips were, "Gentlemen of the jury." His embarrassment now was extreme; blushing, hesitating, and stammering, he repeated the words, "Gentlemen of the jury." The audience evinced genuine politeness and good breeding, by seeming not to notice his peculiarly unpleasant and trying condition. Suddenly regaining his self-possession, he made a speech of such force and eloquence, as to carry conviction and astonishment at once to the hearts of his hearers. Subsequently he took a prominent part in the debates of the society, and became one of its most efficient members.

An adept is not afraid of undertaking what he knows he can do better than any one else, but it requires no little practice to acquire this habitual self-possession. Even the most experienced veterans are often disconcerted, when out of their own sphere, they are summoned to the most familiar and easy tasks. Garrick was once subpoenaed on a friend's trial; when he appeared before the court, though he had for thirty years been in the habit of speaking with the greatest self-reliance in the presence of thousands, yet the instant he appeared in an unusual situation, he became so perplexed and confused, that he was actually sent from the witness' box by the judge, as a man from whom no evidence could be gotten. Charles Fox felt no diffidence in addressing the House of Commons, but was reserved and silent in company, having no confidence in his own colloquial powers, or talent for writing. As a man is strong, so is he bold; but his confident strength is at

ease only in a walk which impulse or necessity has rendered most familiar. In the case of young Clay, as with Fox, the torrent of eloquence rushed upon him from his knowledge of the subject and his interest in it, as soon as he was once fairly on his feet in spontaneous speech, and he went on to the amazement of his audience, unchecked and unbidden, without once thinking of himself, or his initiatory blunder. Subsequent practice, severe and unremitting, fortified Mr. Clay with self-possession, which no finite power could disturb. He became foremost among

“The men that glorious law who taught,
Unshrinking liberty of thought,
And roused the nations with the truth sublime.”

The persevering efforts made by Mr. Clay to preserve and transmit to future generations the invaluable institutions we enjoy, were finely indicated by him on the 15th of August, 1824, when, as Speaker of the House of Representatives, he received General Lafayette, with an apposite and beautiful address, of which the following is an extract:

“The vain wish has been sometimes indulged, that Providence would allow the patriot, after death, to return to his country, and to contemplate the intermediate change that had taken place, to view the forests felled, the cities built, the mountains levelled, the canals cut, the highways constructed, the progress of the arts, the advancement of learning, and the increase of population. General, your present visit to the United States, is a realization of the consoling object of that wish. You are

in the midst of posterity. Every where you must have been struck with the great changes, physical and moral, which have occurred since you left us. Even this city, bearing a venerated name, alike endeared to you and to us, has since emerged from the forest which then covered its site. In one respect you find us unaltered, and that is, in the sentiment of continued devotion to liberty, and of ardent affection and profound gratitude to your departed friend, the father of his country, and to you, and to your illustrious associates in the field and the cabinet, for the multiplied blessings which surround us, and for the very privilege of addressing you, which I now exercise. This sentiment, now fondly cherished by more than ten millions of people, will be transmitted with unabated vigor, down the tide of time, through the countless millions who are destined to inhabit this continent, to the latest posterity."

That Mr. Clay designs to persevere to the last moment of existence on earth in his patriotic course, is evident from his character, and the declaration he made at a complimentary dinner, given him when about to return home finally from Washington. In a speech on that occasion, he alluded to his public career, and the duties of citizenship, in the following beautiful language : " Whether I shall ever hereafter take any part in the public councils or not, depends upon circumstances beyond my control. Holding the principle that a citizen, as long as a single pulsation remains, is under an obligation to exert his utmost energies in the service of his country, if necessary, whether in a public or private station, my friends here and everywhere may rest assured,

that, in either condition, I shall stand erect, with a spirit unconquered, while life endures, ready to second their exertions in the cause of liberty, the union and the national prosperity."

In summing up what we have to say on the character and eloquence of Mr. Clay, we remark that he possesses the richest facility of fluent and sonorous speech, an imposing elocution, a deep and melodious voice, a fine, commanding figure, perfect familiarity with parliamentary forms, and an adroit potency in debate which can rarely or never be either disconcerted or overcome. His sensibility is acute, and this is supported by equal comprehension, elevation of mind and dignity of action ; his sentiments are draped with propriety and enforced with reason. His style is levelled to his subject, and he preserves it both equally remote from grovelling inanity and transcendental bombast.

Possessed naturally of an impetuous temperament and glowing imagination, he early disciplined himself into oratorical habits admirably suited to a mind of keen social perception, and not less adapted to the rapturous expression of exquisite emotion. In his eloquence, wit emerges from and blends with wisdom, as is symbolized by the natural parks of oak which abound on his estate ; the old foliage forms a dark background, on which the new appears, relieved and detached in all its freshness and brilliancy—it is spring engrafted on summer. His nature is genial, full of the acutest sensibility to emotion, and this through all his life has been combined with a profusion of creative political genius in a great variety of public manifestations. This is a power not imbibed

from without, but evolved directly from his own soul. Not that he has grown up isolated from the world and its tumultuous scenes ; no man has been more influenced by the active age, whose practical development and utility he has contributed so much to promote. It is clear that from early youth to maturest manhood, at each step,

“ He drew his light from what he was amidst,
As doth a lamp which hath itself
Matter of light, although it show it not. His
Was but the power to light what might be lit.”

Mr. Clay's method of artistic execution resembles that of Reubens, who did not keep pictures by him for years to dwell on, muse on, and dream of, but sketched, colored and perfected them at once. This, however, is the result of patient practice, and not a substitute for it. From early youth, Mr. Clay's application has been intense and perpetual ; each pursuit with him, every new effort and success, being only another step toward a yet higher achievement. However affluent in original endowments, he knew full well that the best powers of his mind could be developed only by incessant practice. Thus did he come at length to bear down all opposition by his breadth, brightness, and depth of eloquence, qualities which, in him, defy all successful rivalry in political discussion.

In the rigid forms of argument which set forward the most convincing proofs of the justice of a cause, Mr. Clay may be excelled by more than one of his cotemporaries ; but, in his happier efforts, he surpasses them all

in splendor and pungency of appeal, based on disciplined vehemence of spirit. He not only convinces, but dazzles and inflames. If the mere effervescence of passion sometimes appears in blinding copiousness, it as suddenly sinks like foam into the mighty billows which bore it, and clear reason, like a fresh-blown trumpet, moves severely on. It is a rare compound of the lighter and sterner attributes of speech, which, because it is the excellence of natural power, equally affects all. The oak, as lily, feels the lighter breeze; and minds above, as well below, medium range, are swayed alike by the truthful utterances of an excited soul. When fully aroused in collision with worthy antagonists, every fibre of this orator vibrates under the action of his mighty mind, "as heaven quakes under its own thunders." Not that he loses the power of self-control, or becomes in any way distorted; he is never more symmetrical and captivating than when winging the swiftest darts and triumphing over the fiercest foes. In the noblest statue of Apollo which has been preserved, dignity is intimately connected with beauty; the union has produced the highest exemplification of masculine charms, of which we have any model, and is an admirable type of Henry Clay. His mind blends and reproduces the elements of truth and power in natural eloquence, as a mirror imparts a peculiar freshness and tenderness to the diversified hues it reflects.

It is vain to look for much literary excellence in the tumultuous scenes wherein Mr. Clay has all his lifetime been compelled to move. Instead of reclining idly in the peaceful valleys which poets love to celebrate, he

has grown old in battling bravely in the dusty arena where politics ascend the tripod, transformed into a Sibyl unromantic to the last degree. Mr. Randolph, in a strain of most scorching irony, in debate indulged in some personal taunts towards Mr. Clay, commiserating his ignorance and limited education, to whom Mr. Clay replied by saying, "Sir, the gentleman from Virginia was pleased to say, that in one point, at least, he coincided with me—in an humble estimate of my grammatical and philological acquirements. I know my deficiencies. I was born to no proud patrimonial estate from my father. I inherited only infancy, ignorance, and indigence; I feel my defects; but so far as my situation in early life is concerned, I may without presumption say, they are more my misfortune than my fault. But, however I deplore my inability to furnish to the gentleman a better specimen of powers of verbal criticism, I will venture to say my regret is not greater than the disappointment of this committee, as to the *strength of his argument*." This retort is highly honorable to its author, inasmuch as it is at once courteous, caustic, and true. He is the architect of his own fortunes, and however numerous may be his defects, his undoubted excellences would do honor to the most favored man.

Mr. Clay's eloquence is pre-eminently that of exalted statesmanship, exercising which in diffusing light and liberty throughout the world, he rejoices, as does the brave in his "keen, flashing sword, and his strong arm's swift swoop." Strongly imbued with the sentiment of country, among all our public men many think him the

most American. This is undoubtedly his highest merit. Abounding little in learned quotation, classical erudition, or literary decoration, he is studded all over with the richest vestiges of patriotic genius, "racy of the soil." He is eminently the orator of humanity; less logical and less elevated than one or two of his contemporaries, but more insinuating, more potent on our hearts as we listen, the warm and invincible master of the sympathies. He has measured weapons with the mightiest, and proved himself equal to any arm. Once, in particular, in defending a favorite bill, he had to encounter much and strong opposition, at the head of which stood Daniel Webster. The collision of these eloquent and intellectual giants, is said to have been inconceivably grand. Says a gentleman who witnessed it, "the eloquence of Mr. Webster was the majestic roar of a strong and steady blast, pealing through the forest; but that of Mr. Clay was the tone of a god-like instrument, sometimes visited by an angel touch, and swept anon by all the fury of the raging elements." Mr. Clay, aware that he was contending for the very vitality of his country, had nerved himself up to one of his mightiest efforts, one which would demolish every opposing obstacle, and plant his foot in complete triumph on the ruins of the strongest holds of his assailants. He turned aside every weapon directed against his system, and entirely disarmed all opposition.

We know that this great statesman of the West is bold and indomitable; perhaps he has too ardently aspired after both power and popularity, but in the main it must be confessed that he has made his personal ambition sub-

servient to purposes the most magnanimous and grand. In debating talent he has been but very rarely equalled. In moral enthusiasm, practically employed in political and forensic warfare, he has never been excelled. A fiery splendor flows naturally from his ardent heart, and as it spreads over listening multitudes, the effect upon all who catch his tones, or comprehend his words is prodigious. The whole nation listens, and the millions everywhere who speak our vernacular, with thrilled bosoms attest the potency of his genial style. Others can reason dryly, or declaim vapidly, but it has been his peculiar prerogative more than once to raise the spirit of America far beyond the height to which any other hero has carried it, imbuing all classes with the firmest and most impassioned patriotism.

“Thou raised'st thy voice, and the people, awaking,
Beheld the foul source of corruption display'd ;
And, loyal stupidity quickly forsaking,
They found themselves plunder'd, oppress'd, and betray'd ;
Then, loud as the storm in its fury out-rushing,
The shouts of the thousands for freedom arose ;
And liberty only shall soothe them to hushing,
And liberty only shall lull to repose.”

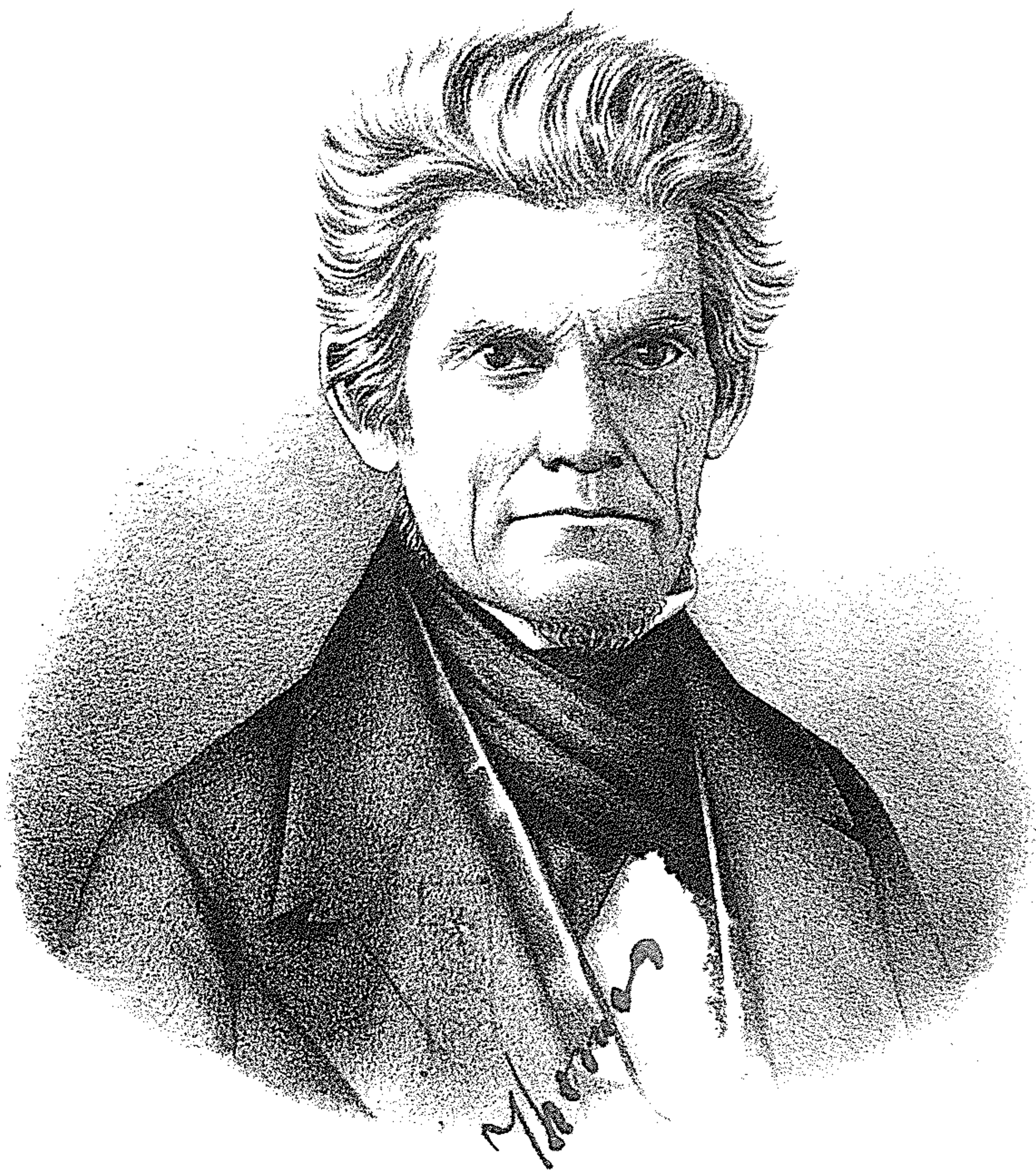
CHAPTER IV.

J O H N C . C A L H O U N ,

THE METAPHYSICIAN.

CONSIDERED in respect to his natural ability, acquired talents, past career, and present position, one of the most interesting and historical characters of our land, is John Caldwell Calhoun. He was born in Abbeville District, South Carolina, March 18th, 1782. His grandfather emigrated with his family from Ireland, and settled, in 1733, in Pennsylvania. His father was then six years old. At a subsequent period, the family removed to Western Virginia; but upon Braddock's defeat, the settlement was broken up, and, in 1756, they went to South Carolina.

John C. was the third son in a family of five children. "Both parents were exemplary for piety and virtue. The father was a hardy and enterprising pioneer; but unlike most of that class, he placed a high value upon education. Though he was entirely self-taught, and lived the greater part of his life on the frontier, surrounded by danger, he made himself an excellent English scholar, and an accurate and skillful surveyor, which profession he long followed. He was the first member ever elected



JOHN C. CALHOUN.

R. Michels lith. 111 Nassau St. N.Y.

to the Provincial Legislature, from the interior of South Carolina. Of this body, and the State Legislature, after the Revolution, he continued a member for thirty years, without intermission, except for a single term, until his death, in 1796. He was a zealous whig, and a disinterested patriot." The son seems to have become the vindicator of "State Rights," very legitimately, for it is recorded that his conscientious father opposed the adoption of the Federal Constitution, on the ground that it conferred rights on Congress incompatible with the sovereignty of the States. Who can estimate the force of hereditary character, and early prepossessions?

At thirteen years of age, young Calhoun was placed at the Academy of his brother-in-law, Rev. Dr. Waddel, one of the most distinguished teachers in the South. Here he prosecuted his studies for some time, and made ample use of a circulating library, especially in the department of history. In the course of fourteen weeks, he is said to have read Rollin's Ancient History, Robertson's Charles V. and America, Voltaire's Charles XII., the large edition of Cooke's Voyages, the first volume of Locke on the Human Understanding, and several other works. Neglecting his meals and rest, with such avidity did he engage in literary pursuits, his countenance grew pallid, his eyes were injured, and his whole frame became emaciated. His widowed mother, fearing the consequences of such application, took him home, and the ardent student, forgetting his books, soon became as passionately fond of agricultural labors and rural sports. Though the progress of his mental education was thus for some years arrested, his rugged pursuits laid the

foundation of a hardy constitution, and gave him a fund of practical knowledge of the greatest value.

In 1800, at the earnest importunity of his older brother, John turned his attention once more to a classical education, and placed himself again under the tuition of Dr. Waddel, who had re-opened his Academy in Columbia County, Georgia. He was then eighteen years old ; and his progress was so rapid, that in two years time, he was enabled to join the junior class at Yale College, in the Autumn of 1802.

It is said that in that institution he took a high grade in all the studies ; being greatly distinguished for depth and sagacity of intellect. In political opinions, he differed widely from the president, Dr. Dwight, with whom he had frequent discussions, but always of a friendly character. Once in the course of a recitation in Paley's Philosophy, the Doctor expressed a doubt, "whether the consent of the governed, was the only just origin of legitimate government?" This caused an animated debate between him and his pupil, which held the class in delighted suspense till dinner, in the course of which, the student evinced such depth of thought, and such power of argument and eloquence, that his dignified and wise antagonist unequivocally predicted his future fame. Said he to a friend, "That young man has talents enough to be President of the United States."

Such an encomium was justified not only by moral habits remarkably correct, for one of his age and temperament, but by those native and acquired powers of mind, which enabled him, in just four years after commencing the Latin Grammar, to graduate with the

highest honors, at the head of a large and talented class. The oration prepared for that occasion was on "The qualifications necessary to a perfect statesman."

On his return home, he enrolled himself a student of law, with H. W. Desaussure, but soon after went again to New England, and entered the Litchfield law school, where for eighteen months under the Judges Reeve and Gould, he made great advancement. "The morning was devoted to law, the rest of the day to general literature and political science, and he cultivated, with especial care, extemporaneous speaking. It was in the debating society of this place, where the most agitating political topics of the day were discussed before crowded meetings, that Mr. Calhoun who was ever the champion of the republican side, first developed his great powers of parliamentary debate. It was his custom, even then, to prepare by reflection, and not by arranging on paper, what he meant to say, nor by taking notes of the arguments of others. A good memory preserved the order of his own thoughts, and a wonderful power of analysis and classification enabled him to digest rapidly, and distribute in their proper places, the answer and refutation of all the arguments of the speakers, however numerous, whom he followed. In 1806, he returned to South Carolina, and in 1807 commenced, in his native district, a lucrative practice, ranking, from the very outset, with the most eminent lawyers in his circuit."

The above details throw sufficient light, perhaps on the preliminary training of Mr. Calhoun. Let us, in the next place, contemplate him as he enters more prominent-

ly on political life. The affair of the Chesapeake was the occasion of his first being brought into distinguished notice. A public meeting was called at Abbeville Court House, and Mr. Calhoun was one of the committee appointed to draft an address and resolutions. By request also he was expected to make a speech. When the day and hour arrived, a great assembly of the people were in attendance. It was his first appearance before the public in the form of popular address, but, trying as the situation was, he acquitted himself in a manner that excited enthusiastic approbation. Soon after, he was proposed as a candidate for the next legislature, and despite popular prejudice against the election of a lawyer, he was chosen by a large majority. He remained in this office two sessions, and distinguished himself for that mental force and political sagacity, for which he has since proved himself so remarkable.

Having been elected by a vast majority to represent the district composed of Abbeville, Newbury, and Laurens, he took his seat in Congress in the autumn of 1811, at the commencement of the first session of the twelfth Congress. His reputation had preceded him, and immediately after he first entered the Capitol, Mr. Calhoun was appointed on the Committee of Foreign Relations, in conjunction with Mr. Peter B. Porter and Mr. Grundy, of the administration side, and Mr. Randolph and Mr. Key, of the opposition. That Committee made an able report, on which the discussions of the session chiefly turned, and which recommended an immediate appeal to arms against the aggressions of England. John Randolph made an able and eloquent speech against the

measures proposed. Mr. Calhoun's first effort in Congress was a reply to the powerful antagonist of Roanoke, and in defence of immediate redress for the injuries our commerce had received. Public excitement, says a historian, was strong, the house crowded, and the orator, rising with the greatness of the occasion, delivered a speech, which for lofty patriotism, cogent reasoning, and soul-stirring eloquence, has seldom been equalled. It met unbounded and universal applause. He was compared to "one of the old sages of the old Congress, with the graces of youth," and the "young Carolinian" was hailed as "one of the master spirits, who stamp their name upon the age in which they live."

The speech referred to above has been preserved, and it is worthy of observation how strongly the logical peculiarities of the orator appear therein, at a time, too, when there was every temptation to rhetorical excess. For example, take the passage wherein he replies to Mr. Randolph's statement of the financial impracticability of the war:

"Before I proceed to answer the gentleman particularly, let me call the attention of the house to one circumstance; that is, that almost the whole of his arguments consisted of an enumeration of evils always incident to war, however just and necessary; and that, if they have any force, it is calculated to produce unqualified submission to every species of insult and injury. I do not feel myself bound to answer arguments of the above description; and if I should touch on them, it will be only incidentally, and not for the purpose of serious refutation. The first argument of the gentleman

which I shall notice, is the unprepared state of the country. Whatever weight this argument might have, in a question of immediate war, it surely has little in that of preparation for it. If our country is unprepared, let us remedy the evil as soon as possible. Let the gentleman submit his plan; and if a reasonable one, I doubt not it will be supported by the house. But, sir, let us admit the fact and the whole force of the argument; I ask whose is the fault? Who has been a member for many years past, and has seen the defenceless state of his country even near home, under his own eyes, without a single endeavor to remedy so serious an evil? Let him not say, "I have acted in a minority." It is no less the duty of the minority than a majority to endeavor to serve our country. For that purpose we are sent here, and not for that of opposition. We are next told of the expenses of the war, and that the people will not pay taxes. Why not? Is it a want of capacity? What, with one million tons of shipping; a trade of near one hundred million dollars; manufactures of one hundred and fifty million dollars, and agriculture of thrice that amount, shall we be told the country wants capacity to raise and support ten thousand or fifteen thousand additional regulars? No; it has the ability, that is admitted; but will it not have the disposition? Is not the course a just and necessary one? Shall we then utter this libel on the nation? Where will proof be found of a fact so disgraceful? It is said, in the history of the country twelve or fifteen years ago. The case is not parallel. The ability of the country has greatly increased since. The object of that tax was

unpopular. But on this, as well as my memory and almost infant observation at that time serve me, the objection was not to the tax, or its amount, but the mode of collection. The eye of the nation was frightened by the number of officers; its love of liberty shocked with the multiplicity of regulations. We, in the vile spirit of imitation, copied from the most oppressive part of European laws on that subject, and imposed on a young and virtuous nation all the severe provisions made necessary by corruption and long-growing chicane. If taxes should become necessary, I do not hesitate to say the people will pay cheerfully. It is for their government and their cause, and would be their interest and duty to pay. But it may be, and I believe was said, that the nation will not pay taxes, because the rights violated are not worth defending; or that the defence will cost more than the profit.

“Sir, I here enter my solemn protest against this low and ‘calculating avarice’ entering this hall of legislation. It is only fit for shops and counting-houses, and ought not to disgrace the seat of sovereignty by its squalid and vile appearance. Whenever it touches sovereign power, the nation is ruined. It is too shortsighted to defend itself. It is an unpromising spirit, always ready to yield a part to save the balance. It is too timid to have in itself the laws of self-preservation. It is never safe but under the shield of honor. Sir, I only know of one principle to make a nation great, to produce in this country not the form but real spirit of union, and that is, to protect every citizen in the lawful pursuit of his business. He will then feel that he is

backed by the government—that its arm is his arms, and will rejoice in its increased strength and prosperity. Protection and patriotism are reciprocal. This is the road that all great nations have trod. Sir, I am not versed in this calculating policy, and will not, therefore, pretend to estimate in dollars and cents the value of national independence or national affection. I cannot dare to measure in shillings and pence the misery, the stripes and the slavery of our impressed seamen; nor even to value our shipping, commercial and agricultural losses under the orders in council and the British system of blockade. I hope I have not condemned any prudent estimate of the means of a country, before it enters on a war. This is wisdom, the other folly.”

On the retirement of General Porter from Congress early in the session of 1811, Mr. Calhoun was placed at the head of the Committee on Foreign Relations, which committee, in addition to their other appropriate duties, were called upon to report bills to carry into effect the military preparations they had recommended. Thus, by circumstances, as well as by natural competency, was he at this early period in the front rank of the brave party, which sustained the war with England.

When we come more particularly to analyze the eloquence of Mr. Calhoun, we shall point out more specifically his short and pregnant sentences, disregard of oratorical conventionalities, and bold directness of diction. But we cannot help remarking in view of his earliest efforts, the marked and characteristic features of his most mature productions. In the former, as in the latter, are displayed those remarkable powers of reason-

ing which have made his speeches to take a place among the most admirable political literature of the age. His independent self-reliance equals the clearness of his perception, and imparts a singular force to his style. Thus when the embargo was greatly relied on, and the enthusiastic South greatly praised the scheme, the young statesman had the hardihood to oppose it in the following terms :

“The restrictive system, as a mode of resistance, or as a means of obtaining redress, has never been a favorite one with me. I wish not to censure the motives which dictated it, or attribute weakness to those who first resorted to it for a restoration of our rights. But I object to the restrictive system, because it does not suit the genius of the people, or that of our Government, or the geographical character of our country. We are a people essentially active ; I may say we are pre-eminently so. ~~No passive system can suit such a people ;~~ in action superior to all others, in patient endurance inferior to none. Nor does it suit the genius of our Government. Our Government is founded on freedom, and hates coercion. To make the restrictive system effective, requires the most arbitrary laws. England, with the severest penal statutes, has not been able to exclude prohibited articles ; and Napoleon, with all his power and vigilance, was obliged to resort to the most barbarous laws to enforce his Continental system.”

After showing how the whole mercantile community must become corrupt by the temptations and facilities for smuggling, and how the public opinion of the commercial community (upon which the system must depend

for its enforcement), becomes opposed to it, and gives sanction to its violation, he proceeds—

“ But there are other objections to the system. It renders Government odious. The farmer inquires why he gets no more for his produce, and he is told it is owing to the embargo, or commercial restrictions. In this he sees only the hand of his own Government, and not the acts of violence and injustice which this system is intended to counteract. His censures fall on the Government. This is an unhappy state of the public mind; and even, I might say, in a Government resting essentially on public opinion, a dangerous one. In war it is different. Its privation, it is true, may be equal or greater; but the public mind, under the strong impulses of that state of things, becomes steeled against sufferings. The difference is almost infinite between the passive and active state of the mind. Tie down a hero, and he feels the puncture of a pin; throw him into battle, and he is almost insensible to vital gashes. So in war. Impelled alternately by hope and fear, stimulated by revenge, depressed by shame, or elevated by victory, the people become invincible. No privation can shake their fortitude; no calamity break their spirit. Even when equally successful, the contrast between the two systems is striking. War and restriction may leave the country equally exhausted; but the latter not only leaves you poor, but, even when successful, dispirited, divided, discontented, with diminished patriotism, and the morals of a considerable portion of your people corrupted. Not so in war. In that state, the common danger unites all, strengthens the bonds of society, and feeds the

flame of patriotism. The national character mounts to energy. In exchange for the expenses and privations of war, you obtain military and naval skill, and a more perfect organization of such parts of your Administration as are connected with the science of national defence. Sir, are these advantages to be counted as trifles in the state of the world? Can they be measured by moneyed valuation? I would prefer a single victory over the enemy, by sea or land, to all the good we shall ever derive from the continuation of the Non-importation Act. I know not that a victory would produce an equal pressure on the enemy; but I am certain of what is of greater consequence, it would be accompanied by more salutary effects on ourselves. The memory of Saratoga, Princeton, and Eutaw are immortal. It is there you will find the country's boast and pride—the inexhaustible source of great and heroic sentiments. But what will history say of restriction? What examples worthy of imitation will it furnish to posterity? What pride, what pleasure, will our children find in the events of such times? Let me not be considered romantic. This nation ought to be taught to rely on its courage, its fortitude, its skill and virtue, for protection. These are the only safe-guards in the hour of danger. Man was endowed with these great qualities for his defence. There is nothing about him that indicates that he is to conquer by endurance. He is not incrustated in a shell; he is not taught to rely upon his insensibility, his passive suffering, for defence. No, sir; it is on the invincible mind, on a magnanimous nature, he ought to rely. Here is the superiority of our kind; it is these that render man the

lord of the world. It is the destiny of his condition that nations rise above nations, as they are endued in a greater degree with these brilliant qualities."

It will not be expected that in the brief biographical sketch requisite to our present purpose, that we should attempt to trace the numerous and invaluable services of Mr. Calhoun during the war. During the gloom of that period, calculated to overwhelm and appal every heart not fortified with patriotism of the purest stamp, he never faltered, never despaired of a glorious triumph over all opposition; but by his genius and wisdom, he rose conspicuous in the constellation of talents which distinguished the parties both for and against the measures he chiefly drafted and perpetually sustained, and in the popular branch of Congress, signalized himself as the main support of the "second war of independence."

At a subsequent session, Mr. Calhoun was placed at the head of the committee on currency, in which capacity he originated and sustained with great success measures which materially benefitted the financial condition of the whole country. It was while struggling in this sphere of usefulness that he had pronounced in his presence the following encomium by Mr. Grosvenor, a strong political opponent.—"Mr. Speaker, I will not be restrained—no barrier shall exist, which I will not leap over, for the purpose of offering to that gentleman my thanks for the judicious, independent, and national course which he has pursued in the House for the last two years, and particularly on the subject now before us. Let the honorable gentleman continue with the same independence, aloof from party views and local



prejudices, to pursue the great interests of his country, and fulfill the high destiny for which it is manifest he was born. The buzz of popular applause may not cheer him on the way, but he will inevitably arrive at a high and happy elevation in the view of his country and the world."

After a brilliant career in Congress of six years, a new and yet more exalted theatre was opened for the display of his talents. In December, 1817, Mr. Calhoun was appointed by Mr. Monroe to the office of Secretary of War. He entered this department under the most adverse circumstances, but only the more to develop his sagacity and practical skill. He found upwards of forty millions of dollars of unsettled accounts, which he speedily reduced to three millions. In addition to this great liquidation of the public debt, it is said he conferred upon the republic a still greater service, by the exactness of accountability which he introduced into every branch of the disbursements, and in consequence of which he was enabled to report to Congress in 1823, that of the entire amount of money drawn from the Treasury in 1822, for the military service, amounting to four millions five hundred thousand dollars, and over, although it passed through the hands of nearly three hundred disbursing agents, there had not been a single defalcation, nor the loss of a cent to the government; and by various other retrenchments he had saved to the country annually more than one million three hundred thousand dollars.

It is well known that Mr. Calhoun was twice elected Vice President of the United States, upon which office

he conferred a dignity and character every way worthy of himself and the station.

On Mr. Hayne's election as Governor of South Carolina, Mr. Calhoun, then Vice-President, was chosen to fill his seat in the Senate of the United States. Says a writer, "It had been intimated that he was to have been arrested on his road to Washington ; and with the single exception which was presented by Mr. O'Connell's initiation into the British Parliament, after the passage of the Catholic Emancipation Bill, there never was a moment when the swearing in of a new member was awaited with expectation so anxious and curious. When he entered the Senate Chamber, where for the seven last years he had presided, over which he then held authority as representative of the collected Union, and in which he now appeared as the delegate of a State, which the federal authorities had pronounced to be in open rebellion, all eyes were turned upon him, and every ear was open to catch the slightest whisper, as he was called upon to take the constitutional oath." Very different is the impression left on the mind by the swaggering air with which the great Irish agitator tossed off, as it were, a dose which he would soon take means to get rid of, the oath of allegiance to the British crown, and the oath of disregard to papal supremacy ; and that created by the calm and religious tone with which the southern chief repeated those solemn words which called God and his country to witness his fidelity to the Federal Constitution. When the ceremony was over, and he had taken his seat among his old political friends, now, with but few exceptions, arranged in hostile array against

him, it was impossible but that the hard feelings of party should have become a little softened. No one who knew his purity of character or purpose, who recollected that twenty years had passed since he entered into the political arena, and that, in that long period, there had not been a speck on his fair and honorable fame, no one who had stood by him in the calamities of the war of 1812, or the perils of the re-action of 1816, could then believe that he harbored in his heart, for an instant, a reservation to the oath he had taken. There were many who may have looked upon him as an ambitious and dangerous man, but we question whether there were any who knew his character, and knew his history, who doubted, no matter how mistaken they might have considered his notions of the unconstitutionality of the tariff of 1828, the full sincerity of his attachment to the limited constitution under which the Union exists."

It was said in the outset that Mr. Calhoun's political life should be divided into three great eras. We have described the first, and the opening session of Congress, to which we have just alluded, marks the second. It was then that the great battle of State-Rights was fought, Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Webster being the leading champions. We subjoin two passages from that stage in the debate in which the two great statesmen examine the interpretation given by the Constitution itself, of the question whether the ~~Constitution is a compact or~~ otherwise.

MR. WEBSTER.

"Whether the Constitution be a compact between States in their sovereign capacities, is a question which

must be mainly argued from what is contained in the instrument itself. We all agree that it is an instrument which has been in some way clothed with power. We all admit that it speaks with authority. The first question then is—What does it say of itself? What does it purport to be? Does it style itself a league, confederacy, or compact between sovereign States? It is to be remembered, that the Constitution began to speak only after its adoption. Until it was ratified by nine States, it was but a proposal, the mere draft of an instrument. It was like a deed drawn but not executed. The Convention had framed it; sent it to Congress then sitting under the Confederation: Congress had transmitted it to the State Legislatures; and by the last, it was laid before the Conventions of the people in the several States. All this while it was inoperative paper. It had received no stamp of authority: it spoke no language. But when ratified by the people in their respective Conventions, then it had a voice and spoke authentically. Every word in it had then received the sanction of the popular will, and was to be received as the expression of that will. What the Constitution says of itself, therefore, is as conclusive as what it says on any other point. Does it call itself a ‘compact?’ Certainly not. It uses the word *compact* but once, and that is when it declares that the States shall enter into no compact. Does it call itself a ‘league,’ a ‘confederacy,’ a ‘subsisting treaty between the States?’ Certainly not. There is not a particle of such language in all its pages. But it declares itself a CONSTITUTION. What is a *Constitution*? Certainly not a league or confederacy, but a *funda-*

mental law. That fundamental regulation which determines the manner in which the public authority is to be executed, is what forms the *Constitution of a State*. Those primary rules which concern the body itself, and the very being of the political society, the form of government and the manner in which power is to be exercised—all, in a word, which form together the Constitution of a State—these are fundamental laws. This is the language of the public writers. But do we need to be informed in this country what a *constitution* is? Is it not an idea perfectly familiar, definite and well settled? We are at no loss to understand what is meant by the Constitution of one of the States—and the Constitution of the United States speaks of itself as being an instrument of the same nature. It says, this *Constitution* shall be the law of the land, anything in *State Constitutions* to the contrary, notwithstanding. And speaks of itself, too, in plain contradistinction from a confederation: for it says, that all debts contracted, and all engagements entered into by the United States shall be as valid under this *Constitution* as under the *Confederation*. It does not say, as valid under this *compact*, or this league, or this confederation, as under the former confederation, but as valid under this Constitution.”

MR. CALHOUN.

“It now remains to consider the third and last proposition contained in the resolution—that it is a binding and a subsisting compact between the States. The Senator was not explicit on this point. I understand him, however, as asserting that though formed by the States,

the Constitution was not binding between the States as distinct communities, but between the American people in the aggregate, who, in consequence of the adoption of the Constitution, according to the opinion of the Senator, became one people, at least to the extent of the delegated powers. This would, indeed, be a great change. All acknowledge, that previous to the adoption of the Constitution, the States constituted distinct and independent communities in full possession of their sovereignty; and surely, if the adoption of the Constitution was intended to effect the great and important change in their condition which the theory of the Senator supposes, some evidence of it ought to be found in the instrument itself. It professes to be a careful and full enumeration of all the powers which the States delegated, and of every modification of their political condition. The Senator said, that he looked to the Constitution in order to ascertain its real character; and surely he ought to look to the same instrument in order to ascertain what changes were in fact made in the political condition of the States and the country. But with the exception of 'We, the people of the United States,' in the preamble, he has not pointed out a single indication in the Constitution of the great change which he conceives has been effected in this respect. Now, sir, I intend to prove that the only argument on which the gentleman relies on this point, must utterly fail him. I do not intend to go into a critical examination of the expression of the preamble to which I have referred. I do not deem it necessary; but were it, it might easily be shown that it is at least as applicable to my view of the Consti-

tution as to that of the Senator, and that the whole of his argument on this point rests on the ambiguity of the term thirteen United States; which may mean certain territorial limits comprehending within them the whole of the States and Territories of the Union. In this sense the people of the United States may mean *all* the people living within these limits, without reference to the States or Territories in which they may reside, or of which they may be citizens, and it is in this sense only that the expression gives the least countenance to the opinion of the Senator. But it may also mean *the States united*, which inversion alone, without further explanation, removes the ambiguity to which I have referred. The expression in this sense, means no more than to speak of the people of the several States in their united and confederated capacity, and if it were requisite, it might be shown that it is only in this sense that the expression is used in the Constitution. But it is not necessary. A single argument will for ever settle this point. Whatever may be the true meaning of this expression, it is not applicable to the condition of the States as they exist under the Constitution, but as it was under the old confederation before its adoption. The Constitution had not yet been adopted, and the States in ordaining it could only speak of themselves in the condition in which they then existed, and not in that in which they would exist under the Constitution. So that if the argument of the Senator proves anything, it proves, not, as he supposes, that the Constitution forms the American people into an aggregate

mass of individuals, but that such was their political condition before it was adopted under the old confederation, directly contrary to his argument in the previous part of the discussion.

“But I intend not to leave this important point, the last refuge of those who advocate consolidation, even on this conclusive argument. I have shown that the Constitution affords not the least evidence of the mighty change of the political condition of the States and the country, which the Senator supposed it effected; and I intend now, by the most decisive proof drawn from the constitutional instrument itself, to show that no such change was intended, and that the people are united under it as States, and not as individuals. On this point there is a very important part of the Constitution entirely and strangely overlooked by the Senator in this debate, as it is expressed in the first resolution, which furnishes the conclusive evidence, not only that the Constitution is a compact, but a subsisting compact, binding between the States. I allude to the 7th article, which provides that ‘the ratification of the Convention of nine States shall be sufficient for the establishment of the Constitution *between the States* so ratifying the same.’ Yes, *between the States*—these little words mean a volume—compacts, not laws, bind *between* the States, and it here binds, not between individuals, but between *the States*,—the States *ratifying*—imply, as strong as language can make it, that the Constitution is what I have asserted it to be—a compact ratifying the States, and a subsisting compact binding the States ratifying it.

“But, sir, I shall not leave this point, all-important in

establishing the true theory of our government, on this argument alone—demonstrative and conclusive as I hold it to be. Another, not much less powerful, but of a different character, may be drawn from the 12th amended article, which provides that ‘the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited to it by the States, are reserved to the States respectively or to the people.’ The article of ratification which I have just cited, informs us that the Constitution which delegates powers, was ratified by the States, and is binding between them. This informs us to whom the powers are delegated, a most important fact in determining the point at issue between the Senator and myself. According to his views, the Constitution created a union between individuals, if the solecism may be allowed, and that it formed, at least to the extent of the powers delegated, one people, and not a Federal Union of the States, as I contend; or to express the same idea differently, that the delegation of powers was to the American people in the aggregate (for it is only by such delegation that they could be made into one people); and not to the *United States*, directly contrary to the article just cited, which declares that the powers are delegated to the United States. And here it is worthy of notice, that the Senator cannot shelter himself under the ambiguous phrase ‘to the people of the United States,’ under which he would certainly have taken refuge, had the Constitution so expressed it; but fortunately for the cause of truth, and for the great principles of constitutional liberty, for which I am contending, ‘people’ is omitted; thus making the delegation of power clear and unequivocal

to the *United States* as distinct political communities, and conclusively proving that all the powers delegated are reciprocally delegated by the States to each other, as distinct political communities."

To this same period belongs Mr. Calhoun's speech against the Force Bill, in which he defended himself against the accusations of General Jackson. Said he :

"Here I must pause for a moment to repel a charge which has been so often made, and which even the President has reiterated in his proclamation; the charge that I have been actuated in the part which I have taken by feelings of disappointed ambition. I again repeat that I deeply regret the necessity of noticing myself in so important a discussion; and that nothing can induce me to advert to my own course but the conviction that it is due to the cause at which a blow is aimed through me. It is only in this view that I notice it.

"It ill became the Chief Magistrate to make this charge. The course which the State took, and which led to the present controversy between her and the General Government was taken as far back as 1828, in the very midst of that severe canvass which placed him in power, and in that very canvass Carolina openly avowed and zealously maintained those very principles which he, the Chief Magistrate, now officially pronounces to be treason and rebellion. That was the period at which he ought to have spoken. Having remained silent then, and having, under his approval, implied by that silence, received the support and vote of the State, I, if a sense of decorum did not prevent it, might recriminate with the double charge of deception and ingratitude. My

object, however, is not to assail the President, but to defend myself against a most unfounded charge. The time alone at which the course upon which this charge of *disappointed ambition* is founded, will of itself repel it, in the eye of every unprejudiced and honest man. The doctrine which I now sustain, under the present difficulties, I openly avowed and maintained immediately after the act of 1828 ; that "bill of abominations," as it has been so often and properly termed. Was I at that period disappointed in any views of ambition which I might be supposed to entertain ? I was Vice President of the United States, elected by an overwhelming majority. I was a candidate for re-election on the ticket with General Jackson himself, with a certain prospect of a triumphant success of that ticket, and with a fair prospect of the highest office to which an American citizen can aspire. What was my course under these prospects ? Did I look to my own advancement, or to an honest and faithful discharge of my duty ? Let facts speak for themselves. When the bill to which I have referred came from the other House to the Senate, the almost universal impression was, that its fate would depend upon my casting vote. It was known that, as the bill then stood, the Senate was nearly equally divided ; and as it was a combined measure, originating with the politicians and manufacturers, and intended as much to bear upon the Presidential election as to protect manufactures, it was believed that, as a stroke of political policy, its fate would be made to depend on my vote, in order to defeat General Jackson's election, as well as my own. The friends of General Jackson

were alarmed, and I was earnestly entreated to leave the chair, in order to avoid the responsibility, under the plausible argument that, if the Senate should be equally divided, the bill would be lost without the aid of my casting vote. The reply to this entreaty was, that no consideration, personal to myself, could induce me to take such a course; that I considered the measure as of the most dangerous character, and calculated to produce the most fearful crisis; that the payment of the public debt was just at hand; and that the great increase of revenue which it would pour into the treasury would accelerate the approach of that period, and that the country would be placed in the most trying of situations, with an immense revenue, without the means of absorption upon any legitimate or constitutional object of appropriation, and would be compelled to submit to all the corrupting consequences of a large surplus, or to make a sudden reduction of the rates of duties, which would prove ruinous to the very interests which were then forcing the passage of the bill. Under these views, I determined to remain in the chair, and if the bill came to me to give my casting vote against it, and in doing so, to give my reasons at large; but at the same time, I informed my friends that I would retire from the ticket, so that the election of General Jackson might not be embarrassed by any act of mine. Sir, I was amazed at the folly and infatuation of that period. So completely absorbed was Congress in the game of ambition and avarice, from the double impulse of the manufacturers and politicians, that none but a few appeared to anticipate the present crisis, at which now all are

alarmed, but which is the inevitable result of what was then done. As to myself, I clearly foresaw what has since followed. The road of ambition lay open before me—I had but to follow the corrupt tendency of the times: but I choose to tread the rugged path of duty.”

After having corrected, as he believed, some of the prominent misrepresentations as to the nature of the controversy with South Carolina, and giving a rapid sketch of the movements of that State in reference to it, he next proceeds to notice some objections connected with the ordinance, and the proceedings under it :

“ The first and most prominent of these is directed against what is called the Test Oath, which an effort has been made to render odious. So far from deserving the denunciation which has been levelled against it, I view this provision of the ordinance as but the natural result of the doctrines entertained by the State, and the position which she occupies. The people of that State believe that the Union is a union of States, and not of individuals ; that it was formed by the States, and that the citizens of the several States were bound to it through the acts of their several States ; that each State ratified the Constitution for itself, and that it was only by such ratification of a State that any obligation was imposed upon the citizens : thus believing, it is the opinion of the people of Carolina that it belongs to the State which has imposed the obligation to declare, in the last resort, the extent of this obligation, as far as her citizens are concerned ; and this upon the plain principles which exist in all analagous cases of compact between sovereign bodies. On this principle the people of the State, acting

in their sovereign capacity in convention, precisely as they adopted their own and the Federal Constitution, have declared by the ordinance, that the acts of Congress which imposed duty under the authority to lay imposts are acts not for revenue, as intended by the Constitutions, but for protection, and therefore null and void. The ordinance thus enacted by the people of the State themselves, acting as a sovereign community, is as obligatory on the citizens of the State as any portion of the Constitution. In prescribing, then, the oath to obey the ordinance, no more was done than to prescribe an oath to obey the Constitution. It is, in fact, but a particular oath of allegiance, and in every respect similar to that which is prescribed under the Constitution of the United States, to be administered to all the officers of the State and Federal Governments ; and is no more deserving the harsh and bitter epithets which have been heaped upon it than that, or any similar oath. It ought to be borne in mind, that, according to the opinion which prevails in Carolina, the right of resistance to the unconstitutional laws of Congress belongs to the State, and not to her individual citizens ; and that, though the latter may, in a mere question of *meum* and *tuum*, resist, through the courts, an unconstitutional encroachment upon their rights, yet the final stand against usurpation rests not with them, but with the State of which they are members ; and such act of resistance by a State binds the conscience and the allegiance of the citizen. But there appears to be a general misapprehension as to the extent to which the State has acted under this part of the ordinance. Instead of sweeping every officer by a

general proscription of the minority, as has been represented in debate, as far as my knowledge extends, not a single individual has been removed. The State, has, in fact, acted with the greatest tenderness, all circumstances considered, towards citizens who differed from the majority; and, in that spirit, has directed the oath to be administered only in cases of some official act directed to be performed, in which obedience to the ordinance is involved.

“It has been farther objected that the State has acted precipitately. What! precipitately! after making a strenuous resistance for twelve years; by discussion here, and in the other House of Congress; by essays in all forms; by resolutions, remonstrances, and protests on the part of her Legislature; and, finally, by attempting an appeal to the judicial power of the United States? I say attempting, for they have been prevented from bringing the question fairly before the Court, and that by an act of that very majority in Congress who now upbraid them for not making that appeal; of that majority who, on a motion of one of the members in the other House, from South Carolina, refused to give to the act of 1828 its true title, that it was a *protective*, and not a *revenue* act. The State has never, it is true, relied upon that tribunal, the Supreme Court, to vindicate its reserved rights; yet they have always considered it as an auxiliary means of defence, of which they would gladly have availed themselves to test the constitutionality of protection, had they not been deprived of the means of doing so by the act of the majority.

“Notwithstanding this long delay of more than ten

years, under this continued encroachment of the Government, we now hear it on all sides, by friends and foes, gravely pronounced that the State has acted precipitately—that her conduct has been rash! That such should be the language of an interested majority, who, by means of this unconstitutional and oppressive system, are annually extorting millions from the South to be bestowed upon other sections, is not at all surprising. Whatever impedes the course of avarice and ambition will ever be denounced as rash and precipitate; and had South Carolina delayed her resistance fifty instead of twelve years, she would have heard from the same quarter the same language; but it is really surprising that those who are suffering in common with herself, and who have complained equally loud of their grievances, who have pronounced the very acts which she has asserted within *her* limits to be oppressive, unconstitutional, and ruinous, after so long a struggle—a struggle longer than that which preceded the separation of these States from the mother country—longer than the period of the Trojan war—should now complain of precipitancy! No, it is not Carolina which has acted precipitately; but her sister States, who have suffered in common with her, have acted tardily. Had they acted as she has done, had they performed their duty with equal energy and promptness, our situation this day would be very different from what we now find it. Delays are said to be dangerous; and never was the maxim more true than in the present case, a case of monopoly. It is the very nature of monopolies to grow. If we take from one side a large portion of the proceeds of its

labor, and give it to the other, the side from which we take must constantly decay, and that to which we give must prosper and increase. Such is the action of the protective system. It exacts from the South a large portion of the proceeds of its industry, which it bestows upon the other sections, in the shape of bounties to manufactures, and appropriations in a thousand forms, pensions, improvements of rivers and harbors, roads and canals, and in every shape that wit or ingenuity can devise. Can we, then, be surprised that the principle of monopoly grows, when it is so amply remunerated at the expense of those who support it?"

The closing paragraphs of this great speech are very impressive. The orator continues:

"The controversy is only as to the means by which our citizens may be protected against the acknowledged encroachments on their rights. This being the point at issue between the parties, and the very object of the majority being an efficient protection of the citizens through the State tribunals, the measures adopted to enforce the ordinance of course received the most decisive character. We were not children to act by halves. Yet for acting thus efficiently the State is denounced, and this bill reported to overrule, by military force, the civil tribunals and civil process of the State! Sir, I consider this bill, and the arguments which have been urged on this floor in its support, as the most triumphant acknowledgment that Nullification is peaceful and efficient, and so deeply intrenched in the principles of our system, that it cannot be assailed but by prostrating the Constitution, and substituting the supremacy

of military force in lieu of the supremacy of the laws. In fact, the advocates of this bill refute their own argument. They tell us that the ordinance is unconstitutional; that they infract the Constitution of South Carolina, although to me the objection appears absurd, as it was adopted by the very authority which adopted the Constitution itself. They also tell us that the Supreme Court is the appointed arbiter of all controversies between a State and the General Government. Why then, do they not leave this controversy to that tribunal? Why do they not confide to them the abrogation of the ordinance and the laws made in pursuance of it, and the assertion of that supremacy which they claim for the laws of Congress? The State stands pledged to resist no process of the court. Why, then, confer on the President the extensive and unlimited powers provided in this bill? Why authorize him to use military force to arrest the civil process of the State? But one answer can be given: That, in a contest between the State and the General Government, if the resistance be limited on both sides to the civil process, the State, by its inherent sovereignty, standing upon its reserved powers, will prove too powerful in such a controversy, and must triumph over the Federal Government, sustained by its delegated and limited authority; and in this answer we have an acknowledgment of the truth of those great principles for which the State has so firmly and nobly contended.

“Having made these remarks, the great question is now presented:—Has Congress the right to pass this

bill?* which I will next proceed to consider. The decision of this question involves the inquiry into the provisions of the bill. What are they? *It puts at the disposal of the President the army and navy, and the entire militia of the country; it enables him, at his pleasure, to subject every man in the United States, not exempt from militia duty, to martial law: to call him from his ordinary occupation to the field, and under the penalty of fine and imprisonment, inflicted by a court martial, to compel him to embrace his hand in his brother's blood.* There is no limitation on the power of the sword, and that over the purse is equally without restraint; for, among the extraordinary features of the bill, it contains no appropriation, which, under existing circumstances, is tantamount to an unlimited appropriation. The President may, under its authority, incur any expenditure, and pledge the national faith to meet it. He may create a new national debt, at the very moment of the termination of the former—a debt of millions, to be paid out of the proceeds of the labor of that section of the country whose dearest constitutional rights this bill prostrates! Thus exhibiting the extraordinary spectacle, that the very section of the country which is urging this measure, and carrying the sword of devastation against us, are, at the same time, incurring a new debt, to be paid by those whose rights are violated; while those who violate them are to receive the benefits, in the shape of bounties and expenditures.

“And for what purpose is the unlimited control of the purse and of the sword thus placed at the disposition of

* The Force Bill.

the Executive? To make war against one of the free and sovereign members of this confederation, which the bill proposes to deal with, not as a State, but as a collection of banditti or outlaws. Thus exhibiting the impious spectacle of this Government, the creature of the States, making war against the power to which it owes its existence.

“The bill violates the Constitution, plainly and palpably, in many of its provisions, by authorizing the President, at his pleasure, to place the different ports of this Union on an equal footing, contrary to the provision of the Constitution which declares that no preference shall be given to one port over another. It also violates the Constitution by authorizing him, at his discretion, to impose cash duties on one port while credit is allowed in others ; by enabling the President to regulate commerce, a power vested in Congress alone ; and by drawing within the jurisdiction of the United States’ courts, powers never intended to be conferred on them. As great as these objections are, they become insignificant in the provisions of a bill which, by a single blow, by treating the States as a mere lawless mass of individuals, prostrates all the barriers of the Constitution. I will pass over the minor considerations, and proceed directly to the great point. This bill proceeds on the ground that the entire sovereignty of this country belongs to the American people, as forming one great community, and regards the States as mere fractions or counties, and not as an integral part of the Union ; having no more right to resist the encroachments of the Government than a county has to resist the authority of a State ;

and treating such resistance as the lawless acts of so many individuals, without possessing sovereignty or political rights. It has been said that the bill declares war against South Carolina. No. It decrees a massacre of her citizens! War has something ennobling about it, and, with all its horrors, brings into action the highest qualities, intellectual and moral. It was, perhaps, in the order of Providence that it should be permitted for that very purpose. But this bill declares no war, except, indeed, it be that which savages wage; a war, not against the community, but the citizens of whom that community is composed. But I regard it as worse than *savage* warfare—as an attempt to take away life under color of law, without the trial by jury, or any other safeguard which the Constitution has thrown around the life of the citizen! It authorizes the President, or even his deputies, when they may suppose the law to be violated, without the intervention of a court or jury, to kill without mercy or discrimination!

“It has been said by the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. Grundy) to be a measure of peace! Yes, such peace as the wolf gives to the lamb—the kite to the dove! Such peace as Russia gives to Poland, or death to its victim! A peace, by extinguishing the political existence of the State, by awing her into an abandonment of the exercise of every power which constitutes her a sovereign community. It is to South Carolina a question of self-preservation; and I proclaim it, that, should this bill pass, and an attempt be made to enforce it, it will be resisted, at every hazard—even that of death itself. Death is not the greatest calamity; there

are others still more terrible to the free and brave, and among them may be placed the loss of liberty and honor. There are thousands of her brave sons who, if need be, are prepared cheerfully to lay down their lives in defence of the State, and the great principles of constitutional liberty for which she is contending. God forbid that this should become necessary! It never can be, unless this government is resolved to bring the question to extremity, when her gallant sons will stand prepared to perform the last duty—to die nobly.”

The third remarkable era in Mr. Calhoun's political career began with the agitation of the sub-treasury question, in 1837. The general suspension of the banks occasioned the call of an extra session of Congress, at the opening of which Mr. Van Buren presented a message which not a little confounded both parties in both wings of the Capitol. On learning the course which the President intended to pursue, Mr. Calhoun at once resolved to sustain him. In defence of the leading financial bill, reported to meet the exigencies of the country, he made three speeches, which are justly ranked among the most distinguished of his life. We quote three short extracts, which present an agreeable variety, each one containing sentiments worthy of the gravest consideration. In the first, the orator alludes to the *influence of banking on the intellect*:

“But its most fatal effects originate in its bearing on the moral and intellectual development of the community. The great principle of demand and supply governs the moral and intellectual world no less than the business and commercial. If a community be so organized as to

cause a demand for high mental attainments, they are sure to be developed. If its honors and rewards are allotted to pursuits that require their development ; by creating a demand for intelligence, knowledge, wisdom, justice, firmness, courage, patriotism, and the like, they are sure to be produced. But, if allotted to pursuits that require inferior qualities, the higher are sure to decay and perish. I object to the banking system, because it allots the honors and rewards of the community, in a very undue proportion, to a pursuit the least of all others favorable to the development of the higher mental qualities, intellectual or moral. to the decay of the learned professions, and the more noble pursuits of science, literature, philosophy, and statesmanship, and the great and more useful pursuits of business and industry. With the vast increase of its profits and influence, it is gradually concentrating in itself most of the prizes of life—wealth, honor, and influence—to the great disparagement and degradation of all the liberal and useful and generous pursuits of society. The rising generation cannot but feel its deadening influence. The youths that crowd our colleges, and behold the road to honor and distinction terminating in a banking-house, will feel the spirit of emulation decay within them, and will no longer be pressed forward by generous ardor to mount up the rugged steep of science, as the road to honor and distinction, when, perhaps the highest point they could attain in what was once the most honorable and influential of all the learned professions, would be the place of attorney to a bank.”

The second quotation relates to the question, *Is the deposite scheme constitutional?*

"I have not yet exhausted my constitutional objections. I rise to higher and to broader, applying directly to the very essence of this substitute. I deny your right to make a general deposite of the public revenue in a bank. More than half of the errors of life may be traced to fallacies originating in an improper use of words; and among not the least mischievous is the application of this word to bank transactions, in a sense wholly different from its original meaning. Originally it meant a thing placed in trust, or pledged to be safely and sacredly kept till returned to the depositor, without being used by the depository, while in his possession. All this is changed when applied to a deposite in bank. Instead of returning the identical thing, the bank is understood to be bound to return only an equal value; and instead of not having the use, it is understood to have the right to loan it out on interest, or to dispose of it as it pleases, with the single condition, that an equal amount be returned, when demanded, which experience has taught is not always done. To place, then, the public money in deposite, in bank, without restriction, is to give the free use of it, and to allow them to make as much as they can out of it, between the time of deposite and disbursement. Have we such a right? The money belongs to the people—collected from them for specific purposes—in which they have a general interest, and for that only; and what possible right can we have to give such use of it to certain selected corporations? I ask for the provision of the Constitution

that authorizes it. I ask, if we could grant the use, for similar purposes, to private associations or individuals? Or if not to them, to individual officers of the Government; for instance, to the four principal receivers under this bill, should it pass? And if this cannot be done, that the distinction be pointed out."

In what follows, Mr. Calhoun explains the *meaning of sub-treasury* :

"I regard this measure, which has been so much denounced, as very little more than an attempt to carry out the provisions of the joint resolution of 1816, and the deposite act of 1836. The former provides that no notes but those of specie paying banks shall be received in the dues of the Government; and the latter, that such banks only shall be the depositories of the public revenues and fiscal agents of the Government; but it is omitted to make provisions for the contingency of a general suspension of specie payments, such as is the present. It followed, accordingly, on the suspension in May last, which totally separated the Government and the banks, that the revenues were thrown into the hands of the Executive, where they have since remained under its exclusive control, without any legal provision for their safe-keeping. The object of this bill is to supply this omission; to take the public money out of the hands of the Executive, and place it under the custody of the laws, and to prevent the renewal of a connection which has proved so unfortunate to both the Government and the banks. But it is this measure, originating in an exigency caused by our own acts, and that seeks to make the most of a change affected by the operation of law,

instead of attempting to innovate, or to make another experiment, as has been erroneously represented, which has been denounced under the name of the Sub-Treasury with such unexampled bitterness."

Mr. Walsh, writing from Paris, remarked that Mr. Calhoun's speech on the Ashburton treaty was regarded by some of the best French critics, as one of the most classical and cogent arguments of modern times. The same may be said of his Oregon speech, and other great efforts of still more recent date. He is to-day full of vivacious intellect, force of logic, and fervor of patriotism, as in 1814 when he battled undismayed against Great Britain. The following extract vividly portrays his own indomitable character, and with it we must close our list of examples :

"This country is left alone to support the rights of neutrals. Perilous is the condition, and arduous the task. We are not intimidated. We stand opposed to British usurpation, and by our spirit and efforts, have done all in our power to save the last vestiges of neutral rights. Yes, our embargoes, non-intercourse, non-importation, and finally, war, are all manly exertions to preserve the rights of this and other nations from the deadly grasp of British maritime policy. But (say our opponents) these efforts are lost and our condition hopeless. If so, it only remains for us to assume the garb of our condition. We must submit, humbly submit, crave pardon, and hug our chains. It is not wise to provoke where we cannot resist. But first let us be well assured of the hopelessness of our state before we sink into submission. On what do our

opponents rest their despondent and slavish belief? On the recent events in Europe? I admit they are great, and well calculated to impose on the imagination. Our enemy never presented a more imposing exterior. His fortune is at the flood. But I am admonished by universal experience, that such prosperity is the most precarious of human conditions. From the flood, the tide dates its ebb. From the meridian the sun commences his decline. Depend upon it, there is more of sound philosophy than of fiction in the fickleness which poets attribute to fortune. Prosperity has its weakness, adversity its strength. In many respects our enemy has lost by those very changes which seem so very much in his favor. He can no more claim to be struggling for existence; no more to be fighting the battles of the world in defence of the liberties of mankind. The magic cry of 'French influence' is lost. In this very hall we are not strangers to that sound. Here, even here, the cry of 'French influence,' that baseless fiction, that phantom of faction now banished, often resounded. I rejoice that the spell is broken by which it was attempted to bind the spirit of this youthful nation. The minority can no longer act under cover, but must come out and defend their opposition on its own intrinsic merits. Our example can scarcely fail to produce its effects on other nations interested in the maintenance of maritime rights. But if, unfortunately, we should be left alone to maintain the contest, and if, which may God forbid, necessity should compel us to yield for the present, yet our generous efforts will not have been lost. A mode of thinking and a tone of sentiment have gone

abroad which must stimulate to future and more successful struggles. What could not be effected with eight millions of people will be done with twenty. The great cause will never be yielded; no, never, never! Sir, I hear the future audibly announced in the past—in the splendid victories over the *Guerriere*, Java, and Macedonia. We, and all nations, by these victories, are taught a lesson never to be forgotten. Opinion is power. The charm of British naval invincibility is gone.”

The foregoing biographical sketch, followed by copious and diversified specimens of his premeditated as well as extemporaneous compositions, will have prepared the way for a more specific examination into the character of Mr. Calhoun's eloquence. Clearness, directness, and energy, we consider its three most marked characteristics.

In the first place, note the remarkable clearness of Mr. Calhoun's mind. We have already traced the circumstances attending the commencement of that noble career in which he has signalized himself as the most philosophical orator in America. By nature and protracted culture he is a consummate metaphysician. By this we do not mean that he is accustomed to reason himself into frigid reveries and Platonic dreams concerning some ideal Atlantis or impossible Utopia. Political and psychological speculations with him are not hard, dry dogmas, but living realities actualized and verified by the profound earnestness of the speaker. His argument is not the “thwarted growth of starveling labor and dry sterility;” but with spontaneous force, and unaffected simplicity, he reveals the inward gran-

deur of a vivid and energetic mind. It is not inappropriate to apply to his speeches what Hazlitt has said of the works left us by the greatest master of graphic art. "Not to speak it profanely, they are a sort of *revelation* of the subjects of which they treat; there is an ease and freedom of manner about them which brings preternatural characters and situations home to us with the familiarity of common every-day occurrences; but while the figures fill, raise and satisfy the mind, they seem to have cost the painter nothing. They are mere intellectual, or rather *visible abstractions* of truth and nature. Everywhere else we see the means; here we arrive at the end apparently without any means. There is a spirit at work in the divine creation before us."

Mr. Calhoun flaunts in no gaudy rhetorical robes of scarlet and gold, but comes into the forum clothed in the simplest garb, with firm hands grasping the reins of fancy, and intent only on giving a reason for the faith that is in him. The embellishment he sparingly employs never obscures or encumbers that manly strength and luminous energy, which constitute the prominent features of his style. His language is exceedingly choice and most fit to be used by all who think while speaking. In characterizing Mr. Calhoun as the metaphysician among American orators, we design to say that he is full of clear-spirited and substantial significance, and not that his intellect is "woven of pure thought and the airy films of the imagination—Arachne's web not finer!" In him that mental acuteness which is skillful in taking up the points of solid atoms, coalesces with a subtlety equally sensitive in feeling the delicate atmosphere of

truth. There are many pseudo philosophers who are adroit only in "defining night by darkness, death by dust," the type of whose debating power could be found in nothing but "what the shadow of the wind might be." Do the best you can to trace their flight or comprehend their meaning, and after all you feel that the attempt is as fruitless as if you should "hunt half a day for a forgotten dream."

Not so with Mr. Calhoun. His is incontestably superior to most of his contemporaries in profound and valuable philosophical accomplishments. Evidently he has great fondness for speculations the most abstract, the fruits of which he can with uncommon facility render directly applicable to common pursuits; he loves to soar into realms not often explored by metaphysical politicians, but at the same time is expert in the discharge of duties the most trite. While he has an eye to perceive, and a hand to grasp, shadowy abstractions, "pure in the last recesses of the mind," he is an adept in all sorts of practical affairs, one whom the most literal proser can hardly excel. His piercing intellect is often illuminated by the brightest imagination, but this latter faculty ever contents itself with the office of ministering only to reason. From this relation of the two grand powers of his mind, it has resulted, that his eloquence, illustrated by axioms more than adorned by imagery, holds the strongest supremacy over those who are best qualified to reflect. The thinking power, prominent in his speeches, together with the earnest spirit pervading them, form their distinctive characteristics, and stamp their superior worth. Their author seems to

have learned from Albericus, that "to the knowledge of history, must be added that part of philosophy which treats of morals and politics; for this is the soul of history, which explains the causes of the actions and sayings of men, and of the events which befall them." At any rate, more than any other politician of the day, he has learned to explore,

"The bearings of men's duties and desires;
To note the nature and the laws of mind;
To balance good with evil; and compare
The nature and necessity of each."

In the second place, look at the directness so characteristic of Mr. Calhoun's style. We have before said that he is highly philosophical, but not subject to metaphysical paroxysms. Habitually dealing in very precise discrimination, no man more than he, is free from scholastic barbarism. The remark made by Dugald Stewart on Barrow is not less true of Calhoun. "As a writer, he is equally distinguished by the redundancy of his matter, and by the pregnant brevity of his expression; but what more peculiarly characterizes his manner, is a certain air of powerful and of conscious facility in the execution of whatever he undertakes." In this respect our American metaphysician differs widely from those learned Thebans who employ much science to inform the world, "that ships have anchors, and that seas are green."

Mr. Calhoun is one of those men whom Providence sends upon earth at remote intervals, to do the chief thinking of their age, to sift the particles of truth from the heap of rubbish under which they have long been

buried, fuse them into practical shape, and give them universal currency. Sparing of words, but teeming with ideas, they coin great principles in the precious mintage of their mind, and hurl them into profuse and popular circulation. Their thought and execution are as intimately allied and effective, as the etherial flash which precedes the thunder. The words of such men contain the life or death of many generations; and they were born to act in crises that powerfully affect the entire future of the human race. They seem to contain the master thought of all, to mould and to express it. If they are truly patriotic, their service will be of inestimable value, for they will say, with William Tell, as he drew the arrow designed to pierce the fatal apple from the head of his boy: "Perish my name and my memory, provided my country may be free!"

Feeling from his youth that the fundamental principles of moral and political philosophy are realities of the greatest importance, he never has fallen into the indolent habit of declaiming about them, as if they were nonentities, incapable of being either seen or understood. These matters he has examined critically and analytically for metaphysical purposes, but he has drawn the scalpel through living subjects rather than dead. The beauty, health, freshness, and animation of the human frame, have departed ere it is submitted to the knife of the anatomist, and it is in something of the same condition that the human mind is considered by most philosophers. But the case is different with Mr. Calhoun. He has ever studied mankind in their vital energies and natural promptings, and has thus learned

skillfully to touch the springs of their action and control its use. Compelled by necessity and disposition to speak in terms intelligible and agreeable to hearers of every grade, he has happily learned both to adapt the object of his inquiries, and his mode of reasoning, to the general understanding and sentiments of his countrymen. As Erasmus said of Sir Thomas More, "His eloquent tongue so well seconds his fertile invention, that no one speaks better when suddenly called forth. His attention never languishes, his mind is always before his words; his memory has all its stock so turned into ready money, that without hesitation or delay it supplies whatever the occasion may require."

The test of true oratorical merit lies in thought, and not in words. Take away language from Homer, and however much you have removed, the epic poet is left unimpaired; but make the same draft upon Virgil, strip him of the majesty, glow, and fascination of his diction, and the merit that remains will be nearly reduced to what he borrowed from Homer's plan. It is the same with many speeches which abound in gorgeous passages, captivating images, pathos, fancy, fervid invective, and stinging sarcasm, but which are little imbued with the intense energy of substantial argument. "An indignant fiery purity" pervades Calhoun's phraseology, like heat and resistance in glowing steel. Ordinary composition called metaphysical by virtue of a multitude of artificial technicalities, resembles an incongruous assemblage of obsolete dilapidations, rather than a natural distribution of practical materials. But the matter and spirit of Mr. Calhoun's eloquence are not

embodied in hyperbole, nor violence, nor frivolity, nor pedantry, but come forth simply in clear, forcible, laconic truth. It is the incarnation and expression of mind, and therefore transcends in worth the flippant nothings of ordinary speakers, as the factitious lustre of the Aphrodite is dull compared with the brow of Raphael's Madonna, and the fantastic carving of a stone mason is stupid beyond endurance beside the divine form of the Greek god.

The accuracy and depth of Mr. Calhoun's knowledge are rendered practically evident by a rapid but distinct and fearless expression. Having fixed his eye steadily on the goal he would attain, he advances towards it with a speed and directness which it requires the utmost care to follow. He requires the undivided attention of the reader or listener, and is sure to reward it. Awed and penetrated by his power, we are compelled to acknowledge that true argumentation is no mere skirmishing or idle sport, but, on the contrary, it is deeply to feel and earnestly to think.

“While thought is standing thick upon the brain
As dew upon the brow—for thought is brain sweat;
And gathering quick and dark, like storms in summer,
Until convulsed, condensed, in lightning sport,
It plays upon the heavens of the mind,—
Opens the hemisphered abysses here,
And we become revealers to ourselves.”

We have spoken of the mental clearness and moral directness so strongly marked in the eloquence of Mr. Calhoun. Let us now, in the third place, notice more particularly his logical force.

Lord Bacon, laying down the theory of the advancement of fortune, in a singular passage, directs—“*that there be not anything in being or action which should not be drawn and collected into contemplation and doctrine.*” Our distinguished countryman seems ever to have acted on this principle, since every day of his mature life has been devoted to the diligent acquisition of knowledge by study and observation the most untiring and diversified. He seems never to have met a man, witnessed an incident, or mingled in a scene, without in some way augmenting his stores of wisdom thereby. His erudition, however, has resulted more from solitary meditation, than from social converse, scientific research, or literary recreation.

Descartes, writing to a friend, said, “I study here intensely without a book;” and it was the well-known saying of Hobbes, “that if he had read as much as others, he might have been as ignorant.” But such unreading philosophers, who avoid books, lest they might stand between them and the natural development of inherent force, do not abound in our day. Perhaps the best example extant among our public men is now under consideration, and yet he, we repeat, is no mere idealist. He knows very well that however high and refined the orator’s head may be, his feet must rest firmly on common earth, with all its gross imperfections, if he wishes to excite popular sympathies, and command belief. He is habitually contemplative, but values time too highly to sit with the long and “passionful unwinking gaze, which beats itself at last, and sees air only.” His is no mere mirage of mind, but the clearest vision on the

most solid ground. The busy idlers who waste life in doating upon "dreams and dim atomic truths," as little resemble him in temperament and taste, as it is possible to conceive. The effects he designs to produce, are the sensations of power and the delights of conviction. To attain this end, he wastes nothing,—not one moment or topic could be spared without irreparable loss,—and the hearer feels that the process has been timed and consummated in a manner as bold as it has been persevering.

Genius we hold to be that power which enlarges the circle of human knowledge, discovers new materials, and gives the air of novelty to what is already known; while talent arranges, elaborates, and renders practical the discoveries of genius. Thus defined, we think that Mr. Calhoun is largely endowed with both these attributes. The talents which succeeded the genius of the ancients, applied their potency and polish to instruct and adorn the world by diffusing the refinements of taste, grace, and sentiment, embodied in masculine beauty, mental grandeur and eloquent expression. Such is our statesman philosopher, full of metaphysical subtlety and moral thoughtfulness. Neither before nor since his entrance into the American Senate, has there been such a union of the orator and sage. His acquired talents are rich and multifarious, and these are mighty auxiliaries to his native capacity, instead of being impediments; in all their wealthy profusion, there is "naught cumbrous more than new down to a wing." Profuse divisions diminish, and all superfluous expletives impair, the simplicity and clearness of natural expression. Orators

dealing largely in such pedantic artificialness resemble those artists, who have wasted existence in abstract theories on proportion, who have measured the antique in all its forms and characters, compared it learnedly with nature, and mixed up dubious amalgams of both, yet never made one figure stand or move. The specific gravity of such dullness is awful, and will cause its possessor to "drop down oblivion like a pebble in a pit."

The form of Mr. Calhoun's eloquence is circumscribed by premeditated lines, characterized by clear, practical sense, and substantiated by a genial enthusiasm, which is to the body of his argument, what the breath of the Almighty was to the yet unvitalized Adam. Taste and elocution not only recommend his speaking to the ear and eye, but the perspicuity of his thought, impressed with a lofty moral import, causes him to be equally intelligible and captivating to both head and heart. He does not "pit the brain against the bosom, and plead wit before wisdom," but combining the spontaneous and forcible action of all his powers, he touches the sensibilities and sways the judgments of all. His mighty mind, when aroused in debate, is quick with the thunder thought and lightning will, rendering it as impossible for ordinary antagonists to avert or resist his influence, as for an oak to clasp in its arms the tempest that beats upon it.

The subjoined sketch was drawn in the winter of 1837-8, by a political and personal friend, and is valuable for its graphic truth :

"Mr. Calhoun has evidently taken Demosthenes for his model as a speaker—or rather, I suppose, he has

studied, while young, his orations with great admiration, until they produced a decided impression upon his mind. His recent speech in defence of himself against the attacks of Mr. Clay, is precisely on the plan of the famous oration *De Corona*, delivered by the great Athenian, in vindication of himself from the elaborate and artful attacks of Æschines. While the one says: 'Athenians! to you I appeal, my judges and my witnesses!'—the other says: 'In proof of this, I appeal to you, Senators, my witnesses and my judges on this occasion!' Æschines accused Demosthenes of having received a bribe from Philip, and the latter retorted by saying that the other had accused him of doing what he himself had notoriously done. Mr. Clay says that Mr. Calhoun had gone over, and he left it to time to disclose his motives. Mr. Calhoun retorts: 'Leave it to time to disclose my motives for going over! I, who have changed no opinion, abandoned no principle, and deserted no party—I, who have stood still and maintained my ground against every difficulty, to be told that it is left to time to disclose my motive! The imputation sinks to the earth with the groundless charge on which it rests. I stamp it down in the dust. I pick up the dart which fell harmless at my feet. I hurl it back. What the Senator charges on me unjustly, he *has actually done*. He went over on a memorable occasion and *did not* leave it to time to disclose his motive.' In the conception and arrangement of the whole speech, in fact, there is a remarkable similarity to the speech of the great Athenian. And where could any man find a nobler model? For withering sarcasm—burning invec-

tive—lofty declamation—for all that is spirit-stirring and glorious in eloquence, there is not on record, in any language, as noble and perfect a specimen as this oration for the crown.

“Mr. Calhoun, in the simplicity and brevity of his sentences, throughout all his speeches, shows the model he has studied. In fact, his whole character and life are eminently Greek. His striking and grand conceptions—with his unassuming and plain manners—his calm dignity and composure—his sternness and exemplary purity in private and public life, all show that he has bathed deep in the fountains of antiquity.

“In one faculty of the mind he surpasses any public man of the age, and that is in analysis. His power to examine a complex idea, and exhibit to you the simple ideas of which it is composed, is wonderful. Hence it is that he generalizes with such great rapidity, that ordinary minds suppose, at first, he is theoretical; whereas, he has only reached a point at a single bound, to which it would require long hours of sober reflection for them to attain. It is a mistake to suppose that he jumps at his conclusions without due care and consideration. No man examines with more care, or with more intense labor, every question upon which his mind is called to act. The difference between him and others is, that he thinks constantly, with little or no relaxation. Hence the restless activity and energy of his mind always place him far in advance of those around him. He has reached the summit, while they have just commenced to ascend, and cannot readily discover the path which has lead him to his lofty and extensive view.

“Mr. Calhoun evidently has studied our system of government very profoundly and philosophically, on the leading ideas of the school of Jefferson. His great speech in reply to Mr. Webster, on the federative principle of the Constitution, and the sovereignty of the States, is one of the most profound and finished commentaries upon that noble instrument and its formation, that has ever been produced by the genius of man. On that remarkable occasion, he simplified the points of controversy with his distinguished antagonist to such a degree, that he compelled him to deny that our system of government was a *constitutional compact*; and finally forced him to the position, that the Government itself had substantive and independent rights, as if the Government was not made by the Constitution, and had no existence, in a single attribute without it. This debate was managed with great power and ability on both sides. Both speakers saw that the whole argument turned upon the point whether the Constitution was a *compact* or not. If it was admitted, the wit of man could not avoid the conclusion, that each party to the compact must of necessity judge of its provisions and infractions, or surrender up their original character as sovereign contracting parties, to a government with power *to define its own limitations*, and, of necessity, to make and unmake the compact at the will and pleasure of those who might chance to give it impulse and vitality. This subject eminently suited Mr. Calhoun’s mind and habits of thought, and he consequently exhibited a power of argument—a distinctness of analysis—and a luminous investigation of the attributes and nature of

government—which will stand a monument to his fame, as long as the American eagle shall present to the world that bright constellation of independent States which now glitter and blaze around its brow. No human being can read that speech without feeling that it contains the same doctrines which were proclaimed in the Kentucky and Virginia resolutions of '98, and in the immortal report of Mr. Madison, around which the Republican party rallied with the devotion of those who felt the liberties of their country to be involved.

“As a public speaker and debater, Mr. Calhoun is energetic and impressive to the highest degree. Without having much of the action of an orator, yet his compressed lip—his erect and stern attitudes—his iron countenance, compressed lip, and flashing eye—all make him, at times, eloquent in the full sense of the word. No man can hear him without feeling. His power is in clear analysis—suppressed passion, and lofty earnestness. As to the great questions connected with the currency of the present day, it is vain and idle to contend with him. It has been the subject of his daily thoughts for more than twenty years. He is before his age, but he will triumph, and posterity will be astonished at the profoundness and the sagacity of his views. Many suppose that he has an absorbing ambition; but this is a mistake, and it arises from the natural activity of his mind on all questions of much interest, and his constant and ardent patriotism. Devotion to the honor and liberties of his country is his consuming passion, and his ardent pursuit of what he conceives to be her interests is mistaken by the superficial observer for overweening

ambition. Ambition he has, but it is high and noble, and like the Roman's, identified with love for Rome. His nullification, so much misunderstood and misrepresented, was with him a pure and enthusiastic devotion to the true spirit of the Constitution, and the permanent interest of the whole Union, according to his understanding of them. His greatest weakness, if weakness it can be called, is his free and unreserved confidence in those who are not his friends. This arises from the natural integrity and unsuspecting character of his heart. Another weakness, perhaps, is, that he talks too much, forgetting that there is often dignity and power in impressive silence, particularly after a man has acquired fame. This arises, however, from the simplicity of character and great love of truth, which makes him eager to present her to others, that they may receive and love her, too, with veneration equal to his own."

To the above, we may add a few remarks respecting Mr. Calhoun's person and character.

Strangers, judging only by his external appearance, are liable to form very unjust conceptions of this extraordinary man. His countenance, so marked by decision and firmness; and his eyes, so large, dark, brilliant, and penetrating: leave no doubt for a moment of a high order of intellect. Still, the contemplator feels like Adam, who, when perceiving Michael, chief of the heavenly warriors, approaching from afar, says to Eve:

"Majesty
Invests his coming; yet not terrible
That I should fear, not sociably mild
As Raphael."

There is at first a mixed emotion of respect and fear, as if the individual in question is indeed to be revered for his intellectual capacity, but not to be esteemed for his social worth. How completely does actual acquaintance correct such a falsity of view ! Perhaps there is not a man in the world whose colloquial fascination and endearing social qualities exceed those of Mr. Calhoun. It is true, that while engaged in public functions, he appears as one in whom "the intellectual life is quick in all its parts," and his iron features repel all thoughts of fond and childish glee. But in private, with the harness of forensic warfare laid aside, while he still maintains the dignity of true greatness, no one is more easy of access, more cordial and kind.

The genial goodness native to his head and heart are manifest in the spirit of his public conduct. Everywhere he is as full of thought as ocean is of brine, but there is no bitterness in his written or living speech.

He deals very sparingly in invective ; and never requires the veil of public spirit to be thrown over his personal antipathies and inordinate self-esteem. He may seem to be "full of obstinate questionings," nice discriminations, and the keen observance of dialectic rules ; but when soaring highest "into that wide and uncircumscribed sphere wherein spirits excursive and philosophically modest take their range," and gathering there, "if not certain and irrefragable conclusions, at least scattered particles of wisdom, which he more highly esteemed than all the stamped coinage whereof dogmatism makes its boast," he never appears malicious in thought or deed. His loftiest abstractions are embodied in that

athletic good sense which disdains to stab in the dark, and is equally unambitious of enlarging its apparent magnitude by looming through a fog. He amalgamates an artless angular elocution and rigid mental precision, with perpetual suavity of spirit, in language the most lucid and choice. However specious at first the system may look which he rises to maintain, he delivers in its defence a prodigious number of pointed observations, which at once are regarded as parliamentary axioms, universal and profound.

What in particular is to be observed with regard to Mr. Calhoun is, that, in a pre-eminent degree, his is the eloquence of character. There is a moral power in his life which imparts authority to his speech, and commands respect. Nothing in man is valuable that is not characteristic. Without character, all language is empty and insignificant ; since it is only from this quality that beauty can be developed and truth enforced. A speaker may be hard in his style, severe and dry, and yet not fail to please, provided he is imbued with courteous but decided independence of character and undoubted integrity. As this is the only ground of personal worth, so is it the only guarantee of public safety. Talent is always but too readily worshipped ; but, if it be divorced from rectitude of purpose, it is characterized more by the attributes and influence of a demon than a god. It is well, therefore, that "the splendor of corruption hath no power nor vital essence." Honesty is a great part of ~~eloquence.~~ We persuade others most by being sincerely earnest ourselves. This is a virtue that redeems many faults. All magnanimous persons, however much they

differ from Mr. Calhoun in belief, will grant that he is manifestly less a deceiver than deceived. If he errs in judgment, it is his misfortune rather than his crime. Hence his great influence over all parties, and hence, as has been strikingly proved, their anxiety to trust the highest national welfare to his supervision in the darkest hour. Without exaggeration, may we apply to our great fellow-citizen, thus trained and trusted, what was eloquently said of Lord Chatham: "The secretary stood alone. Modern degeneracy had not reached him. Original and unaccommodating, the features of his character had the hardihood of antiquity; his august mind overawed majesty; and one of his sovereigns thought royalty so impaired in his presence, that he conspired to remove him, in order to be relieved from his superiority. No state chicanery, no narrow systems of vicious politics, no idle contest for ministerial victories sunk him to the vulgar level of the great; but, overbearing, persuasive, and impracticable, his object was England,—his ambition was fame; without dividing, he destroyed party; without corrupting, he made a venal age unanimous; France sunk beneath him; with one hand he smote the house of Bourbon; and wielded in the other the democracy of England. The sight of his mind was infinite, and his schemes were to affect, not England, not the present age only, but Europe and posterity. Wonderful were the means by which these schemes were accomplished, always seasonable, always adequate, the suggestions of an understanding animated by ardor, and enlightened by prophecy.



"The ordinary feelings which make life amiable and

indolent,—those sensations which soften, and allure, and vulgarize, were unknown to him ; no domestic difficulties, no domestic weakness reached him ; but, aloof from the sordid occurrences of life, and unsullied by its intercourse, he came occasionally into our system to counsel and decide.

“A character so exalted, so strenuous, so various, so authoritative, astonished a corrupt age, and the Treasury trembled at the name of Pitt through all her classes of venality. Corruption imagined, indeed, that she had found defects in this statesman, and talked much of the inconsistency of his glory, and much of the ruin of his victories—but the history of his country, and the calamities of the enemy, answered and refuted her.

“Nor were his political abilities his only talents ; his eloquence was an era in the Senate, peculiar and spontaneous, familiarly expressing gigantic sentiments and instinctive wisdom—not like the torrent of Demosthenes, or the splendid conflagration of Tully ; it resembled, sometimes the thunder, and sometimes the music of the spheres. Like Murray, he did not conduct the understanding through the painful subtilty of argumentation ; nor was he, like Townshend, for ever on the rack of exertion, but rather lightened upon the subject, and reached the point by the flashings of his mind, which, like those of his eye, were felt, but could not be followed.

“Yet he was not always correct or polished ; on the contrary, he was sometimes ungrammatical, negligent and unenforcing, for he concealed his art, and was superior to the knack of oratory. Upon many occasions

he abated the vigor of his eloquence ; but even then, like the spinning of a cannon ball, he was still alive with fatal, unapproachable activity.

“ Upon the whole, there was in this man something that could create, subvert, or reform an understanding, a spirit, and an eloquence to summon mankind to society, or to break the bonds of slavery asunder, and rule the wildness of free minds with unbounded authority ; something that could establish or overthrow empire, and strike a blow in the world that should resound through its history.”

The bard of Eden said that a poet “ ought himself to be a true poem ;” that is a model of the best and most honorable qualities. We do not hesitate to claim such for the distinguished subject of this sketch. It is not a primary ambition with him to exemplify the words of old Puttenham : “ Ye shall know that we may dissemble in earnest as well as in sport, under covert and dark terms, and in learned and apparent speeches, in short sentences, and by long ambage and circumstance of words, and finally, as well when we lie, as when we tell truth.” He is not one of those

“ Men of that large profession that can speak
To every cause, and things mere contraries,
Till they are hoarse again, yet all be law !
That with most quick agility can turn
And re-return ; can make knots and undo them,
Give forked counsel, take provoking gold
On either hand, and put it up.”

Mr. Calhoun is a philosophical statesman, whom it is

impossible for those who prize true eloquence, not to admire—whom it is impossible for those who justly appreciate a generous nature and untarnished worth, not only to respect but love. Perhaps he was never surpassed for the union of metaphysical acumen and oratorical energy. He is firm and yet flexible, having little of that granite style, that scholastic stiffness, which, under the abused name of classical correctness, often exhibit all the chilling repulsiveness that belongs to fictitious solidity and affected pomp,—pedantic antiquarians who have garnered nothing from departed ages but obsolete formulas, and attitudes of stone. Reason is supreme in Mr. Calhoun, but it is not alone; it is associated with imagination, and all the gentler attributes.

“There is passion enough, but like the steam in a well-regulated engine, it displays itself not in wreaths and puffs of vapor, but in the rapid and methodical action of the machinery it impels. The mind of the student is heated, not by sparks applied to his prejudices, his tastes, to his sense of the ridiculous, or his sense of the sublime, but by the fire which has been raised by the vehement electric rapidity with which the reasoning process has been conducted.” In him, argumentation is limited to no single and hackneyed form, but becomes like the princess of the Arabian tale, sword, eagle, or flame, according to the war it wages, sometimes piercing, sometimes soaring, sometimes illumining, in every useful form, retaining no fixed image of itself, except that of almost supernatural power. No arch is so beautiful as the ancient Roman arch, and, like that of Doric architecture, its beauty arises from its perfect substan-

tiability, and the ideas it suggests of strength and usefulness. And such is a fit type of the eloquence of John C. Calhoun.

His features are very striking, invested as they are with thought, expression, sympathy, and passion—the undisguised consciousness of intellectual power. His vocabulary is adequate to express all the refinements of analytical distinctions: his countenance is equally adequate to convey all the minute subtleties of feeling, when the vocal organs are too much oppressed by emotion to speak. He has real greatness, dignity, and force, can inspire a trifle with importance, and wield every forensic implement with effect. Impotency itself becomes strength in the hands of genius, while the greatest abilities are dwarfed into impotency by the touch of mediocrity. The shepherd's staff of Paris would have been a deadly weapon in the grasp of Achilles; but the ash of Peleus could only have fallen unused from the dainty fingers of the perfumed and effeminate archer. Only that majesty is truly imposing which is tempered by emanations of intelligence, adorned with honor and softened into love. Such is the character of Mr. Calhoun, prominent among the

“Men whose great thoughts possess us like a passion
Through every limb and the whole heart; whose words
Haunt us as eagles haunt the mountain air;
Thoughts which command all coming times and minds,
As from a tower a warden.”

CHAPTER V.

GEORGE McDUFFIE,

THE IMPETUOUS.

IN the subjoined remarks on the eloquence of Mr. McDuffie, we shall endeavor to depict him, not as he is now, in his infirm and emaciated condition, but as he was in the days of his physical firmness and mental glory. Then, his strong memory, expressive physiognomy, powerful voice, and excited action, gave to him extraordinary weight as a speaker. He broke into the political arena with the fury of a competitor too late for the combat ; and, as if to redeem lost time, or to annihilate as soon as possible the antagonist who had summoned him to the fight, he amazed all by the eloquent violence, the unexampled impetuosity, and fierce earnestness with which he smote down his foes. In his best days there was in him an impetuous and concentrated grandeur, a scornful energy, which was rendered exceedingly effective by spontaneous fervor and a comprehensive mind.

“ His voice blew like the desolating gust

Which strips the trees, and strews the earth with death.

His words were ever like a wheel of fire,
Rolling and burning this way now, now that :
Now whirling forth a blinding beam, now soft
And deep as Heaven's own luminous blue—and now
Like to a conqueror's chariot wheel they came,
Sodden with blood and slow, revolving death :
And every tone fell on the ear and heart,
Heavy and harsh and startling, like the first
Handful of mould cast on the confined dead,
As though he claimed them his."

In every department of high endeavor, we occasionally meet with heroes who always appear in a tempest, as if generated by its fury. They are insubordinate but illustrious, braving defeat and attempting the apparently impossible, with disordered garments, dishevelled hair, and extended arms, smiting in every direction, but with an eye unblenching and a heart undismayed. Such was Kleber at Heliopolis, Danton in the French assembly, Diderot among militant philosophers, and McDuffie in the American Congress. This Jupiter Tonans was ever armed with thunders which he launched against his foes, without showing them the anvil on which they had been forged, and without revealing the slow and laborious process by which they were prepared. Suddenly he would appear, without any previous intimation of his design, to smite down what he regarded as the monster Consolidation, and victoriously fight the battles of Free Trade and State Rights.

All great questions are raised and settled by men *in earnest*—men who have bound invaluable principles about their hearts which they feel are "part and parcel"

of their being, and in the defence of which they will sacrifice everything dear rather than let them go. Such earnestness is very sure to make tremble, if not entirely to overthrow, the systems to which it shall come in full force to be opposed. It is not dainty in its means, nor obscure in its opposition. It levels against them wit, satire, persuasion, argument. It heeds not, in this matter, the decisions of the powers that be. It is not afraid of being taunted as treasonable. Truth is its aim ; error is in its way ; and with a view to one, it cannot afford to be delicate towards the other. A lie is called a lie, shown to be a lie, denounced as a lie, and men are told to reject it or perish.

Mr. McDuffie has distinguished himself both as a writer and speaker. Of his elaborated political writings we need adduce but a single specimen. It is taken from a work entitled "National and State Rights Considered," was written in his early maturity, and is the more noticeable as being somewhat antagonistic to his subsequent opinions and action. We quote it as a fair sample of the earnest discrimination and condensed force peculiar to this author. Says he :

"You assert, that when any conflict shall occur between the General and State Governments, as to the extent of their respective powers, '*each party has a right to judge for itself.*' I confess I am at a loss to know, how such a proposition ought to be treated. *No climax of political heresies can be imagined, in which this might not fairly claim the most prominent place.* It resolves the Government at once into the elements of physical force, and introduces us directly into a scene of anarchy

and blood. There is not a single power delegated to the General Government, which it would not be in the power of every State Government to destroy, under the authority of this licentious principle. It will be only necessary for a State Legislature to pass a law, forbidding that which the Federal Legislature enjoins, or enjoining what the Federal Legislature forbids, and the work is accomplished. Perhaps you would require the State Judiciary to pronounce the State law constitutional. I will illustrate by a few examples:

“Suppose Congress should pass a law ‘to lay and collect taxes, imposts and excises,’ and that a State Legislature should pass another, declaring the *objects* for which the revenue was intended were *unconstitutional*, and therefore prohibiting the officers of the General Government, by severe penalties, from collecting the taxes, duties, imposts and excises. Suppose Congress should pass a law ‘to raise an army’ for a national war, and a State Legislature pass another, declaring the war ‘wicked, unrighteous and unconstitutional,’ and therefore prohibiting the officers of the General Government, under heavy penalties, from recruiting soldiers, within the limits of the State. Suppose Congress should pass a law ‘for the punishment of counterfeiting the securities and current coin of the United States,’ and a State Government should pronounce it *unconstitutional*, and provide heavy penalties against all officers, judicial or ministerial, who should attempt to enforce it. I need not multiply cases; for if you will duly consider these, you will find enough to satiate your keenest relish for anarchy and disorder. In all the above cases, you

would say 'each party has a right to judge for itself,' and of course to enforce its judgment. You might then behold a revenue officer of the United States confined in a State dungeon, for obeying the revenue laws of Congress, &c. And all this would unavoidably result in giving the State rulers a right to resist the General Government, or in a civil war to establish its legitimate authority; consequences, either of which is incompatible with the very notion of government. To suppose that the General Government has a constitutional right to exercise certain powers, which must operate upon the people of the States, and yet that the Government of each State has the right to fix and determine its own relative powers and by necessary consequence to limit the powers of the General Government, is to suppose the existence of two contradictory and inconsistent rights. In all governments, there must be some *one* supreme power; in other words, every question that can arise, as to the constitutional extent of the powers of different classes of functionaries, must be susceptible of a legal and peaceable determination, by some tribunal of acknowledged authority, or force must be the inevitable consequence. And where force begins, government ends.

"And it is the more astonishing, that you have assumed positions, involving such tremendous consequences, when we consider that they are in direct opposition to the 'strict letter' of the Constitution, your favorite test of the extent of delegated powers. It is therein provided 'that the Constitution and the laws of the United States, which shall be made in pursuance

thereof,' 'shall be the supreme law of the land, and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, *anything in the constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.*' And again, 'the judicial power (of the United States) shall extend to all cases in law and equity, arising under this Constitution, the laws of the United States, and treaties made, or which shall be made, under their authority.' Nothing can be more plain than that the 'strict letter' of the Constitution does make *the laws* of Congress *supreme*, enjoining obedience upon the State functionaries, and making void the laws of a State if contrary thereto. And to give the provision a sanction of a nature peculiarly impressive, 'the members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by oath or affirmation to support the Constitution of the United States.'

"It is not less evident, that it belongs to the National Judiciary, to pronounce upon the constitutionality or unconstitutionality of the laws of the National Legislature. Its jurisdiction extends to all cases rising under them; and it is hard to conceive how in any possible case a federal judge can decide a case, arising under a law, without pronouncing upon the constitutionality of that law. In fact, it would be vain and idle to make the laws of Congress supreme, if the National Judiciary had not the power of enforcing them. For you can hardly be ignorant, that a law is a dead letter, without an organ to expound, and an instrument to enforce it. I should suppose, therefore, that no professional man could hesitate in saying, that a forcible opposition to the judgment

of the federal court, founded upon an act of Congress, *by whatever State authority that opposition might be authorized*, would be the very case, which the Convention had in view, when they made provision, for ‘calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union.’ But I sincerely hope, that your licentious doctrines will never have the effect of misleading the State authorities so far, as to render this terrible resort unavoidable. I trust the farewell address of Washington, admonishing his fellow-citizens to ‘frown indignantly’ upon those who preach up doctrines tending to disunion, is not yet forgotten.”

As a brief specimen of his indignant ardor, and adroit energy in retort, take the following. Replying to the charge of federalism, made by his State Right opponents to the administration of Mr. Monroe, Mr. McDuffie says :

“Presuming upon the ignorance of the people, you have vainly imagined, they could be carried away, by the ‘magic of a name.’ Hence your continual straining, your ridiculous twisting, to associate with every measure of Mr. Monroe’s administration the term *federal*; a term which you suppose will awaken so many odious associations, as to make the people forget, that, as a party word, so far from applying to Mr. Monroe’s administration, it properly belongs to its opponents. And as among these, you may claim a distinguished situation, having preached pretty much the same doctrines in *peace*, which former opponents advocated in *war*, you could scarcely have deserved more credit, had a defence of the famous Hartford Convention and an accomplishment of their views, *so similar to your own*, been the avowed object of your labors.”

In bringing before the reader a few paragraphs from Mr. McDuffie's pen, however redolent of meaning and forcible in style they may be, we are deeply conscious of the inadequacy of all written language to express the full import and energy of his living speech. Much of the matter and spirit of eloquence may be enshrined in books; but that which is best in the soul of the gifted, which is most impressive, spontaneous, vital and godlike in his nature and yearnings, meditations and sympathies, attributes which are adapted to move and regenerate the earth, gladdening the dwellers thereof, cannot be stereotyped in leaden plates and laid away in musty libraries. It is a gleaming and unsheathable potency, double-edged and invincible, burning one moment in the brain and heart of a true orator, and at the next as quickly becoming the inspiration of all brains and hearts listening around.

The passions are often the most eloquent persuaders. He who is least learned, if ardently aroused, will be more effective than the most erudite, whose language is as frigid as it is polished. Like a wintry sun, the phraseology of sophisticated artificialness may dazzle, but it has little power to melt. Feeling is often not less efficient than wisdom, but it is always when they coalesce with each other and strike with simultaneous blows. Fanciful images may possess transient charms, but it is only fervid sentiment imbued with persuasive reason that permanently interests and subdues. Otherwise the cloud is cold, "although ablaze with lightning—though it shine at all points like a constellation." Thoughts and words really eloquent are the ebullitions of radical heat,

the indicators of life and health; not spasmodic contortions of disease, the cadaverous symptoms of approaching dissolution. Nature gave Mr. McDuffie

“ A heart that like a Geyser spring,
Amidst its bosomed snows,
May shrink, not rest—but with its blood
Boils even in repose.”

To illustrate what we have already said, and to prepare the way for analytical remarks yet to follow, we will quote a few examples of Mr. McDuffie's spoken style. In the first, he characterizes *political* corruption in these terms :

“ Sir,—We are apt to treat the idea of our own corruptibility as utterly visionary, and to ask, with a grave affectation of dignity—what ! do you think a member of Congress can be corrupted ? Sir, I speak what I have long and deliberately considered, when I say, that since man was created, there never has been a political body on the face of the earth, that would not be corrupted under the same circumstances. Corruption steals upon us in a thousand insidious forms, when we are least aware of its approaches. Of all the forms in which it can present itself, the bribery of office is the most dangerous, because it assumes the guise of patriotism to accomplish its fatal sorcery. We are often asked, where is the evidence of corruption ? Have you seen it ? Sir, do you expect to see it ? You might as well expect to see the embodied forms of pestilence and famine stalking before you, as to see the latent operations of this insidious power. We may walk amidst it and breathe its conta-

gion, without being conscious of its presence. All experience teaches us the irresistible power of temptation, when vice assumes the form of virtue. The great enemy of mankind could not have consummated his infernal scheme for the seduction of our first parents, but for the disguise in which he presented himself. Had he appeared as the devil, in his proper form; had the spear of Ithuriel disclosed the naked deformity of the fiend of hell, the inhabitants of Paradise would have shrunk with horror from his presence. But he came as the insinuating serpent, and presented a beautiful apple, the most delicious fruit in all the garden. He told his glowing story to the unsuspecting victim of his guile. 'It can be no crime to taste of this delightful fruit. It will disclose to you the knowledge of good and evil. It will raise you to an equality with the angels.' Such, sir, was the process; and in this simple but impressive narrative, we have the most beautiful and philosophical illustration of the frailty of man, and the power of temptation, that could possibly be exhibited. Mr. Chairman, I have been forcibly struck with the similarity between our present situation and that of Eve, after it was announced that Satan was on the borders of Paradise. We, too, have been warned that the enemy is on our borders. God forbid that the similitude should be carried any farther. Eve, conscious of her innocence, sought temptation and defied it. The catastrophe is too fatally known to us all. She went, "with the blessings of heaven on her head, and its purity in her heart," guarded by the ministry of angels—she returned, covered with shame, under the heavy denunciation of heaven's everlasting curse.

“Sir, it is innocence that temptation conquers. If our first parent, pure as she came from the hand of God, was overcome by the seductive power, let us not imitate her fatal rashness, seeking temptation when it is in our power to avoid it. Let us not vainly confide in our own infallibility. We are liable to be corrupted. To an ambitious man, an honorable office will appear as beautiful and fascinating as the apple of Paradise.

“I admit, sir, that ambition is a passion, at once the most powerful and the most useful. Without it, human affairs would become a mere stagnant pool. By means of his patronage, the President addresses himself in the most irresistible manner, to this, the noblest and strongest of our passions. All that the imagination can desire—honor, power, wealth, ease, are held out as the temptation. Man was not made to resist such temptations. It is impossible to conceive, Satan himself could not devise, a system which would more infallibly introduce corruption and death into our political Eden. Sir, the angels fell from heaven with less temptation.”

The next quotation is even more striking. It is taken from a speech delivered by Mr. McDuffie on a memorable occasion in *vindication of South Carolina* :

“*Mr. Chairman*,—A great and solemn crisis is evidently approaching, and I admonish gentlemen, that it is the part of wisdom, as well as of justice, to pause in this course of legislative tyranny and oppression, before they have driven a high-minded, loyal and patriotic people to something bordering on despair and desperation. Sir, if the ancestors of those who are now enduring—too patiently enduring—the oppressive burdens unjustly im-

posed upon them—could return from their graves, and witness the change which the federal government, in one quarter of a century, has produced in the entire aspect of the country, they would hardly recognize it as the scene of their former activity and usefulness. Where all was cheerful, and prosperous, and flourishing, and happy, they would behold nothing but decay, and gloom, and desolation, without a spot of verdure to break the dismal continuity, or even

‘A rose of the wilderness left on its stalk,
To tell where the garden had been.’

“Looking upon this sad reverse in the condition of their descendants, they would naturally inquire what moral or political pestilence had passed over the land, to blast and wither the fair inheritance they had left them. And, sir, when they should be told, that a despotic power of taxation infinitely more unjust and oppressive than that from which the country had been redeemed by their toils and sacrifices, was now assumed and exercised over us by our own brethren, they would indignantly exclaim, like the ghost of the murdered Hamlet, when urging his afflicted son to avenge the tarnished honor of his house,

‘If you have nature in you, bear it not.’

“Sir, I feel that I am called upon to vindicate the motives and the character of the people of South Carolina, from imputations which have been unjustly cast upon them. There is no State in this Union distinguished by a more lofty and disinterested patriotism, than that which I have the honor, in part, to represent. I can proudly and confidently appeal to history for proof of this asser-

tion. No State has made greater sacrifices to vindicate the common rights of the Union, and preserve its integrity. No State is more willing to make those sacrifices now, whether of blood or treasure.

“But, sir, it does not belong to this lofty spirit of patriotism, to submit to unjust and unconstitutional oppression, nor is South Carolina to be taunted with the charge of treason and rebellion, because she has the intelligence to understand her rights, and the spirit to maintain them. God has not planted in the breast of man a higher and a holier principle, than that by which he is prompted to resist oppression. Absolute submission and passive obedience to every extreme of tyranny, are the characteristics of slaves only.

“The oppression of the people of South Carolina has been carried to an extremity, which the most slavish population on earth would not endure without a struggle. Is it to be expected, then, that freemen will patiently bow down, and kiss the rod of the oppressor? Freemen, did I say? Why, sir, any one who has the form and bears the name of a man—nay, “a beast that wants discourse of reason,” a dog, a sheep, a reptile—the vilest reptile that crawls upon the earth, without the gift of reason to comprehend the injustice of its injuries, would bite, or bruise, or sting the hand by which they were inflicted.

“Is it, then, for a sovereign State to fold her arms and stand still in submissive apathy, when the loud clamors of the people, whom Providence has committed to her charge, are ascending to heaven for justice? Hug not this delusion to your breast, I pray you.

“It is not for me to say, in this place, what course South Carolina may deem it her duty to pursue, in this great emergency. It is enough to say, that she perfectly understands the ground which she occupies; and be assured, sir, that whatever attitude she may assume, in her highest sovereign capacity, she will firmly and fearlessly maintain it, be the consequences what they may. The responsibility will not rest upon her, but upon her oppressors.

“I will say in conclusion, Mr. Chairman, that in all I have uttered, there has not been mingled one feeling of personal unkindness to any human being, either in this house or out of it. I have used strong language, to be sure, but it has been uttered “more in sorrow than in anger.” I have felt it to be a solemn duty, which I owed to my constituents, and to this nation, to make one more solemn appeal to the justice of their oppressors.

“Let me, then, sir, beseech them, in the name of our common ancestors, whose blood was mingled together as a common offering, at the shrine of our common liberty—let me beseech them, by all the endearing recollections of our common history, and by every consideration that gives value to liberty and the union of these States, to retrace their steps as speedily as possible, and to relieve a high-minded and patriotic people from an unconstitutional and oppressive burden, which they cannot longer bear.”

In the great debate which took place in the Senate on Foot's Resolution, in January, 1830, an incident occurred which indicated the appreciation put by Mr. Webster upon the talents of Mr. McDuffie, and at

the same time brought into prominent notice the skill which the latter possesses of mingling graphic description and pungent appeals in forensic argument.

Said the orator from Massachusetts :

“ In the course of these remarks, Mr. President, I have spoken of the supposed desire, on the part of the Atlantic States, to check, or at least not to hasten, Western emigration, as *a narrow policy*. Perhaps I ought to have qualified the expression ; because, sir, I am now about to quote the opinions of one, to whom I would impute nothing narrow. I am now about to refer you to the language of a gentleman of much and deserved distinction, now a member of the other House, and occupying a prominent situation there. The gentleman, sir, is from South Carolina. In 1825, a debate arose in the House of Representatives, on the subject of the Western road. It happened to me to take part in that debate ; I was answered by the honorable gentleman to whom I have alluded, and I replied. May I be pardoned, sir, if I read a part of this debate ?

“ ‘ The gentleman from Massachusetts has urged,’ said Mr. McDuffie, ‘ as one leading reason why the government should make roads to the West, that these roads have a tendency to settle the public lands ; that they increase the inducements to settlement, and that this is a national object. Sir, I differ entirely from his views on the subject. I think that the public lands are settling quite fast enough ; that our people need no stimulous to urge them thither ; but want rather a check, at least, on that artificial tendency to the western settlement, which we have created by our own laws.

“ ‘The gentleman says, that the great object of Government, with respect to those lands, is not to make them a source of revenue, but to get them settled. What would have been thought of this argument in the old thirteen States? It amounts to this, that those States are to offer a bonus for their own impoverishment, to create a vortex to swallow up our floating population. Look, sir, at the present aspect of the southern States. In no part of Europe will you see the same indications of decay. Deserted villages—houses falling to ruin—impoverished lands thrown out of cultivation! Sir, I believe that if the public lands had never been sold, the aggregate amount of the national wealth would have been greater at this moment. Our population, if concentrated in the old States, and not ground down by tariffs, would have been more prosperous and more wealthy. But every inducement has been held out to them to settle in the West, until our population has become sparse, and then the effects of this sparseness are now to be counteracted by another artificial system. Sir, I say if there is any object worthy the attention of this Government, it is a plan which shall limit the sale of the public lands. If those lands were sold according to their real value, be it so. But while the Government continues, as it now does, to give them away, they will draw the population of the older States, and still farther increase the effect which is already distressingly felt, and which must go to diminish the value of all those States possess. And this, sir, is held out to us as a motive for granting the present appropriation.

I would not, indeed, prevent the formation of roads on these considerations, but I certainly would not encourage it. Sir, there is an additional item in the account of the benefits which this Government has conferred on the western States. It is the sale of the public lands at the minimum price. At this moment we are selling to the people of the West lands at one dollar and twenty-five cents, which are worth fifteen, and which would sell at that price if the markets were not glutted.' ”

In Professor Wilson's *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, after an exceedingly unfavorable portraiture of the great living Irish orator, Shield's exterior, Tickler says : “ But never mind—wait a little—and this vile machinery will do wonders. To make some amends for her carelessness in all other external affairs, nature has given him as fine a pair of eyes as ever graced human head—large, deeply-set, dark, liquid, flashing like gems, and these fix you presently, like a basilisk, so that you forget everything else about him ; and though it would be impossible to conceive anything more absurdly ungraceful than his action, sharp, sudden jolts, and shuffles, and right-about twists and leaps, all set to a running discord of grunts and moans, yet, before he has spoken ten minutes, you forget all this, too, and give yourself up to what I have always considered a pleasant sensation—the feeling, I mean, that you are in the presence of a man of genius !”

This applies admirably to Mr. McDuffie, who, in the best days of his strength, possessed those endowments which were calculated beyond most of his contemporaries, to inspire that noblest of all kinds of eloquence

incomparably superior to the disciplined and elaborate oratory which too much abounds—the “logic set on fire,” which flows from those lofty sources of emotion which nature supplies in an elevated and earnest heart. “Sursam corda” seems ever to have been in his ritual as an orator, if not as a religionist; impelled as he was by that exaltation of the feelings, which is the glory of devotion as of eloquence, and without which nothing great or good was ever accomplished.

A clerical friend, well acquainted with Mr. McDuffie *at home*, once described to the writer a scene which throws much light on his remarkable character. A public dinner was given him by his political friends. Our informant, wishing to hear the great speech anticipated, was provided with a privileged seat by the orator himself, so that he could come in after the less ethereal festivities were over, and enjoy the more desirable “feast of reason and flow of soul.”

A great crowd was in attendance. The preliminary toasts and harangues being passed, the great man of the occasion arose. He stood above medium height, was in vigorous health, had a piercing look, profuse hair mantled a full countenance, and his general aspect, every way striking, was rendered still more noble by his prominent Roman nose. The opening of his speech was far from being elegant or even fluent. Without grace of elocution, and without anything like originality or force of expression, he labored through a succession of stumbling, awkward sentences. Strangers who were present began to look sorely disappointed, and wondered how such a speaker could have acquired such a reputation.

“ But this was only wing-flapping—not flight ;
The pawing of the courser ere he win.”

The speaker began to warm into increased speed and force, when suddenly his whole aspect changed, and a splendid train of ideas gushed from his fulminating eyes and lips. Then, like one possessed, he seemed to have become insensible to everything but the momentous subject that rose on his view and demanded the full exercise of all his powers. A wine-glass full of the “generous beverage” stood before him. This, with one of his violent gestures, he inadvertently knocked yards down the table, and dashed on in a torrent of eloquence perfectly irresistible.

This occurred just before the outbreak of “Nullification,” a subject upon which Mr. McDuffie had not yet acted with the same sentiments and form in which he afterwards appeared. At this period, his scheme was to resist the tariff by “non-consumption.” On this topic he dilated with great splendor and power. His speech became scathing and insufferably bright, “like the white lightning of a day too hot.” The listening and excited multitude bent forward with parted lips and impassioned looks, as if fearful of losing a single word. At the moment when the spell was complete over the entranced mass—when enthusiasm had become accumulated to its utmost height—and every passion and fibre in every listener seemed to move in exact sympathy with the almost frenzied orator, he grasped the front of his black broadcloth coat with his two hands convulsively, raising them as high as possible for a mo-

ment, and then bringing them down with an energy that threatened to rend the garment in tatters, he exclaimed, "Doff this golden tissue!" Our clerical friend, who fired up mightily as he recounted the reminiscences of that memorable day, protested that, had Mr. McDuffie gone one step further, and thrown his coat clean off, he, and every other man present, would, in an instant, and unconsciously, have done the same. This is quite probable, since, in two months' time not a fine coat was to be seen in all the region. Clergymen, judges, governor, and all, mounted coarse, home-spun, and, sure enough, all *had* doffed the golden tissue.

"Never were bliss and beauty, love and woe,
Ravelled and twined together into madness,
As in that one wild hour."

Ordinarily, Mr. McDuffie is reserved, sombre, and taciturn; but when the social fit is on him, intellectual rays break from his person, like flashes through a thunder cloud. When once thoroughly aroused, his conceptions are not unfrequently terrific and grand; not the mere paroxysms of a fever, given forth in sonorous rhapsodies, but the well sustained flights of a vigorous understanding. It is his highest glory to be "a man of mind, above the run of men." In the sudden transitions from morbid listlessness to impassioned energy, so common to him, ideas the most startling, to use the bold figure of Dante, are showered into his mind. Under their influence, his action and utterance are rapid, and sometimes become more violent than energetic. In such instances, there is more boisterousness than

grandeur, more passion than majesty. If his speech resembles "the ocean heaped into a single surge," it does not always have the mellow thunder of the seas; nor, when most impetuous, does it seem "immortal as their ceaseless music." It is true that jutting peaks, craggy shores, fathomless depths, profuse foam, and furious motion characterize the great deep. But these are not its only traits, nor does sublimity constitute its only attraction. The infinitely varied forms of the waves, their light and shadow, the gay transparency of their spray, and, above all, the perpetual change of color and action, amuse the contemplator in detail, as much as the grandeur of the united attributes is calculated to awe his mind.

The popular heart needs to be soothed as well as stimulated, and in this respect, as in many others, there is a strong analogy between eloquence and music; both, when perfect, produce a pleasing repose—a calm, sober delight—which, if not relieved by skillful variety, soon chafes into weariness or sinks into sleep. As the principle of harmony must be preserved in the wildest and most eccentric music, wherein sudden, and quickly varying emotions of the soul are expressed, so must imperturbable self-control attend the speaker in scenes of the greatest excitement and confusion. Johnson, who was not only a sincere and discriminating admirer of Shakspeare, but who did much to restore his glory, correctly observes that, with all his beauties, he has faults, and faults which could obscure any other writer than himself; that his effusions of passion, when the situation naturally calls them forth, are in the highest degree striking and energetic: but that, when he puts his in-

vention and his faculties to the rack, the fruits of his ambitious toil are bombast, meanness, tediousness, and obscurity.

As in graphic or plastic art, the wildest and most frenzied fancy is obliged to appropriate to itself the common laws of matter as the means of developing its meaning, so in oratory the simplest ideas and most natural elocution must be the chief instruments employed, "Light over strong, and darkness over long, blind equally alike." Care should be taken that the hearer is not perplexed and distracted by a confusion of incongruous parts, or offended by inharmonious tones. The truth of this observation has been rendered most evident by the great teacher of almost every rule of excellence, when, on a parallel occasion, he made Hamlet recommend to the players the comprehensive precept, never to offend eye or ear: "In the very torrent, tempest, and whirlwind of your passion," says he, "you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness." And yet, at the same time, he observes most justly, "The end of playing, both at the first, and now, was and is, to hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure." No oratorical maxims can be truer or more practical than these. "Be not too tame neither," continues Hamlet: "suit the action to the word, the word to the action: with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature."

We should never mistake violence for strength, grimace for forcible expression, or blood and horror for the true

sublime. Perfect oratorical action combines the strength of the Hercules with the activity of the gladiator, and the grace of the Apollo. Such an amalgamation is not embodied in "glittering masses of portentous incongruities and colossal baubles," but in a simple and lucid grandeur of style which verifies the saying, that "terror hath a beauty even as mildness." It is not in the gross and tumultuous manifestations of fierce elemental energies, not in the clash of the hail, nor the blast of the whirlwind, that the noblest features of the sublime are developed. God is not in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice. "They are but the blunt and the low faculties of our nature, which can only be addressed through lampblack and lightning, It is in quiet and subdued passages of unobtrusive majesty, the deep, and the calm, and the perpetual—that which must be sought ere it is seen, and loved ere it is understood—things which the angels work out for us daily, and yet vary eternally, which are never wanting, and never repeated, which are to be found always, yet each found but once; it is through these that the lesson of devotion is chiefly taught, and the blessing of beauty given." We should remember that passion is not absolutely and in itself great or violent, but only in proportion to the weakness of the mind it has to deal with; to increase its flame is necessarily to decrease the fund of substantial strength on which it subsists :

"The fire that mounts the liquor, till it run o'er,
In seeming to augment it, wastes it."

When a fondness for the sensations of power in a

public speaker becomes intrusive and attractive, in itself, instead of being subordinated to the results it would attain, and lost in them, it is undoubtedly a fault of the most vitiating character. Hence the example of an orator like Mr. McDuffie is liable to be a dangerous one to aspiring youth, naturally inclined to be led astray by what is merely dazzling, daring and impetuous. In the master himself, it is a style of oratory which approaches the highest order of merit, because it is natural ; but, when imitated, it is sure to degenerate into action the most extravagant and expressions the most ferocious. Such corruscations of fancy and superficial passion are to true eloquence, what the incessant flashings of a tempestuous night are to daylight. It may be difficult to say, whether they are the height of the sublime, or the superlatively ridiculous : perhaps we should more truly say, that in every such case, it is not a dubious point to decide as to which category they belong. Disgust ever dwells near the line that separates legitimate terror and pity from horror and aversion, as if stationed there on purpose to guard against all extravagance. Great energy of thought and expression is perfectly natural to persons of a certain temperament, and in them is the ground and guarantee of the highest excellence, but is exceedingly offensive when affected or assumed. Such coarseness of verbiage and furiousness of manner is inspired by that *false Bacchus*, whose influence is quite too prevalent in our day.

In his peculiar style, Mr. McDuffie is without a rival. His voice resembles the harsh terrific blast of the trumpet, rather than the tender, mellifluous harmony of the

flute or Æolian harp, and breaks on the trembling air "like ocean's tongue in Staffa's stormy cave." By the spontaneous energy of his perspicuous reason, winged in the burning beams of truth, he has power to force open the eyes of men, and when open, he can illuminate or blind them. His elocution smites on the popular heart like the club of Hercules; the stroke bears a crushing force, but its sweep is both irregular and awkward, illustrating energy rather than elegance. He is the impersonation of that convulsive power which agitates the masses and impels them to action. Seen when the crowded pack of his passions are in full chase, he is, indeed, a mighty hunter, whose course no ordinary arm can for a moment oppose. At other times he is moody and sad, and appears as if he could be aroused only by the sympathetic action of that popular phrenzy which crouches ever in the dark cavern of the future, to spring upon us like a tropical tornado,

"Which, hushed in grim repose, awaits his evening prey."

Men like Mr. McDuffie are not to be subjected to the ordinary canons of criticism. If you require a colossus to force his feet into tiny Chinese slippers, he will burst such impediments like a lion breaking his chains. There is too much life and agility in him for vassalage so disgraceful to great inborn strength. Some one compared the genius of Racine to the Apollo Belvidere, and the genius of Shakspeare to the equestrian statue of Philip IV. in Notre Dame at Paris. "Be it so," replied Diderot; "but what would you think, were the wooden statue

to draw down his helmet, shake his gauntlet, brandish his sword, and prance about the cathedral?"

In Mr. McDuffie there is abundance of force; if he had been endowed with a larger measure of easy grace and diversified naturalness, perhaps he would have been a better model. Says Chateaubriand: "The great poet of Albion, endowed with creative power, animates even inanimate objects. The scenes, the stage, a branch of a tree, a blade of grass, the bones in a churchyard, all speak: under his magic touch there is nothing dead, not even death itself.

"Shakspeare makes great use of contrasts: he loves to mingle diversions and acclamations of joy with funeral pomp and the wailings of grief. Thus, for example, the musicians summoned to the nuptials of Juliet arrive just in time to attend her remains to the grave; and, indifferent to the grief which prevails in the house of mourning, they indulge in jests, and discourse of matters the most foreign to the catastrophe. Who does not recognize in this the reality of life? who does not feel all the bitterness of the picture, and who is there that has not witnessed similar scenes? These effects were not unknown to the Greeks. We find in Euripides those simple touches of nature which Shakspeare intermingles with his loftiest tragic sublimity. An example of this occurs in Phædra, where the princess has just expired, and the chorus know not whether they shall enter her apartment. In Alceste, Death and Apollo exchange pleasantries, Death wishes to seize Alceste while she is young, because he is not anxious to have a wrinkled victim. These contrasts verge on the

terrible : but then a single shade too strong or too faint in the expression renders them senseless or ridiculous."

The mild sentiments have their eloquence as well as the vehement passions, but it is the latter only, or at least chiefly, that we meet with in Mr. McDuffie. Too often the symmetry of his thought and the beauty of his expression is dimmed by extravagance or deformity. But, when all his faults are subtracted, there still remains the extraordinary merit of being neither insipid or equivocal. He resembles a mighty stream, sometimes flowing in a full and limpid current, and oftener, perhaps, turbid and encumbered with rubbish, but there is always a mighty volume of meaning and force in him which it is much easier to criticise than excel. What we are most anxious to impress on the young reader is, that neither uncouthness nor impetuosity is necessarily allied to great strength. In Laocoon, as Goethe has suggested respecting that master-piece of antiquity, we contemplate nature in full revolt and desperation. The last choking pang, the desperate struggle, the maddening convulsion, the working of the corroding poison, the vehement fermentation of his blood, the stagnating circulation, suffocating pressure, and paralytic death, yet over the utmost violence is thrown the mantle of majestic grace. We see it, feel it thrillingly in that presence, and in a moment understand what the great poet meant when he celebrated the

" Still greatness of simplicity and repose."



LEWIS CASS .

H. Michelin's Lith. Ill. Nassau S.E.A.Y.

CHAPTER VI.

LEWIS CASS,

THE COURTEOUS.

It is an invigorating exercise, to attempt the analytical portraiture of great logical powers ; and it is an exhilarating one, to describe adroit talents employed in splendid declamation. But, to many persons, it is not less pleasing to contemplate simple statesmanship habitually adorned with decided good nature.

We propose to sketch the career of General Cass as a civilian, military chieftain, and patriotic statesman.

He was born in Exeter, New Hampshire, Oct. 9th, 1782. His ancestors were among the first settlers of that part of the country. It is said that his father bore a commission in the revolutionary army, which he joined the day after the battle of Lexington, and in which he continued until the close of the war, having borne a part in the battles of Bunker Hill, Saratoga, Trenton, Princeton, Monmouth, and Germantown. In 1799, he moved with his family to Ohio, and settled in the vicinity of Zanesville, where, after a life of honor and usefulness, he died, August, 1830.

The son of whom we are speaking, was educated

mainly at the Academy of Exeter, and studied law at Marietta, under the late Governor Meigs. He was admitted to the bar in 1802, and pursued the practice of his profession for several years with distinguished success.

He was elected a member of the Ohio Legislature in 1806. About this time the movements of Colonel Burr began greatly to alarm the country. Mr. Cass was appointed on the committee to which the subject was referred, and drafted the law by which the local authorities were enabled to arrest the party and boats on their passage down the Ohio. Having thus timely baffled a project which was deemed of a revolutionary character, designed to separate the west from the east, the same pen drafted the address to Mr. Jefferson, which unfolded the views of the Ohio Legislature on this important subject.

Mr. Cass was appointed Marshal of the State, in 1807, which office he resigned in 1813. In 1812, he volunteered in the force called out to join the army under General Hull, and marched to Dayton, where he was elected Colonel of the 3d regiment of the Ohio volunteers.

Thus have we arrived at the period when his military service was fairly begun. His prevailing trait of courteous patriotism was developed from the first. The history of that expedition says: "Having to break through an almost trackless wilderness, the army suffered much on its route to Detroit, and it was necessary that the officers of the volunteers should be exemplars in fatigue and privations, lest the men, unused to military discipline

should turn back in discouragement. Colonel Cass was among the most urgent for an invasion of the Canadian province, immediately after the army arrived at Detroit ; but General Hull did not cross the river, until after the lapse of several days, and thereby lost all the advantages of a prompt and decisive movement. The advanced detachment was commanded by Colonel Cass, and he was the first man who landed, in arms, on the enemy's shore after the declaration of war. On entering Canada, General Hull distributed a proclamation, among the inhabitants, which, at the time, had much notoriety, and was generally ascribed to Colonel Cass : it is now known that he wrote it. Whatever opinions may have been entertained of the inglorious descent from promise to fulfillment, it was generally regarded as a high spirited and eloquent document. Colonel Cass soon dislodged the British posted at the bridge over the Canards. There he maintained his ground, in expectation that the army would advance and follow up the success, by striking at Malden ; but he was disappointed by the indecision of the general, who ordered the detachment to return."

Immediately after this disastrous movement, Colonel Cass repaired to Washington, and reported the proceedings to Government. In the following spring his position was changed, being appointed colonel of the 27th regiment of infantry, and soon after he was promoted to the rank of brigadier general. He joined General Harrison, at Seneca, and crossing Lake Erie with him, after Perry's victory, was present in the pursuit of Proctor, and participated in the triumph at the Moravian

towns. The north-western campaign being brought to a successful close, General Cass was left in command of Michigan and the upper province of Canada. His headquarters were at Detroit, and he thus became the military guardian of a people over whom he was soon called to preside in the highest civil functions.

What follows will unfold the character of General Cass more particularly as a patriotic statesman. On October 9th, 1813, he was appointed governor over the territory just alluded to. In 1814, he was associated with General Harrison in a commission to treat with the Indians, who had acted as enemies during the war. A treaty of pacification was formed, and a large body of influential Indians accompanied Governor Cass to Detroit, as auxiliaries. So great an influence had he already obtained over the most savage natures, by blended courtesy and decision, that many were transformed into the most efficient friends. At one period, Michigan was left with a single company of regular soldiers for its defence, and that at the time consisted of only twenty-seven men. Yet, with this inadequate force, and the local militia, the governor, more by personal persuasion than martial compulsion, was able to defend the territory against all of its foes.

After the termination of the war, Governor Cass moved his family to Detroit. History records the condition of affairs at that time. "Michigan had suffered greatly during the war; Detroit exhibited a scene of devastation. Scarcely a family, when it resumed its domestic establishment, found more than the remnants of former wealth and comforts. Laws had become si-

lent, and morals had suffered in the general wreck, and it required great prudence and an uncommon share of practical wisdom to lead back a people thus disorganized, to habits of industry and order. The civil government was established, and such laws enacted as could be most easily carried into effect. The legislative power being placed in the hands of the governor and judges, rendered it a delicate task to aid in the enactment of laws which were to be enforced by the same will ; but it was performed with decision and enlightened discrimination.

“The Indian relations were likewise to be readjusted throughout the western frontier. War had ruptured or weakened every tie which had previously connected the tribes with our government. By decisive, but kind measures, the hollow truce which alone existed, was converted into a permanent peace, and they returned by degrees, to their hunting grounds and usual places of resort, with a general disposition to live in amity and quiet.”

During the year 1816, Governor Cass was associated with General M'Arthur to treat with the Indians at Fort Meigs. The north-western portion of Ohio was acquired at this time. The following year he was engaged in the same duty at Fort Mary's, and secured the acquisition of a large tract of land in Indiana. In 1819, he assisted in the treaty held at Sagano, by which extensive relinquishments were obtained from the Indians in Michigan. In all these negotiations, Governor Cass succeeded most effectually by his courteous frankness and disposition to act on the principle of fair reciprocity. In the same year, he exerted himself with success, in securing the election of a delegate to Congress ;

and in promoting the sale of the public lands within the territory. It is believed that the prosperity of Michigan was greatly promoted by these measures.

In 1820, under the sanction of Mr. Calhoun, then Secretary of War, an expedition was planned by Governor Cass, the object of which was to pass through Lake Superior, cross the country to the Mississippi, explore the sources of that river, and establish an intercourse with the Indians, on that extensive route. The party combined persons eminent for their military and scientific accomplishments. A preliminary object was, to inform the Indians at the Sault de St. Marie of the intention of government to establish a military post at that point, and to determine a suitable site. Connected with this undertaking, the following published incident will be read with interest: "On his arrival there, Governor Cass assembled the Indians and made known the object in view. Being under the influence of a chief who was notoriously disaffected towards the United States, they heard the proposition with evident ill-will, and broke up the council with every appearance of hostile intentions. They returned to their encampment, immediately transported their women and children over the river, and raised a British flag, as if in token of defiance. Governor Cass at once adopted the only course suited to the emergency. Taking only an interpreter with him, he advanced to the Indian encampment and pulled down, with his own hands, the Anglo-Savage flag, directing the interpreter to inform the Indians that they were within the jurisdiction of the United States, and that no other flag than theirs must be allowed to wave

over it. Having given this bold and practical rebuke, he returned to his party, taking with him the flag, and leaving the Indians to further reflection. The moral influence of this opportune and seemingly perilous step, was immediately seen; new overtures were made by the Indians, which led to an amicable and satisfactory adjustment. The course of the expedition, and most of its scientific results, have been published in Mr. Schoolcraft's interesting journal."

It would probably weary the reader, should we present full details of all the important treaties with the various Indian tribes which were mainly conducted by Governor Cass:—in 1821, at Chicago; in 1823, with the Delawares; in 1825, at Prairie du Chien; in 1827, and again in the following year, at St. Joseph's and Green Bay. These treaties occasioned him an incredible amount of fatigue in long and dangerous journeys, but were most fruitful in their results. In his various treaties, Governor Cass has acquired for the United States, and rescued from the wilderness, for great and practical agricultural purposes, many millions of acres of land; and by a kindness of manner, as well as uprightness of negotiation, which it is believed never aggravated the lot of a single Indian or tribe.

In 1822, the Council of Michigan held its first session. This body relieved the governor and judges of their legislative duties, and gave the government a more republican form. The messages which Governor Cass sent to the several councils, convened under his administration, are said to have been written in a chaste and dignified style; indeed, all the documents that came

from his pen, while governor of the territory, may be regarded as good models of executive composition, and exhibit a cultivated literary taste of a high order.

In addition to his gubernatorial writings, General Cass has given to the world several important publications. In the fiftieth and fifty-fifth numbers of the *North American Review*, he discussed the Indian character, language, and condition, in a style uncommonly earnest and eloquent. These articles, full of graphic history, discriminating analysis, and statistical accuracy, attracted general attention, and imparted much gratification to the public mind.

A historical society was formed in Michigan, in 1828, before which General Cass delivered the first address in 1829, embodying the early history of Michigan, and bringing it down to the period when the United States came into possession of it. It was deemed of great value for its copious historical matter, and by its publication much permanent information was secured.

A still more elaborate production was occasioned by a request, in 1830, for an address before the alumni of *Hamilton College*, New York, at their anniversary meeting. The production delivered on that occasion displayed an affluence of reading and reflection which proved the author's acquaintance with most of the departments of knowledge, and doubtless did much to secure for him the honorary degree of LL.D., which he afterwards received from that college. He had before received literary honors from several of the leading historical and philosophical societies of the land.

In July, 1831, General Cass was, by President Jack-

son, appointed Secretary of War. On being placed in this office, he resigned that of Governor of Michigan, in which he had officiated eighteen years. Says a writer in allusion to the event: "When he began his administration, he found the country small in population, without resources, and almost sunk under the devastations of war. He left it with a wide-spread population, and thriving with unprecedented prosperity. This auspicious condition may not all be attributed to executive instrumentality: but an administration, impartial, vigilant, pervading, and intelligent, may be fairly supposed to have shed a happy influence on all around. It will long be remembered in Michigan, where its termination is universally regretted. In the important station which he now holds, his sphere of usefulness is enlarged, and none of his predecessors ever enjoyed a greater share of public confidence.

"Strict and punctual in his business habits, plain and affable in his manners, with powers of mind which grasp, as it were, by intuition, every subject to which they are applied—united to various and extensive acquirements, we feel that we hazard nothing in the declaration, that the measure of his fame is not yet full."

Having performed very efficient service as Secretary of the War Department, General Cass was appointed Minister at the Court of France. The fidelity with which he performed this mission, maintaining the honor of his country with his pen as well as personal dignity, and his particular courtesy to all Americans, are well known. Those who have been abroad much, know painfully, that the latter quality is not always signalized

by our functionaries, who, too often, find it more convenient to ape contiguous kingcraft, than pay the attentions to their republican countrymen for which their office is held. But General Cass was a noble exception, and so was his successor, Mr. King, as from agreeable experience we can testify. Mrs. Sigourney, on being presented to the late royal family, the first day of 1841, wrote a poem in which she alluded to this "kind ambassador." The foot-note she appends to that expression, embodies the sentiment of many hundreds. Says she, "How justly is this adjective applied to General Cass, and all his family. His unwearied attention to travellers from his native country, during the whole time that he has represented its interests at the Court of France, are deeply felt and fervently acknowledged. Without reference to political creed, or other adventitious distinction, he not only gathers them around him with liberal and elegant hospitality, but, aided by his whole household, strives to teach them the luxury of home-feeling in a foreign land."

This high office, which he had so long and worthily filled, General Cass relinquished in October, 1842, and arrived in Boston, Dec. 6th. On the day previous to his departure a public dinner was given him by his fellow citizens then in Paris, as a testimonial of their high respect and warm esteem.

The dinner went off with great eclat, and the company separated at an early hour, bearing with them the recollection of a most delightful and agreeable evening, and with but one circumstance to modify their pleasure—the necessity of bidding adieu to him whose guests

they had so often been, and who now and for the last time was theirs.

On July 4th, 1843, the completion of the Wabash and Erie Canal was celebrated. After a prayer had been made by the chaplain, and the Declaration of Independence read, General Cass rose and delivered an oration from which we make the following selection. After an appropriate exordium, he says:

“ It is profitable in the career of life, occasionally to pause to withdraw ourselves from the very busy scenes, with which we mingle, and to look back upon the progress we have made, and forward, as far as it is given to us to look forward upon the prospect before us. These are high places in the journey of life, whence the region around is best contemplated and understood. In all time great events have been thus commemorated. The principle has its foundation in human nature, though perverted in its application by power or superstition. And many a monument which has survived its own history and the objects of its founders, yet looks out upon the silence around it, the solitary evidence of some great, but forgotten event in the fitful drama of life. And we have come up to-day to one of these high places to commune together. We have met from many a portion of our common country, and this great assemblage testifies, not less by its numbers, than by the imposing circumstances which surround it, that there is here passing one of those scenes which mark the progress of society, and which form its character, and oftentimes its destiny. And so it is, and it is good for us to be here. We have not come to fight a battle, nor

to commemorate one—we have not come to worship at the shrine of power, to celebrate the birth or the death of some unworthy ruler, the last step in political degradation. Nor have we come to commence, to complete, nor to commemorate some useless but imposing structure, erected by pride, but paid for by poverty. I would not, however, be misunderstood. Far be it from us to censure or to check those feelings of love of country, or of religion, which seek their *outpourings* in the erection of memorials upon spots which have drank the blood of the patriot or of the martyr. It is a tribute of virtue, which honors the dead and the living. But let it be voluntary. Then it will neither be unjust in its object, nor oppressive in its accomplishment. It will teach a lesson to after ages, which may stimulate virtue to action, and give fortitude to endure till the day of deliverance comes with its struggle and its reward. Look at the mighty Pyramids, which rise over the Arabian and the Libyan wastes, and which cast their shadow far in the desert, mocking the researches and the pride of man. They tell no tale but the old tale of oppression. They speak in their very massiveness, of pride and power on the one side, and misery and poverty on the other. One of the little channels which the Fellah has diverted from the great river at their base, and which spreads verdure and fertility over the valley, that owes so much to God, and so little to man, is far dearer to the oppressed population, than these useless and mighty structures.

“Our eastern brethren, with the characteristic liberality and patriotism, which make the descendants of the

pilgrims proud of the land of their ancestors, have just completed and dedicated a monument to mark the site of the battle, which opened the greatest contest between a powerful empire and her young and distant provinces, and whose influence, if it did not give to the Revolution its fortunate issue, impressed its character upon the whole struggle. We have no such place to hallow; but we have the people to do the deeds by which places are sanctified, and where the pilgrims of liberty come, not to worship but to reflect. We have not the wealth nor those 'appliances,' by which the long and imposing procession, and the gorgeous pageantry, which a great city can arrange and display, affect, and almost subdue, the imagination. We have not the chief magistrate of the republic, with his official counsellors, to mark, as it were, with a national character, the occasion of our assemblage. Nor have we constructed an obelisk, simple and severe in its style, but lasting as the deeds it commemorates, whose foundation is laid in the graves of martyred patriots, but whose summit rises towards the heavens, telling the story of their fall, and proclaiming the gratitude of their countrymen. But there are here stout hearts and strong hands; thousands, who would devote themselves, as did the men of Bunker Hill, to the cause of freedom, and who would fight as they fought, and die as they died, should their country demand the sacrifice. On the face of the globe, liberty has no more zealous defenders, nor patriotism more ardent votaries, than is this great assembly, the convocation of a people, who have made this region their own by all the ties that bind a man to his home, and who

will defend it, and the institutions which belong to it, by all the means that energy and intelligence and devotedness have ever brought to the great day of trial, and by which they have made it a day of triumph.

“We have come here to join in another commemoration. To witness the union of the lakes and of the Mississippi. To survey one of the noblest works of man in the improvement of that great highway of nature, extending from New York to New Orleans, whose full moral and physical effects it were vain to seek even to conjecture.

“And fitly chosen is the day of this celebration. This work is another ligament, which binds together this great confederated Republic. Providence has given us union, and many motives to preserve it. The sun never shown upon a country abounding more than ours does, in all the elements of prosperity. It were needless to enumerate the advantages we enjoy, and which give us so distinguished a position among the nations of the world. They are seen and felt in all those evidences of prosperity and improvement, which greet the traveller wherever he passes through our country. And still more striking are they when we contrast our situation with that of the older regions of the world. I shall not enter into the comparison. I could speak of it from personal knowledge, but ~~the~~ task would not be a pleasant one, for it would recall many a cause of discontent, and many a scene of misery, which meet the eye of the most careless observer, who exchanges the new hemisphere for the old. An American, who does not return to his own country a wiser man and a better

citizen, and prouder, and more contented, for all he has seen abroad, may well doubt his own head or heart, and may well be doubted by his countrymen.

“Still, it is not to be disguised that, from the very constitution of human nature causes may occasionally exist, tending to weaken, though they cannot sever, the bonds which unite us; and happy is it that these causes may be counteracted, and ultimately, we may hope, rendered powerless, by measures now in progress, which will add the ties of interest to the dictates of patriotism. Our railroads and canals are penetrating every section of our territory. They are annihilating time and space. They are embracing in their folds the ocean and the lake frontiers, and the great region extending from the Alleghany to the Rocky Mountains, through which the mighty Mississippi and its countless tributaries find their way to the Gulf of Mexico. Once let this work be completed, and we are bound together by cords which no strength can sunder. The moral and political effect, therefore, of the great work before us, is even more important than the physical advantages it promises. It will bear upon its bosom the products of a thousand fertile valleys, and it will spread gladness and prosperity over regions which have just been rescued from the Indians, and from the animals, his co-tenants of the forest, which minister to his wants. But it will do more than this. It will make glad the heart of the patriot. As he sails along it, he will see, not merely the evidences and the cause of wealth and prosperity, but one of the ties which knit us together. By a process more fortunate than alchymist ever imagined, the feeblest element will

be converted into the strongest bond. It will bear the boat and its freight to a market, where products may be interchanged and wealth acquired. But it will interchange interests and feelings which no wealth can purchase, and for which no price can pay. Well, then, may we rejoice upon this day. The occasion and the time are in unison together. And while we thank God for the services and sacrifices which he enabled our fathers to make in the acquisition of freedom and independence, let us thank him, also, that we are able to strengthen their work, and to transmit to our children, as they transmitted to theirs, the noblest inheritance that belongs to man. The ark of the Constitution is yet untouched. Withered be the hand that would pollute it."

After a graphic and eloquent sketch of what had transpired on that spot within less than two centuries, he proceeds with some statements which are interesting from their auto-biographical, as well as historical character. Says he :

"It is now forty-three years since I landed upon the northern shore of Ohio, a young adventurer seeking the land of promise ; which has been to him, as to many others, the land of performance. At that time, the Territory of Indiana was not organized, and the States of Ohio, of Indiana, of Illinois, and of Michigan, and the Territory of Wisconsin, formed one government, under the name of the North-Western Territory."

Passing over a vivid description of the horrors of Indian warfare, we come to the following description :

"Nature has been prodigal of her favors to the valley of the Maumee. I can never forget the first time it

met my eye. It was at the commencement of the late war, when the troops, destined for the defence of Detroit, had passed through the forest from Urbanna, to the Rapids. The season had been wet, and much of the country was low, and the whole of it unbroken by a single settlement, and we had cut our road, and transported our provisions and baggage, with great labor and difficulty. We were heartily tired of the march, and were longing for its termination, when we attained the brow of the table land, through which the Maumee has made a passage for itself, and a fertile region for those who have the good fortune to occupy it. Like the mariner, we felt that we had reached a port; like the wanderer, a home. I have since visited the three other quarters of the globe, and passed over many lands and seas. But my memory still clings to the prospect which burst upon us, in a bright day in June, from the valley of the Maumee; to the river, winding away beyond our view; to the rapids, presenting every form of the most picturesque objects; to the banks, clothed with deep verdure; and to the rich bottoms, denuded of timber, as though inviting the labor and enterprise of the settler."

He proceeds to give interesting details of the weary modes of travelling to which the early inhabitants were subjected, passes a fine encomium on the enterprise which had opened such improved facilities through the new canal, and forcibly illustrates the feasibility and importance of such improvements.

The progress of great American enterprises, and the

impressions they produce on European nations, are well stated in the following extract :

“ It is but a few years since our attention was systematically turned to the improvement of our means of internal communication. The first impulse was given by the State of New York, in the projection and commencement of her great work, an evidence alike of her energy and wisdom, and an enduring monument of her perseverance, and of which the whole country is now gathering the fruits. Since then, many other States, unwilling to be left behind in the career of advancement, have followed the same route, and everywhere canals and railroads have sprung into existence, facilitating the communication between the most distant parts of the country, and ministering to those wants of intercourse, which are at once the cause and the effect of active exertion and of commercial prosperity. Our social and political institutions and our national character, alternately operating upon each other, have never achieved a prouder triumph, nor furnished a more irrefragable proof of their tendency to promote human happiness, than in this peaceful victory over the natural impediments which divided, though they could not separate us, and which has increased our capacity for defence, as much as it has added to our stock of wealth. The fate of republican institutions is in our hands. If the great experiment, as it is elsewhere and tauntingly called, but which every American knows is no longer an experiment, that is in progress among us, of the power of man to govern himself should fail, ages may pass away before the rights and safety of all are again

committed to the custody of all. Fortunate it is, therefore, when the operation of our system can be presented to the old world in a point of view, in which it can be examined and appreciated, by being brought into comparison with the effects of the institutions that prevailed there. No effort of this country, in its onward march, has awakened more attention, or excited more admiration, than the successful progress we have made in this great enterprise—this greatest of enterprises in the history of internal improvement. The geographical maps make known the gigantic features of our confederation, and the statistical tables and the reports of travellers made known the communications, natural and artificial, by which it is knit together.

“ The works, both of nature and of man, are on a scale of proportion unknown in that part of the world. Rivers traversing the earth from the arctic to the tropical regions; lakes, or rather seas, where navies have rode, and victories been gained; railroads extending from the Atlantic to Lake Erie, a distance of five hundred miles, and intersecting the country in all important directions; and canals penetrating our valleys, and ascending our mountains, and forming one after another, great lines of communication which would circumscribe many a European kingdom. And before these works the forest gives way. They are not confined to the more densely peopled portions of our country, but like the hardy settler, they are marching with giant strides towards the remote frontier. Already they have passed the cabin of the pioneer of improvement, and the hut of the Indian. They remove from their path the lofty and

primeval trees, the relics of a former age, and the contemporaries, perhaps, and witnesses of strange events forever lost to the knowledge of the world ; and before them our primitive people are receding, and seeking a new home, where the approach of the white man may be delayed, but cannot be prevented. It is a popular remark with the Indians, that when the bee comes among them, it is soon followed by the big knives. But there is now another precursor, which announces to the secluded village that the civilized stranger is at hand, propelled by some monster, whose fearful sound precedes him, and which, ascending the solitary stream, penetrates the recesses of the forest, and proclaims to its tenants, that ere long their council houses will become desolate, and the plough will pass over the graves of their fathers.

“In Europe this is a rate of progress utterly unknown, and comprehended with difficulty. There they deliberate, while here we act. If more caution would give more certainty of success, it would take from the energy of purpose, and of action, which has carried us forward in our career, both physically and morally, with a rapidity unknown in the history of the world, and which opens to a future, cheering to the heart of the patriot, and encouraging to the lover of humanity. It is that energy which, if it commit faults, can repair them—which always operating, is never discomfited ; accomplishing its projects when practicable, and turning to others with equal confidence and perseverance, when checked by insuperable difficulties.”

The closing portion of this admirable oration we

quote at length. It is a fair specimen of the author's style, and is too good to be abbreviated.

“ We come here to rejoice together. Memorable deeds make memorable days. There is a power of association given to man, which binds together the past and the present, and connects both with the future. Great events hallow the sites where they pass. Then returning anniversaries, so long as these are remembered, are kept with sorrow or joy, as they were prosperous or adverse. To-day a new work is born—a work of peace and not of war. We are celebrating the triumph of art, and not of arms. Centuries hence, we may hope that the river you have made, will still flow east and west, bearing upon its bosom the riches of a prosperous people, and that our descendants will come to keep the day, which we have come to mark, and that as it returns they will remember the exertions of their ancestors while they gather the harvest. Associations are powerful in the older regions of the eastern continent, and strongly affect the imagination. They belong, however, to the past. Here, they are strong and vigorous, and belong to the future. There, hope is extinct, and history has closed its record. Time has done its work. Here we have no past; all has been done within the memory of man. Our province of action is the present, of contemplation, the future. No man can stand upon the scene of one of those occurrences which has produced a decisive effect upon the fate of nations, and which history has rendered familiar to us from youth, without being withdrawn from the influence of the present, and carried back to the period of conflict, of doubt, and of

success, which attend some mighty struggle. All this is the triumph of mind, the exertion of intellect, which elevates us in the scale of being, and furnishes us with another and pure source of enjoyment. Even recent events, around which time has not gathered its shadows, sanctify the places of their origin. What American can survey the field of battle at Bunker Hill, or at New Orleans, without recalling the deeds which will render these names imperishable? Who can pass the islands of Lake Erie, without thinking upon those who sleep in the waters below, and upon the victory which broke the power of the enemy, and led to the security of an extensive frontier? There no monument can be erected, for the waves roll, and will roll over them. But he who met the enemy and made them ours, and his devoted companions, will live in the recollections of the American people, while there is virtue to admire, patriotism or gratitude to reward it. I have stood upon the plain of Marathon, the battle-field of liberty. It is silent and desolate. Neither Greek nor Persian is there, to give life and animation to the scene. It is bounded by sterile hills on one side, and lashed by the eternal waves of the Egean Sea on the other. But Greek and Persian were once there, and that dreary spot was alive with hostile armies, who fought the great fight which rescued Greece from the yoke of Persia.

“And I have stood also upon the hill of Zion, the city of Jerusalem, the scene of our Redeemer’s sufferings and crucifixion, and ascension. But the sceptre has departed from Judah, and its glory from the capital of Solomon. The Assyrian, the Egyptian, the Greek, the

Roman, the Arab, the Turk, and the Crusader, have passed over this chief place of Israel, and have reft it of its power and beauty. Well has the denunciation of the prophet of misfortunes been fulfilled, when he declared that 'the Lord had set his face against this city for evil and not for good;' when he pronounced the words of the Most High, 'I will cause to cease from the city of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride; for the land shall be desolate.'

"In those regions of the east where society passed its infancy, it seems to have reached decrepitude. If the association, which the memory of the past glory excites, are powerful, they are melancholy. They are without joy for the present, and without hope for the future. But here we are in the freshness of youth, and can look forward, with national confidence, to ages of progress in all that gives power and pride to man, and dignity to human nature. No deeds of glory hallow this region. But nature has been bountiful to it in its best gifts, and art and industry are at work to extend and improve them. You cannot pierce the barrier which shuts in the past, and separates you from the great highway of nations. You have opened a vista to the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico. From this elevated point, two seas are before us, which your energy and perseverance have brought within reach. It is better to look forward to prosperity than back to glory. To the mental eye no prospect can be more magnificent than here meets the vision. I need not stop to describe it. It is before us

in the long regions of fertile land, which stretch off to the east and west, to the north and south, in all the advantages that Providence has liberally bestowed upon them, and in the changes and improvements which man is making. The forest is fading and falling, and towns and villages are rising and flourishing. And better still, a moral, intelligent, and industrious people are spreading themselves over the whole face of the country, and making it their own and their home. And what changes and chances await us? Shall we go on increasing and improving, and united? or shall we add another to the list of republics, which have preceded us, and which have fallen the victims of their own follies and dissensions? My faith in the stability of our institutions is enduring, my hope is strong; for they rest upon public virtue and intelligence. There is no portion of our country more interested in their preservation than this, and no one more able and willing to maintain them. We may here claim to occupy the citadel of freedom. No foreign foe can approach us; and while the west is true to itself and its country, its example will exert a powerful influence upon the whole confederation, and its strength, if need be, will defend it."

Since the above oration was delivered, General Cass has for some time been a member of the United States Senate. The reputation he has born therein, and before the country, as a sagacious, patriotic and eloquent debater is of a high order. But our limits will not admit any more examples. In what remains, we shall submit a few remarks on the particular trait in this orator, his courtesy.

In all his private intercourse with men, and deportment towards nations, our distinguished countryman has rarely been accused of being severe, and then it was evidently from patriotic considerations, and not from personal disrespect.

We have seen what a large number of difficult treaties with western savages General Cass had occasion to negotiate, and with what success he performed the task. In the war department, in executive functions and foreign diplomacy, he has been equally efficient and successful. This is to be explained, in a great measure, by the fact, that his kindness of manner is calculated to conciliate an honorable concurrence not less than his firmness tends to command respect. This is the quality so justly celebrated by Cicero, in his offices, at the opening of the fourteenth section of the second book: "But of speaking or discourse there are two sorts; the one proper only for common conversation, the other, for pleadings and debates in public. Of these two, the latter, which is what we call eloquence, is apparently more powerful towards the attainment of glory; but yet it is inexpressible of what influence courtesy and affability are, in the business of obtaining men's love and affections. There are extant letters of Philip to Alexander, Antipater to Cassander, and Antigonus to Philip; in which these most wise and prudent princes (for such we are told they really were) advise each his son to speak kindly to the multitude, and try to win the hearts of both them and the soldiers by gentle words and familiar appellations."

A public man will be likely to succeed in his career, just so far as he practices that kind of demean-

nor, which benevolence dictates, and prudence confirms. By being cautious of insulting the weakest, and ever ready to oblige the lowest, he will exemplify a generosity that is sure to engross the good will of all beneath him, while he at the same time attains habits of forbearance and fortitude which constitute the best safeguard against all the malice of the ignoble great. He who, from native generosity, would not bruise a worm, will be the slowest to incur the venom of a serpent; and when maliciously stung, will find no small mitigation of his pangs in the sympathies of all the magnanimous and good. Says old Bishop Hall, "There is an affable familiarity that becometh greatness. It is not good for eminent persons to stand always upon the height of their state; but so to behave themselves, that as their social carriage may not breed contempt, so their over-highness may not breed a servile fearfulness in their people. Ceremonies of respectfulness, though they be in themselves slight and arbitrary, yet the neglect of them, in some cases may undergo a dangerous construction. How well it becomes the great to stoop unto a courteous affability, and to exchange words of respect, even with their humble vassals!"

To cultivate a disposition to please and oblige our fellow creatures is to conform to the scriptural injunction, "be courteous"—"be gentle to all men,"—and in this respect, especially, General Cass is worthy of being emulated by every public or private individual. He has learned that to refuse graciously what he cannot grant honestly, and to conciliate those whom it is impossible or unjust to subdue, is the instrument of best service and

the means of most good. To many persons it doubtless seemed ludicrous in the citizens of obscure Megara, when they offered the freedom of their city to Alexander, who had conquered the world; but it was a mark of true sagacity, as well as true nobility, in him, to receive this tribute of their respect with complacency, on being told that they had never offered it to any but to Hercules and himself. Hollow trees are always the stiffest; but the mightiest oak, if sound, can bend. The more exalted a man is by station, the more powerful should he be by kindness; in life and in death, he should strive to deserve the encomium pronounced on Patroclus by the great Atrides:

“How skilled he was in each obliging art;
The mildest manners, and the gentlest heart.”

Nothing, however, can constitute good breeding that has not good nature for its foundation, and comprehensive goodness for its main design. The courtesy it employs is real, and not superficial; it is the deep and prolific source of refined manners, polite action, kind words and beneficent deeds. It has a potent influence in the world. Though it cannot of itself alone create a good name, nor absolutely supply the want of it; yet it is a quality which strongly attracts to its possessor the confidence and esteem of all classes of mankind. There is no policy like politeness, since a good manner often succeeds where the best logic has failed. Moreover this is an attribute which may be employed as effectively to correct the unworthy as it is most useful to inspire confidence in the timid and encourage the de-

serving. "Nothing sharpens the arrow of sarcasm so keenly, as the same courtesy that polishes it, and nothing exposes and arrests impertinence so efficaciously as the contrast presented by amenity. No reproach is like that we clothe with a smile and present with a bow." A fine illustration of this truth is presented in the fourth book of *Paradise Lost*. The reproof which the devil most keenly felt, was that which was most respectfully presented :

" So spake the cherub ; and his grave rebuke,
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
Invincible ; abash'd the devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue, in her shape how lovely ; saw and pin'd
His loss ; but chiefly to find here observ'd
His lustre visibly impaired ; yet seem'd
Undaunted."

It should be particularly observed that gentleness is not weakness. A mind that is addicted only to fawning and flattery will never honor truth and duty by an allegiance based on principle and adorned by true nobleness of spirit. Such an unsubstantial character can no more be made to assume the aspect of real politeness, than a sponge, or a fungus of any sort can be polished like a diamond or gold. Lead may be heavy enough for many useful purposes, but it is too unsubstantial and worthless to be coined into the currency of a nation ; and so of the public men it symbolizes, they are too stupid to be trusted, and too uncouth to be admired. But true greatness is always sympathetic and generous. Homer, that just observer of nature, makes no scruple to repre-

sent Ulysses—his best of men; and Achilles—his bravest of men, frequently in tears. Jonathan and David were the most heroical men of their age; yet they wept on each other's neck, till each exceeded. And what a lesson do we learn at the grave of Lazarus!

He whose disposition is most favorable to the production of happiness within himself, is of necessity and naturally most agreeable to others; and these common qualities of pleasing and being pleased mutually react upon and generate each other. "The great boast of polished life," says Jeffry, "is the delicacy, and even the generosity of its hostility—that quality which is still the characteristic, as it furnishes the denomination, of a gentleman—that principle which forbids us to attack the defenseless, to strike the fallen, or to mangle the slain—and enjoins us, in forging the shafts of satire, to increase the polish exactly as we add to their keenness or their weight." In his letter to the Duke of Ormond, Dryden speaks on this topic in his own rich, characteristic style. Says he, "Gold, as it is the purest, so it is the softest and most ductile of all metals. Iron, which is the hardest, gathers rust, corrodes itself, and is therefore subject to corruption: it was never intended for coins and medals, or to bear the faces and inscriptions of the great. Indeed, it is fit for armor, to bear off insults, and preserve the wearer in the day of battle; but the danger once repelled, it is laid aside by the brave, as a garment too rough for civil conversation—a necessary guard in war, but too harsh and cumbersome in peace, and which keeps off the embraces of a more humane life."

The mild courtesy of a truly generous heart, produces gracious manners, as genial sunshine and dew elicit the verdure and odors of earth, imparting alike to opening flower and benignant character, a most captivating charm. But when urbanity is separated from religious charity, it is rather the law of strife than a treaty of peace between men ; since, without that divine virtue, a man may appear courteous at times, while, as St. Bernard said of Peter Abailard, he is unlike himself—externally a John, and within a Herod. Even his apparent kindness will be employed habitually with the intention of injuring more deeply. Don Alonzo, king of Naples, hearing one day a certain man praising his enemy, “remark,” said he “the artifice of the man, and you will see that his praises are only for the purpose of doing him more harm.” The event verified the prediction. Indeed, along with native generosity of heart, nothing but the love of God and the direction of the secret purpose to his glory in the general welfare, can be the source of real, sincere and lasting courtesy. It was set forth in no mean light by Homeric Nestor, who received the two strangers with such kindness, although he thought in his mind that they might be robbers who passed over the watery ways, bearing evil to men of other nations. But the great apostle of the Gentiles presents a much higher and better example when, writing to Philemon concerning his poor servant Onesimus, he says, “If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account. I, Paul, have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it.” This is the gracious-

ness which is practically useful, and which all should exemplify.

“Then only shows of kindness have their worth,
When outward courtesies truly declare
The heart that keeps them.”

CHAPTER VII.

THOMAS H. BENTON,

THE MAGISTERIAL.

ABOUT ten years since, a sketch of THOMAS HART BENTON was presented to the public through the medium of the Democratic Review. From that work we extract the subjoined biographical remarks, preparatory to a yet more particular survey of the mental and oratorical character of our distinguished countryman.

“On the seventeenth of January, 1837, at the close of the long debate which had taken place in the Senate of the United States, on the famous ‘expunging resolution,’ shortly before the vote was to be taken, of which the issue had not been left doubtful by the previous imperative decision of public opinion, Col. Benton, of Missouri, rose in his place, and, addressing himself to the Vice President in the chair, in the course of a brief, but emphatic speech, referring back to the scene which had been enacted on the same spot three eventful years before, on the adoption of Mr. Clay’s memorable resolution of condemnation of the late President for the removal of the deposits, and to his own prophecy, then fearlessly hazarded, that that resolution should be ‘ex-



THOMAS H. BENTON .

H. Michelin's Lith. Massau St. N.Y.

punged' by the people of the United States from the journal of the Senate, uttered the following well-known words, which have become imperishably associated with his name :

“ ‘Solitary and alone I set this ball in motion !’ ”

“ This is the moment that the artist has selected as the most strikingly illustrative of the character of the Senator from Missouri ; and no one who has ever seen and heard Col. Benton, will hesitate in recognizing the features, air, and attitude of the ‘ Great Expunger.’ ”

“ Col. Benton is about fifty-four (64) years of age. His senatorial life dates from the year 1820, when he was elected by the Legislature of Missouri, before the formal admission of that State into the Union by Congress. He had removed to Missouri about five years before, from Tennessee ; where he had immediately arisen to distinction at the bar. It will be remembered that the Representatives from that State were not admitted to their seats in Congress till the succeeding year. The interval Col. Benton devoted to study, in preparation for the career which a worthy ambition had already, doubtless, marked out before him, in public life. Within that time he made himself master, in particular, of the Spanish language, and, to a considerable extent, of its literature.

“ He early rose to a prominent position in the Senate ; and his speech at the session of 1823-4, on the bill which (as chairman of a select committee) he introduced, to amend the Constitution with respect to the mode of the Presidential election, was one of remarkable ability and force. It contained but one erroneous

position, of which experience was not long in demonstrating the fallacy. Though he was opposed to the practice of choosing the Presidential electors by general ticket, or by the legislatures of the States, as he was, in fact, to the whole system of an intermediate electoral body between the people themselves, and the object of their choice for that high dignity, yet he was in favor of the umpirage of Congress, in the case of a failure to elect a majority candidate by the people on the first trial, with a single equal vote to every State, without reference to population. This was, in our opinion, carrying the State-Rights' principle (our sheet anchor, when not abused,) to an improper extreme, and implied a confidence in Congress, for the exercise of that dangerous power, neither justified by first principles, nor by subsequent experience. On this latter point he found himself in natural opposition to Mr. Van Buren, being representatives, the one from one of the largest, and the other from one of the least populous States in the Union. Mr. Van Buren was then, as he has ever since been, in favor of a second appeal to the popular vote. In the course of his speech, however, Col. Benton paid a handsome personal tribute to his eminent opponent. Col. Benton sat on the same committee (Military Affairs) with General Jackson, of which they were both very industrious and valuable members, the latter being the chairman. Here was necessarily renewed some portion of that intercourse which had in former years been of the most friendly and intimate character, but which had received an unhappy interruption from an occurrence too well known to the public to need further allusion.

It was still many years, however, before it did, or could resume a tone at all resembling its former character ; and, in fact, no personal explanation of that occurrence, nor allusion to it, ever passed between them until one or two evenings before President Jackson's departure from this city to the Hermitage, last March. That conversation was of a very solemn and affecting character. Long since, indeed, had every trace disappeared from the bosom of each, of that hostile feeling which had had its origin, on Col. Benton's part, only in the exasperated affections of a brother, and the pernicious influence of that pest of society—mischief makers ; and which, on the part of General Jackson, the frank, manly, warm-hearted soldier, may be said never to have had an existence ; and its place had been resumed by the memory of early friendship, mutual services, and the equal confidence of each in the honor and integrity of the other.

“Col. Benton continued a determined member of the opposition during the term of Mr. Adams, as he has been one of the main pillars of support to the democratic administration which succeeded it. It is not necessary to specify the particular occasions on which he has distinguished himself in his parliamentary life. The events are so recent, as they were striking, that they are doubtless fresh within the memory of most of our readers. The panic session cannot be passed, however, without a brief notice. In this Col. Benton sustained, unaided, except by the support of two or three gallant friends, (of whom the present Secretary of State was, perhaps, the most effective in impromptu debate,) the whole brunt of the tremendous attack with which the admin-

istration was then assailed, with a fury and powerful array of talent and eloquence never before witnessed in any legislative body. His services then rendered to the democratic cause can never be forgotten, and never repaid, except by the proud consciousness of the eventual triumph by which they have been so signally crowned. His controversy with Mr. Clay, in the famous Veto debate in 1832, affords, perhaps, as striking a specimen of his powers in this kind of gladiatorial encounter, as any that could be selected. If, on that famous field, either party may be said to have been borne worsted to the ground, it certainly was not the democratic orator, whose panache rode proudly, like that of Henri IV., above the tide of the battle, unbowed and unsullied.

“Col. Benton is by birth a North Carolinian, being a native of the county of Orange, and sprung emphatically from the people of that sound republican State. In fact, North Carolina has been singularly illustrious in the number of great men that she has contributed to the young States of the South and West. At various periods within the history of the Government, she has been able to claim as her native sons more than half a dozen of the Senators in Congress ; and at this time she has on the same floor not less than eight members, who may be fairly estimated as among the first men of the day. Even Ohio, in the person of the youngest Senator, has sent a North Carolinian ; and Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee would seem almost to believe that none other than a native of that State can do justice to the dignified functions of an American Senator. The ancestors of Col. Benton were among the leaders of the

Revolution of 1775, and contributed in every way to the service of their country. The family of the Harts, from which he is descended on the mother's side, was one of the most active in the State, in furtherance of the settlement of Kentucky, which was originally commenced in North Carolina, under the name of the Transylvania Colony; and it is sometimes cited by North Carolinians, with no little pride, that the people of that State (and among them the Harts) were the real backers of the famous Daniel Boone. Col. Benton may thus claim to be a hereditary defender of the liberties and the rights of the people; and for this purpose a reference back to a man's ancestry may be not only proper, even for a democrat, but praiseworthy, as an honorable incentive to zeal and devotion to the same good old cause. He is, and has ever been, most emphatically a democrat. He has been faithful to this principle from the outset of his public life, as it will prove faithful to him before its close. He has been a deep student of the history of our government, as of all ancient and modern times, for the great purpose of sustaining the popular cause against all aristocratic usurpation, under whatever form disguised. He is no parlor politician. He does not come from the palaces of cities, or the elegantly furnished chambers of 'Offices of Discount and Deposit.' His constituency is to be found among the hardy and true-hearted pioneers of civilization, in the farthest South and West.

"His earliest sympathies are with the ploughman and planter of the land, and his political creed is imbued with the honesty and simplicity of their lives. His elo-

quence in debate he caught from the strong native feeling and sagacity of those who till the soil, and substantially produce all the annual wealth of the nation, and not from the specious sophistry which so many of our American statesmen imbibe, insensibly, from the legions of speculators of every hive, and variety—subsisting, in reality, on that great producing mass with which our cities swarm. We repeat that it is this arduous devotion to the service of the democratic cause, in opposition to all encroachments on the plain original principle of equality of rights, which has gradually raised the Missouri Senator to his present commanding position, and has given such distinguished eclat to his name throughout the whole American Union.

“Perseverance, that attribute of all truly great and powerful minds, has through life been a remarkable trait of Col. Benton’s character. Establishing his principles at the outset, basing them all on an unwavering faith in the intelligence and integrity of the people, and guiding his course by the single polar star of the democratic principle, he goes fearlessly forward in his own path, equally unmindful who may oppose, or who may follow. He reaches his position, and takes his stand there, waiting for public opinion to come up to him, however far distant it may seem to lag behind ; he does not go back and linger and hesitate with it, but devotes himself, with all his energies and industry, to hasten it forward and quicken its development. Such a man must necessarily for a long time stand alone ; and it requires a high degree of moral courage, firmness of pur-

pose, and conscientious belief of the truth of his principles, to maintain such a position. He is for a long time regarded, even by the great body of his own friends, as a visionary ultra—as a theorist whose views are too wild for practicability ; enemies will doubtless christen him and his ideas as a stupendous ‘humbug ;’ but in the end, the progress of events and of public opinion will probably come up to his position, and the consequence will be that he will then stand forward as its most prominent representative.

“ Such are the men that work great revolutions and reforms ; though whether, when they have achieved that, their mission, they are found to combine with that impulsive energy which has thus far been their leading attribute, those other qualities suitable to the regulation and conduct of affairs afterwards, on which alone a perfect and safe public confidence can be based, remains a question to be dispassionately considered, and on which we do not pretend to pass an opinion. It is very certain that the authors of revolutions have not unfrequently been those on whom the public confidence would be the last to fix, as the most suitable persons to preside over the action of the new state of things established by them ; and many instances might be pointed to in which, after having been so selected by the generous impulse of popular gratitude, they have proved far from competent to this new and widely different duty. Of this, however, the public opinion, the vox populi, is the best and the only proper judge, and it would ill become us to attempt to forestall it in the slightest degree.

“ There is a great deal of popular misapprehension of

Col. Benton's views of financial science, at present the principal question on which the two great parties of the country stand at issue.

They have been so long and so loudly denounced as violent and absurd, in the extremes to which they go, that, notwithstanding our repeated experience of the rule, that opposition party clamor, against a prominent man ought to work by *inverse proportion*, some considerable effect has certainly been produced unfavorable to the distinguished Senator, even upon his own party. This effect is somewhat analogous to the cases of Jefferson, whom some good people were honestly made to imagine all that was unprincipled, both in his public and private capacity—of General Jackson, whom many actually supposed an illiterate ignorant dotard, whose stubborn honesty was his only good quality—of the present incumbent of the same elevated office, whom not a few, even of his own party and friends, have been made by dint of reiteration and positive assertion, in the very face of repeated facts, to believe a rather timid and time-serving politician, forgetful that moral courage is most contracted when calmest, deepest when most quiet. Col. Benton's views, though much misrepresented, have never pointed to a compulsory abolition of all paper money, or the destruction of banks. The disconnection of the Government from the banking interest—the restrictive influence which would be exerted by confining the fiscal action of the Government to the currency contemplated by the Constitution, to moderate the constant tendency of paper money to excess and abuse—and the reform of the anti-republican *monopoly* feature of the

system, as it has hitherto existed—comprise the substance of the views which have often been denounced as *ultra* and impracticable, as entertained by Col. Benton. The constitutional currency for the minor purposes of life—credit paper for the larger operations of commerce, for those who choose to use its facilities with their eyes open, and the privilege of choice—is acknowledged by all the divisions of the democratic party who have followed united under the flag of reform of the late administration, as the common creed; the only difference of opinion is as to the mode of carrying it into effect—a difference of opinion which need not, and cannot, long remain a subject of serious party divisions.”

From these general remarks on Mr. Benton’s personal history and political character, let us pass to the consideration of his published sentiments, that we may verify their worth. The first specimen we adduce is taken from a speech made by him in the Senate, Dec. 23, 1828, on the Public Debt. Herein will be seen, what has ever been a prominent trait in this patriot, a firm resistance to all great nominal monopolies. Having urged many considerations against the proposed measure, he proceeds, near the close of his argument, to say :

“I am for the abolition, because the wielding of ten millions of surplus revenue would dangerously increase the patronage of the Federal Government. It is now mortgaged to the public debt, and its application to that object being fixed and regular, involves the exercise of but little patronage. Released from the mortgage, it would be applicable to innumerable objects, and subject to the annual appropriation of Congress. Its distribu-

tion would attract all eyes, and excite universal cupidity. It would draw deputations from cities, towns and villages, from companies, and corporations, from counties, states and districts, to the feet of the Federal Government, all clamorous for their share of the spoil, and neglecting their own business to obtain it; all becoming less independent in proportion as they received it, like the degenerate Romans who began to lose the spirit of independence from the moment they began to look to the public granaries, instead of their own cribs, for a supply of corn.

“I am for the abolition, because an annual scramble on the floors of Congress for ten millions of dollars would fill our halls with bargains, combinations, intrigues and corruption. The effect would be inevitable. Help my State to half a million, and I will help yours to another half. Such would soon be the secret, and before long, the open and unblushing language. A majority might even meet beforehand, and divide the whole among their own States. They might even do worse, they might insert appropriations for roads and canals in States whose representatives denied the constitutionality of such appropriations, and thus subject them to the censure of all their constituents who admitted the power, or denying it, still thought they ought to have their share while it was going. In this way the delegation of a State might be rendered obnoxious to their constituents, and broken down at home by a manœuvre here. Is this fancy, or is it fact? exclaimed Mr. B. It is fact, and the history of our legislation proves it. Within the last three years, the manœuvre was tried. A bill came up from the H.

R. with appropriations for internal improvement for a majority of the States, including some whose delegations could not vote for such objects. The bill passed through this chamber, and became a law; but the design against the members failed. A kindly feeling prevailed. The yeas and nays were not called. The bill went through without noise, and the obnoxious voters were not pointed out to their constituents. This thing may be attempted again upon a greater scale, and with a more determined intent, if ten millions are to be annually divided out.

“I am for the abolition, because the annual division of ten millions of dollars would fill this Union with discord and violence. The division of money and property is the fruitful source of dissension all over the world, and throughout all ranks and classes of people. It is the bane of partnerships, the rock on which the peace of families is split, and the signal for strife and contention amongst confederates and conquerors. So sung the Poet of nature—

‘ Friends now fast sworn,
Whose double bosoms seem but one heart to bear,
Who ’twine as ’t’were in love inseparable,
Shall, within this hour, upon dissension of a doit,
Break out to bitterest enmity.’

“Yes, upon dissension of a farthing! With how much greater bitterness then must this enmity break out when the dissension is for millions, when the parties are sovereign communities, their passions inflamed by association, no common superior to decide between them,

and all sense of shame lost in the mass of undistinguishable multitudes? The last thing that any friend to the peace, the harmony, the stability of this Union would wish to see, would be an annual scramble on the floor of Congress for ten millions of dollars. We shall have heart burnings enough in distributing the two or three millions of surplus which will remain without these ten millions, and in contending for the countless millions of the public lands.

“I am for the abolition, because it will be the means of restoring the harmony of this Union, now greatly impaired by a tariff which sits hard upon the navigating and planting interests of the country. An abolition of ten millions of duties upon the principles stated in this resolution, will relieve these interests, without injuring any other interests, and thus an angry question will drop from our discussions, and a heavy cloud of discontent will vanish from our political horizon.”

An English barrister once undertook to speak while an express went twenty miles to bring back a witness whom it was necessary to produce upon the trial. Beyond the sea that was deemed quite an exploit, but it was nothing to what we often see in this land of wordy wars. For instance, take the great debate on Foot's resolution in 1829-30. Mr. Benton had at least his fourth day in that memorable contest, and mightily did he annoy the bravest champions he was called to face.

On the second day, Jan. 29, “The Senator from Missouri,” submitted the following remarks which occasioned a well-known reply.

“The Senator from Massachusetts, (Mr. Webster,)

has since occupied the floor two days, and has taken no notice of facts so highly authenticated, drawn from sources so wholly unimpeachable, and so pointedly conflicting with the denials and assertions which he has made on this floor. It is not for me to account for this neglect, or forbearance. Rhetoricians lay down two cases in which silence upon the adversaries' arguments is the better part of eloquence; first, where they are too insignificant to merit any notice; secondly, where they are too well fortified to be overthrown. In such cases it is recommended as the safest course, to pass them by without notice, and, as if they had not been heard. I do not intimate which, or if either of these rules governed the conduct of the Senator from Massachusetts. I can very well conceive of a third, and very different reason for this inattention—a reason which was seen in the fullness of the occupation which the Senator from South Carolina (GEN. HAYNE) had given him. True, the Senator from Massachusetts tells us that he felt nothing of all that—that the arrows did not pierce—and makes a question whether the arm of the Senator from South Carolina was strong enough to spring the bow? This he repeated so many times, and with looks so well adjusted to the declaration, that we all must have been reminded of what we have read in ancient books, of the brave gladiator who, receiving the fatal thrust which starts the cry of "*hoc habet*" from the whole amphitheatre, instead of displaying his wound, and beseeching pity, collects himself over his centre of gravity, assumes a graceful attitude, dresses his face in smiles, bows

to the ladies, and acts the unhurt hero in the agonies of death.

“ But admitting that the arrows did not pierce : What then ? Is it proof of the weakness of the arm that sprung the bow, or of the impenetrability of the substance that resisted the shaft ? We read in many books of the polished brass that resists, not only arrows, but the iron-headed javelins, thrown by gigantic heroes. But, pierced or not pierced, we have all witnessed one thing ; we have seen the Senator from Massachusetts occupy one whole day in picking these arrows out of his body ; and to judge from the length and seriousness of this occupation, he might be supposed to have been stuck as full of them as the poor fellow whose transfixed effigy on the first leaf of our annual almanacs attracts the commiseration of so many children.”

At a subsequent stage of the same speech, Mr. Benton referred to most interesting facts, as follows :

“ Let us pause, Mr. President, and reflect for a moment, upon the consequences to the West, and to the Union, if President Jefferson had not seized the opportunity of purchasing Louisiana ; or, having purchased it, the Senate or House of Representatives should have rejected the acquisition. In the first place, it is to be remembered that France, emerging from the vortex of her revolution, overflowing with warriors and governed by the conqueror, who was catching at the sceptre of the world, was *then* the owner of Louisiana. The First Consul had extorted it from the King of Spain in the year 1800 ; and the violation of the right of deposit at New Orleans, was the first act of ownership over the

new possession, and the first significant intimations to us of the new kind of neighbor that we had acquired. Contemporaneously with this act of outrage upon us, was the concentration of twenty-five thousand men, under the general of division, afterwards Marshal Victor, in the ports of Holland, for the military occupation of Louisiana. So far advanced were the preparations for this expedition, that the troops were ready to sail ; and commissaries to provide for their reception, were engaged in New Orleans and St. Louis, when the transfer of the province was announced. Now, sir, put it on either foot : Louisiana remains a French, or becomes a British possession. In the first contingency, we must have become the ally or the enemy of France. The system of Bonaparte admitted of no neutrals ; and our alternatives would have been, between falling into the train of his continental system, or maintaining a war against him upon our own soil. We can readily decide, that the latter would have been most honorable ; but it is hard to say, which would have been most fatal to our prosperity, and most disastrous to our republican institutions. In the second contingency, and the almost certain one, we should have had England established on our western, as well as on our northern frontier ; and I may add, our southern frontier also ; for Florida, as the property of the ally of France, would have been a fair subject of British conquest in the war with France and Spain, and a desirable one, after the acquisition of Louisiana, and as easily taken as wished for ; the vessel that brought home the news of the victory at Trafalgar, being sufficient to summon and reduce the places of

Mobile, Pensacola, St. Marks, and St. Augustine. This nation, thus established upon three sides of our territory, the most powerful of maritime powers, jealous of our commerce, panting for the dominion of the seas, unscrupulous in the use of savage allies, and nine years afterwards to be engaged in a war with us! The results of such a position would have been, the loss, for ages and centuries, of the navigation of the Mississippi; the permanent occupation of the Gulf of Mexico by the British fleet; the consequent control of the West Indies; and the ravage of our frontiers by savages in British pay. These would have been the permanent consequences, to say nothing of the fate of the late war, commenced with our enemy encompassing us on three sides with her land forces, and covering the ocean in front with her proud navy, victorious over the combined fleets of France and Spain, and swelled with the ships of all nations. From these calamitous results, the acquisition of Louisiana delivered us; and the heart must be little turned to gratitude and devotion, which does not adore the Providence that made the great man President, who seized this gift of fortune, and overthrew the political party that would have rejected it."

On the third day of this famous gladiatorial contest, Mr. Benton showed that "there were blows to give as well as blows to take." Referring to the sacred and secular patriots of the South in colonial and revolutionary times, he proceeded to say:

"Time and my ability would fail in any attempt to perform this task; to enumerate the names and acts of those generous friends in the South, who then stood forth

our defenders and protectors, and gave us men and money, and beat the domestic foe in the capitol, while we beat the foreign foe in the field. Time and my ability would fail to do them justice; but there is one State in the South, the name and praise of which, the events of this debate would drag from the stones of the West, if they could rise up in this place and speak! It is the name of that State upon which the vials, filled with the accumulated wrath of years, have been suddenly and unexpectedly emptied before us, on a motion to postpone a land debate. That State, whose microscopic offence in the obscure parish of Colleton, is to be hung in equipoise with the organized treason and deep damnation of the Hartford Convention; that State, whose present dislike to a tariff which is tearing out her vitals, is to be made the means of exciting the West against the whole South; that State, whose dislike to the tariff laws is to be made the pretext for setting up a despotic authority in the Supreme Court; that State, which, in the old Congress in 1785, voted for the reduction of the price of public lands to about one-half the present minimum; which, in 1786, redeemed after it was lost, and carried by its single vote, the first measure that ever was adopted for the protection of Kentucky—that of the two companies sent to the Falls of Ohio; that State, which, in the period of the late war, sent us a LOWNDES, a CHEVES, and a CALHOUN, to fight the battles of the West in the Capitol, and to slay the Goliahs in the North; that State which at this day has sent to this chamber, the Senator (GEN. HAYNE) whose liberal and enlightened speech on the subject of the public lands, has been

seized upon and made the pretext for that premeditated aggression upon South Carolina, and the whole South which we have seen met with a promptitude, energy, gallantry, and effect, that has forced the assailant to cry out an hundred times, that he was still alive, though we all could see that he was most cruelly pounded.

“Memory, Mr. President, is the lowest faculty of the human mind—the irrational animals possess it in common with man—the poor beasts of the field have memory. They can recollect the hand that feeds, and the foot that kicks them; and the instinct of self-preservation tells them to follow one and to avoid the other. Without any knowledge of Greek or Latin, these mute, irrational creatures “fear the Greek offering presents;” they shun the food offered by the hand that has been lifted to take their life. This is their instinct; and shall man, the possessor of so many noble faculties, with all the benefits of learning and experience, have less memory, less gratitude, less sensibility to danger, than these poor beasts? And shall he stand less upon his guard, when the hand that smote is stretched out to entice? Shall **man**, bearing the image of his Creator, sink thus low? Shall the generous son of the West fall below his own dumb and reasonless cattle, in all the attributes of memory, gratitude, and sense of danger? Shall his “*Timeo Danaos*” have been taught him in vain. Shall he forget the things which he saw, and part of which he was—the events of the late war—the memorable scenes of fifteen years ago? The events of former times, of forty years ago, may be unknown to those who are born since. The attempt to surrender the navigation of the

Mississippi ; to prevent the settlement of the West ; the refusal to protect the early settlers of Kentucky and Tennessee, or to procure for them a cession of Indian lands ; all these trials, in which the South was the savior of the West, may be unknown to the young generation that has come forward since ; and with respect to these events, being uninformed, they may be unmindful and ungrateful. They did not see them ; and, like the second generation of the Israelites, in the land of promise, who knew not the wonders which God had done for their forefathers in Egypt, they may plead ignorance and go astray after strange gods—after the Baals and the Astaroths of the heathen ; but not so of the events of the last war. These they saw ! The aid of the South they felt ! The deeds of a party in the north-east they felt also. Memory will do its office for both ; and base and recreant is the son of the West, that can ever turn his back upon the friends that saved, to go into the arms of the enemy that mocked and scorned him, in the season of dire calamity.

“ I proceed to a different theme. Among the novelties of this debate, Mr. President, is that part of the speech of the Senator from Massachusetts which dwells, with such elaboration of argument and ornament, upon the love and blessings of union, the hatred and horror of disunion. It was a part of the Senator’s speech which brought into full play the favorite Ciceronian figure of amplification. It was up to the rule in that particular. But it seemed to me that there was another rule, and a higher and a precedent one, which it violated. It was the rule of *Propriety* ; that rule which requires the fitness of

things to be considered ; which requires the time, the place, the subject, and the audience to be considered ; and condemns the delivery of the argument, and all its flowers, if it fails in congruence to these particulars. I thought the essay upon union and disunion had so failed. It came to us when we were not prepared for it, when there was nothing in the Senate, nor in the country, to grace its introduction ; nothing to give, or to receive, effect to or from the impassioned scene that we witnessed. It may be, it was the prophetic cry of the distracted daughter of Priam, breaking into the council, and alarming its tranquil members with vaticinations of the fall of Troy ; but to me, it all sounded like the sudden proclamation for an earthquake, when the sun, the earth, the air, announced no such prodigy ; when all the elements of nature were at rest, and sweet repose pervading the world. There was a time, Mr. President, and you, and I, and all of us, did see it, when such a speech would have found, in its delivery, every attribute of a just and rigorous *Propriety* ! It was at the time when the five-striped banner was waving over the land of the North ! when the Hartford Convention was in session ! when the language in the Capitol was, "Peaceably, if we can ; forcibly, if we must !" when the cry, out of doors, was, "the Potomac the boundary ; the Negro States by themselves ! The Alleghanies the boundary, the western savages by themselves ! The Mississippi the boundary, let Missouri be governed by a Prefect, or given up as a haunt for wild beasts !" That time was the fit occasion for this

speech ; and if it had been delivered then, either in the Hall of Representatives, or in the Den of the Convention, or in the highway, among the bearers and followers of the five-striped banner, what effect must it not have produced ? What terror and consternation among the plotters of disunion ! But, here, in this loyal and quiet assemblage, in this season of general tranquillity and universal allegiance, the whole performance has lost its effect for want of affinity, connection, or relation, to any subject depending, or sentiment expressed in the Senate ; for want of any application, or reference, to any event impending in the country."

On the 2d of February, 1831, Mr. Benton delivered his most celebrated speech against the renewal of the charter of the Bank of the United States. It is characterized throughout by severe argument and that copiousness of statistical information for which this speaker is distinguished. The following is the closing portion :

"I have said that the charter of the Bank of the United States cannot be renewed. And in saying this, I wish to be considered, not as a needless denunciator, supplying the place of argument by empty menace, but as a Senator, considering well what he says, after having attentively surveyed his subject. I repeat, then, that the charter cannot be renewed ! And, in coming to the conclusion of this peremptory opinion, I acknowledge no necessity to look beyond the walls of this Capitol,—*bright as may be the consolation which rises on the vision from the other end of the avenue !*—I confine my view to the halls of Congress, and joyfully exclaim, it is no longer the year 1816 ! Fifteen years have gone

by ; times have changed, and former arguments have lost their application. We were then fresh from war, loaded with debt, and with all the embarrassments which follow in the train of war. We are now settled down in peace and tranquillity, with all the blessings attendant upon quiet and repose. There is no longer a single consideration urged in favor of chartering the Bank in 1816, which can have the least weight or application, in favor of re-chartering it now. This is my assertion ! a broad one it may be ; but no less true than broad. Let us see ! What were the arguments in 1816 ? Why, first, '*to pay the public creditors.*' I answer this is no longer anything, for before 1836 that function will cease ; there will be no more creditors to pay. 2. '*To transfer the public moneys.*' That will be nothing ; for, after the payment of the public debt, we shall have no moneys to transfer. The twelve millions of dollars which are now transferred annually to the North-East, to pay the public creditors, will then remain in the pockets of the people, and the reduced expenditures of the government will be made where the money is collected. The army and the navy, after the extinction of the debt, will be the chief objects of expenditure ; and they will require the money, nearer on the frontiers, convenient to the land forces, or on the seaboard, convenient to the custom-houses. Thus will transfers of revenue become unnecessary. 3. '*To make loans to the General Government.*' That is nothing ; for the General Government will want no loans in time of peace, not even out of its own deposits ; for the prospect of war is rather too distant at present to

make new loans on that account. 4. '*To pay the Pensioners.*' That is something, I admit, when the payments exceed a million per annum. But what will it be after 1836? When the hand of death, and the scythe of time, shall have committed five years more of ravages in their senile ranks. The mass of these heroical monuments are the men of the Revolution. They are far advanced upon that allegorical bridge so beautifully described in the vision of Mirza. They have passed the seventy arches which are sound and entire, and are now treading upon the broken ones, where the bridge is full of holes, and the clouds and darkness setting in. At every step some one stumbles and falls through, and is lost in the ocean beneath. In a few steps more the last will be gone. Surely it cannot be necessary to keep up for twenty years, the vast establishment of the Federal Bank to pay the brief stipends of these fleeting shadows. Their country can do it,—can pay the pensions as well as give them—and do it for the little time that remains with no other regret than that the grateful task is to cease so soon. 5. '*To regulate the currency.*' I answer; the joint resolution of 1816 will do that, and will effect the regulation without destroying on the one hand, and without raising up a new power, above regulation, on the other. Besides, there is some mistake in this phrase, *currency*. The word in the Constitution is *coin*. It is the value of coin which Congress is to regulate; and to include bank notes under that term is to assume a power, not of construction—for no construction can be wild and boundless enough to construe coin, that is to say, me-

tallic money melted, cast and stamped—into paper notes printed and written—but it is to assume a power of life and death over the Constitution ; a power to dethrone and murder one of its true and lawful words, and to set up a bastard pretender in its place. I invoke the spirit of America upon the daring attempt! 6. ‘ *To equalize exchanges, and sell bills of exchange for the half of one per cent.*’ This is the broker’s argument ; very fit and proper to determine a question of brokerage ; but very insufficient to determine a question of great national policy, of State rights, of constitutional difficulty, of grievous taxation, and of public and private subjugation to the beck and nod of a great moneyed oligarchy. 7. ‘ *A bonus of a million and a half of dollars.*’ This, Mr. President is Esau’s view of the subject ; a very seductive view to an improvident young man, who is willing to give up the remainder of his life to chains and poverty, provided he can be so-laced for the present with a momentary and insignificant gratification. But what is it to the United States?—to the United States of 1836! without a shilling of debt, and mainly occupied with the reduction of taxes! Still this *bonus* is the only consideration that can now be offered, and surely it is the last one that ought to be accepted. We do not want the money ; and, if we did, the recourse to a *bonus* would be the most execrable form in which we could raise it. What is a *bonus* ? Why, in monarchies, it is a price paid to the king for the privilege of extorting money out of his subjects ; with us, it is a price paid to ourselves for the privilege of extorting money out of ourselves. The

more of it the worse ; for it has to be paid back to the extortioners, with a great interest upon it. It is related by the English historian Clarendon, who cannot be suspected of overstating any fact, to the prejudice of the Stuart kings, that for £1,500 advanced to Charles the First in *bonuses*, no less than £200,000 were extorted from his subjects : being at the rate of £133 taken from the subject for £1 advanced to the king. What the Bank of the United States will have made out of the people of the United States, in twenty years, in return for its *bonus* of \$1,500,000, (which, I must repeat, has been advanced to us out of our own money,) has been shown to be about sixty-six millions of dollars. What it would make in the next twenty years, when secure possession of the renewed charter should free the institution from every restraint, and leave it at full liberty to pursue the money, goods and lands of the people in every direction, cannot be ascertained. Enough can be ascertained, however, to show that it must be infinitely beyond what it has been. There are some *data* upon which some partial and imperfect calculations can be made, and let us essay them. In the first place, the rise of the stock, which cannot be less than that of the Bank of England, in its flourishing days, (probably more, as all Europe is now seeking investments here,) may reach 250 per cent., or 150 above par. This, upon a capital of thirty-five millions, would give a profit of \$42,500,000 : a very pretty sum to be cleared by operation of law !—to be added to the fortunes of some individuals, aliens as well as citizens, by the mere passage of an act of Congress !

In the next place, the regular dividends, assuming them to equal those of the Bank of England in its meridian, would be ten per cent. per annum. This would give \$3,500,000 for the annual dividend; and \$70,000,000 for the aggregate of twenty years. In the third place, the direct expenses of the Institution, now less than \$400,000 per annum, would, under the new and magnificent expansion which the operations of the Bank would take, probably exceed half a million per annum; say \$10,000,000 for the whole term. Putting these three items together, which is as far as *data* in hand will enable us to calculate, and we have \$122,500,000 of profits made out of the people, equal to a tax of \$6,000,000 per annum. How much more may follow, is wholly unascertainable, and would depend upon the moderation, the justice, the clemency, the mercy and forbearance, of the Supreme Central Directory, who, sitting on their tripods, and shaking their tridents over the moneyed ocean, are able to raise, and repress, the golden waves at pleasure:—who, being chief purchasers of real estate, may take in towns and cities, and the whole country round, at one fell swoop;—who, being sole lenders of money, may take usury, not only at 46, but at 460 per cent.:—who being masters of all other banks, and of the Federal Government itself, may compel these tributary establishments to ransom their servile existences with the heavy, and repeated exactions of Algerine cupidity. The gains of such an institution defy calculation. There is no example on earth with which to compare it. The Bank of England, in its proudest days, would afford but an inadequate and imper-

fect exemplar; for the power of that Bank was counterpoised, and its exactions limited, by the wealth of the landed aristocracy, and the princely revenues of great merchants and private bankers. But with us, there would be no counterpoise, no limit, no boundary, to the extent of exactions. All would depend upon the will of the Supreme Central Directory. The nearest approach to the value of this terrific stock, which my reading has suggested, would be found in the history of the famous South Sea Company of the last century; whose shares rose in leaps from 100 to 500, and from 500 to 1000 per cent.; but, with this immeasurable and lamentable difference, that *that was a BUBBLE!* *this, a REALITY!* And who would be the owners of this imperial stock? Widows and orphans, think you? as ostentatiously set forth in the report of last session? No, sir! a few great capitalists; aliens, denizens, naturalized subjects; and some native citizens; already the richest of the land; and, who would avail themselves of their intelligences, and their means, to buy out the small stockholders on the eve of the renewal. These would be the owners. And where would all this power and money centre? In the great cities to the north-east, which have been for forty years, and that by force of federal legislation, the Lion's den of southern and western money; that den into which all the tracks point inwards; from which the returning track of a solitary dollar has never yet been seen! And, this is the institution for which a renewed existence is sought—for which, the votes of the people's representatives are claimed! But, no! Impossible! It cannot be! The Bank is done. The arguments of

1816 will no longer apply. Times have changed ; and the policy of the Republic changes with the times. The war made the Bank ; peace will unmake it. The baleful planet of fire, and blood, and every human woe did bring that pestilence upon us ; the benignant star of peace shall chase it away."

One of the most instructive of Mr. Benton's speeches was that on the Oregon question, delivered in the Senate in May, 1846. The following is a fair sample :

" The value of the country, I mean the Columbian River and its valley, (I must repeat the limitation every time, lest I be carried up to 54° 40) has been questioned on this floor and elsewhere. It has been supposed to be of little value, hardly worth the possession, much less the acquisition, and treated rather as a burden to be got rid of, than as a benefit to be preserved. This is a great error, and one that only prevails on this side of the water ; the British know better, and if they held the tithe of our title they would fight the world for what we depreciate. It is not a worthless country, but one of immense value, and that under many aspects, and will be occupied by others, to our injury and annoyance, if not by ourselves for our own benefit and protection. Forty years ago it was written by Humboldt that the banks of the Columbia presented the only situation on the north-west coast of America fit for the residence of a civilized people. Experience has confirmed the truth of this wise remark.

It is valuable, both as a country to be inhabited and as a position to be held and defended. I speak of it, first, as a position, commanding the North Pacific Ocean,

and overlooking the eastern coast of Asia. The North Pacific is a rich sea, and is already the seat of a great commerce; British, French, American, Russian, and ships of other nations frequent it. Our whaling ships cover it, our ships of war go there to protect our interest, and, great as that interest now is, it is only the beginning. Futurity will develop an immense and various commerce on that sea, of which the far greater part will be American. That commerce, neither in the merchant ships which carry it on, nor in the military marine which protects it, can find a port to call its own, within twenty thousand miles of the field of its operations. The double length of the two Americas has to be run, a stormy and tempestuous cape to be doubled, to find itself in a port of its own country, while here lies one in the very edge of its field, ours by right, ready for use, and ample for every purpose of refuge and repair, protection and domination. Can we turn our back upon it? and, in turning the back, deliver it up to the British? Insane and suicidal would be the fatal act!

To say nothing of the daily want of such a port in time of peace, its want in time of war becomes ruinous. If we abandon, England will retain! And her wooden walls, bristling with cannon, and issuing from the mouth of the Columbia, will give the law to the North Pacific, permitting our ships to sneak about in time of peace—sinking, seizing, or chasing them away in time of war. As a position, then, and if nothing but a rock or desert point, the possession of Columbia is invaluable to us; and it becomes our duty to maintain it at all hazards.

“Agriculturally the value of the country is great ; and, to understand it in all its extent, this large country should be contemplated under its different divisions—the threefold natural geographical divisions under which it presents itself: the maritime, the middle, and the mountain districts.

Mr. Benton then proceeds to speak of the agricultural nature of the country, under these three natural geographical divisions and discovers an intimate acquaintance with the nature of the soil, and a familiarity with statistical information—which show him to be a master of his subject, and which forcibly exhibit his reasons for considering “the region, drained by the waters of the Columbia as one of the valuable divisions of the North American Continent.”

We omit this portion of his speech, and pass to the considerations by which he illustrates the commercial importance of Oregon. He says:

“Commercially, the advantages of Oregon will be great—far greater than any equal portion of the Atlantic States. The eastern Asiatics, who will be their chief customers, are more numerous than our customers in western Europe, more profitable to trade with, and less dangerous to quarrel with. Their articles of commerce are richer than those of Europe ; they want what the Oregons will have to spare, bread and provisions, and have no systems of policy to prevent them from purchasing these necessaries of life from those who can supply them. The sea which washes their shores is every way a better sea than the Atlantic ; richer in its whale and other fisheries ; in the fur regions which enclose it

to the north; more fortunate in the tranquillity of its character, in its freedom from storms, gulf streams and icebergs; in its perfect adaptation to steam navigation; in its intermediate or half way islands and its myriad of rich islands on its further side; in its freedom from maritime powers on its coasts, except the American, which is to grow up at the mouth of the Columbia. As a people to trade with, as a sea to navigate, the Mongolian race of eastern Asia, and the North Pacific Ocean, are far preferable to the European and the Atlantic.

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“It would seem that the White race alone received the divine command to subdue and replenish the earth! for it is the only race that has obeyed it—the only one that hunts out new and distant lands, and even a New World, to subdue and replenish. Starting from western Asia, taking Europe for their field, and the sun for their guide, and leaving the Mongolians behind, they arrived, after many ages, on the shores of the Atlantic, which they lit up with the lights of science and religion, and adorned with the useful and the elegant arts. Three and a half centuries ago, this race, in obedience to the great command, arrived in the New World, and found new lands to subdue and replenish. For a long time it was confined to the border of the new field (I now mean the Celtic Anglo-Saxon division); and even foreshore years ago the philosophic Burke was considered a rash man because he said the English colonists would top the Alleghanies, and descend into the valley of the Mississippi, and occupy without parchment, if the Crown

refused to make grants of land. What was considered a rash declaration eighty years ago, is old history, in our young country, at this day. Thirty years ago, I said the same thing of the Rocky Mountains and the Columbia: it was ridiculed then; it is becoming history to-day. The venerable Mr. Macon has often told me that he remembered a line low down in North Carolina, fixed by a royal governor as a boundary between the Whites and the Indians: where is that boundary now? The van of the Caucasian race now top the Rocky Mountains, and spread down to the shores of the Pacific. In a few years a great population will grow up there, luminous with the accumulated lights of European and American civilization. Their presence in such a position cannot be without its influence upon eastern Asia. The sun of civilization must shine across the sea: socially and commercially the van of the Caucasians and the rear of the Mongolians must intermix. They must talk together, and trade together, and marry together. Commerce is a great civilizer, social intercourse as great, and marriage greater. The White and Yellow races can marry together, as well as eat and trade together. Moral and intellectual superiority will do the rest; the White race will take the ascendant, elevating what is susceptible of improvement, wearing out what is not. The Red race has disappeared from the Atlantic coast: the tribes that resisted civilization met extinction. This is a cause of lamentation with many. For my part, I cannot murmur at what seems to be the effect of Divine law. I cannot repine that this Capitol has replaced the wigwam—this Christian people replaced the savages—

white matrons the red squaws, and that such men as Washington, Franklin, and Jefferson have taken the place of Powhattan, Opechonecanough, and other red men, howsoever respectable they may have been as savages. Civilization or extinction has been the fate of all people who have found themselves in the track of the advancing Whites, and civilization, always the preference of the Whites, has been pressed as an object while extinction has followed as a consequence of its resistance. The black and the red races have often felt their ameliorating influence. The yellow race, next to themselves in the scale of mental and moral excellence, and in the beauty of form, once their superiors in the useful and elegant arts, and in learning, and still respectable though stationary; this race cannot fail to receive a new impulse from the approach of the Whites, improved so much since so many ages ago they left the western borders of Asia. The apparition of the van of the Caucasian race, rising upon them in the east after having left them on the west, and after having completed the circumnavigation of the globe, must wake up and reanimate the torpid body of old Asia. Our position and policy will commend us to their hospitable reception: political considerations will aid the action of social and commercial influences. Pressed upon by the great Powers of Europe—the same that press upon us—they must in our approach see the advent of friends, not of foes; of benefactors, not of invaders. The moral and intellectual superiority of the White race will do the rest; and thus, the youngest people, and the newest

land, will become the reviver and the regenerator of the oldest.

“It is in this point of view, and as acting upon the social, political, and religious condition of Asia, and giving a new point of departure to her ancient civilization, that I look upon the settlement of the Columbia river by the van of the Caucasian race as the most momentous human event in the history of man since his dispersion over the face of the earth.”

It would be easy to multiply a great variety of samples from Mr. Benton's speeches, but the above are sufficient for our purpose, and we have room for no more. We proceed to speak more particularly of his character as an orator. He is, we think eminently laborious, imperious, and democratic in his habits, spirit, and style.

In the first place, Mr. Benton is uncommonly industrious in preparing for public discussions, and in the discharge of professional duties. It has been said of Macaulay, that he is one of the great guns of debate,—one which it takes a long time to load, and still more to bring into position : when fired it makes a great noise, hurts some of the enemy, perhaps, and frightens more : but the action is always decided before the gun can be reloaded. Not so with Benton, since he is ever supplied with a great amount of ammunition fitted to every mode of warfare, and which he can bring into effective use in the most sudden and momentous crisis. The foregoing specimens exhibit the affluence of his statistical information, gathered from all reliable sources, and fitted to aid the attainment of all practical designs.

When it is calm in the Senate, he is busy in the archives of the nation, exploring our history and studying our wants, that whenever a political storm arises he may rush to the arena fully equipped and "ready for any fate."

It is only by perpetual industry that one can acquire adequate resources, and use them with pleasure as well as with effect. The less we confine ourselves to limited fields and particular models, the more we shall profit by universal excellence, and the nearer we shall approximate in our habitual execution to the great general rules of exalted nature and elaborate art.

In the second place, all who have heard Mr. Benton much, know that he habitually bears an imperious aspect, and is not unfrequently betrayed by strong feeling into imperious action, in public speech. He carries the consciousness of high station, and the air of high talent; a portable treasure of confidence, which it is difficult to fathom and dangerous to offend. Generally he is busy at his desk, with heaps of books and papers all around, and with pen in hand, ready to transcribe a precedent, note a blunder, or project an argument. But when there is no important business going forward, he still preserves a magisterial dignity of deportment, throwing back his head and forming with his chin an obtuse angle with the horizon, as if to repel all familiarity and make the most of every moment as it flies.

Mr. Benton is not one of those who "let I dare not—wait upon I would," like the poor cat in the adage. He is resolute and daring in debate, sometimes to a reckless degree. The manner in which he recently conducted

the defence of his son-in-law illustrates what we mean by the magisterial element of his nature. It is hard for him to endure restraint, and when too much chafed he fiercely acts the part of a hero, like Macbeth, who "un-seemed a man from the nave to the chaps." Anger, we know it has been said, is one of the sinews of the soul: he that wants it hath a maimed mind. But there is danger that this element may so much prevail as to disfigure its possessor rather than fortify or ennoble him. Moderation is the silken string running through the pearl-chain of all virtues, without which the orator suffers more than any other man, since he can command others only so far as he commands himself.

The utility of high mettle is found in being docile to the curb while it needs not the spur. A man must have spirit or he cannot hope to have influence. Tamely to shrink from a collision with his equals or superiors, will inevitably and speedily lead him to sink below himself. He who is afraid to express a strong opinion, or to strike a hard blow, for fear that the word or the blow may be retaliated, is a mental coward of the most abject type. Such persons soon form the base habit of throwing themselves on the forbearance of their antagonists, and find impunity in their insignificance. So long as they are thus afraid of making enemies they never deserve to have true friends and seldom find them.

In saying that Mr. Benton is laborious as a student, and magisterial in attitude and manner as an orator, we should particularly observe, thirdly, that he is democratic in purpose and humane in spirit. He professes to seek the greatest good of the greatest number, and this is

doubtless the source of his most palpable faults and fairest virtues. It is said that he is sometimes too fractious for a dignified Senator ; but it is quite probable that his energy is that of deep, conscientious conviction, rather than ephemeral passion. He is too egotistical, say others, not sufficiently remembering, perhaps, that one may seem to be most guilty in this respect, when in reality he is least blameworthy. The speaker who sees a grand principle most clearly, and feels its value most acutely, will for this very good reason be most like-to say, *I assert this* or *I believe that*. This kind of egotism is infinitely more praiseworthy than the too common *tuism* which, with crafty circumlocution, affects a modest air in order the more basely to secrete a cowardly and selfish aim. The orator in question has ever been free and independent in his habits of thought and action, evidently sincere in his convictions, and bold, but not pertinaciously impertinent, in enforcing them. Whatever may be thought of his doctrines, or his mode of stating them, it is certain no honest antagonist will accuse him of duplicity or servility of spirit. Just as the slavery of the body causes the moral sensitiveness to languish, so intellectual vassalage enervates the imagination and deadens the soul. The mind, in its daring excursions and fearless expressions, must explore the realms of thought and fancy with a native and enthusiastic freedom, like Sinbad in the Valley of Diamonds, and while thus surrounded by invaluable riches, the adventurer, at liberty to choose and use for himself, will disdain all but the most resplendent gems.

Mr. Benton has long been an apostle of republican-

ism, and sometimes his constitutional ardor may have hurried him to the very verge of demagogical fury, but we are not aware that this has ever been prompted by an ambition either to obtain office or increase worldly emoluments. For many years he has been accustomed to observe the dragon reed of cunning and powerful monopolists swarming thick around the masses of their countrymen to deprive them of lawful rights,

“And not content the fruits to gather free,
He lends the crowd his arm to shake the tree.”

In our day the people at large are rapidly growing indisposed longer to tolerate great wrongs, whether of regal or republican stamp. What is most needed is a class of bold, brave, and good leaders, who dare, by precept and example, to “speak the truth and do the right,”—patriots who in the most exalted sphere will shrink from no browbeating and tyrannical aristocrat,

“Although his ancient but ignoble blood
Has crept through scoundrels ever since the flood.”

The purest eloquence is always democratic in spirit, because it has public utility for its aim, and human happiness for its inspiration. It always leads, and mainly sustains the great contention of the many against the few, for the recovery of their rights and the assertion of their interests. True eloquence is essentially democratical, since it deals with the universal, appeals to the common heart of man, and labors to promote the welfare of all mankind. Its chief ingredients are feeling,

thought, and passion, and not external rank, glitter, or station. It is not a power only, but beneficent goodness also. The finest displays of moral grandeur,—such as those which portray Prometheus, blessing the human race and defying the thunder of Jove, even when chained to the barren rock, with the vulture gnashing at his heart,—are but the principles which in every age have animated the heroes who have struck for freedom, braving the dungeon, the stake, and the scaffold, in their devotion to liberty, and their determination to emancipate themselves and their fellow-creatures from every iniquitous bond. The noblest times of free government have ever been the grandest eras of oratorical development. “Thus it triumphed in ancient Greece; its revival in modern days was when mind first broke loose from the superstition of ages, heaved off the authority of the church and the schools, and entwined itself with the feeling and the tendencies of human life. It ever has an affinity, not with the few in their distinctions, but with the many in their common properties, passions, fears, sorrows, rejoicings, and triumphs. It invites man, as it were, to a great feast, of which nature is the provision in all its diversity—for eloquence, like poetry, is the reflection of nature in the human soul; and there it offers him, not unsubstantial fare in gilded dishes, but angels’ food, and nectar of the gods. Imagination is the truth-seeing and beauty-seeing power; it is that which appreciates sublimity and loveliness, whether physical or moral; and by it man grows up into like order and harmony, and in similar loveliness; he aspires towards

an affinity of grandeur, and realizes the purposes of his own existence in this majestic world."

Every orator really inspired, and who moulds his public life according to the promptings of his better nature, will instinctively plead the native rights of the many rather than prostitute his talents to promote the unnatural immunities of the few. It is not uncommon that we see even the veteran in partisan warfare, if really well endowed, yield to the nobler promptings of his soul, and breathe a magnanimous strain which at once surprises and delights both friends and foes. We may regard such a man as in the position of the old prophet Balaam; when he intends to curse democracy, he is obliged, from the power of truth within him, to bless it. He is like the soothsayer, sent for from a far country—the seven altars erected for sacrifice—the incense rising in clouds; but when the inspiration comes, instead of malediction upon the people, he begins:—"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy tabernacles, O Israel!"

We live in an age which demands the services of men as industrious, resolute, and magnanimous as Mr. Benton, or any other public functionary can be. We need master-spirits in every exalted sphere, whose dignity is inherent and not assumed, a natural nobility of soul which commands spontaneous reverence; and not that pompous and arrogant grandeur as vulgar as it is mean, the incarnation of insolence and utterly unworthy of respect. What the great commonality wants is moral force, soul, manliness. These qualities, united with sound judgment and fertile imagination, contribute perpetual delight and admiration to the uneducated,

as well as to the most highly cultivated minds. The multitude prefers rugged naturalness in an inferior order of eloquence, to feebleness and insipidity in the highest. Even manifest defects become a man, when they are of natural growth, and the bold elements of an original character. Of this truth we have a striking instance in Mirabeau.

We are to bear in mind, however, that the most mighty champions have ever been the gentlest. The greatest geniuses on earth, in all their grandest and most beautiful conceptions, never overstep the modesty of nature, however wild their fancy, or fervid their feelings. Dignified and effective passion never expresses itself in violence and grimace.

All extraordinary excellence is produced not by any one quality, but by the combined influence of many; it is not exclusive sublimity of conception, the most acute discrimination of character, the widest sphere of comprehension, the most judicious and elaborate composition, nor the greatest pungency of expression: it is rather the union and simultaneous action of all these kindred powers. Energy of conception, and refinement of taste are the leading elements, so that grace of execution and perfection of finish go hand in hand; but the result when complete is many-sided, comprising diversified elements, each one admirable in itself. The elegance and truth of the details equal the intrinsic worth and symmetrical grandeur of the whole.

How much of this excellence Mr. Benton possesses, we leave the reader to infer from the specimens adduced above, and the traits portrayed. That he may be much

more fully prepared to form a just conception of the private worth, as well as public usefulness of the distinguished subject of our own very imperfect sketch, we subjoin the following conclusion of the biographical notice with which we began :

“ In all the domestic relations of life, Col. Benton is a remarkably exemplary man ; he is highly fortunate and happy in his family. He mixes little in general society, being but rarely tempted by any of its attractions from his own fireside, his family, studies, and the public business to which his zealous attention is unremitting. In person he is large, robust, of florid complexion, and powerful frame, capable of enduring fatigue, both mental and physical, under which but few other men could bear up. His reputation has been frequently assailed, with reference to his early youth, with slanders utterly false and base, of which he has never condescended to take the slightest notice—imitating, in this self-confident scorn of such unworthy assailants, the example of the great founder of his political school, Jefferson.

“ One remarkable trait of his public life deserving of notice, is the elevation of his ambition above the attractions of *office*. No one can doubt that during the late administration, his wish could have readily commanded from Gen. Jackson—to whom he rendered a support, made, by their peculiar personal relation, so honorable to both—almost any such gratification within the gift of the latter. He has always, however, preferred to any other the seat which he has so long occupied in the Senate of the United States, as the post (during all that time) of

the highest usefulness to the cause of his principles, and therefore of the highest honor.

“ In the style of his oratory, Col. Benton is forcible and very effective in the powerful struggle of debate. His manner is rhetorical, and he is at times too diffuse. He is often singularly happy in his metaphorical illustrations, in which he is very abundant, though he is sometimes hurried, in the flow of his language, into metaphors, which once entangled in them, it is not easy to manage very gracefully. A progressive improvement in his oratory has, however, been very evident within the last few years, his taste being purified from some bad habits of style, by which it was formerly disfigured. He may be said literally, according to the well-known maxim of Cicero, to have made himself an orator, having had to struggle against the apparently natural disadvantages of an incorrect and false taste. We have heard the remark made by one of his friends, that his best speech will not be delivered for ten years yet to come, and that he will have attained the age at which Cicero achieved his highest triumph, before he will have brought out all the capacity of eloquence within him. He is laborious in preparation of his materials, as he is usually luminous and forcible in their arrangement and use. Some of his best efforts have, however, been entirely extemporaneous. He has that faculty indispensable to greatness, a strong memory: and his extensive reading, and particularly his familiarity with all ancient and modern history, often supplies him with happy and striking illustrations of his positions. But his great strength consists in the

sincere force of his own convictions ; in his unhesitating confidence in the eventual support of his opinions by the verdict of the public judgment ; in the firmness and earnestness of his own will ; in the accumulation of facts which he brings to bear upon his subject, driving his nail home with repeated blows of a hammer that tells whenever it strikes. He is not generally esteemed a pleasing speaker, we believe, by the frequenters of the Senate galleries ; but in that body itself he often carries great weight, and there can be no doubt that his speeches within the last six or eight years have told with a more abiding effect on the mind of the country at large than those of any other individual."

CHAPTER VIII.

WILLIAM C. PRESTON,

THE INSPIRED DECLAIMER.

WE love good speaking, and will make almost any sacrifice to enjoy the best. Ten years ago, we performed a long and expensive journey to Washington, on purpose to hear the lions roar. At that time, what an array of talent there was in Congress! The morning after our arrival, we hurried to the Capitol, glanced at the works of art and the elegant grounds, waiting for the doors to open, when we immediately ensconced ourself in the Senate gallery. The dignitaries soon began to drop into their seats. Some of them we had seen elsewhere, and the most were recognized at once, from prints or verbal descriptions. But there was one in particular whom we were anxious to see and hear. Newspaper accounts of his matter and manner had excited the liveliest curiosity, and we had come a weary way to seek its gratification.

“Pray, sir,” said we to a reporter, “which is Mr. Preston?”

“That’s him,” was the reply, pointing to a somewhat large and decidedly heavy-looking personage, with brown

coat and a little switch cane, round-shouldered, yellowish wig, and florid complexion, trudging about with good-natured greetings to all in a kind of whining tone and careless air, everywhere met with smiles, and with everybody cracking a joke. This was a poser, indeed. We were looking for a prim, scholastic dignitary, with a most refined aspect and reserved manner, stooping to small talk only in selectest circles, and then always in *ore rotundo* style.

Business began at length, and it was worse still. This great orator of South Carolina, of whom our friend James C. Brooks had written so vividly, arose to second a resolution. He stood in a most unclassical position, bending forward, with his hands resting on two desks beneath him, his face expressionless, and his whole delivery as devoid of our preconceived notions as it could possibly be. Had he not more than once responded to the call of his name, we should have doubted his identity.

But, wait a bit. An expected debate was postponed, and a bill came up suddenly for final action, in which Mr. Preston was a good deal interested. It was a critical moment for the measure involved, and he rose again to speak. How different! Not three minutes had passed before we saw a new man there. He insensibly assumed an erect position, as elastic as it was commanding; his countenance changed its aspect as palpably as the landscape is changed by the sun bursting through sombre clouds; his muscles rounded out in a fuller and fairer symmetry; and the veins of his forehead swelled with the heated currents of almost preternatural energy;

his voice was suddenly changed into deep and mellow tones, with now and then a slight trembling that indicated intense emotion ; those short, significant sentences, so peculiar to his higher efforts, shot out in every direction like hissing bolts ; every eye and ear of a rapidly gathered throng seemed entranced before the speaker as he fulminated like one truly inspired.

Since that day of unexpected disappointment and unequalled gratification, we have heard a great deal of debating in Washington, London, and Paris, but have never met a second WILLIAM C. PRESTON. There may be others who are sounder logicians, more finical rhetoricians, shrewder politicians, or abstruser metaphysicians ; but where is a competitor, who can excel him in lucid, fiery, and captivating declamation ?

It is not our purpose, in the present instance, to encumber ourselves with biographical details. We have more genial matter in hand, and shall proceed at once to select several examples of our orator's composition, preparatory to an analysis of his peculiarly pungent eloquence. We begin with extracts from the speech delivered by Mr. Preston in the Senate, March 1, 1836 on the Abolition question :

“ Mr. President : I deeply regret the course which this discussion has taken. I have remarked its progress with much pain, with a feeling of anxiety and depression, which I find great difficulty in expressing. It has been mixed up with all those small topics of party and personal bitterness which, whether properly or not, enter so largely into the ordinary debates of the Senate, but which are altogether misplaced, and dangerous

when connected with the consideration of those deep and vital interests involved in any discussion of the institution of slavery. It is very desirable, as has been well suggested by the Senator from Massachusetts, that, if we must deliberate on this subject, we do so with all the calmness possible, and with a deliberate and combined effort to do what is best under the perilous circumstances which surround us, uninfluenced by the paltry purposes of party. In whatever temper you may come to it, the discussion is full of danger. The fact that you are deliberating on this subject of slavery, inspires my mind with the most solemn thoughts. No matter how it comes before you ; no matter whether the question be preliminary or collateral, you have no jurisdiction of it in any of its aspects. These doors should be closed against it ; for you have no right to draw into question here an institution guaranteed by the Constitution, and on which, in fact, the right of twenty-two Senators to a seat in this body is founded—and, emphatically, you have no right to assail, or to permit to be assailed, the domestic relations of a particular section of the country, which you are incapable of appreciating—of which you are necessarily ignorant—which the Constitution puts beyond your reach, and which a fair courtesy, it would seem, should exempt from your discussion. It exacts some patience in a southern man, to sit here and listen, day after day, to enumerations of the demoralizing effects of his household arrangements *considered in the abstract*—to hear his condition of life lamented over, and to see the coolness with which it is proposed to admit petitioners who assail, and vilify, and

pity him, on the ground that it would hurt their feelings if *we* do not listen to them. We sit here and hear all this, and more than this. We hear ourselves accused of being agitators, because we ask the question, is it the pleasure of the Senate to hear those who thus assail us? As yet, Mr. President, the incendiaries are but at your door, demanding admittance, and it is yet within your power to say to them, that they shall not throw their burning brands upon this floor, or propagate the conflagration through this Government. Before you lend yourself to their unhallowed purposes, I wish to say a word or two upon the actual condition of the Abolition question; for I greatly fear, from what has transpired here, that it is very insufficiently understood; and that the danger of the emergency is by no means estimated as it ought to be. God forbid that I should permit any matter of temporary interest or passion to enter into what I am about to tell you of the real dangers which environ us. My State has been assailed. Be it so. My peculiar principles have been denounced. I submit to it. Sarcasms, intended to be bitter, have been uttered against us. Let them pass. I will not permit myself to be disturbed by these things, or, by retorting them, throw any suspicion on the temper in which I solemnly warn both sections of this Union of the impending dangers, and exhort this Senate to do whatever becomes its wisdom and patriotism under the circumstances. Let us not shut our eyes, sir, on our condition. Some gentlemen have intimated that there is a purpose to get up a panic. No, no, sir. I have no such purpose. A panic on this subject is a disaster. The stake is too great to play for under a panic. In

the presence of so much danger as I solemnly believe exists, I would rather steady every mind to the coldest contemplation of it, than endeavor to excite my own, or the feelings of others, by adventitious stimulants. If I over-estimate the magnitude of the dangers which threaten us, it is in spite of myself, against my wishes, and after the most deliberate consideration.

“ Look round, then, sir, on the circumstances under which these numerous and daily increasing petitions are sent to us. They do not come, as heretofore, singly, and far apart, from the quiet routine of the Society of Friends, or the obscure vanity of some philanthropic club ; but they are sent to us in vast numbers, from soured and agitated communities, poured in upon us from the overflowing of public sentiment, which everywhere, in all Western Europe and Eastern America, has been lashed into excitement on this subject. Whoever has looked at the actual condition of society, must have perceived that the public mind is not in its accustomed state of repose, but active, and stirred up, and agitated beyond all former example. The bosom of society heaves with new and violent emotions. The general pulse beats stronger and quicker than at any period since the access of the French Revolution. Public opinion labors, like the priestess on her tripod, with the prophecy of great events. In Germany, in France, and in England, there is a great movement party organized upon the spirit of the times, whose tendency is to overturn established institutions, and remodel the organic forms of society, for whose purposes the process of experiment is too slow, and the action of reason too

cold; whose infuriated philanthropy goeth about seeking whom it may devour. To these ethical or political enthusiasts the remote and unsustained institution of slavery offers at once a cheap and fruitful subject. Accordingly, it is known that the *doctrinaire* and *juste milieu* party of France, and its leading paper, the *Journal des Debats*, conducted with much ability, is devoted to the purposes of abolitionism. The Duc de Broglie, Prime Minister of France, with St. Domingo before his eyes, is president of an abolition society, having in view the manumission of the slaves in the French West Indies. But the state of feeling in England has a much more direct influence upon us, and is therefore of more important investigation."

Mr. Preston then proceeds to speak of the state of the public mind in England, in relation to the slave question—of the act of emancipation by the British Parliament of the West India slaves, which he traces to the individual efforts of Wilberforce and Clarkson,—and remarks on the morbid sensibility everywhere prevalent in relation to the African race—a sensibility pervading the literature, politics, and whole organization of society, and shows, from the intimate sympathies existing between England and America, how great an influence must be excited on public opinion in this country, and hence warns the Senate of the result.

Passing over this and other portions of this speech, we come to the close which we give entire. Let the reader conceive, if he can, the perpetual corruscation of flashing bolts with which it fell from the impassioned orator.

“The honorable Senator, (Mr. Prentiss) with his characteristic earnestness, and with the weight communicated to everything he says, by the high estimate of his worth and ability, and the known gravity of his mode of thinking, has informed us that amongst these petitioners are men of as much worth and patriotism as are to be found anywhere; and the honorable gentleman himself vindicates the petitioners by the authority of his co-operation, when he declares here in his place that Congress is constitutionally endowed with the power of manumitting the slaves in this District, and that it is expedient to exercise this power. But a short time since the Legislature of the State which the gentleman represents passed resolutions that the matter of slavery ought not to be agitated. Now, the Senator thinks it expedient to act. His colleague, too, assures us that the progress of the agitation in Vermont is greatly accelerated; that seven societies have been recently organized in one county; and that he hears of societies springing up in quarters, remote neighborhoods, where he had supposed that abolition had scarcely been heard of. Is there nothing in these facts?

“Five hundred societies are now organized, and in active operation, and daily increasing in numbers. Is there nothing in this? In these wide-spread associations are there none but the weak and base, a noisy and impotent rabble, which will fret itself into exhaustion? Or are they composed, as all such popular movements are, of a mixed multitude of all those whom wild enthusiasm, mistaken piety, perverted benevolence, and blind zeal, hurry and crowd together, to swell the torrent of

public enthusiasm, when it sets strongly towards a favorite object? However humbly I may think of the wisdom of these people, I do place a high estimate upon their zeal and enterprise. We have seen what these qualities effected in England on this subject, and they are not less efficacious here. There is at this moment in New York an association of twenty-five men of wealth and high standing, who, with a spirit worthy of a better cause, have bound themselves to contribute \$40,000 a year to the propagation of abolition doctrines through the press. Five of these pay \$20,000 a year, and one \$1,000 a month. Such is the spirit, and such the means to sustain it.

“Again, I demand, sir, do these things indicate nothing? The press is subsidized—societies for mutual inflammation are formed—men, women, and children, join in the petitions—rostrums are erected—itinerant lecturers pervade the land, preaching up to nightly crowds a crusade against slavery. The pulpit resounds with denunciations of the sin of slavery, and infuriate zealots unfurl the banner of the cross—the standard to which the abolitionist is to rally. The cause of anti-slavery is made identical with religion, and men and women are exhorted, by all that they esteem holy, by all the high and exciting obligations of duty to man and to God, by all that can warm the heart or inflame the imagination, to join in the pious work of purging the sin of slavery from the land. Gentlemen have told us of the array of the reverend clergy on these petitions. Infatuated and deluded men! In the name of charity, they lay a scene of blood and massacre; in the blas-

phemed name of the religion of peace, they promote a civil and servile war ; they invoke *Liberty* to prostrate the only Government established for its preservation. But what voice can penetrate the deafness of fanaticism ? It neither hears, nor sees, nor reasons, but feels, and burns, and acts with a maniac force.

“ Nor are the all-exciting topics of religion the only sources from which this turbid and impetuous stream is swollen. All the sympathies of the American heart for liberty, (the word itself has a magic in it,) achieved through war and revolution, are perverted into it. When the war-cry is ‘God and Liberty’—when it is thundered from the pulpit, and re-echoed from the press, and caught up and shouted forth by hundreds of societies, until the whole land rings with it, shall we alone not hear it, or, hearing it, lay the flattering unction to our souls that it portends nothing ? Be not deceived, I entreat, gentlemen, in regard to the power of the causes which are operating upon the population of the non-slaveholding States. The public mind in those States has long been prepared for the most favorable reception of the influences now brought to bear upon it. It has been lying fallow for the seed which is now sown broadcast. A deep anti-slavery feeling has always existed in the Northern and Middle States ; it is inscribed upon their statute books. Each, in succession, impelled by this feeling, has abolished slavery within its own jurisdiction ; and what has been effected there, without as yet any fatal consequences, unreflecting ignorance will readily suppose may be effected everywhere under all circumstances. The spirit of propagandism is in pro-

portion to the distance of the object, and the ignorance of the propagandist. Of the whole population of those States, ninety-nine hundredths regard the institution with decided disapprobation, and scarcely a less proportion entertain some vague desire that it should be abolished, in some way, at some time, and believe that the time will come, and the mode be devised. They believe that slavery is bad in the abstract, and not incurable as it exists. The remoteness of it from themselves makes them at once more ignorant of its actual condition, and bolder in suggesting remedies. It is to such a temper of mind that the inflammatory appeals I have spoken of are addressed.

“But there is still another element of power, scarcely less than either of those I have adverted to, which the incendiaries will not be slow to avail themselves of. Cast your eyes, sir, over the States where they have already gained foothold, and mark the eagerness and equality with which two great political parties are struggling for ascendancy. Animated by the utmost intenseness of party spirit, and in the very height of a contest of life and death, they will be willing to snatch such arms as fury may supply, and avail themselves of such auxiliaries as chance may offer. A third party, even were it less numerous than the abolitionists, occupying for a time a neutral position, will of course be able to decide the controversy. Each party will dread its accession to the other, and each may, perhaps in turn, court its influence. Thus its consequence is enhanced, and, deriving strength from position, it acquires a new principle of augmentation, until it becomes

sufficiently powerful to absorb one or the other of the contending parties, and become itself the principal in the controversy. Then are added party spirit, political ambition, local interests ; and, with all this aggregation of strength and power, think you, sir, that abolitionism, at your next session, will pause at your door, waiting to see if it be your pleasure to ask it in ? Even now, sir, candidates for popular favor begin to feel the influence of this new power. The very fact of the reluctance which we all feel to agitate this matter here, bespeaks our fears of exasperating the strength which we instinctively know resides in the abolitionists. Gentlemen say we must tread softly, lest we wake the giant ; we must not breathe upon the spark, lest it burst into a blaze ; we must bow down before the coming storm until it blows over, for fear that it will prostrate us if we stand up : and while the policy of such a course is urged, we are told there is no danger.

“No gentleman will suppose that I take pleasure in indicating the cause of growth, or the present strength of the abolitionists, or would willingly exaggerate them. It is not, I confess, without the deepest apprehensions that I contemplate them ; but my chief fears arise from the supineness with which they are regarded here, on both sides of the House. We repose in a false and fatal security. I am amazed and dismayed at the view which my friends have taken of these matters. I know well that their interest is identical with mine. I know their honor and candor ; and most willingly would I indulge in their soothing hopes, if the deepest sense of the most imperious duty did not exact of me to call

upon them to awake to a sense of the danger, and be prepared to meet it with a thorough comprehension of its import; and as a member of the Senate of the United States, I warn and exhort gentlemen to take early and decided counsel as to what is fit to be done. The occasion concerns us all, not perhaps in an equal degree, but it deeply concerns all who feel, as I do, a profound veneration for the Constitution, and an ardent love for the Union. I conjure the Senators from the non-slaveholding States to approach this subject with a steady regard and unfaltering step; to come to the task at once, before it is too late; to interpose all the authority of this Government between the incendiaries and their fatal purposes; and to pledge the moral weight of their individual characters against it.

“ I heartily approve the sentiments which have been generally avowed in the Senate, and appreciate the patriotic feelings which gentlemen have expressed in regard to the abolitionists. I have read with unfeigned pleasure, the wise communication of the Governor of New York to his Legislature, and am gratified to believe that there is a mass of intelligence and worth in that great State, as well as in others of the Northern and Middle States, which deeply disapproves these proceedings. But what I fear is, that neither here nor elsewhere is there a sufficient perception of the imminence of the danger, or the potency and permanency of those causes which create it. Even honorable gentlemen from the South, who have all at stake; around whose hearths, and in whose bed-chambers, the cry of thousands is invoking murder, in the name of God and

liberty—with the example of Jamaica and St. Domingo before them, even they are not sufficiently aroused to the emergency. I entreat them to awake: I invoke gentlemen from all quarters, of all parties, to unite at once, to combine here, in the adoption of the strongest measures of which this Government is capable, and thus to enter into mutual pledges to oppose, by all possible means, and to the last extremity, the destructive and exterminating doctrines of these terrible incendiaries. Signalize your opposition by the most decided action. Stamp their nefarious propositions with unqualified reprobation. Throw the whole authority of this Government against them. Pledge the authority of each Senator in his own State. Say to the abolitionists that this Government will in no event be made an instrument in your hands. Say to the South that this pestilential stream shall not be poured upon you through these halls. Give us the strongest measures. If you cannot adopt the proposition of my colleague, let us know what you can do. The matters before us are of the deepest consequence, and it may, perhaps, not be within the competence of this Government to effect an entire remedy of the evil. Something, however, can be done; you may, at least, save yourselves from becoming either passively or actively accessory to the result. Erect yourselves into a barrier between the opposing sections. Save the Union if you can.

“If things go much farther, you may find this no easy matter. Recent experience has, thank God, demonstrated that this Government is not strong enough to produce disunion. Will it be strong enough to prevent

it if proceedings go on, which inevitably make two people of us, warring on a question which, on the one side, involves existence, and on the other, arrays all the fury of fanaticism? Think you, sir, that, if you have not the spirit or power to trample out the brand that is thrown amongst us, you can yet bring help when the whole land is wrapped in conflagration? If, however, in your judgment it is not competent or expedient to act decisively, tell us so. Let us know what you can or will do, and we will consider it, and bring to the consideration of it a candid and conciliatory temper, anxious to find safety for the Constitution in your measures. Our own safety is in our own keeping. I will not more than allude to it for fear of misconstruction; but while with the most painful emotions I have adverted to the dangers of our situation, while with the most profound solicitude I entreat the Senate to guard against them, I know that the South has the power and the will to vindicate its rights and protect itself. Even if it were destitute of the high spirit which characterizes it, if it were without the resources which abound there, it would be forced into a position of self-defence by the inexorable necessities of self-preservation. The South has drawn deep lessons of instruction from the colonial history of France and England. St. Domingo and Jamaica were colonies subject to the dominion of a foreign power, and perished because they were colonies. Their disastrous history is not recorded in vain. I will not pursue this topic. I am here a member of the Senate of the United States, impressed with a sense of my federal duties, and in discharge of them, have felt

myself compelled to state my conception of the perilous circumstances in which we are, because I fear there is a fatal misconception in regard to them. It is possible, sir, that I may have conceived them too strongly. I wish it may turn out so. It is erring on the safe side to magnify the strength of the enemy, if you intend to encounter him with fortitude and just preparation. Many friends near me see nothing on the horizon but a floating cloud, which the summer breeze will drive away. I see, or think I see, the gathering of a tempest surcharged with all the elements of devastation. If they be right, it is happy for us all; but if they be wrong, and I right, and the blessed moments of preparation are thrown away until the storm bursts, they incur an awful responsibility."

The happy versatility of which Mr. Preston is capable in public speech, is indicated by the following extract from the account given of the famous Whig Convention, held in Baltimore on the first week of May, 1840:

"The Hon. Wm. C. Preston, the eloquent and distinguished Senator from South Carolina, next responded to the call of the Convention. 'This,' said he, 'is the happiest day of my life. I see here the consummation of almost all that I had hoped for from the earliest day I entered public life. I hate tyranny, and from my infancy was taught to despise a Tory. I was born a Whig, and am yet a Whig. The Whigs have met here,' continued Mr. Preston, 'to bring peace and prosperity to the land, and I take pleasure in expressing the belief that the man of their choice will maintain and consoli-

date the great national institutions and enterprises of the country.' Continuing his remarks,

"Mr. Preston alluded to the self-denying, magnanimous, and patriotic conduct of Henry Clay. The eulogium was the most eloquent we have heard, and the audience heard it with interest and delight. Returning to General Harrison, he said, 'I will devote to him my labor, my thoughts, my person, and my purse. I regard the Ohio farmer as a true and devoted patriot, and I would the news of this day's meeting could be borne to him upon the wings of the wind.'

"Mr. Preston, in concluding his remarks, said, he was a Southern man, and happily in connection with this subject did he allude to the recent demonstration of opinion from the 'Old Dominion.' Harrison, too, he was proud to say, was a Virginian born, and a son of a signer of the Declaration of Independence. He sprung, too, from the best of the Anglo-Saxon blood. He was a descendant of that Harrison who, in the reign of the tyrant Charles, said that, 'as he was a tyrant, I slew him.' Who, said Mr. Preston, can boast of better blood in his veins than this descendant of the king-destroying, despot-killing, tyrant-hating Harrison ?

"Mr. Preston, in a manner peculiar to himself, after exhorting the Whigs to use their anticipated triumph as not abusing it, left the grave a moment for the gay. Alas, poor Democrats, farewell, dear Loco Focos ! you have had your day. Every dog has his day ! It is necessary, Mr. Van Buren, that you should go for diminished wages, and the country says you shall go for diminished wages ! Again, Mr. Preston drew a happy

picture of the 4th of March, 1841. He supposed that prince of Democrats, Martin Van Buren, to be here in his coach and four horses. Following him comes Amos Kendall, and succeeding him, Levi Woodbury with his empty bags, and still behind these worthies the head of the war department, Mr. Poinsett, the author of the system for two hundred thousand militia, and thirty-four bloodhounds. I see them now, said Mr. Preston, in my mind's eye. They come from Washington—are seen at Fell's Point,—now at Canton—and some one says to the party there is the race course where met the National Convention in May last.

“Again, Mr. Preston changed his manner, and in a burst of eloquence which electrified his hearers, exhorted them to go into the possession of the administration of the public affairs with clean hands and honest hearts; and first of all to proscribe the system of proscription which had dishonored the country. Let us wash the ermine and purify the seats of government. Mr. Preston also made a happy allusion to Cincinnatus the ploughman, citizen, and general. In many respects Harrison was like him, but the spectacle of selecting the humble American citizen to rule over the nation was of the moral sublime, and far eclipsed anything in Grecian or Roman history,

“In General Harrison, said Mr. Preston, in conclusion, I believe in after time we may be able to say, that the country has a second Washington in the second Harrison. When this day comes, and God speed the time, for one I will be content—rest satisfied—leave the field of labor,—and say like one of old—‘Now, Lord, lettest

thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy glory.'”

On January 13th, 1841, Mr. Preston delivered in the Senate his famous speech on the Pre-emption Bill. That effort was in a more subdued tone than is usual with him, and presented a vast amount of statistical information. The following continuous passage, taken from the main body of the speech, will best exemplify his most substantial manner in the forum. Having submitted a long array of numerical facts to substantiate foregoing positions, he proceeds to say :

“This account does not include the heavy disbursements for Indian wars, which, swelled by the recent enormous expenses in Florida, may be safely set down at forty millions of dollars. With this very large balance standing against the land yet in possession of the United States, if the calculation of the value of that residue made by the Senator from South Carolina be correct, the whole will not reimburse us, much less the 65 per cent. which he proposes to reserve. And thus we shall have squandered not only what Virginia and the other States *gave* us, but also a large sum of money contributed by the old States in the form of taxes upon their citizens before the States now proposed to be benefitted were in existence. In this most obvious view of the case, we give out of the treasury, to a few favored States, 35 per cent. of many millions of dollars collected from the other States. By this operation, Virginia will not only have given her lands, but her money also. She will have transferred her property, and paid a sum to those who take it. The quantity of land proposed

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to be surrendered by this act of cession is, according to the report of the select committee, one hundred and fifty-four millions of acres, lying in various portions of the nine selected States. Thirty-five per cent. upon this quantity is upwards of fifty millions of acres, certainly a munificent donation. The average annual income from the sale of public lands for the last twenty years is about five millions of dollars. Assuming this ratio, the annual grant in money to these nine States is more than a million and a half of dollars. It is equal to the civil lists of those States. It is the assumption of the public debts of those States. It is the distribution of the whole nett proceeds of the public lands amongst nine States.

“ It seems to me that the mode of calculation by which the mover of this amendment brings down the value of the public lands is erroneous; but, whatever that value may be, we have no power to cast it away. One thing is certain, that the sales yield an income of five millions, and that, in all human probability, they will continue to do so for the next thirty years. Their value for a sum in hand, therefore, is correctly estimated by a very obvious process. The annual receipts should cover the annual interest, and provide a sinking fund for the capital. By this mode of calculation, then, allowing the income from the public lands to terminate at the end of thirty years, the present value in hand would be upwards of fifty millions; and the proposition thus reduced results in a donation, *in presenti*, of seventeen millions of dollars to the nine States. The eagerness manifested by the Senators representing those States is

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natural. There is a grandeur in this munificence which subdues the imagination, and casts into shade the vast donation of Virginia—differing from that, too, in this: that, whereas Virginia gave to all the States, herself included, this proposition gives to one-third of the States, containing less than one-sixth of the population.

“ That the average of the last twenty years is a just, or at least a sufficiently low, criterion of the proceeds of the public lands for the future, will be apparent from the consideration of the great increase of the population, which furnishes the demand for new lands. The United States now contain 18,000,000 of inhabitants, an increase at the rate of about 700,000 a year. The demand for new settlements will increase in a corresponding ratio with the population. It may be safely put down as increasing at the rate of four per cent. Experience, heretofore, has shown that the rate of purchase does not diminish, as the land has been picked and culled; but on the contrary, those lands which have been longest in market are most freely sold, in proportion to the quantity in market. Thus, lands are more rapidly taken up in Ohio than in Arkansas, for the obvious reason that a dense population makes inferior land more valuable in the midst of it, than more fertile districts in an uninhabited country. There is but a million of acres of United States land now remaining unsold in Ohio, and even this is diminishing with an accelerated ratio. It therefore may be well assumed that from this source the United States may enjoy a revenue of five millions, until very much the largest portion of the domain within the nine States is disposed of, and

long before that period Florida, Iowa, and Wisconsin will have brought their contributions to the general fund, and extended the period of this income to future generations. Reasoning upon data known to be correct, in thirty years from this time the demand for the public lands will be in proportion to a population increasing at the rate of two millions a year.

“ But there are other serious objections to this amendment, and I invoke the attention of Senators from every quarter of the Union to that which I am now about to state. The proposed mode of disposing of the public lands is altogether, and to an enormous extent, *unequal in its operation*. What I insist on, is, that there shall be at any rate a perfect equality; that there shall not be discrimination and bounties in favor of one State and against another; but here there is a degree of inequality which, were there no other objections, would be sufficient to compel my decided dissent. It is proposed to cede the public domain to each of the States respectively, within whose territorial limits they lie. It is given to the States, not to individuals. It is given to them, not as being *all* the States, but as being part only of the States of the Union. Should it be ceded to all the States, it would be a violation of the original cession, and of the Constitution, as the advocates of this measure contend. It is to be ceded to the States, not in proportion to their contributions to the public burdens, or in proportion to their size or population, but simply as States. And what will be the result, as between one of the States and another? Ohio exceeds Missouri in population four to one; and how does this amendment pro-

pose to distribute the public lands between these two States? The share of Missouri is to the share of Ohio as more than twenty-eight to one, making the population of Missouri receive over the population of Ohio more than one hundred to one. Can Ohio stand by and see the public domain given away in this proportion? Nor is this all; for the one million of acres which Ohio gets, is of lands which have been in market for more than forty years, and have been picked and culled during all that time, while the thirty millions which are given to Missouri consist of fresh and fertile lands but recently surveyed. Now let me ask, what will Virginia get? She contributes to the public burdens six times as much as Missouri. Missouri is to get thirty-five per cent. of thirty millions. How much does Virginia get? Nothing! This is not thirty millions to one; it is thirty millions to nothing. Besides, Ohio has now passed her chrysalis condition. She has now become one of the old States of the Union. A million of acres is nothing to her. But this amendment gives her her dividend but of one million of old and refuse land, while it gives Missouri her dividend of thirty millions of new land of the very best quality.

“Let us now look a little at the operation of this scheme in its details. I have here the report of the learned Committee on Public Lands, made at the last session, stating the quantity of public lands within the various States. Ohio, it appears, contains one million of acres of second, third, and fourth-rate lands, while Arkansas has forty-three millions of acres.

[Mr. Sevier, across—Yes, and it is rich].

“ Yes, Arkansas is rich ; and this is one of the schemes to make the rich richer, and the poor poorer. Arkansas has forty-three times as much of the public land as Ohio ; at the same time Ohio has a million and a half of inhabitants, while Arkansas has one hundred thousand. Thus, one hundred thousand people are to be benefited at the rate of forty-three millions of acres of land—rich land, as the Senator tells us—while a million and a half of people in another State are benefitted at the rate of one million of refuse land. Arkansas is to get two hundred and fifteen acres to each *inhabitant*, and Ohio one-third of one acre ! being a difference of six hundred and forty-five in favor of Arkansas. Each inhabitant of Arkansas, therefore, will get six hundred and forty-five times as much as each inhabitant of Ohio. And so of the rest. Michigan has thirty-one millions of acres to Ohio’s one million. Yet she has less than one hundred thousand inhabitants. The proportions are enormous. The original cession said that the avails of the public domain were to be shared among the States according to their several portions of the general charge and expenditure. Yet, here an inhabitant of Arkansas is to get six hundred and forty-five times as much as an inhabitant of Ohio ; or, if you regard the two as States, one gets forty-three times as much as the other.

But it does not stop here. New States of the Union are selected as beneficiaries : are they, then, to be confined to the avails of the land they receive ? Not at all : after receiving that, they are then to come in and be common sharers with the rest of the States. We are to give them all their own lands, and a portion in ours

besides! Virginia is to get one twenty-sixth part of one-half of these lands, and Arkansas, after having got her own thirty-one millions, is to share this one twenty-sixth part with Virginia. I should really hope, if the land must be given away, it will be at some rate more reasonable than this. The entire quantity of lands remaining unsold within the States enumerated in the Senator's amendment is 154,000,000 acres: one-half of this will be 77,000,000, one-third is 50,000,000. And the bill gives these 50,000,000 to nine States, the other States to get no portion of it.

"I could run out this illustration yet further: but I refrain. *Ex pede, Herculem.* These are sufficient.—These are to me striking views, but they are not the considerations which weigh most heavily upon my mind, and which I should be most glad to see removed if this amendment is to be adopted, and is ever to become a law. In arguing this whole question I feel the difficulty of our situation as arguing against the wishes and expectations of those who *are to receive the benefit*. The nine States who are to get this magnificent donation have eighteen Senators among those whom I am addressing, who have, of course, a more direct interest in the adoption of the amendment than any of the rest of us. This, of itself, presents a powerful motive to secure their support to the measure: and this fact alone ought to make us pause before we hastily adopt the plan. The benefit to be granted is not common to us all, but peculiar to them—it is exclusive as to us. They are to be benefited: we are to be injured. In alluding to the strength of the motive here presented as likely to

band together eighteen Senators in support of this scheme, I mean to make no personal or offensive reference to those Senators: it is a motive likely to act on all men placed in their circumstances. They desire, very naturally, and very properly, to benefit their constituents; and, under the pressure of that desire, with such an opportunity for its gratification, the understanding even of the strongest is very likely to be warped in its conclusions, and seduced to believe that the measure is perfectly just and proper. We must entreat gentlemen so situated, as I do now entreat them, to raise their views from the immediate interest of their constituents, in such a cession as is now proposed, to a just administration of the sacred trust which has been confided to them for the benefit of the entire Union. Is it right—is it just—is it generous—to find their own peculiar interest in our loss and sacrifice? I throw myself upon them, that they will consider this subject in an enlarged point of view. Especially do I wish Ohio to do this, who is passing out of her state of minority and becoming of ripe age. Will Ohio consent thus to squander our common patrimony? I put it to Indiana, who is soon about to become the third State in this Union: and I ask her whether, to promote a transient interest to-day, she will be willing to sacrifice the permanent and abiding interest of to-morrow? and whether she will lend herself to the delusion that it is just to deprive the old States of the inheritance they have received from our ancestors?

“The amendment will produce a state of things I earnestly deprecate. In the administration of this do-

main something is due to our past experience. We all remember the large amount of debt which was once accumulated under the credit system of sale of the public lands ; you remember that the debtors declared that they could not pay, and would not. The very same spirit which prompts men to take the land without a legal right prompts them to stand out for the money they ought to pay for it. Circumstances made it difficult, perhaps impossible, for them to pay ; and I well recollect the terror with which the politicians of that day looked to the results of such a state of things. I remember with what anxiety, not to say terror, Mr. Monroe contemplated a debt of nineteen millions owed by one section of the Union. Congress looked with dismay at the mass of debt due from settlers on the Lower Mississippi ; and in contemplation of the mischievous effects arising from the credit system, in relation to the public lands, you determined to alter your terms of sale ; and it was wisely decided to sell, in future, for cash alone. But if a scattered debt, due from individuals, be an evil of so dangerous a character as to excite their terrors, how fearful will it become when this debt, instead of being dispersed among a number of individual settlers, is consolidated into one mass, and owed by a section which has already, from time to time, made claim to an indefeasible title in all this land ! Can you collect it ? You cannot drive your debtors from the land. Will you call out the force of the country—send your army—sell the land under them, and take possession of it for the United States ? It cannot be done. To individuals, in such a case, you can afford to yield, and make a com-

promise ; but how will you stand when you have made States your debtors ? The amendment establishes the relation of debtor and creditor between this Government and entire States—with neighboring, with contiguous States—with a mass of States, all having one common interest in the question, one common character, and one common debt. Do you expect from a debtor like this to *collect* your debt by any process ? The thought is idle. I estimate the honor and fidelity of the States as much as any man ; but what have we heard for the last few years, from the other side of the Senate, but wild denunciations of State extravagance—State profligacy—and the dear, blessed people to be taxed to pay State debts ? Suppose there comes a short crop, or an Indian war, or any other of the like contingencies, would it not be urged as an excuse for not paying the State debt ? And would you venture, under such circumstances, to call upon them for your money ? You dare not. Gentlemen have told you, in one breath, that you cannot protect your land from the squatters either by your tipstaves or by soldiers ; and in the very next breath they say you can force whole States to comply with their contracts by the power of the judiciary ! Your army cannot remove a handful of individuals, and yet you are going to drive the States by your judiciary ! You cannot turn off a poor squatter, who has no sort of title, or evidence or pretence of title ; and yet you are, by the most nugatory provisions of this bill, to oust a citizen of a State, having a deed from the State in his pocket, and the whole State power interposed between him and you ! If a State shall declare that they will not pay you, do

you expect that individuals of that State will? God forbid that I should ever see the day when this comes to be tried, or that I should contribute to the possibility of superinducing it. You place the man between two fires. The State tells him to hold his land; the General Government orders him to give it up. He is to be hung by the State if he disobeys the State Government; and if he obeys the State, then he is to be hung by the General Government! You never can enforce your contract; the judiciary is utterly incapable of it. The remedy which the amendment provides for the case is utterly inefficient. It is, that, if the States refuse to pay, then the deeds made by the States to individuals shall be vacated. Pshaw! Why, as I have said, with no deed at all, the settlers have stood out against you, and you have been forced to yield, over and over again; think you that, with a State deed to show, and the State authority to shield them, they are going to march off their farms at the bidding of your marshall? He would be a bold man who would carry a process there. I say, then, that there is great danger in your establishing the pecuniary relation of debtor and creditor with the States. If they cannot pay, what will you do? They will resist in masses. They have eighteen Senators on this floor; and it is already their boast that in ten years from this time they will hold the balance of power, and that they will *take* the land upon their own terms. The remedy proposed by the amendment is altogether fallacious. It proposes to divert a vested right, and to drive a man from lands that he has bought and paid for."

One of the very latest and most finished productions

given to the public by Mr. Preston, was the eulogy he pronounced upon his early associate, literary rival, and political friend, Hugh S. Legare. The following brief extract, it is believed, applies to the eulogist as well as to his friend :

“He mainly devoted himself to the departments of classical literature and philosophy ; and he zealously engaged in the discussions of the debating societies, to practice himself in the art of speaking. These studies were a passion with him. His attention to the exact sciences, however, seemed to be stimulated rather by an ambition of excellence and a sense of duty. His recitations in mathematics, chemistry, and natural philosophy were always good—equal to the best in his class—but his heart was in the classics. There he was not only learning, but feasting. He was not only making stages on a journey, but lured on from height to height, enraptured with the glowing scene, until all the glorious creations of Greek and Roman genius lay like a landscape beneath him.”

Further on, he describes the career prosecuted by Mr. Legare after he left college :

“He did not fall into the fatal error of supposing that the college course completed his education, or that the distinction acquired by it entitled him to repose or indolence. He had learned enough—no inconsiderable knowledge—to know his ignorance, and did not believe that he had even laid a foundation, but had merely been collecting materials for an education. He left the college, therefore, for the deeper seclusion of his own library, and entering on the study of law, rather added to

than changed his former labors. The study of his profession was the base line of very multifarious reading, and was in the beginning, and for many years afterwards, regarded as subsidiary to other objects requiring also other attainments."

Having mentioned the fact that his lamented friend went to Paris in 1818, Mr. Preston proceeds to describe his occupations there, and the facilities he found for cultivating his most genial tastes :

"The most attractive objects to him, were the galleries of fine arts and the theatres. The former, somewhat shorn of their beams, in 1818, were yet glorious with the rich, though diminished spoils of Italy and Holland. His cultivated imagination found the counterparts of its images on the canvas or in marble: and while they filled him with delight, furnished him with more exalted, and at the same time with more definite, conceptions of grace, beauty, and sublimity. The theatres were then in the highest state of perfection, and Mr. Legare, being well acquainted with the French drama as a literature studied and enjoyed its representations on the stage with intense delight. Talma and Duchenois had brought tragic acting to perfection, and Mars was inimitable in polite comedy. To Mr. Legare, their representations was not only amusement, but a study. The theatre was to him what it was when Bolingbroke applauded a play of Addison, or Johnson the acting of Garrick."

These quotations are not only good specimens of Mr. Preston's narrative style, but, the last one in particular, they are very significant of the author's own

mental predilections and most genial habitudes. He, too, was an early proficient and ardent votary in the classics, sojourned sometime in Europe, everywhere cultivated literary enthusiasm, studied all the elegant arts with fervid zeal, and was a passionate admirer of the drama. He has just told us about his friend's fondness for tragedy; and what he immediately adds thereto looks even more like a description of his own temperament and taste than those of Legare. Of the latter he says: "It was, however, illustrative of a trait in his character, that he frequently sought and enjoyed the rich farce of Potier, or the naïveté and idiomatic finesse of the vaudeville—for although his general demeanor was grave, and sometimes even austere, yet there was a vein of fun running through his character; with a keen perception of the ludicrous, which not unfrequently manifested itself in the presence of his intimate friends. At such moments his joyousness, his entire abandon, and the rich play of a riotous imagination over the vast field of his varied associations, afforded an amusing and not unpleasing contrast with his habitual reserve."

There is a graceful, negligent, though animated, air about Mr. Preston's mode of public address which is exceedingly captivating. His language "thrills in each nerve, and lives along the line," with pre-eminent beauty and force. There is an exuberance of thought and imagery throughout his productions, and a copious expenditure of both, which seems as fearless of exhaustion, as it is prolific of delight. The reader in a good degree, and the hearer much more, feels that either him-

self or the magician before him had "eaten of the insane root that takes the reason prisoner," such strange elevations of spirit are produced, alternately glowing and shivering through the bosom. This result is produced in a great degree by the extraordinary dramatic power in this orator. Deep emotion, pervading the whole form of an impassioned speaker, and investing him as with preternatural light, often has the most strikingly beautifying effect. Thus Baron de Grimm says of the great French actor Le Kain, that, off the stage, he was more than usually ugly, with coarse, unpleasing features, a heavy, unwieldy form, a hoarse and disagreeable voice, and manners entirely destitute of elegance. But on the stage, and really excited, so as to be wholly absorbed in his part, he was indeed a hero, a king, with features the most noble, or the most touching, a mien the most imposing and the most graceful, a voice the most tenderly pathetic, and that rare combination of irresistible perfections, which often drew from women who were convinced of his ugliness, involuntary exclamations upon his beauty. Witness the Marquise de Pompadour, who, an hour after she found him frightful in a gallery of the Palace of Versailles, exclaimed, on seeing him appear upon the stage under the turban of Orasman: "Great God! how handsome this man is! how sublime! how admirable!"

But this kind of effect was produced, as is always the case, by real feeling, and not by mere mouthing or mawkish affectation. La Harpe testifies that "the play of Le Kain's features was not owing merely to the action of his muscles; it arose from the agitation of a

soul moved to its very depths, yet revealing but a part of its torture, repressing far more than it displayed on the surface. His cries and his tears were the result of real sufferings ; the gloomy, fearful fire of his glances, the stamp of grandeur impressed upon his brow, the frightful contraction of his muscles, the tremor of his lips, and the wild disorder of his features, all testified to a heart full to overflowing—a heart impatient of restraint—impatient to pour forth its griefs, which, when revealed, found no relief. We heard the echo of the inward storm, and we felt that the unhappy man, like the ancient priestess, was crushed by the divinity which had descended upon his bosom. It is necessary, therefore, to have seen the effect that he produced, in order to imagine it and to credit it. One could never conceive that profound terror, that appalling silence, interrupted at times by the accents of grief, which responded to those of the actor, by the sobs which testified to the agitation of every heart, by the tears which had need to flow, to relieve the suffocated bosom. What a moment ! What a spectacle ! From the weeping that was heard on every side of the house, from the multiplied signs of general desolation, one would have thought that he beheld a people who had just been smitten with some great calamity.”

To be coarse is a vulgar error ; but to be monotonous, is a no less fatal fault. Everything strongly marked in eloquent speech, good or bad, is the spontaneous product of its author—his genius, his energy, his character. Those who are the most elaborately uniform are far from being the most effective. It is those

that strike by their natural inequalities, their characteristic individuality, and whose faults and excellencies keep up perpetual expectation, who produce the greatest influence. The speaking of some men appears to be faultless, and this is all that is ever said about them. They are never approved or condemned earnestly, because in character they are intrinsically tame. But other men agitate and almost convulse the public mind by contrary extremes; and these, because they are full of character, produce much fierce discussion as to their merits, while by all parties they continue to be listened to with delight. It has been questioned whether Raphael would have acquired so great a name, if his coloring had been equal to his drawing or expression. As it is, "his figures stand out like a rock, severed from its base: while Correggio's are lost in their own beauty and sweetness." Whatever has not a mixture of strong contrasts, amounting often to manifest imperfection, in it, soon grows insipid, or seems "stupidly good."

It is impossible to hide nature in artificial robes, and thus manufacture a lay figure which will command the sympathy and raptures of mankind. The great desideratum is, to impress character on whatever one attempts in speech. It is not coldly to recite sentiment, but earnestly to act it. He who can best do this, exemplifies most agreeably an *intellectual* style. Listening to them we are carried along so delightfully with the deep and powerful current of their naturalness, that, like Partridge in Tom Jones, when he saw Garrick personate Hamlet, all seems so spontaneous, so completely without effort, that we feel sure, there is

neither artifice nor mystery, extraordinary power nor genius, in the whole matter. The elder Kean was mighty, because he was his own great original, with all his errors and excellencies—"not the copyist of any other—not the pupil of a school—not a mannerist, but an actor who found all his resources in nature, who delineated his passions only from the expression that the soul gives to the voice and features of man—not from the images that have before him been represented on the stage. It is from the wonderful truth, energy, and force with which he strikes out, and presents to the eye this natural working of the passions of the human frame, that he excites the emotions, and engages the sympathy of his spectators and auditors."

To those who know Mr. Preston, are familiar with his mental tastes, style of thought, and manner of expression, the propriety of these dramatic allusions will be seen at once. Not that our accomplished and eloquent countryman is a mere mannerist in any sense. We have adduced copious proofs of his admirable versatility in composition, and all the world knows that he can most skillfully adapt his elocution to every form and shade of thought. The Tatler says there was a man in his day who could play nothing but the Apothecary in *Romeo and Juliet*. He succeeded so well in this, that he grew fat upon it, when he was set aside; and having then nothing to do, pined away till he became qualified for his part again, and had another run in it. But Mr. Preston is not thus dependent upon any one occupation or style. Whenever he is roused, on whatever theme or occasion, there is a great deal of stage effect in his

figure, voice, and general bearing, but it seems little indebted to study. He was unmistakably created to produce great oratorical effects. His claim to admiration is in his boiling blood and flashing brain—the generous ardor of his temperament, and his brilliant mental power. He is undoubtedly the Roscius of the American forum, but he is equally great in many other spheres. He is by nature and habit gorgeously armed with the splendid excellence of passionate vigor; but he is none the less potent and attractive in the quiet shades of literary research and domestic joy.

We have presented a variety of written samples, showing the diversified features of Mr. Preston's mind as a cultivated statesman; and have stated what we believe to be his predominant quality of temperament and general style. It remains now definitely to portray the characteristics of his extraordinary eloquence.

We have said that his manner is highly dramatic; and this is true, because it habitually embodies and exemplifies deep human devotion by feature, form, and action. In the first place, the expression, physical and mental, as exhibited by Mr. Preston, is remarkable. Some orators, like Rembrandt, possess the full empire of light and shade, and of all the tints that float between them; they can tinge their pencil with equal success in the cool of dawn, in the noon-day ray, in the livid flash, in evanescent twilight, and render darkness visible, if they like. Such masters are men inspired, be their sphere of development and creative power what it may. To them nature discloses all the varied light of rising, meridian, and setting suns. Height, depth, solitude, convulsion,

strike, terrify, absorb, or bewilder them by turns, and under the action of these diversified views and emotions, they cause us to see what they see, feel as they feel, and traverse mournfully or joyously with them through classic, romantic, or sacred regions. The sedate, the severe, the solemn, the gay, the pleasing, the placid, the awful, and the sublime, are depicted by turns; each touch in harmony with the subject, and all invested with the greatest propriety and force. Of this stamp is William C. Preston. He can speak the world's one tongue, in tone, feature, and action, with simultaneous and irresistible effect—that language which, whenever and wherever it is truly expressed, always “trembles towards the inner founts of feeling,” and produces the most pleasing as well as most potent results. “With gleaming plumes, that might o’ercome an air of adamantine denseness, pranked with fire,” his appearance before an audience is the signal for universal admiration and profound respect. He possesses in full measure that “winged power” which Pindar praises in Homer, and which whirls incident on incident with such rapidity, that, absorbed by the whole, we are drawn from the imperfection of single parts, and are enthralled as by the fantasies of a vision.

This orator commands within his own bosom the source of deep pathos, as well as the more fiery fountains of passion and pungent wit. In this versatility lies the secret of his greatest power. He who can best delineate the suffering side of human nature can likewise represent the gay side; because he who can attain the greater has already reached the less. Mr. Preston

is an admirable painter of the florid school ; but, perhaps, is not so expert in severe reasoning and analytical thought. He can defend any favorite system with the flowers of rhetoric much more effectively than with the inflexible and inodorous weapons of syllogistic form. Without injustice, it is believed, we may apply to him the critical judgment which Broussais pronounced before the Institute of France, on the historian Mignet, wherein he sums up the character of that extraordinary man as follows :—“His mind, which was quick, penetrating, strong, and creative, was deficient in the essential of rigor ; he did not always propound his problems well, and often contented himself with imperfect solutions, because he observed shrewdly, but concluded hastily. To inquire and believe, to affirm and contend, were with him necessities ; he knew not what it was either to doubt or to hesitate. Thence arose at once his imperfections, his talent, his power, his success ; he thence derived a style beautifully animated and free, glowing, copious, unequal, vigorous ; he thence drew the inspiration of those works which interested not only as the exposition of his ideas, but as the echo of his feelings, for he threw into them both his views and himself.” Not that our gifted countryman is incapable of severe argument, but he superabounds in other qualities which, if they are less rigid, are often more captivating. He knows himself, and can make his audience deliciously comprehend the poet’s meaning when he exclaims—

“ How sweet to feel the sun upon the heart !
To know it is lighting up the rosy blood,

And with all joyous feelings, prison-hued,
Making the dark breast shine like a spar grot."

Again, the form which Mr. Preston's eloquence instinctively assumes is as remarkable as its expression, and contributes much to its peculiar force. As has been already estimated, his style is beautiful, graceful, exuberant, and sometimes undefined. When one's fancy borders on phrensy, he will be most likely to despise the drudgery of minute detail. His reasoning is less composed by laborious skill than grouped by instinctive emotion; this teaches him at once to grasp his subject, stamp his character, and arrange its costume. He does not, like Calhoun, draw from the resources of matchless dialectics; but he pours forth without stint the effusions of a glowing and resolute sensibility. His speech, "looking as woven in a loom of light," unlike the frigid and opaque products of pedantic cloisters, is lucid to the eye and genial to the heart. For this reason is he heard on popular occasions with much more interest than are those who are colder and more methodized. He has read enough in every department of science, literature, art, and morals, to be habitually instructive, and is especially distinguished for the ability to express what he does know in language at once clear, fervid, and emphatic. The depth of his emotion, and the violence of his mental action, permeating and impelling his physical powers, are expressed in a glowing eloquence, well calculated to enrapture men, and win extended popularity. It is a style which combines many attractive qualities. The mirror of feeling and generosity, it is the translucent organ of imagination

and reason, political philosophy, and impassioned poetry. Its common aim and chief success consists in the delineation of emotion; but it also possesses a good deal of artistic precision and intellectual force. In dealing with familiar topics, he often gives much clearness, regularity, and power to his expressions. Hence it is that

“He rules, like a wizard, the world of the heart,
To call up its sunshine, or draw down its showers.”

When imagination predominates in a speaker, we should expect to find in him much contrast and display, apparently artificial exuberance, and melo dramatic combinations. Mr. Preston sometimes appears to strain too much after effect; this, however, is produced more by nature than affectation, since persons of his stamp, more than they themselves are usually aware, have their reason a good deal enthralled by imagination and the passions. The native warmth of our orator tinges all his words in the higher forms of speech, “like gold-hued cloud-flakes on the rosy morn.” Instead of congealing his eloquence through arbitrary combinations, he imbues it with the fire of a soul naturally acute and invincibly free. He abounds in that emotion which instantly becomes conviction in the masses; and is persuasive, because his spirit, sensitive and versatile, bears always in its accent the true impression of the moment, and the distinct expression of his actual design. In his gentler mood and ethereal musing, he resembles,

“That snow-like fall of feeling which overspreads
The bosom of the youthful maiden’s mind,
More pure and fair than even its outward type.”

That is the most powerful speech which in the directest manner addresses all our perceptions, not only by arguments which we are bound to hear, but through that higher language of the heart to which it is bliss to listen. It is this that chains the feelings and the imagination, convinces while it exhilarates, and holds us enthralled for a season in spite of ourselves, that thereby it may more effectually exalt our conceptions and ennoble their worth. It is the sentiments of a discourse that should claim our chief solicitude, and not its language or form, the work and not the instrument, as " 'twas not by words Apelles charm'd mankind." Eloquence is a central glory, a blazing focus, around which all the rays of knowledge, experience, and science, all the ideal as well as all the practical of our nature, arrange themselves in one harmonious whole to irradiate and adorn every kingdom of mind.

But this grand principle of mental unity in oratorical efforts by no means excludes variety, it rather imperiously demands it. For example, of all writers that ever lived, Homer, in his epic, impresses one particular idea—the generic one of war. But in doing this, his heroes and heroines are delineated by the most contrasted and striking individualities of character. Agamemnon and Achilles, Thersites and Ulysses, Diomed and Nestor, Helen and Andromache, are most widely different in tone, form, and style. The efficient orator must have wisdom, therefore, and if it is imbued with practical flexibility, he cannot have too much of it; since he will be able to appreciate and produce the perfect, only so far as he is qualified to discern and avoid

the defective. Rhetorical artificialness is an appearance, but eloquence is a substance ; the former bears the same relation to the latter, that a skeleton does to a living man. Only as the orator penetrates into the depths of his own soul, will he be able to take the accurate measure and truthful hues of appropriate materials, and thus give to his productions an import and symmetry that seem at once natural and supernatural. He appropriates to his use whatever in the universe around him is most significant, pertinent, and interesting ; and having constructed an organic whole of the richest matter and most graceful form, he breathes into it the highest value, even the breath of life. To aspire constantly after the truly natural, is to soar to the highest pinnacle of worth ; but to be content with the mere appearance of naturalness is to sink to the lowest depth. Not only must there be knowledge founded on theory and matured by practice, a mass of select and well-digested materials, perspicuity of method and fluency of utterance, but there must also be imagination to place these things in bold and brilliant points of view, presence of mind, conscious vigor, and daring resolution. Dry reason is rendered but the more repulsive by an alliance with a cloudy, formless, and nerveless fancy ; but vivid and creative imagination is an auxiliary of the greatest beauty and use ; the first being the torpid chrysalis, the latter the butterfly set free on unwearied wings to soar in flowery fields, on lofty hills, or through azure heavens.

“ Hence, all-majestic on th’ expanding soul,
In copious tide, the bright ideas roll ;

Fill it with radiant forms unknown before,
Forms such as demigods and heroes wore."

We have spoken of the expressive features and peculiar form of Mr. Preston's eloquence, and shall conclude our portraiture of him by a notice of his remarkable action.

Says an English writer, "There are two aspects in which language may be viewed as a medium of communicating admiration, wisdom, delight, to others; one would be *speech*. Then how astonishing to think that you can stand in the centre of a mighty congregation of learned or ignorant, thoughtful or reckless men—all the elements of the understanding cast together in tumultuous disorder—and knock at every one of their minds in succession. Think how this has been done,—by Demosthenes, waving the multitude into repose from his mound of turf, on some Grecian hill-side; by Plato, subduing the souls of them who listened to him under the boughs of a dim plane; by Cicero, in the stern silence of the forum; by our own Chatham, in the chapel of St. Stephen. Think how each and all not only knocked, but entered; wandered over the hearts of their hearers; traced the secret and winding circuits of feeling; roused the passions in their darkest recesses of concealment, knocking, entering, searching. This was much, but they did more. In every heart they set up a throne; they gave laws; they wielded over it the sceptre of intellectual royalty. Thus the Athenian crowd start up with one accord and one cry to march against Philip; and the Senate throbs with the convulsive agony of indignant patriotism, rushing upon Cata-

line ; and the vast assembly of genius and power in our own parliament is dissolved for a season—as happened after an address of Sheridan—that it might recover from the benumbing wand of the enchanter. And this is the working of language under the aspect of *speech*.

“But it is in the second shape of language, that of *literature*, in which the most wonderful faculty resides. The power of persuasion is mighty, but perishable ; its life, for the most part, passes with the life of the speaker. It darkens with his eye ; it stiffens with his hand ; it freezes with his tongue. The swords of these champions of eloquence are buried with them in the grave. Where is the splendid declamation of Bolingbroke ? Vanished as completely as the image of his own form from the grass-plots of Twickenham ! But in that speech, which is created by the printing-press into literature, dwells a principle never to be quenched. Literature is the immortality of speech. Here, however, as under the former aspect, the medium of communication effects, in the strongest manner, the object conveyed. Hence it has been ever found, that those books are the most admired and the most enduring which reflect the thoughts with the most lucid simplicity. Thus it is in Homer, Plato, Livy, and Ariosto. The transparency of the diction preserves every feature of thought unbroken. And this transparency is always the result of intense fervor of conception. That exquisite material through which, from our sunny chambers, we gaze out on the scenery of woods and gardens, has received its crystalline purity only through the fiery pro-

cesses of the furnace. It was melted by the flame before the rough particles of sand disappeared in that cloudless surface of beauty, through which the minutest fibre of the leaf, or the purple streak upon the tulip, is conspicuous. It is the same with language. The harsh ingredients have been blended and fused by the ardent flame of an excited imagination, before it brightens into that surface of mild beauty upon which the physiognomy of the faintest emotion may be distinctly traced. Pope has not omitted to notice this peculiarity in the Homeric poems, and to attribute it to this cause."

The above remarks are strikingly, and yet in a degree mournfully appropriate to the subject of this sketch. Their pertinency consists in the vivid manner in which they describe the process which has produced the transparent force of his style ; and the only sad association they suggest is that connected with the fact that when he can be no longer *seen* in the full splendors of his living speech, much of his oratorical influence will have become forever eclipsed. His written eloquence is not devoid of admirable traits, but it is his spoken excellence—as heard, felt, seen, in himself alone, that is so rarely excelled.

There is a vast superiority in those inspirations of vitality and action which enlist themselves at once on the side of truth with a fearlessness of argument and enthusiasm which bear down all opposition. In the greatest emergency, Mr. Preston does not fear to abandon himself to his own sensations, and depend upon them. Like the Scythian warrior, he is most deadly in his aim when moving at the fleetest pace. This is at

the same time the source of great practical power and the cause of much popular admiration. There is something very fascinating in seeing that done with careless ease, which most persons attempt only with laborious difficulty; to witness the performance, causes the spectator to share somewhat in that general animation with which the masterly adept seems to be inspired. Though at the moment we may not reflect on the great pains which have been taken beforehand to secure the facility we witness, our pleasure is undivided in feeling, as well as seeing, the results produced. It is only as the mind is free and spontaneous that it can be pleasing and impressive. Whatever is undertaken by a reluctant understanding, and executed with a servile hand, cannot be characterized by any high degree of excellence.—Extemporaneous speech is our orator's great forte, and in this department he is without a superior in this land or age. "Lighting himself, where'er he soars or dives, with his own bright brain," his inspired declamation occupies the very first rank of its kind. He has more power to astonish, perhaps, than ability to inform; and yet in this latter quality he is not ordinarily excelled. He has learned to generalize his ideas, and verify their worth in perpetual practice, effective and appropriate. It is thus that he has acquired the only true criterion of oratorical worth, exemplified by him; while with a wise care,

"Judge of his art, through beauty's realms he flies,
Selects, combines, improves, diversifies."

Every great mind is endowed with a prevailing cha

acteristic, to which all other qualities minister without being absorbed ; and this prevailing trait, like the keystone of an arch, unites and fortifies all lesser powers. Agility does not destroy firmness, nor strength crush agility ; elegance does not degenerate into effeminacy, nor is hugeness mistaken for grandeur. Dignity, grace, and valor, when combined in the greatest and most perfect degree, lose none of their primary features, but blend in harmonious excellence, and present an aggregate of most delightful charms. Thus the Hercules of Glycon, though the symbol of absolute, uniform, and irresistible strength, is swift as a stag, elastic as a ball, and in his rugged might graceful like Apollo. So in eloquence, perfection does not destroy truth, or deface elegance. Racine, in all the refinement of his *art* is more *natural* than Victor Hugo ; just as the Python-slayer, in all his *divinity*, is more *human* in his form and motion than an Egyptian colossus.

Nothing tends more to destroy oratorical effect than insane profusion : while, on the other hand, the entire absence of adornments is not so much simplicity, as poverty. There may sometimes appear to be much beauty when there is no force ; as Milton's fine dark eyes continued to sparkle when they were stone blind. But this is not often the case with Preston, whose prevailing power lies in profuse and vital enthusiasm. He is familiar with classical learning, and is a sincere devotee at the shrine of all the elegant arts. Ever industrious to transfer the best and most enduring beauties to oratory, he has, by aid of his vivid imagination, imparted to the language of the forum charms

which neither painting nor music had the ability to express. It is this quality that renders him habitually energetic, but seldom extravagant. As Titian, in the dreadful familiarity with which he causes the guardian snake of the Bæotian well to approach the companions of Cadmus, touched the true vein of terror and marked its limits, so Preston can with a bold hand suggest the horrible in a few significant lines, and yet control himself with a sagacious taste that seldom offends. In him, this is the inspiration of nature, rather than the dictate of art, and is at once the basis and crowning charm of his fervid eloquence. But

“Thy last, thy noblest task remains untold,
Passion to paint, and sentiment unfold.”

To the question, What are the chief sources of Mr. Preston's eloquence? we would mention three—love of the beautiful, native enthusiasm, and patriotic devotion.

In the first place, the inspiring, beautifying, and ennobling influence of plastic, pictorial, and dramatic art are loved by few, and appreciated by none, with a more discriminating and ardent zeal than by the ex-Senator from South Carolina. From early manhood he has been their devoted admirer and munificent patron. At home and abroad he has sought out the best models, and imbued his soul with their consummate charms. Their inarticulate melody has become the vernacular of his heart, and this perpetual pæan resounding within, has delicately attuned more earthly organs, and perpetually coins language kindred to itself, and most palpable to common sense.

The elegant arts occupy a very important place in the education of every man destined for the functions of public life. Aristotle, in the Third Chapter of the Eighth Book of his Politics, speaking of the statesmen of his day, says:—"All men taught *grammatta* or literature, gymnastics and music, and many *teen graphi-keen*, or the art of design, as being useful, and abundantly useful, to the purposes of life; but mainly because it enables us to appreciate the merits of distinguished artists, and carries us to the contemplation of *real* beauty; as letters, which are the *elements* of calculation, terminate in the contemplation of truth."

To the same purpose, Castiligione, the friend of Raphael, in his Cortigiano, says: "Before I undertake this, there is one thing I desire to speak of, which, because in my judgment it appears of importance, ought by no means to be omitted in the character of our perfect statesman, and that is *skill in drawing*, and a competent knowledge in the very art of painting: nor think it strange that I require this skill in a statesman, which in these days is looked upon as mechanical, and little becoming a gentleman."

If in all our higher institutions of learning there were galleries and competent professors of art, as well as libraries and literary disquisitions, it would be well for the genius of the present generation, and auspicious of the best cultivation in all future time. The bases of the arts touch each other: the same principles govern all, and they are especially serviceable to those who would perfect themselves in eloquence. The ancients were convinced of this, and have transmitted to us the name

of Theon the Samian, as owing his celebrity to that intuition into the secret and sudden movements of nature, which the Greeks called *fantasias*, the Romans *visiones*, and which are better understood among ourselves by the phrase of "unpremeditated conceptions," or the re-production of associated ideas. Quintilian explains this principle in the following passage in his rhetoric. Says he : " We give the name of visions to what the Greeks called fantasies ; that power by which the images of absent things are represented by the mind with the energy of objects moving before our eyes : he who conceives these rightly will be a master of passions ; his is that well-tempered fancy which can imagine things, voices, acts, as they really exist, a power, perhaps, in a great measure dependent on our will. For if these images so pursue us when our minds are in a state of rest, or fondly fed by hope, or in a kind of waking dream, that we seem to travel, to sail, to fight, to harangue in public, or to dispose of riches we possess not, and all this with an air of reality, why should we not turn to use this vice of the mind ? Suppose I am to plead the case of a murdered man, why should not every supposable circumstance of the act float before my eyes ? Shall I not see the murderer, unawares, rush in upon him ? In vain he tries to escape—see how pale he turns—hear you not his shrieks, his entreaties ? Do you not see him flying, struck, falling ? Will not his blood, his ashy semblance, his groans, his last expiring gasp, seize on my mind ? "

Observation, meditation, scientific research, and historical lore furnish the chief substratum of eloquence.

These transplant us into diversified regions and remotest times ; empires and revolutions of empires pass before us with memorable facts and actors in their train—the legislator, the philosopher, the discoverer, the warrior, the artist, the divine, the grand agents of Providence and the beneficent polishers of life, are the personages which learning may collect, and the materials which reason may employ. But there are other, and often mightier faculties of the mind, in popular address, which demand other implements for their effective use. We refer to dramatic invention, the legitimate employment of which is seen in the exhibition of character, in the conflict of passions with the rules and prejudices of society, the rights and wrongs of the world. It is this that inspires, agitates us by reflected self-love, with pity, terror, hope and fear, joy and remorse ; whatever makes thoughts and events, time and place, the instruments of character and pathos, let the tissue be actual or fictitious, is its legitimate claim, and may be subordinated to the most profitable designs. Such is the invention of Sophocles, Shakspeare, and Raphael ; and such is the character most marked in Mr. Preston's style. This imparts to him, in his happier inspirations, a grace which is beauty in motion ; it regulates the air, the attitudes, and movements of his body and mind—

“ The nameless graces which no methods teach,
And which a master-hand alone can reach.”

Minds of pure Attic taste love the Hybla heather more for its sweet hives than its purple hues ; but they only become more attractive when delicately tinged with the

last. Still we should never forget that natural beauty is more desirable than the most consummate art, as a fair forehead outshines the diamond diadem thereon. Mere prettiness cannot long absorb attention in the presence of native majesty, any more than the transient sparkle of a cascade can withdraw the eye of refined taste from the mountain soaring above its source and sublimely reposing in its evening silence.

Some men seem to have dreamed of an angel's face in early youth, and spent their whole subsequent life in trying to embody, in every word they utter, something of its loveliness. "In act most graceful and humane, their tongue drops manna." Mr. Preston is of this order in eloquence, inasmuch as he abounds in fervid imagery, genial sentiments, and elegant variety. There is less frigid simplicity than animated propriety in his composition. His language often resembles that of the Norman troubadour who compared the object of his love with a bird whose plumage assumes the hues of every flower and precious stone. He habitually depends almost entirely on the circumstances of the occasion or the excitement of the hour; and such men succeed admirably, or universally fail. They never drudge along with the uniform calmness of stupid mediocrity. They speak well only when they are manifestly inspired, and then they appear like an oriental sun, announced by no dawn and succeeded by no twilight.

The second source of Mr. Preston's eloquence, and a very prolific one, is his native enthusiasm. The reason why great excellence is so rare on the rostrum, or in forensic debate, results from the necessity of com-

bining qualities the most diverse, as a pre-requisite to its attainment. To a sound head there must be united a warm and magnanimous heart. There is truth in the saying, that "something in fires depends upon the grate:" it is not an exaggerated assertion that almost everything in eloquence depends upon the peculiar temperament of the orator. If he is by nature frigid and formal, his speech will necessarily be barrenner than ice; but if an ardent and affectionate spirit throbs in his bosom, it is probable that a corresponding pulse and power will characterize the language he employs. Examine all great orators, and you will invariably find them

" Rich in invisible treasures, like a bud
Of inborn sweets, and thick about the heart
With ripe and rosy beauty—full to trembling."

Says an agreeable writer, "There are some persons in the world who are special favorites among all who know them, who find or make friends everywhere; whose company every one enjoys, and from whom every one is loath to separate. Their frank and easy manners inspire confidence at first sight, and one numbers them as friends almost as soon as one has made their acquaintance. No one is ever 'not at home' to them; their visit is anticipated as a pleasure; and no one feels disposed to part with them without the cordial inquiry, 'When shall we see you again?' There is an exuberance of pleasureable life about them which seems to diffuse itself among all around, and their presence is felt to be an addition to the general amount of

happiness in the circle privileged with their company. In selecting a party of friends, their name always suggests itself first, and the absence of any two others would be a less disappointment than theirs. Every one seeks their side at the dinner-table, and he deems himself fortunate whose chair in the social circle is next to theirs. Innocent childhood loves to sit on their knee and prattle its earnest nonsense in their ear; impetuous youth finds in them cordial companions; and old age values them as pleasant and estimable friends. And yet it is not to their personal comeliness that they are indebted for their popularity, for their exterior is often far from prepossessing; nor to their intellect, for even their best admirers do not imagine them Byrons, nor do they themselves turn down their shirt-collars to be thought such. They have no remarkable vein of humor to boast of, never made a pun, perhaps, in their lives, scarcely know what an epigram is, are quite incapable of setting the table in a roar, and are distinguished neither for their fine clothes nor their long purses. One quality, however, they possess, which proves an over-match for every other distinction, namely, a transparent kindly nature, a desire to promote the happiness of all around them, a generous warmth of feeling, a frank cordial bearing, a universal sympathy—in one word, ‘heart.’”

Every sentence of this description applies very appropriately to Mr. Preston, barring what is said about punning and setting the table in a roar. He is no bungler at *that*! Otherwise the portrait is correct of our enthusiastic countryman in whom the dew-drops

that gemmed the morning of life were not "parched and dried up in manhood's noon." The confiding trust, and uncalculating generosity of youth, were not merged into the cold suspicious selfishness common to our maturer days. His head has not been disciplined at the expense of the heart; and the boasted wisdom of age has not been made the poor substitute for that freshness of feeling which it is the unhappy tendency of artificial education to depress if not entirely to eradicate. Carrying the frank buoyancy and indomitable enthusiasm of early boyhood along with his maturing growth through its every stage, Mr. Preston may now say, in the full meridian of his powers, "I live in all things and am closed in none."

This native generosity, or quality of *heart* of which we have spoken, creates the best writers and most popular orators in the world. It was this that made Shakspeare, Goldsmith, Cowper, and Burns what they were with the pen; and it was this that endowed Chatham, Sheridan, Patrick Henry, and his distinguished relative, William C. Preston, with their great power in public speech. Such men gleam not in the cold and lifeless radiance of the moon, but with the genial and vitalizing splendors of the sun. The enthusiasm glowing in their own bosom has an affinity for all affection, and inclines all hearts to itself as the magnet draws steel. It is a power grounded on the broad base of human nature, and vibrates upon the feelings, not of this or that conventional class of persons, but in the breast of our common humanity. Herein lies the magical influence of some men in the pulpit, at the bar, and in

the senate ; they are actualities and not shams, have soul-leverage about them and can heave the world, calling forth smiles and tears, shouts and sobs at will. Every word they speak

“ Doth seek its way into the list’ning heart,
As will a bird unto her secret nest,—
Then sit and sing.”

The orator under consideration is not one of those apathetic beings who never feel themselves enlarged and ennobled by those inspirations which elevate the person in whom they swell above the ordinary forces of dull humanity in the full fruition of pure and exalted joys. On the contrary, his soul teems with that native and enthusiastic imagination which has been the fortune of each great poet, painter, and orator that has ever lived. Every character moulded by such creators as Æschylus, Homer, Dante, or the Bard of Avon, is energized by them in and through the heart. In the language of a powerful living author : “ Every circumstance or sentence of their being, speaking, or seeming, is seized by process from within, and is referred to that inner secret spring of which the hold is never lost for an instant ; so that every sentence, as it has been thought out from the heart, opens for us a way down to the heart, leads us to the centre, and then leaves us to gather what more we may ; it is the open sesame of a huge, obscure, endless cave, with inexhaustible treasure of pure gold scattered in it : the wandering about and gathering the pieces may be left to any of us, all can accomplish that ; but

the first opening of that invisible door in the rock is of the imagination only.

It will easily be inferred from what we have said concerning this particular trait that it is far from preserving its possessor from every fault. Of all men, he will be inclined to muse more than meditate, dictate to an amanuensis rather than handle his own pen. He would prefer riding with Ariosto on winged horses through the air, instead of sitting down with Milton to help "waste a sullen day with neat repast of Attic taste and wine." Mr. Preston, by natural endowments, if not by habitual preference, is of that class who "rather love a splendid failing than a petty good;" and whose spontaneous potency enables them to sway the masses of mankind as they list, now "leading them with Tyrtæan fire," now singing them to rest with gentlest murmurings. A mind thus impregnated with the flames of oratorical genius, though it may be greatly wanting in certain attributes, will surely in the end crown itself with the brightest honors, despite the cavils of envy or the sneers of malice. That is a very inferior style which is characterized by no manifest defects and no striking beauties. Such speakers must be classed with them who, as the great poet of character says, are "men of no mark or likelihood." But to this category our orator does not belong. He deals not in "the fantastic visions of fruitful mediocrity," but with more valuable materials expended in a more glorious career. Homer's description of Venus approaching Anchises, and her influence on the woods, the birds, the sea, the fiercest animals even, may be taken as a fit symbol of the power which the

fervidly beautiful eloquence of Mr. Preston exerts on all classes everywhere.

We remark, in conclusion, that his patriotic devotion, based on and blended with his native enthusiasm and love of the beautiful, is to him the third, and perhaps most prolific source of oratorical power.

At the outset, we arranged before the reader a variety of examples showing the versatility of which Mr. Preston is capable in composition. His elocution accords exactly thereto. In his medium manner, he is all ease, frankness, and bland familiarity ; brilliant in expression, lively, even animated to a high degree often, but not too much so, to make a very agreeable impression on his audience, whatever may be the theme. Then, his language is "soft as a feathered-footed cloud in heaven," and his lucid demonstration is "full of all-sparkling sparry loveliness." He often falls into this careless, colloquial style, in a modulated tone, clear, distinct enunciation, and with a rich exuberance of unpremeditated sentiment, addressing the mind and heart of the delighted audience, and letting the ear glean after what it can.

On occasions of greater importance, he indicates more care in preparation, and presents more elaborated thought. When he sets himself earnestly at work with all his energies to meet a great emergency, the intelligent witness of the result feels that, as Zeuxis collected all the beauties of Agrigentum to compose a perfect model, so Preston, when he wishes, can lay every department of excellence under contribution to compose his argument and adorn it with unequalled charms. From his place in the Senate, he poured molten gold

into the crucible of politics, with gems gathered from every glittering grotto, and fragrance distilled from every blooming field; and, lo! there issued from the fusion, many substantial and splendid formulas, beside much excellence that was palpable only to the most delicate sense.

But the best strength of this enthusiastic patriot is never taxed to the utmost except when he feels that real and fearful dangers threaten the welfare of his own State or the Union at large. He loves his country deeply, passionately, and we sincerely believe that no man is more willing to make greater sacrifices for the general weal, or more competent to promote it. Few excel him in gentler strains, "the sway of social, sovereign peace;" but absolutely none like him can effectively command that more fiery eloquence that rings on the startled world like a clarion, and is "swift, in use diverse, as is a warrior's spear." He then breathes all the firm resoluteness of the martial-god, while "his red shield drips before him." He who is not sincerely patriotic, lacks a fundamental private virtue, and is as unworthy of public confidence as he will be certainly destitute of popular power. Practical experience and undoubted love of country are essential to inspire respect and excite affectionate sympathy. Thus qualified, the orator will speak instinctively and exactly as all true men would feel, speak, and act in the circumstances he anticipates or describes. In all inspired eloquence, the results will be identical in kind, but diversified in degree, tinged with the individuality of the orator, and measured as to its influence by the depth and durability of his actual

emotions. For instance, *Æschylus* was a Marathonian hero—*Sophocles* a philosopher ; and their works exactly comport with their respective characters.

Webster and Preston used to sit close to each other in the American Senate. How unlike ! Listening to one, is like going from solemn, swelling music, into a stately sculpture-gallery, where you are surrounded with god-like forms, which give you the impression of distinct proportion and severest beauty, and which yet, by their majesty, bend you low in awful reverence. The other resembles an Italian parterre in full bloom, melodious with sparkling fountains, embellished with graceful vases and dancing fawns, redolent of sweet odors, and resounding with happy voices chatting and singing near, while the volcano burns on the view, and a fearful thunder-gust is beginning to obscure the sun.

CHAPTER IX.

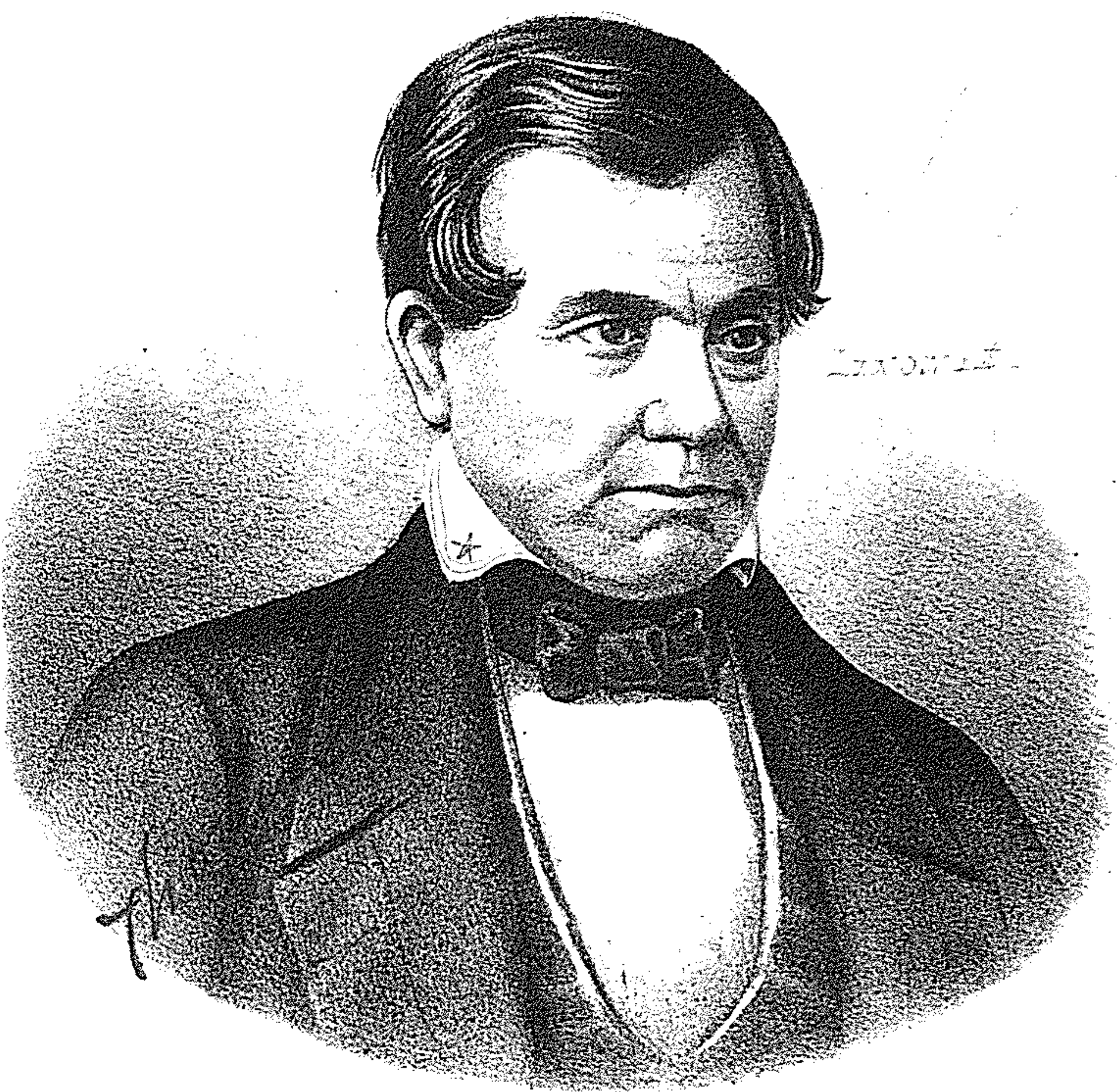
THOMAS CORWIN,

THE NATURAL ORATOR.

To sketch the life of Mr. Corwin, analyze his mind, and describe his person, constitute the general purpose of this chapter, the execution of which will be attempted under these three general heads.

In the first place, it will be desirable to present such biographical facts as are requisite to elucidate the public career of the distinguished orator of Ohio, and in doing this, we shall rely mainly on the accuracy and refined taste of William Green, Esq. of Cincinnati. An article from his pen contributed to the American Review, Sept. 1847, gives the following details:—

“ Thomas Corwin was born in Bourbon county, Kentucky, July 29th, 1794. At the age of four years, he was made a permanent resident of Ohio, by the removal of his parents to Warren county, in that State, in the year 1798. His father, for many years, was one of the most respectable and honored men of Ohio. For a long time a member of the legislature of the State, he was distinguished for the dignity and impartiality with which he presided, for several years, over its upper



THOMAS CORWIN.

E. Michelin's lith 111 Nassau St. N.Y.

branch. The son was, and is worthy of the father. The early pursuits of the former were of the humble kind; suited to a position entirely unpretending, and admirably calculated, under the influence of the consistent presence of a virtuous example, to establish in the early character the foundations of the highest future usefulness. As might be supposed, from the influence of such early associations, instantly acting upon a strong and sensitive mind, it is not surprising that uncompromising firmness, and integrity of character, should everywhere be associated with his name, among the companionships and neighborhoods of his early life.

“The community in which he was educated, and where are to be found his warmest friends, because there he is best known, were not less sensible of his talents than of his virtues. His mind was early accustomed to habits of thought; and thus fitted him, at an early day, to exert a decided influence upon those around him, in concerns of a general public interest. It may be said of him, as of but few others, comparatively speaking, that he was grounded and formed in the principles calculated to render a public man eminently useful, before he became one. Instead of waiting for public life to teach him lessons, he thoroughly learned in private life what could not fail to fit him for a public one. This learning in him was associated with a uniform and unyielding adherence to abstract truth; and, therefore, doubtless it is, that in a public career of some twenty-two or three years, he has always been on the same side of *principle*, whenever, in occasional issues with political friends, it has been supposed to be

in conflict with *expediency*. Such a character in Mr. Corwin, which made him an early object of attention to the people of his neighborhood, is happily destined to do credit to a political career; and he had passed but a short period the constitutional age of eligibility, when he was elected to the House of Representatives of Ohio.

“His career as a Representative in the State Legislature, though short, was characterized by the marks of independence, uprightness, and eloquence, which have given him so much distinction since. Those who knew him intimately twenty years ago, express no surprise at his course on the Mexican question, at the last session of Congress. Nor were they surprised that that course was vindicated by an effort of argument and eloquence such as the country or the world has rarely witnessed. On a smaller theatre, the same sort of power, both moral and intellectual, had been seen before, and with something of the same effort: for, if we remember rightly, his high tone in vindication of a great and cardinal abstract right, in the Legislature of the State, placed him for a short season in a sort of cloud with the friends with whom he generally acted. But his election to Congress, a short time after, showed that the cloud was only a passing one, and that he was all the stronger with a discriminating people; that he had dared, in the honest conviction that he was right, to brave the ordeal of a temporarily-opposing public sentiment.

“Mr. Corwin’s career in Congress was of nine years’ continuance. He resigned his seat after the first session of the last term, in consequence of being made the can-

didate for Governor of Ohio. His course in Congress, was that of a careful, thoughtful, conscientious man. His appearance in debate was rare, but always effective. The announcement of his name was an assurance of profound stillness in the House. That stillness continued while he occupied the floor, except as it was sometimes broken by demonstrations of excitement, such as wit, argument, and eloquence like his must occasionally produce.

“Mr. Corwin’s career as Governor of Ohio was limited to a single term of two years. His position, under the Constitution, which makes the executive office merely nominal, was one rather of dignity than of power; and afforded him but little opportunity for the exhibition of those talents for which his course in other positions has shown him so remarkable.

“His election to the Senate of the United States, by the Whig party, against a competition in its own ranks, which was, of itself, high honor, was perhaps the truest and highest expression that could have been given of the estimation in which he was held by the people of Ohio, and especially by the Whig party.”

From this brief biographical review, we proceed, secondly, to portray Mr. Corwin’s mental character, and remark that his mind appears to be eminently unsophisticated by pedantry, unshackled by prejudice, and unterrified by power.

In the first place few minds have been developed in public life, adorning the highest functions with learning exact and varied, that have so constantly maintained an air entirely foreign to everything like pedantic display.

His erudition is copious, but unostentatious; and his task is all the more infallible, because it is the legitimate offspring of nature, educated by propriety. Learning is used by him as means, not as an end; moral grandeur, native and indestructible, rises spontaneously from his soul, and this is as superior to all pedantic artificialness, as the perfected temple is superior to the chippings that lie about, or the scaffolding soon to be thrown down. If man is constantly seen in his work, what he produces will be of little value. He cannot have too much scientific accuracy or literary embellishment, but these should be felt rather than seen. When scholastic phrases abound more than the spirit of wisdom, they are the signs of a debased, mistaken, and false style of eloquence. "The skill of the artist, and the perfection of his art, are never proved until both are forgotten." Only that which is true to the structure and wants of the soul is potent and perpetual in its influence thereon; since, as Cicero intimates, time obliterates the conceits of opinion or fashion, and establishes the verdicts of nature.

He who is destined to become a great and beneficent orator, will early learn not only to see minutely the general laws which govern the human mind, but by critical observations in the outward world, and profound self-analysis, he becomes master of those nice traits by which different classes are individualized, and hence can palpably portray the hopes and feelings of all bosoms,—like the Arabian Magician, he holds a polished mirror to our gaze, wherein we behold not ourselves and the present only, but the thoughts and emotions of the past,

scenes the most remote, and characters the most diversified. Men thus endowed will touch most sensibly a mixed audience, as well as interest, to the greatest degree, the most refined. Not only his graver productions will the erudite enjoy, but, in common with the unsophisticated masses, they will keenly relish his lighter and more homely strains, according to the account given of such works by the inimitable master of wisdom and naturalness :

“ They were old and plain,
The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,
And the free maids that weave their thread with bones
Did use to chaunt them.”

Candidates for public life are often very solicitous to obtain at the outset a bold position suitable for the display of their fine acquirements; but those are sure to be most successful who seek rather to deserve popular favor than to forestall it. “ Do not trouble yourself too much about the light on your statue,” said Michael Angelo to the young sculptor; “ the light of the public square will test its value.” It is not in proportion to the dry shells of knowledge gathered in the isolated cloister that a public character is to be estimated, but by the living and practical energies he has cultivated in actual conflicts with opposing elements and impetuous mankind. Let the aspirant strive most of all to be somebody, in head and heart, and there is no danger but the world will soon appreciate his real worth. Whatever is natural, true, and good, never long fails of being sincerely and universally esteemed. Why is it that admiration for

works of consummate excellence is undiminished by distance or time ; that masterpieces excite the same feelings now as when they were first created, and are regarded with the same rapture on the banks of the Seine, the Thames, the Hudson, or the Ohio, as when they sanctified the temples of Athens, ennobled the martial trophies of Rome, or adorned the gardens of Florence? It is because they are imbued with those elements of truth which pervade the human soul and the universe of God. Works of this stamp are scarce, but they are never trite. For instance, the frequent mention of most writers soon palls on the mind, but the world has not yet grown tired of Shakspeare's name or thoughts. His volumes are like that of nature, and we can turn to them perpetually without weariness or disgust:—

“ Age cannot wither, nor custom stale
His infinite variety.”

Sydenham has beautifully said, whosoever describes a violet exactly as to its color, taste, smell, form, and other properties, will find the description agree in most particulars with all the violets in the world. It is the same in eloquence : he who can most lucidly express a truthful emotion from his own heart will most strongly affect the largest audience. Men differ less in sense than in sentiment ; he who draws from his intellect only may be understood by a limited class whose mental conceptions correspond ; but he who embodies in plain language his own naturally excited sensibilities, will be immediately felt and appreciated by all mankind.

If one would be perpetually interesting he must be perpetually varied. Certain medicines tend to produce immediate and profuse perspiration, but if continued too long, they relax the system and fatally congeal the fountain of life. It is the same with unnatural excitement or insipid monotony. It is necessary to be neat without being fantastic, and free without carelessness. Simplicity of diction is a grand merit, infinitely transcending all artificial trickery, or stately, stilted march of language. Johnson well observed that *Cato's Soliloquy* is an instance to prove that the most solemn and elevated thought may be, in the most impressive manner, conveyed in language of the utmost simplicity. Pedantic ostentation, and assumed grimace are superlatively contemptible when compared with real wisdom and honest passion. When the tragedian of Athens moved all hearts as he clasped the burial urn and burst into broken sobs, there were few, perhaps, who knew that it held the ashes of his own son, but all were thrilled by his real emotion thus produced. When the feeling is that of nature, and tones are truthful, all kindred natures melt, and tears are spontaneously commingled from all hearts.

In the second place, Mr. Corwin's mind is unshackled by prejudice, as well as unsophisticated by pedantry. Truthfulness to his own premeditated convictions seems to constitute its presiding principle and prolific force. His chief volume is man, his teacher truth, his school society at large: therein he has learned to draw the subtle discriminations of mental action in every stage of life, and amongst every class of mankind. In

those happy inspirations in which Mr. Corwin does not so much come to nature, as nature comes to him, he transmits her features like a lucid glass, unmodified by factitious tints or stains. He is powerful because he is true, expressing frankly and fearlessly what he distinctly sees and acutely feels: hence his sentiments wind resistlessly through the wards of human hearts, stealing their incarnate strength to conquer passion and ignoble prejudice. Spontaneous energy and instinctive grace of manner poise his language and exalt his argument, in a mode peculiar to himself, and which equally surprises the fancy, persuades the judgment, and affects the heart. He is less skilled in the refinements of art, than in the power of catching the passions as they rise in the breast, or escape from the lips of nature herself. This is the grand talisman of oratorical mastership—

“ Which, like the fabled stone, conceived of fire,
Son of the sun, transmutes all seen to soul.”

Mr. Corwin has ever cherished large and inspiring views of life. His mind, in its philosophical excursions, is not manacled by a wretched faith in obsolete formulas; but believes in the moral progress of the human race, possesses a strong sympathy with all its lofty aspirations, and is consecrated to the beneficent task of crushing great evils, and mitigating acute pangs. The heaven-strung chords of man's immortal soul are all free within him, to vibrate at the slightest sigh breathed from sorrowing hearts, and it is from this inimitable and inexhaustible source within that he draws those diversified chains of thrilling power which so strikingly charac-

terize his living speech. Man is not a being of thought only, but also of feeling; he is a whole, composed of various related powers, and to this susceptible unity, the aggregate of multifarious variety, the orator must speak with correspondent tones, if he would hope to persuade. Then words, like enchanting hieroglyphics, interpreted by the flames kindled at the chief source of passion, glide through the eye, strike charmingly on the ear, stir up the mind, take captive the imagination, besiege the understanding, and conduct the listener through delicious conviction to confirmed belief. Mr. Corwin's mind may be symbolized by the bee, not when cramped and cringing in his self-built, narrow cell; but pursuing a bright and brave life upon the wing among flowers. Conventionalities never cripple him in the presence of duty, but he darts forward natural and free.

“As morning wind, with wing fresh wet,
Shakes dew out of the violet.”

No great and lasting reputation was ever gained in any department of mental excellence, but by a close and correct representation of reality. Great artists, writers, and speakers are universally admired only as they penetrate to the deep substratum of natural character, which, however disguised and modified by local circumstances, is in essence everywhere the same. It is only as the voice of nature, the vernacular tongue of all our race, speaks through mental creations, that they are endowed with the highest and most attractive worth; as it was only when the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep, that order, beauty, and sub-

limity stood revealed to the world. Homer pleases, wherever the springs of social life are pure ; and is read with delight by all classes, in almost every cultivated language, because he is true to the emotions of all. He takes us at once into the Grecian councils ; walks directly on the banks of Scamander ; deals in real armies and real heroes. We see Paris going out to battle like the war-horse prancing to the river side ; the wife, the mother, in natural anxiety ; or, most touching of all, the aged and mourning father a suppliant at the feet of the youthful hero who destroyed his son. And how did the greatest bard of modern times people the fancies of his readers, and guarantee to himself perpetual influence but, as Jeffrey suggests, “in the delicate sensibility with which he has traced, and the natural eloquence with which he has pointed out that fond familiarity with beautiful forms and images—that eternal recurrence to what is sweet or majestic in the simple aspects of nature—that indestructible love of flowers and odors, and dews and clear waters, and soft airs and sounds, and bright skies, and woodland solitudes, and moonlight bowers, which are the material elements of poetry—and that fine sense of their undefinable relation to mental emotion, which is its essence and vivifying soul—and which, in the midst of Shakspeare’s most busy and atrocious scenes, falls like gleams of sunshine on rocks and ruins—contrasting with all that is rugged and repulsive, and reminding us of the existence of purer and brighter elements !—which HE ALONE has poured out from the richness of his own mind, without effort or restraint ; and contrived

to intermingle with the play of all the passions, and the vulgar course of this world's affairs, without deserting for an instant the proper business of the scene, or appearing to pause or digress, from the love of ornament or need of repose!—HE ALONE, who, when the object requires it, is always keen and worldly and practical—and who yet, without changing his hand, or stopping his course, scatters around him, as he goes, all sounds and shapes of sweetness—and conjures up landscapes of immortal fragrance and freshness, and peoples them with spirits of glorious aspect and attractive grace—and is a thousand times more full of fancy, and imagery, and splendor, than those who, in pursuit of such enchantments, have shrunk back from the delineation of character or passion, and declined the discussion of human duties and cares. More full of wisdom, and ridicule, and sagacity, than all the moralists and satirists that ever existed—he is more wild, airy, and inventive, and more pathetic and fantastic, than all the poets of all regions and ages of the world:—and has all those elements so happily mixed up in him, and bears his high faculties so temperately, that the most severe reader cannot complain of him for want of strength or of reason—nor the most sensitive for defect of ornament or ingenuity. Everything in him is in unmeasured abundance, and unequalled perfection—but everything so balanced and kept in subordination, as not to jostle or disturb or take the place of another. The most exquisite poetical conceptions, images, and descriptions, are given with such brevity, and introduced with such skill, as merely to adorn, without loading the sense

they accompany. Although his sails are purple and perfumed, and his prow of beaten gold, they waft him on his voyage not less, but more rapidly and directly, than if they had been composed of baser materials. All his excellencies, like those of Nature herself, are thrown out together ; and, instead of interfering with, support and recommend each other. His flowers are not tied up in garlands, nor his fruits crushed into baskets—but spring living from the soil, in all the dew and freshness of youth ; while the graceful foliage in which they lurk, and the ample branches, the rough and vigorous stem, and the wide-spreading roots on which they depend, are present along with them, and share in their places, the equal care of their Creator.”

Boileau compressed much meaning in his memorable verse, that “nothing is beautiful but what is natural.” The way to write and speak in words and tones that will effectively and universally impress, is to write and speak sincerely. That alone can impel which God has made powerful—truth and honesty. Life only imparts life, and by true utterances alone are indelible impressions produced. An eye that can see, an ear that can hear, a heart that can feel, and a resolution that dares follow the convictions of truth in the path of nature ; these are the grand characteristics of true eloquence, and its chief creators. He who makes nature his constant and intimate companion, will thereby take all the world into a delighted companionship, and will have power to sway them when or where his purposes may lead. It is the blending of theory and practice, abstract reason and simple sense, producing consummate

worth ; to which union in the highest eloquence, we may apply the answer of Polixenes, in the Winter's Tale, to Perdita's neglect of the streaked gilly-flowers, because she had heard it said,

“There is an art which in their piedness shares
With great creating nature.

Pol. Say there be :

Yet nature is made better by no mean,
But nature makes that mean. So ev'n that art,
Which you say adds to nature, is an art
That nature makes ! You see, sweet maid, we marry
A gentler scion to the wildest stock :
And make conceive a bark of ruder kind
By bud of nobler race. This is an art,
Which does mend nature—change it rather ; but
The art itself is nature.”

The bases of the arts touch each other, and the same fundamental principle presides over all. History delineated on canvas, and eloquence speaking from the printed page or fervid lips, are governed by the same general rules. Burke, who best felt and in a good degree exemplified this truth, said, “The painter who wishes to make his pictures (what fine pictures ought to be), nature elevated and improved, must first gain a perfect knowledge of nature as she is : before he makes men as they ought to be, he must know how to make them as they are ; he must acquire an accurate knowledge of all the *parts of the body and countenance*. To know *anatomy* will be of little use, unless physiology and physiognomy are joined to it.” Again—

“Works of real merit are produced by a laborious

and accurate investigation of nature upon the principles observed by the Greeks—first, to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the common forms of nature, and then, by selecting and combining, to form compositions according to their own elevated conceptions.

“This is the true principle of poetry and painting. Homer and Shakspeare had perhaps never seen characters so strongly marked as Achilles and Lady Macbeth, and yet we feel those characters are drawn from nature; the *limbs* and *features* are those of common nature, but *elevated* and *improved*!”

The greatest masters have one great decided beauty in their works. Their figures, whether in action, or repose, or expression, always appear to be the unconscious agents of an impulsion they cannot help; the spectator is never drawn aside from what they are doing by any artificialness in them, as if they labored most to show how grand or graceful they are. They seem impelled by an impulse they cannot control; their heads, hands, feet, and bodies, instinctively put themselves into positions the best adapted to execute the spontaneous intentions of the mind. All studied grace is unnatural, as is seen in children who are naturally graceful until they learn to dance.

True genius is *geniality*, a power universally felt, though happily expressed but by few. Its voice is always recognized, and its humblest whisper is heard wide over all the world in a thousand thrilling airs. This spirit of genuine eloquence is not the work of intellect merely, but the finer breath of the soul, roused and radi-

ant with the hopes, fears, and joys which lend this mortal life its greatest passion and power. Thus Cowper through his "Task," Burns through his ballads, and Corwin through his popular addresses, find an immediate echo in every human bosom, because they indite things pertaining to humanity in a human manner. Their meaning always dwells in their language, in secret sanctity and unobscured charms, "like a golden toy mid Beauty's orb'd bosom," and yet, simple as are the words, from the innate nobility of the ideas, how gracefully dignified are the sentiments, how powerful in their influence on both head and heart. Therein is most strikingly verified the saying, that "One touch of Nature makes the world of kin." The highest types of character are always marked by honest, unpretending, manly simplicity of genius, and habits of life, which not only excite admiration, but confidence and love. True power is always real, and not artificial. When men labor hard to appear like simple, humble, and honest people, their affectation immediately betrays the paucity of their talents and the hypocrisy of their purpose. The result is something which, as Ninon de l'Enclos said of the young Marquis de Sevigne, has very much the character of *fricasseed snow*, and is utterly destructive of all effective eloquence. In the following lines, Faust gives excellent counsel to every public speaker :

"Good sense and truth are good enough for men.
Hast anything to say ? Out with it, then !
And the more natural the style, the better.
Your pompous words, your phrases nicely join'd,
Will find the people deaf as any adder ;

They're but dry leaves, that rustle in the wind,
No comfort for the soul ;—peas in a bladder."

We have said that the mind of Mr. Corwin is neither sophisticated by pedantry, nor shackled by prejudice ; we remark, thirdly, that it is eminently unterrified by power. His mental independence is his most prominent trait. It was this that early and rapidly led him to distinction. He did not wait for the pedantic routine usually deemed indispensable for admission to the temple of fame, but boldly forged his own keys, entered, and at once took possession of a conspicuous niche. From the outset he scorned to appear as the tame imitator of the veterans he encountered, but was first their magnanimous emulator, and then speedily a triumphant rival. Mr. Corwin is habitually neither fawning nor fierce ; he is true. In his speech, there is never arrogant assumption, no flourish of trumpets as if to introduce something splendid, but all is calmly resolute and moves on in an easy, natural course. It is a style which tends to excite healthfully and purify our common human nature and elevate it, by working on the instincts and tendencies co-extensive with the race. He bears a transparent bosom, is courteous to all adversaries, but never fails to call things by their right names. Most orators are people who talk, and not prophets divinely inspired. But true eloquence is not a body merely ; it is a soul so vital and creative, that it does not so much take a form as make one, and adorns the world it has come to move. It is the pungent expression of those thoughts to which the universe is nearest allied, and most clearly celebrates, not in symbols only but substance, not in showy forms

but serene almightiness. Every sentiment and the language in which it is clothed, is fresh as a new morn, grand like the soul whence it arose, and luminous as the meridian sun.

We will here present some specimens which will exemplify the three points mentioned above, in the analysis of Mr. Corwin's mind. The first abounds in pure wit, and occurs in the author's vindication of the venerated Harrison from the attack of Gen. Crary, of Michigan. That gentleman, on the 14th of February, 1840, in a debate on the *Cumberland Road* in Congress, seized the occasion to enlighten mankind with his views of Gen. Harrison's deficiencies as a military commander, his mistakes at Tippecanoe, &c. &c. &c. Mr. Corwin replied in a torrent of humor, sarcasm, and ridicule, which completely overwhelmed his victim, and led John Quincy Adams a few days after to refer to him as "the late Mr. Crary." The following passage will give some idea of the scathing wit which prevails through the whole speech :

"In all other countries, and in all former times, a gentleman who would either speak or be listened to on the subject of war, involving subtle criticisms and strategy, and careful reviews of marches, sieges, battles, regular and casual, and irregular onslaughts, would be required to show, first, that he had studied much, investigated fully, and digested the science and history of his subject. But here, sir, no such painful preparation is required : witness the gentleman from Michigan ! He has announced to the House that he is a militia general on the peace establishment ! That he is a lawyer we know, tolerably

well read in Tidd's Practice and Aspinasse's Nisi Prius. These studies, so happily adapted to the subject of war, with an appointment in the militia in time of peace, furnish him at once with all the knowledge necessary to discourse to us, as from high authority, upon all the mysteries of the 'trade of death.' Again, Mr. Speaker, it must occur to every one, that *we*, to whom these questions are submitted and these military criticisms are addressed, being all colonels at least, and most of us, like the gentleman himself, brigadiers, are, of all conceivable tribunals, best qualified to decide any nice points connected with military science. I hope the House will not be alarmed with the impression that I am about to discuss one or the other of the military questions now before us at length, but I wish to submit a remark or two, by way of preparing us for a proper appreciation of the merits of the discourse we have heard. I trust as we are all brother-officers, that the gentleman from Michigan, and the two hundred and forty colonels or generals of this honorable House, will receive what I have to say as coming from an old brother in arms, and addressed to them in a spirit of candor,

‘Such as becometh comrades free,
Reposing after victory.’

“Sir, we all know the military studies of the military gentleman from Michigan before he was promoted. I take it to be beyond a reasonable doubt that he had perused with great care the title-page of ‘Baron Steuben.’ Nay, I go further; as the gentleman has incidentally assured us that he is prone to look into musty and neglected

volumes, I venture to assert, without vouching in the least from personal knowledge, that he has prosecuted his researches so far as to be able to know that the rear rank stands right behind the front. This I think is fairly inferable from what I understood him to say of the two lines of encampment at Tippecanoe. Thus we see, Mr. Speaker, that the gentleman from Michigan, being a militia general, as he has told us, his brother officers, in that simple statement has revealed the glorious history of toils, privations, sacrifices, and bloody scenes, through which, we know from experience and observation, a militia officer, in time of peace, is sure to pass. We all in fancy, now see the gentleman from Michigan in that most dangerous and glorious event in the life of a militia general on the peace establishment—a parade day! That day, for which all the other days of his life seem to have been made. We can see the troops in motion—umbrellas, hoes, and axe handles, and other like deadly implements of war, overshadowing all the field: when, lo! the leader of the host approaches!

‘Far off his coming shines:’

“His plume which, after the fashion of the great Bourbon, is of awful length, and reads its doleful history in the bereaved necks and bosoms of forty neighboring hen-roosts. Like the great Suwaroff, he seems somewhat careless in forms or points of dress; hence his epaulettes may be on his shoulders, back, or sides, but still gleaming, gloriously gleaming, in the sun. Mounted he is, too, let it not be forgotten. Need I describe to the colonels and generals of this honorable House, the steed

which heroes bestride on these occasions? No! I see the memory of other days is with you. You see before you the gentleman from Michigan, mounted on his crop-eared, bushy-tailed mare, the singular obliquity of whose hinder limbs is best described by that most expressive phrase, 'sickle hams'—for height just fourteen hands, 'all told;' yes, sir: there you see his 'steed that laughs at the shaking of the spear;' that is his war horse 'whose neck is clothed with thunder.' Mr. Speaker, we have glowing descriptions in history of Alexander the Great and his war-horse Bucephalus, at the head of the invincible Macedonian phalanx; but, sir, such are the improvements of modern times that every one must see that our militia general, with his crop-eared mare, with bushy tail and sickle ham, would totally frighten off a battle-field a hundred Alexanders. But, sir, to the history of the parade-day. The general, thus mounted and equipped, is in the field, and ready for action. On the eve of some desperate enterprise, such as giving order to shoulder arms, it may be, there occurs a crisis, one of those accidents of war, which no sagacity could foresee nor prevent. A cloud rises and passes over the sun! Here is an occasion for the display of that greatest of all traits in the history of a commander—the tact which enables him to seize upon and turn to good account unlooked for events as they arise. Now for the caution wherewith the Roman Fabius foiled the skill and courage of Hannibal! A retreat is ordered, and troops and general, in a twinkling, are found safely bivouacked in a neighboring grocery. But even here the general still has room for the execution of heroic

deeds. Hot from the field, and chafed with the heroic events of the day, your general unsheathes his trenchant blade, eighteen inches in length, as you will remember, and with energy and remorseless fury he slices the water-melons that lie in heaps around him, and shares them with his surviving friends. Others of the sinews of war are not wanting here. Whiskey, Mr. Speaker, that great leveller of modern times, is here also, and the shells of the water-melons are filled to the brim. Here again, Mr. Speaker, is shown how the extremes of barbarism and civilization meet. As the Scandinavian heroes of old, after the fatigues of war, drank wine from the skulls of their slaughtered enemies, in Odin's halls, so now our militia general and his forces, from the skulls of the melons thus vanquished, in copious draughts of whiskey assuage the heroic fire of their souls, after a parade-day. But, alas for this short-lived race of ours ! all things will have an end, and so it is even with the glorious achievements of our general. Time is on the wing, and will not stay his flight ; the sun, as if frightened at the mighty events of the day, rides down the sky, and ' at the close of the day, when the hamlet is still,' the curtain of night drops upon the scene,

‘ And Glory, like the phœnix in its fires,
Exhales its odors, blazes and expires.’ ”

To this we may subjoin an extract which exemplifies the effective combination of severe attributes with the lighter graces of oratory. Oratorical power of the first order exists only when the serious and the sportive are symmetrically joined. In such a consummation, as

in the bard of Avon, we find a strong, unostentatious master, who is able, with perfect ease and certainty, without formal reasoning, subtilizing and classifying his ideas, to seize with confident hand, whatever is true or false in man, and express it in a manner the most natural, forcible, and just. His attitudes, motions, and sentiments will be graceful and effective, because they are poised by nature and impelled by truth. Fresh as a spouting spring among the hills, his heart leaps out to life, and his accents are everywhere greeted with delight, because he speaks the world's one tongue. What he utters is of "nature's flow not art's; a fountain's, not a pump's."

No man can long command an attentive hearing, who has not the power of captivating the imagination. This he will best accomplish by commingling an official, elaborated, Ciceronian, admiring style, with one more conversational, anecdotal, and jocular. The aggregate will be conceived and fashioned according to popular ideas and tastes, and speaks at once to the senses and understandings of the great commonality. Such a style assumes a lyric flexibility, and becomes the very mirror and echo of the human soul. The charm arises not so much from the originality inherent in eternal ideas, as from the simple earnestness they develop, the exalted sentiments they breathe, and the exquisite naturalness of their expression. No composition can be beautiful or natural without variety, or even without contrast; but care must be taken to prevent variety from degenerating into inconsistency, and contrast into contradiction. With this precaution each distinguished part will make a separate impression, and while all bear the same stamp,

concurring towards the same end, every portion is an additional support and adornment to the prevailing idea. Such alternations of smoothness and ruggedness, forming a picturesque naturalness of style, affects an audience much like the excitement produced by the intricacies of wild romantic mountainous scenes, wherein curiosity, while it prompts us to scale every rocky promontory, and explore every new recess, by its salubrious exercise keeps the fibres of the body excited to their full tone, and the mind perpetually on the stretch. Thus exercised, the enraptured observer drinks in all that in nature is brilliant or pure, all that in feeling is sacred or sublime. This in turn produces eloquence, which no more palls on the popular taste, than the mountainous billows of the sea in their playfulness grow weary of the wind. It is this coquetry of nature which makes her beauty more amusing, more varied, and more playful, but also not "less winning soft, less amiably mild." It is the spirit of mightiest conquests, as attractive as it is potent :

" Like the blush of love upon the cheek,
Or the full feeling lightening through the eye,
Or the quick music in the chords of harps."

But to the extracts we promised. The following are from the great speech against the Compromise Bill, which Mr. Corwin delivered in the United States Senate, July 24th, 1848 ; and which the reporter said " swept like a consuming fire through the dry grass, under a high wind, destroying in its flames arguments, appeals, authorities, compromises—leaving the whole question in the

naked form of the admission or exclusion of slavery." We have to regret that our limits will not admit the whole production.

"You say this land was conquered by the common blood of the country; you trace back the consideration which you have paid for this country to the blood and the bones of the gallant men that you sent there to be sacrificed; and pointing to the unburied corpses of her sons who have fallen there, the South exclaims: 'These—these constitute my title to carry my slaves to that land! It was purchased by the blood of my sons.' The aged parent, bereft of his children, and the widow with the family that remains, desire to go there to better their fortunes, if it may be, and pointing to the graves of husband and children, exclaim: 'There—there was the price paid for our proportion of this territory!' Is that true? If that could be made out—if you dare put that upon your record—if you can assert that you hold the country by the strong hand, then you have a right to go there with your slaves. If we of the North have united with you of the South in this expedition of piracy, and robbery, and murder, that oldest law known among men—'honor among thieves'—requires us to divide it with you equally. [Laughter and subdued applause.] Nay, more, it is only a fitting *finale* to that infernal tragedy, that after having slaughtered fifty thousand human beings, in order to extend your authority over these one hundred and fifty thousand, the murder should be followed by the slavery of every one that can be made subject to the law of power.

"Sir, if it be true that you hold this territory by con-

quest, you hold it precisely by the same right that the Virginian holds his slave to-day, and by no other. You have stolen the man, and with the strong hand torn him from his own home—part of his family you have killed, and the rest you have bound in chains and brought to Virginia! Then, in accordance with the brand which it seems the Almighty has impressed upon poor woman—*partus sequitur ventrem*—you condemn to Slavery, to the remotest posterity, the offspring of your captive! It is the same right originally in both cases. This right of conquest is the same as that by which a man may hold another in bondage. You may make it into a law if you please: you may enact that it may be so: it may be convenient to do so: after perpetrating the original sin, it may be better to do so. But the case is not altered; the source of the right remains unchanged. What is the meaning of the old Roman word *Servus*? I profess no great skill in philological learning, but I can very well conceive how somebody looking into this thing, might understand what was the law in those days. The man's life was saved when his enemy conquered him in battle. He became *servus*—the man preserved by his magnanimous foe; and perpetual slavery was then thought to be a boon preferable to death. That was the way in which slavery began. Has anybody found out on the face of the earth a man fool enough to give himself up to another, and beg him to make him his slave? I do not know of one such instance under heaven. Yet it may be so. Still I think that not one man of my complexion of the Caucasian race could be found quite willing to do that!

“ This right, which you are now asserting to this country, exists in no other foundation than the law of force, and that was the original law by which one man appropriated the services and will of another to himself. Thus far we have been brought after having fought for this country and conquered it. The solemn appeal is made to us—‘ Have we not mingled our blood with yours in acquiring this country ?’ Sure, my brother ! But did we mingle our blood with yours for the purpose of wresting this country by force from this people ? That is the question. You did not say so six months ago. You dare not say so now !

“ You may say that it was purchased, as Louisiana or as Florida was, with the common treasure of the country ; and then we come to the discussion of another proposition : What right do you acquire to establish slavery there ? But I was about to ask of some gentleman—the Senator from S. C. for instance, whose eye at a glance has comprehended almost the history of the world—what he supposes will be the history of this, our Mexican war, and these our Mexican acquisitions, if we should give it the direction which he desires ? I do not speak of the propriety of slave labor being carried anywhere. I will waive that question entirely. What is it of which the Senator from Vermont has told us this morning, and of which we have heard so much during the last three weeks ? Every gale that floats across the Atlantic comes freighted with the death groans of a King ; every vessel that touches our shores bears with her tidings that the captives of the Old World are at last becoming free—that they are seeking, through blood

and slaughter—blindly and madly, it may be, but nevertheless resolutely—deliverance from the fetters that have held them in bondage. Who are they? The whole of Europe. And it is only about a year ago, I believe, that that officer of the Turkish Empire who holds sway in Tunis, one of the old slave markets of the world, whose prisons formerly received those of our people taken upon the high seas and made slaves to their captors—announced to the world that everybody should there be free. And, if I am not mistaken, it will be found that this magic line which the Senator from S. C. believes has been drawn around the globe which we inhabit, with the view of separating Freedom and Slavery— $36^{\circ} 30'$, brings this very Tunis into that region in which by the ordinance of God men are to be held in bondage! All over the world the air is vocal with the shouts of men made free. What does it all mean? It means that they have been redeemed from political servitude; and in God's name I ask, if it be a boon to mankind to be free from political servitude, must it not be accepted as a matter of some gratulation that they have been relieved from absolute subjection to the arbitrary power of others? What do we say of them? I am not speaking of the propriety of this thing; it may be all wrong, and these poor fellows in Paris, who have stout hands and willing hearts, anxious to earn their bread, may be very comfortable in fighting for it. It may be all wrong to cut off the head of a King or send him across the Channel. The problem of Free Government, as we call it, is not, it seems, yet solved. It may be highly improper and foolish in Austria and Germany to

send away Metternich and say, 'We will look unto this business ourselves.' According to the doctrine preached in these halls—in free America—instead of sending shouts of congratulation across the water to these people, we should send to them groans and commiseration for their folly, calling on them to beware how they take this business into their own hands—informing them that universal liberty is a curse; that as one man is born with a right to govern an Empire, he and his posterity (as Louis Philippe of Orleans maintained when he announced that his son should sit on the throne when he left it) must continue to exercise that power, because in their case it is *not* exactly *partes sequitur ventrum*, but *partes sequitur pater*—that is all the difference. [Laughter.] The Crown follows the father! Under your law the chain follows the mother! [Subdued manifestations of feeling.]

"It was a law in the Colonies about '76 that Kings had a right to govern us. George Guelph then said '*partes sequitur par*'—My son is born to be your ruler. And at the very time when Virginia lifted up her hand and appealed to the God of justice—the common father of all men—to deliver her from that accursed maxim and its consequences, that one man was born—as Jefferson said—booted and spurred to ride another, it seems that by the Senator's account of it, she adhered to another maxim, to wit: that another man should be born to serve Virginia. I think this maxim of Kings being born to rule, and others being born only to serve, are both of the same family, and ought to have gone down to the same place; hence, I imagine, they came, long ago, to-

gether. I do not think that your *partus sequitur ventrem* had much quarter shown it at Yorktown on a certain day you may remember. I think that when the lion of England crawled in the dust, beneath the talons of your eagles, and Cornwallis surrendered to George Washington, that maxim, that a man is born to rule, went down, not to be seen among us again forever, and I think that *partus sequitur ventrem*, in the estimation of all sensible men, disappeared along with it. So the men of that day thought. And we are thus brought to the consideration of the proper interpretation of that language of those men which has been somewhat criticized by the Senator from South Carolina. What did they mean when they said in the Declaration of Independence, that all men are born equally free? They had been contending that, if we on this side of the water were to be taxed by the Imperial Parliament of England, we had a right to say who should represent us in that Parliament. I need not refer gentlemen to the arguments then advanced. I need not refer the Senator from Virginia to his own local history, which informs him that, throughout the whole Revolutionary period, the people in all the shires and towns were meeting and passing resolutions, as that book of American Archives that you have authorized to be perpetuated, will show you, complaining to the Crown of England of the importation of slaves into this country. And why did they complain? Let their own documents tell their own story. Then men in that generation, in Virginia, in Connecticut—as the Senator before me will see by referring to that book in MS.—everywhere throughout the Colo-

nies, said—‘While we are contending for the common rights of humanity, against the Crown of England, it does not become us to enslave men and hold them in slavery.’ They objected to the introduction of slaves into this country through the intervention of the slave-trade, because it was a wrong perpetrated upon the slave himself, and especially because it prevented the settlement of the country by artizans, mechanics, and laboring husbandmen. I venture the assertion that not three counties in the State of Virginia can be named in which resolutions of that character were not passed.

“In 1784, not far from this Capitol, where we are now engaged in talking about the transfer of the slave-trade to the shores of the Pacific ocean, there was a meeting in Fairfax, at which one George Washington, Esq., presided. Some young gentlemen may know something of him. He was a tobacco-planter, sir, at Mount Vernon. The resolutions passed on that occasion declared the intention of the meeting to refrain from purchasing any slaves, and their determination to have nothing to do with the slave-trade—because the introduction of slaves into this country prevented its settlement by free whites. This, then, was the opinion in Virginia at that time; and it was the opinion in Georgia too.”

Farther on, he remarks:

“Thank God, though all should fail, there is an infallible depository of truth, and it lives once a year for three months in a little Chamber, below us! We can go there. Now I understand my duty here to be, to ascertain what constitutional power we have, and when we have ascertained that, without reference to what the Su-

preme Court may do—for they have yet furnished no guide on the subject—we are to take it for granted that they will concur with us. If the Court does not concur with us, I agree with gentlemen who have been so lost in their encomiums upon that Court, that their decision, whether right or wrong, controls no action. But we have not hitherto endeavored to ascertain what the Supreme Court would do. I wish then to ascertain in what mode this wonderful response is to be obtained—not from that Delphic Oracle, but from that infallible divinity, the Supreme Court. How is it to be done? A gentleman starts from Baltimore, in Maryland, with a dozen black men who have been *partes sequitur ventrum* burnt into their skins and souls all over; he takes them to California, three thousand miles off. Now I don't know how it may be in other parts of the world, but I know that in the State of Ohio it is ordained that the law is carried to every man's door. What then is the admirable contrivance in this bill by which we can get at the meaning of the Constitution? We pray for it, we agonize for it, we make a law for it, and that it may be speedily known—for, if not speedily known, it may as well never be known; if slavery goes there and remains there for one year, according to all experience, it is eternally. Let it but plant its roots there, and the next thing you will hear of will be the earnest appeals about the rights of property. It will be said: 'The Senate did not say we had no right to come here. The House of Representatives, a body of gentlemen elected from all parts of the country on account of their sagacity and legal attainments, did not prohibit us from coming here. I thought

I had a right to come here: the Senator from South Carolina said I had a right to come; the Hon. Senator from Georgia said I had a right to come here; his colleagues said it was a right secured to me somewhere high up in the clouds and not belonging to the world; the Senator from Mississippi said it was the ordinance of Almighty God; am I not then to enjoy the privileges thus so fully secured to me? I have property here; several of my women have borne children, who have *partus sequitur ventrem* born with them; they are my property.' Thus the appeal will be made to their fellow-citizens around them; and it will be asked, whether you are prepared to strike down the property which the settler in those territories has thus acquired? That will be the case unless the negro from Baltimore, when he gets there and sees the Peons there—slaves not by *partus sequitur ventrem*, but by a much better title—a verdict before a Justice of the Peace—should determine to avail himself of the admirable facilities afforded him by this bill for gaining his freedom.

"Suppose my friend from New Hampshire when he goes home, gets up a meeting and collects a fund for the purpose of sending a missionary after these men; and when the missionary arrives there he proposes to hold a prayer meeting, he gets up a meeting as they used to do in Yankee times, 'for the improvement of gifts.' He goes to the negro quarter of this gentleman from Baltimore, and says: 'Come, I want brother Cuffee; it is true he is a son of Ham, but I want to instruct him that he is free.' I am very much inclined to think that the missionary would fare very much as one did in South Caro-

lina, at the hands of him of Baltimore. So, you see, the negro is to start all at once into a free Anglo-Saxon in California; the blood of Liberty flowing in every vein, and its divine impulses throbbing in his heart. He is to say: 'I am free; I am a Californian; I bring the right of *habeas corpus* with me.' Well, he is brought up on a writ of *habeas corpus*—before whom? Very likely one of those gentlemen who have been proclaiming that slavery has a right to go there; for such are the men that Mr. Polk is likely to appoint. He has prejudged the case. On the faith of his opinion the slave has been brought there: what can he do? There is his recorded judgment printed in your Congressional Report; what will he say? 'You are a slave. Mr. Calhoun was right. Judge Berrien, of Ga., a profound lawyer, whom I know well, was right. I know these gentlemen well; their opinion is entitled to the highest authority, and in the face of it, it does not become me to say that you are free. So, boy, go to your master; you belong to the class *partus sequitur ventrem*: you are not quite enough of a Saxon.' What then is to be done by this bill? Oh! a writ of error or appeal can come to the Supreme Court of the United States. How? The negro, if he is to be treated like a white, taking out an appeal, must give bonds in double the value of the subject matter in dispute. And what is that? If you consider it the mercantile value of the negro, it may be perhaps \$1,000 or \$2,000. But he cannot have the appeal according to this bill, unless the value of the thing in controversy amounts to the value of \$2,000. But, then, there comes in this ideality of personal liberty: what is it worth?

Nothing at all—says the Senator from South Carolina—to this fellow, who is better without it. And under all this complexity of legal quibbling and litigation, it is expected that the negro will stand there and contend with his master, and coming on to Washington, will prosecute his appeal two years before the Supreme Court, enjoying the opportunity of visiting his old friends about Baltimore!”

One more quotation from this admirable speech must suffice:—

“I had almost believed, after hearing the beautiful, romantic, sentimental narration of the Senator from Mississippi, that God had indeed, as he said, made this people in Africa to come over here and wait upon us, till the Senator from Florida waked me up to a recollection of the old doctrines of Washington and Jefferson, by assuring that wherever that patriarchal institution existed, a rigid police should be maintained, in order to prevent the old women from cutting the throats of somebody! It is then a very ‘peculiar’ institution! Those who live under it cannot exist a day without caresses; and on the next, they must provide scores of constables with clubs in their hands, to keep them from cutting each other’s throats!

“I do not wish to extend that institution into these Territories. Is it pretended that Slave labor could be profitable in Oregon or California. Do we expect to grow cotton and sugar there? I do not know that it may not be done there; for as the gentleman from New York has told us, just as you go west upon this continent, the same line of latitude changes very much, so

that you may have a very different isothermal line as you approach the Pacific Ocean. But I do not care so much about that ; my objection is a radical one to the institution everywhere. I do believe, if there is any place on the globe which we inhabit where a white man cannot work, he has no business there. If that place is fit only for black men to work, let black men alone work there. I do not know any better law for man's good than that old one which was announced to man after the first transgression, that by the sweat of his brow he should earn his bread. I don't know what business men have in the world unless it is to work. If he is only to sleep and eat, he is reduced to the level of the hog—the only gentleman I know!

“ When you ask me, then, not to prohibit slavery in these territories, with my view of the institution itself, and of our power, I must assert the power to exclude slavery forever. In your States where you have made slavery property, you may protect it as you please, and I will aid you in giving it that security which the Constitution affords ; but, with God's help, not one inch beyond shall this institution go. I may be mistaken in all this ; but of one thing I am satisfied—of the honest conviction of my own judgment—and no supposed interruption of the ties which bind the various sections of the Confederacy shall induce me to shrink from these convictions, whenever I am called upon to carry them out into law.”

Shakspeare may well be excused for seeking in the Roman senate what he knew all senates could furnish—a buffoon. By this remark, we do not imply that Mr.

Corwin bears that character. No man mingles more dignity with his wit, and no one can be more courteous in his severity. He is the incarnation of humor ennobled by reason, and more than any other orator alive, abounds in those happy hits that "snatch a grace beyond the reach of art," as in the froth formed on the mouth of Jalysus' hound by a lucky dash from the sponge of Protogenes. His productions flow with a freedom and prodigality, as if they cost him nothing; and this air of original animation is attended by a correspondent spirit of facile but accurate execution. Such properties will always attract attention, and command admiration, despite palpable faults. It is of necessity a popular style. The freedom of its flow, the vividness of its colors, and energy of signification, contribute to excite and keep alive the most eager interest. The speaker appears to have perfect confidence in himself, and at once inspires his audience with the assured expectation of being regaled with both novelty and wisdom.

The subjoined specimen is after Mr. Corwin's more dignified and classical manner. It teems with the results of much reading, is imbued with high moral principle, and radiates with the most impressive eloquence. It is taken from an early and famous speech he made in the Senate on the Mexican war:—

"Mr. President, this uneasy desire to augment our territory has depraved the moral sense, and blighted the otherwise keen sagacity of our people. What has been the fate of all nations who have acted upon the idea that they must advance? Our young orators cherish

this notion with a fervid, but fatally mistaken zeal.— They call it by the mysterious name of ‘destiny.’ ‘Our destiny,’ they say, ‘is onward;’ and hence they argue, with ready sophistry, the propriety of seizing upon any territory and any people, that may lie in the way of our ‘fated’ advance. Recently these progressives have grown classical; some assiduous student of antiquities has helped them to a patron saint. They have wandered back into the desolated Pantheon, and there, among the Polytheistic relics of that ‘pale mother of dead empires,’ they have found a god, whom these Romans, centuries gone by, baptized ‘Terminus.’

“Sir, I have read much, and heard somewhat of this gentleman, Terminus. Alexander, of whom I have spoken, was a devotee of this divinity. We have seen the end of him and his empire. It was said to be an attribute of this god, that he *must* always advance and never recede. So both republican and imperial Rome believed. It was, as they said, their destiny; and for a while it did seem to be even so. Roman Terminus did advance. Under the eagles of Rome, he was carried from his home on the Tiber, to the farthest East on one hand, and to the far West, among the then barbarous tribes of Western Europe, on the other. But at length the time came when retributive justice had become ‘a destiny.’ The despised Gaul calls out to the contemned Goth, and Attila, with his Huns, answers back the battle-shout to both. The ‘blue-eyed nations of the North,’ (in succession of united strength,) pour forth their countless hosts of warriors upon Rome and Rome’s always advancing god, Terminus. And now the battle-

axe of the barbarians strikes down the conquering eagle of Rome. Terminus at last recedes; slowly at first, but finally he is driven to Rome, and from Rome to Byzantium. Whoever would know the farther fate of this Roman deity, so lately taken under the patronage of American Democracy, may find ample gratification of his curiosity in the luminous pages of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*. Such will find that Rome thought as you now think, that it was her destiny to conquer provinces and nations, and, no doubt, she sometimes said as you say, 'I will conquer a peace.' And where now is she—the mistress of the world? The spider weaves his web in her palaces; the owl sings his watch-song in her towers. Teutonic power now lords it over the servile remnant, the miserable memento of old and once omnipotent Rome. Sad, very sad, are the lessons which time has written for us. Through and in them all, I see nothing but the inflexible execution of that old law, which ordains as eternal the cardinal rule, 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods, nor *anything* which is his.' Since I have lately heard so much about the dismemberment of Mexico, I have looked back to see how, in the course of events, which some call 'Providence,' it has fared with other nations, who engaged in this work of dismemberment. I see that in the latter half of the eighteenth century, three powerful nations, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, united in the dismemberment of Poland. They said, too, as you say, 'It is our destiny.' They 'wanted room.' Doubtless each of these thought, with his share of Poland, his power was too strong ever to fear invasion or even insult. One had

his California; another his New Mexico; and a third his Vera Cruz. Did they remain untouched and incapable of harm? Alas! no; far, very far from it. Retributive justice must fulfil its destiny, too. A very few years pass ~~off~~, and we hear of a new man, a Corsican Lieutenant, the self-named 'armed soldier of Democracy,' Napoleon. He ravages Austria, covers her land with blood, drives the Northern Cæsar from his capital, and sleeps in his palace. Austria may now remember how her power trampled upon Poland. Did she not pay dear, very dear, for her California?

"But has Prussia no atonement to make? You see this same Napoleon, the blind instrument of Providence, at work there. The thunders of his cannon at Jena proclaim the work of retribution for Poland's wrongs; and the successors of the Great Frederick, the drill-sergeant of Europe, are seen flying across the sandy plains that surround their capital, right glad if they may escape captivity and death.) But how fares it with the Autocrat of Russia? Is he secure in his share of the spoils of Poland? No; suddenly we see, Sir, six hundred thousand armed men marching to Moscow. Does his Vera Cruz protect him now? Far from it. Blood, slaughter, desolation, spread abroad over the land, and finally, the conflagration of the old commercial metropolis of Russia closes the retribution she must pay for her share in the dismemberment of her weak and impotent neighbor. (Mr. President, a mind more prone to look for the judgments of Heaven in the doings of men than mine, cannot fail in this to see the Providence of God. When Moscow burned, it seemed

as if the earth was lighted up, that the nations might behold the scene. As that mighty sea of fire gathered and heaved and rolled upward, (and yet higher, till its flames licked the stars, and fired the whole heavens) it did seem as though the God of the Nations was writing in characters of flame on the front of his throne, that doom that shall fall upon the strong nation which tramples in scorn upon the weak. And what fortune awaits him, the appointed executor of this work, when it was all done? He, too, conceived the idea that his destiny pointed onward to universal dominion. France was too small—Europe, he thought, should bow down before him. But as soon as this idea took possession of his soul, he, too, became powerless. (His Terminus must recede, too. Right there, while he witnessed the humiliation, and, doubtless, meditated the subjugation of Russia, He who holds the winds in His fist, gathered the snows of the North, and blew them upon his six thousand men; they died—they froze—they perished.) And now the mighty Napoleon, (who had resolved on universal dominion; *he, too*) is summoned to answer for the violation of that ancient law, ‘Thou shalt not covet anything which is thy neighbor’s.’ (How are the mighty fallen!—He, beneath whose proud footsteps Europe trembled, he is now an exile at Elba, and now finally a prisoner on the rock of St. Helena—and there on a barren island, in an unfrequented sea, in the crater of an extinguished volcano, *there* is the death-bed of the mighty conqueror. All his *annexations* have come to that! His last hour is now come; and he, the man of *destiny*, he who had rocked the world as with the throes

of an earthquake, is now powerless—still—even as the beggar, ~~so~~ he died. On the wings of a tempest that raged with unwonted fury, up to the throne of the only Power that controlled him while he lived, went the fiery soul of that wonderful warrior, another witness to that eternal decree, that they who do not rule in righteousness shall perish from the earth. He has found ‘room’ at last. And France, *she*, too, has found ‘room.’ Her eagles ~~now~~ no longer scream along the banks of the Danube, the Po, and the Borysthenes. They have returned home to their old eyrie, between the Alps, the Rhine, and the Pyrenees. So shall it be with yours. You may carry them to the loftiest peaks of the Cordilleras—they may wave in insolent triumph in the Halls of the Montezumas—the armed men of Mexico may quail before them; but the weakest hand in Mexico, uplifted in prayer to the God of justice, may call down against you a power, in the presence of which the iron hearts of your warriors shall be turned into ashes.

“Mr. President, if the history of our race has established any truth, it is but a confirmation of what is written, ‘The way of the transgressors is hard.’ Inordinate ambition, wantoning in power, and spurning the humble maxims of Justice ~~has~~—ever has—and ever shall end in ruin. Strength cannot always trample upon weakness—the humble shall be exalted—the bowed down will at length be lifted up. It is by faith in the law of strict justice, and the practice of its precepts, that nations alone can be saved. All the annals of the human race, sacred and profane, are written over with this great truth, in characters of living light. It is my

fear, my fixed belief, that in this invasion, this war with Mexico, we have forgotten this vital truth. Why is it that we have been drawn into this whirlpool of war? How clear and strong was the light that shone upon the path of duty a year ago! The last disturbing question with England was settled—our power extended its peaceful sway from the Atlantic to the Pacific; from the Alleghanies we looked out upon Europe, and from the tops of the Stony Mountains we could descry the shores of Asia; a rich commerce with all the nations of Europe poured wealth and abundance into our lap on the Atlantic side, while an unoccupied commerce of three hundred millions of Asiatics waited on the Pacific for our enterprise to come and possess it. One hundred millions of dollars will be wasted in this fruitless war. Had this money of the people been expended in making a railroad from our Northern Lakes to the Pacific, as one of your citizens has begged of you in vain, you would have made a highway for the world between Asia and Europe. Your capital then would be within thirty or forty days' travel of any and every point on the map of the civilized world. Through this great artery of trade, you would have carried through the heart of your own country the teas of China, and the spices of India, to the markets of England and France. Why, why, Mr. President, did we abandon the enterprises of peace, and betake ourselves to the barbarous achievements of war? Why did we forsake this fair and fertile field to batten on that moor?

“But, Mr. President, if further acquisition of territory is to be the result either of conquest or treaty, then

I scarcely know which is to be preferred, eternal war with Mexico, or the hazards of internal commotion at home, which last, I fear, *may* come, if another province is to be added to our territory. * * * / We stand this day on the crumbling brink of that gulf—we see its bloody eddies wheeling and boiling before us—shall we not pause before it be too late? How plain again is here the path, I may add the ~~only way~~ of duty, of prudence, of true patriotism! Let us abandon all idea of acquiring farther territory, and, by consequence, cease at once to prosecute this war. Let us call home our armies, and bring them at once within our own acknowledged limits. Show Mexico that you are sincere when you say that you desire nothing by conquest. She has learned that she cannot encounter you in war; and if she had not, she is too weak to disturb you here. Tender her peace, and, my life upon it, she will then accept it. But whether she shall or not, you will have peace without her consent. 'It was your invasion that made war, your retreat will restore peace. Let us, then, close forever the approaches to internal feud, and so return to the ancient concord and the old ways of national prosperity and permanent glory. Let us here, in this temple consecrated to the Union, perform a solemn lustration; let us wash Mexican blood from our hands, and on these altars, in the presence of that image of the Father of his Country that looks down upon us, swear to preserve honorable peace with all the world, and eternal brotherhood with each other.' |

We have presented a biographical sketch of Thomas Corwin, and attempted to analyze his oratorical charac-

ter. It remains, briefly to describe his person; and this we will do by glancing first at his physical form, and then at his moral constitution.

It is of great advantage for a public speaker to be endowed with what is called *presence*—a commanding form and conciliating demeanor; and this Mr. Corwin possesses to an eminent degree. “The eye is made the fool of the other senses, or else worth all the rest.” An audience loves to repose its gaze upon him who addresses them, reading dignity in his aspect as well as catching inspiration from his lips. Unfortunately many a fine intellect is shrouded in an uncouth body, looking “as if some of nature’s journeymen had made them, and not made them well.” But not so with our orator. The graceful magnitude of his outer man comports with the compact and yet flexile firmness of the soul within. He is above medium height, of muscular make, agile limbs, and erect attitude. His features are full, ingenuous in their habitual expression, and—not absolutely black. His brows are broad, open, and massy, the fit throne of mighty thought. Like his hair, his eyes are dark, clear, and piercing; generally mild in their look, but sometimes filled with a deadly irony, which it is impossible to describe. In some burlesque lines on the treatment of Regulus by the Carthagenians, the rhymester comes nearest to an exact description of Mr. Corwin’s look when it is assumed:

“His eyelids they pared;
————— how he stared!”

In common conversation, and in ordinary debate,

Mr. Corwin wears an aspect cheerful and attractive to the last degree ; but when dealing in fiery argument or stinging sarcasm, the language of his features exactly corresponds with his avowed sentiments and adds a fearful significancy to their force. A flash of exultation often plays over his countenance when he observes how the winged shaft has taken effect, and with what tenacity it sticks to his writhing victim. The quiver or curl of his lip, the dropping of his chin, the fantastic rolling of his eyes, and the mock pathos of his tones, as he utters some mortal sneer, is comical beyond conception except to those who have *seen* him speak. It is really astonishing with what distinctness he can *say* a given sentiment and *look* directly the opposite, and the side glance of his twinkling eye—the unmistakable interpretation given by his facial muscles will contradict with overpowering drollery and emphatic eloquence the words that instant on his lips. In all such instances the effect is designed, and is a trait of power in this orator which no living master can approach. It is easy to perceive the triumph of sagacious humor in his look, even before he speaks ; feats of exquisite sportiveness, in which pleasantry and utility are felicitously combined, and executed by the most perfect master of forensic mirth, creating roars of merriment in which all gravity is overwhelmed and the most demure risibles convulsed. He will enunciate ridicule in a dry laugh, multiply it in a thousand extemporized wrinkles all over his sombre visage, suggest it in every form and direction through sardonic chuckles and twinkling looks, darting from his speaking face more fatal jests than are clothed in words,

and yet embodying downright sarcasm in the plainest language enough to scarify any common skin. And yet, what is still more strange, there is no appearance of malice in all this. Mr. Corwin seeks no noisy applause by his occasional bitterness, and the plaudits which continually attend the popular appreciation of his grotesque wit, as well as sterling argument, appear to afford him gratification only so far as comprehensive, beneficent, and enduring results are achieved. He seldom exasperates, though he always keenly excites; there is so much courtesy mingled in all his severity, that the subject of his lash is obliged to laugh while he smarts. His pangs are mitigated, however, by the reflection that they are inflicted by superior talent as magnanimous as it is keen, and not by harsh and uncouth imbecility. This is a grand consolation, since it is much more dignified and tolerable to endure the paw of a lion than the hoof of an ass.

It should not be inferred from the above remarks, that Mr. Corwin's greatest forte lies in the use of small arms in forensic warfare. He is never so great as when he addresses himself to analytical reasoning and severe deduction. It is true he can play at will his virgin fancies wild; he has mastered the great secret of nature, having learned her manner, and with rapture tasted her style; his bold imagination can skillfully touch the very limits which it dares not pass, careering with supreme dominion over all kingdoms of emotion and thought; yet is he the most powerful and self-possessed when in the forum of rigid debate, dealing logic on fire all around. One of the first lawyers in Ohio has frequently assured

the writer that Mr. Corwin excels all his acquaintances in the knowledge of mental philosophy and the science of legitimate argument. With Promethean power he can give life to the cumbrous mass of precedents accumulated by plodders, throw an intellectual splendor over images opaque to ordinary minds, and at the same time lay bare the soul of passion, as well as rivet conviction on the most stubborn understanding. His wit is that of a manly, independent spirit; his cheerfulness that of a generous, feeling heart. His natural vitality of soul, Diogenes turn of dialectics, and inexhaustible humor, sustain his energy in all toils and render him fearful to all foes. He is a man "replete with mocks, full of comparisons and wounding flouts;" but the chief reason why his protection is courted by the weak and dreaded by the mighty is, that behind lighter skirmishing, he plies mental artillery of the largest calibre and most destructive force. Alternate action and repose, playful squibbing and irresistible broadsides, afford their adroit possessor a versatility of power which few can either anticipate or resist. And yet nothing is more foreign from artificialness. His speech takes a natural growth, and his oratorical triumph is perfected much as Milton described :

"So from the ground
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
More airy, last the bright consummate flower."

Having already passed in our description from the physical attributes of Mr. Corwin, to his intellectual and moral character, we will dwell yet a little longer on this

last point. In his mental productions we see traits that correspond to the appearances of material elements and natural scenes, striking contrasts in form, color, light, and shadow; sunbeams bursting through a small opening in a dark wood, a rainbow against a stormy sky, meadows fragrant and lovely with flowers on one hand, groves prostrated by tempests, and mountain peaks scathed by lightnings on the other. His style is insinuating and pungent, not abrupt or petulant, but full of those captivating transitions, which, while they surprise into more absorbing curiosity, seldom repel by acrimonious denunciation, but keep up an increasing interest, insensibly wind round the heart, and lead the judgment to conviction and repose. Having witnessed the effects of his address on a popular audience, you feel that his task was not executed by mechanical means, that he not only has taste, but genius and invention, and that his spirit, like Hotspur's, had "lent a fire e'en to the dullest peasant."

That orator will have the greatest public power who lives nearest to infinity by throwing wide open all the avenues of his being to whatever is beautiful, and true, and grand around him. If ethereal tides swell and circulate through every artery and vein, energizing his soul and clarifying his vision, his thoughts will be vivid like the fulminations of heaven, and his expressions will reverberate in thunder tones, startling and distinct to every ear. Of this stamp is Thomas Corwin. He excels most statesmen, in this respect among many others—he knows when to speak and when to be silent. That is the wisest of men, who not only can create superior works,

but can perceive when his task is done. The knowledge when to stop, left Scylla nothing to fear, though disarmed; the want of this knowledge, gave Cæsar to the dagger of Brutus. The great orator of Ohio says plainer things, and does bolder deeds, than any other senator; yet is he the last to violate any rule of propriety, offend any one of true dignity, wink at any private injustice or public wrong. Such a man can neither be praised nor insulted; he is above the fulsomeness of the selfish and the malignity of the mean.

Says the excellent judge of character, from whom we quoted in the beginning of this chapter, "Mr. Corwin's private life, from boyhood up, has been marked by the strictest virtue and the most stainless honor. His professional career, as a part of it, has been distinguished for benevolence and justice. His social qualities are of the highest order, and impart the happiest influence upon all who are so fortunate as to enjoy the advantages of them. Few men excel him in colloquial power, or in the range of intelligence to make it the most attractive. His life has been one of laborious study, and his mind is highly charged with useful learning and well-digested principles. He has read much, and with careful discrimination—applying the most careful thought of his own mind in the speculations of others. However, his opinions on all subjects are uniformly his own. No man is more unpretending in his attainments, or more modest in exhibiting them; but, at the same time, no man can be more decided in resisting the prescriptions of mere authority. His mind, in its philosophic spirit, is formed mainly on the principle of self-reliance; and he

values and uses learning rather as a means to help him think than to supply him with thoughts. It is, however, high proof in favor of the principles of any party or category with which he may sympathize and act, that they have been thoroughly thought out by him from their simplest elements, and finally adopted by him as ascertained truths. He allows no mere party reasons for his convictions, and wants no party aid for their support.

“As a public speaker, Mr. Corwin is gifted far above the ordinary standard of parliamentary experience. His manner is perfectly self-possessed—his thoughts flow forth in the most lucid forms: his language is in the purest taste—always strong, though frequently in a high degree erratic. In all his efforts, whether of the more elaborate or of the lighter kind, he fixes attention in the outset, and holds it, unbroken, to the end. It is, evidently, one of the secrets of his power, that he knows when he has exhausted a subject, and where to stop. He is so clear in his conceptions, and exact in his arrangement of them, that he never repeats himself; and hence never offends, as do many of the best speakers, by occasional indications of a want of thorough understanding of their own minds.

“In the mixed walks of eloquence, when under the excitement of a great subject, and a grand and responsible occasion for the discussion of it, Mr. Corwin often exhibits powers which could hardly be excelled. He has moments of intense strength, in which he seems to rise, unconsciously, high above his own ordinary level, and to wield with almost superhuman power the grandest thoughts; setting them forth in the sublimest images,

and clothing them in the most beautiful forms of speech. On occasions that properly admit of the application of the higher powers of wit, his efforts are unrivalled. His quick perception of the weak points of an adversary's position, and, if open to ridicule, his ready association of them with the most grotesque forms of exposure, give often, even to his grave speeches, a force and influence which the severest logic would utterly fail to give. The amiable and gentlemanly temper, moreover, with which he exerts these high and even dangerous powers, saves him from all hazard of giving personal offence in the application of them, and it is proverbially said of him, that the object of his satire is usually among the most entertained of those who listen to it. The treat is too rich to be quarrelled with, even by the victim whom it would annihilate.

“ But, after all, the most striking and captivating feature in his speaking, is, that he allows no doubt in his auditory of the entire sincerity of what he is saying. It is a man uttering great and important truths under the impulses of deep conviction, and not a mere declaimer or advocate, who would produce effect for an occasion. And this great feature of Mr. Corwin's speaking, which stands out so prominently in every speech he makes, no matter what the audience, the place, or the occasion, is the necessary result of that self-culture, which, in his habitual studies, keeps the watches of an honest and conscientious heart in constant company with the labors of a clear, serene, and self-poised mind.

“ As a writer, Mr. Corwin's pursuits have never

required of him to make any especial exhibitions—though those who enjoy the privilege of his correspondence know that his occasional discussions in the exact forms of writing, are not inferior to his more accustomed efforts of the forensic kind. He writes as he speaks ; in a style of the purest taste and most direct expression, with all the earnestness of deep conviction, and the consciousness that he has something to say.

“ Mr. Corwin is not an ambitious man, in any low or vulgar sense. His whole life has proved his aspirations to be of the loftiest and purest kind. The high places he has so long occupied in public affairs, seem to come to him as a matter of course. He has been no seeker after them ; and has submitted to none of the compromises of self-respect, so sadly common in our country, to obtain them. Deeply studied in the institutions of his country, and profoundly animated with the sentiment of patriotism that would administer and maintain them in their true strength and purity, he has occupied such positions in relation to them as were perfectly natural, and such as it would have been a kind of moral treason, in a man of his gifts, to have declined. His ambition is to be eminently useful ; and if the marks of public confidence which have been so lavishly bestowed upon him, are to be regarded as proofs, his ambition has not been without success.

“ We have thus spoken of Mr. Corwin, and in no spirit of adulation, nor with any purpose of gaining to him any artificial or fictitious importance before the nation. We have spoken, because that such a man should be talked and written about, and made known to

the nation. It is quite obvious that his position as a man, and as an American statesman, is now high. It is destined to be higher—not, perhaps, in outward rank, but in that depth and universality of public esteem and reliance, which are the fruit of many and arduous trials, and a long life of single-hearted devotion to principle. Be these trials ever so many or so arduous, they will leave unsullied the lofty name, unspotted the steadfast soul, of THOMAS CORWIN.”

The “Queen City” will long remember that afternoon of Monday, Oct. 9th, 1848, when the announcement that “Tom Corwin” was to speak in a large open space in one of the suburbs, had an effect in emptying the busiest quarters very like the approach of the fascinating queen of Egypt:

“The city cast

Her people out upon her; and Antony,
Enthron'd in the market-place, did sit alone,
Whistling to the air; which, but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,
And made a gap in nature.”

The vast area of seats arranged for the audience was filled by ladies alone, while beyond, in every direction, further than the most powerful voice could reach, crowds were compactly standing in rapt attention, listening from carriages, peering through windows, bending from balconies and roofs, or clinging to trees and flag-staffs, while banners waved above, eyes sparkled, and irrepressible cheers resounded all around.

Mr. Corwin spoke for a long time, and more than once was on the point of closing when the multitudes

compelled him still to proceed. The scene was every way exceedingly impressive. There was no filmy cloud to break the softness of the west, where the sun sank like a globe of molten gold, radiating to the zenith, flashing from cloud to cloud, and blending in one massy sheet over the vast and glowing concave. The beautiful coronet of hills which encompass Cincinnati, gloriously tinted with autumnal foliage, were then doubly resplendent in the evening glow, while numerous villas studding their sides and summits, smitten by the setting sun, were illuminated by harmless conflagrations. Every moment grew more pensive and solemn in the amber hues of declining day ; and the orator, as if inspired by the hour, rose to a most exalted strain of the moral sublime in picturing the evils which many feared and which he came there to deprecate. At that moment we gazed intently upon his noble form raised by popular enthusiasm upon a rustic pyramid in full view of enraptured throngs. He bore the aspect of a prophet, condensing the utmost measure of solicitude and meaning in language prompted by the approach of a fearful crisis. The last gleam of day played on his brow ; his lips quivered and burned with their last eloquent appeal ; he bowed his silent homage to the excited thousands ; and repeated shouts, half drowning the salvos of cannon, shook the heavens.