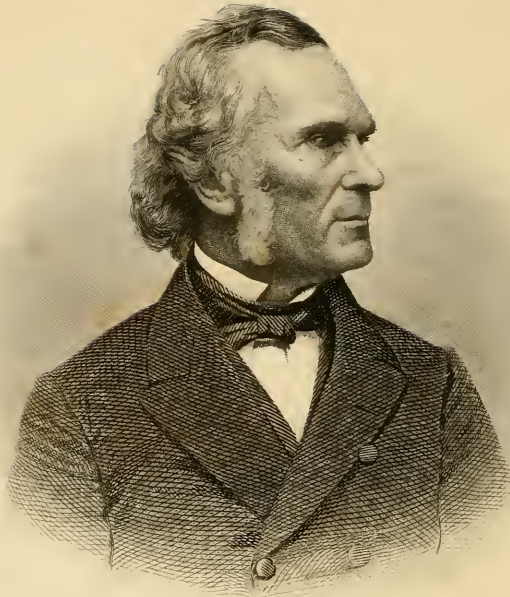


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OF
SENATOR BUCKINGHAM.





Engr. by Geo. E. Davis. N.Y.

Wm W Buckingham

SKETCH

OF

WILLIAM ALFRED BUCKINGHAM.

BY

INCREASE N. TARBOX.
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WILLIAM ALFRED BUCKINGHAM.

THE face of Gov. Buckingham has become very familiar to the people of New England, and indeed of the whole land. By his personal presence in so many places, and on so many occasions of public interest, great multitudes of this living generation have seen and known him. By the aid of art, his picture has been taken up and circulated through the whole country. It is a face which, once seen, is not likely to be forgotten, or confounded with the faces of others. It stands out, by itself, clear to the eye and clear to the memory. There was a manly beauty, not only in his features, but in his whole person and in his bearing, that made him a man to be remembered. An inherited and cultivated politeness, a gentlemanly dignity, a winning and courtly action, were joined in him with great force and executive ability. Whether presiding at some public meeting, or mingling in the social gathering, or meeting his neighbors in the common thoroughfares of life, there was a grace, a decorum in every word and in every movement.

One chief reason why he was so widely known personally, and will be so widely remembered, is, that he ranged through so large a field of activities. It is rare that any one man moves in so many different spheres, and comes in contact with his fellow-men at so many varied and diversified points. In the first place, he was a man of very large business, well known in the central circles of trade and commercial activity. When he entered prominently into public political life, he came as one providentially raised up to meet the terrible exigencies of our late war of the Rebellion. He had been two years

Governor of Connecticut (1858-60) before the outbreak, and by party usage would then have retired. But the troublous clouds which began to loom up on the horizon made Connecticut afraid, in this crisis, to change her leader; and so for six years more, through all that dark and changing conflict, he sat at the helm and guided the State. That divine wisdom and foresight which gave Abraham Lincoln to the nation in those trying years, gave William A. Buckingham to the State of Connecticut. He had been in office long enough before the Rebellion to know the place and its duties, and, with the opening of the war, he became a pillar of strength, not only to his own little State, but to the nation itself.

Passing from the round of State offices and honors, he became in the last years of his life a member of the Senate of the United States, and had a wider though not a more important field for the exercise of his abilities.

But this man, moving in this public sphere, the observed of all observers, had yet other and more quiet ranges, where he was equally at home and widely known. He was one of the deacons of a large Congregational Church in Norwich, and one of the teachers in its Sabbath School. And by the law of Congregational comity and fellowship, this man, who was so eminent a layman in a local church, was naturally called to perform important and varied services in the sisterhood of churches. He was the presiding officer at the conference; a director or the president of various benevolent organizations. He was called to be first of the moderators of the National Council of Congregational Churches meeting in Boston in 1865,—just as his remote ancestor, Rev. Thomas Buckingham, was one of the presiding officers at that notable synod in Saybrook, in 1708, which constructed the Saybrook platform. In these various ecclesiastical connections he was brought into familiar acquaintance with multitudes of people who may not have known him in political or business life.

And in this connection it is pleasant to remember that Connecticut has had other governors in the past, who did not forget their daily duties in their own local churches, while sharing more public honors and offices. Gov. Buckingham, in this respect, preserved the traditions of a simpler age, amid a

generation more given to change and show. Roger Wolcott, Colonial Governor from 1750 to 1754, was an active member of Rev. Timothy Edwards' church in East Windsor, a man of large acquaintance with the Scriptures and of devoted piety. That wonderful boy, Jonathan Edwards, son of Timothy, through all the years of his childhood, doubtless heard from the lips of Roger Wolcott impressive expositions of Scripture doctrine and duty. They went in and out together at that rude meeting-house where Timothy Edwards began his ministry in 1694.

Gov. Jonathan Trumbull, in the goodly town of Lebanon, where Gov. Buckingham was born, was a pillar and tower of strength in the local church over which Rev. Solomon Williams was so long pastor. No public activities and cares ever made him forget his private religious duties to God and his fellow-men. If he wrote a letter to the Continental Congress, or to his beloved Washington, chief of the army, it was likely to be as good a letter *religiously*, as it was discreet and wise in a *civic* point of view.

In more recent times, William W. Ellsworth, in the years while he held the office of Governor of Connecticut, kept his connection with his large Bible-class in Dr. Hawes' Church of Hartford, meeting them Sabbath by Sabbath in the plain old lecture-room, after a careful study of the lesson for the day. Other cases might be noticed, but these will suffice. It is in such characteristics as this that the glory of old Connecticut is found.

The earliest ancestor of Gov. Buckingham on these New England shores was Thomas Buckingham, who in 1639 appears as one of the "seven pillars" around whom the ancient church of Milford, Conn., was organized. The formation of the First Church in New Haven had just taken place, and the plan adopted was that seven men, including the pastor, should first bind themselves together by religious ceremonies and services, and so become the nucleus of organization. At New Haven, Mr. John Davenport, the pastor, preached on the occasion from the fitly chosen words, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars." This form of organization may be regarded as somewhat fanciful, and cer-

tainly not necessary to the existence of a Congregational church; but there was an element in it not devoid of decorous beauty and propriety. *Seven* was a sacred Old Testament number, and they would begin with that. But the more important and vital idea was, as in the organization of the first churches in the Massachusetts Bay, that a Congregational Church could spring into being anywhere, without regard to set forms, if only there was a little company of God's people who desired to be banded together in this goodly fellowship.

But the pattern of organization at New Haven was copied for the church in Milford in that same year. Indeed, the ceremony of organization took place in New Haven. Mr. Peter Prudden, the pastor, with William Fowler, Edmund Tapp, Zechariah Whitman, Thomas Buckingham, Thomas Welch, and John Astwood, were the "seven pillars" which wisdom had "hewn out" for the construction of this church in the wilderness.

Dr. Sprague makes a mistake in a note in his *Annals*, where he confuses this Thomas Buckingham with his son, afterwards minister at Saybrook. The first Thomas Buckingham was only a prominent layman, like his distinguished descendant two hundred years later.

This man's son, Rev. Thomas Buckingham, was minister of the ancient church of Saybrook (the technical name of the church is now "Old Saybrook") nearly forty years, from 1667 to 1709. The year before his death was made famous in Connecticut by the enactment, on this spot, of the "Saybrook Platform." Yale College, founded in 1700, had its early Commencements here. Mr. Buckingham was one of the trustees of the College. Yea, more, he was one of the ten ministers who met at Branford, in 1700, with their arms full of books, which they laid down upon a table, saying, "I give these books for the founding of a college in Connecticut." That was the beginning of what was afterwards known as Yale College, and these ten ministers were the first trustees.

As we have said, the early Commencements were held at Saybrook, though the students were not all taught there. It was "the day of small things," and the few scholars were

quartered out here and there in the families of such ministers as were competent to instruct them. But in the month of September the trustees and the scattered students (at least such of them as were to be graduated) gathered at Saybrook, the Seniors to go through their exercises of graduation and to receive their degrees, and the trustees to attend to the business of the annual meeting. It was a day of rough roads and hard travelling, and it was desirable to cover as many public duties as possible by one journey. In the year 1708, in the month of May, the civil government of Connecticut thought there ought to be in the little Commonwealth a new *ecclesiastical* code; and so this civil government (not the churches) ordered a synod to be convened at Saybrook, in connection with the next annual Commencement. The trustees of the college were eminent ministers, and they would serve the purposes of the synod, so far as they went, and save other men from making the toilsome journey. In fact, the synod only numbered sixteen, — twelve ministers and four laymen; so that besides the trustees of the college, only a very few men were called to make any journey at all.

We have no partialities whatever for the work which that body of men accomplished. The *Saybrook Platform* stands to-day only as a striking historical monument, showing a drift of those times. Many of the churches of Connecticut never would accept it, or be governed by it. It humbled and dishonored the laity, and threw an almost despotic power into the hands of the ministers. It was more Presbyterian than Congregational, yet not either. But it came into being in the course of historical events, and is not to be judged by these days, but by the days preceding and attending its origin. Thomas Buckingham, minister of Saybrook, was the assistant moderator of that synod. He died in the year following. The Congregational Council that met in Boston in 1865, composed of more than five hundred ministers and laymen, gathered from every part of our wide Congregational field, with Gov. William A. Buckingham as Moderator, did work which we are quite sure will better stand the test of after times.

Rev. Thomas Buckingham, of Saybrook, gave a son to the ministry, eminent in his profession. This was Rev.

Thomas Buckingham, a graduate of Harvard College in 1690, and pastor of the Second Church in Hartford between thirty and forty years, dying in 1731. Rev. Stephen Buckingham, also a graduate of Harvard in 1693, and minister at Norwalk from 1697 to 1727, was a nephew. He died in 1746. On the death of Thomas, of Saybrook, in 1709, Thomas, of Hartford, was immediately chosen to fill his place on the Board of Trustees of the college; and in 1716, Stephen, of Norwalk, was also elected a member of the Board. Thomas was a member for twenty-two years, and Stephen, sixteen.

As evidence of the good estimation in which the Buckinghams were held in the early colonial days, we find among the *Public Records of Connecticut* such items as the following. "This Court [1699] grants the Rever'd Mr. Thomas Buckingham of Hartford, two hundred acres of land where it may be had without prejudice to any former grant or the settlement of any plantation."

And again, in 1704: "This Assembly doth grant to the Rev^d Mr. Thomas Buckingham, of Saybrook, [here follow four other names, and then], Mr. Thomas Buckingham Jun^r Mr. Daniel Buckingham and Abimeleck the sonne of Joshua of Saybrook aforesaid, that they shall have a patent for a certain tract of land lying and bounded as followeth," etc. [Here the locality is given, showing it to be in Eastern Connecticut, bounded easterly or northeasterly by the Willimantic River, which the record calls *Wallamantick*.] This Abimeleck, the "sonne" of Joshua, was an Indian. Joshua was the English name for Uncas, and the son was favored and befriended for the services done to the English by his father.

We now start anew with Rev. Thomas Buckingham, of Saybrook. We have spoken of his son, Rev. Thomas, of Hartford, and his nephew, Rev. Stephen, of Norwalk, because they were men of prominence in their generation. Thomas, of Saybrook, had other children: among them Daniel Buckingham, through whom the line of Gov. Buckingham is to be traced. Saybrook for some generations was the home of this branch of the family. To commence with our own times and move backward, the line will run thus, and the figures will show the year of birth. William A. Buckingham [1804] was the son

of Samuel [1770], who was the son of Samuel [1740], who was the son of Daniel [1698], who was the son of Daniel [1672], who was the son of Rev. Thomas, of Saybrook [1646], who was the son of Thomas, one of the "seven pillars" of the church of Milford, (1639). All this history is made very clear in the *Genealogy of the Buckingham Family*, compiled by Robert H. Chapman, of Saybrook. We have seldom seen a volume in this line more neat and admirable in its arrangement.

Deacon Samuel Buckingham was united in marriage, near the beginning of the present century, to Joanna Matson, of Lyme, and became a citizen of Lebanon, Conn. Six children were born into this household, of whom William A. was the second. There were two daughters and four sons. One son died in infancy; the other children all lived to mature life. Two yet survive,— Dr. S. G. Buckingham, of Springfield, and Israel Matson Buckingham, of Norwich.

Of such ancestry and parentage William A. Buckingham was born, in the town of Lebanon, Conn., on the 28th¹ of May, 1804. No better town could have been selected for his birth and early education. On the one hand, the place was full of Revolutionary memories and traditions, and on the other, it was devoted to literary and intellectual culture to a very remarkable degree. From this quiet town, on the hills of Eastern Connecticut, an influence went forth, through all the years of the Revolutionary struggle, such as flowed from no other place, large or small, in all New England. This was the home of Gov. Jonathan Trumbull, who held the office of governor from 1769 to 1783, and then resigned, having been for fifty years, in one form or another, without interruption, in the public service. By the peculiar charter of Connecticut, the colonial governors were chosen by the people, and not appointed in England, and so Gov. Trumbull was on the side of the people, while the governors generally in the other Colonies were appointed abroad, and, at the opening of the Revolutionary strife, acted for the home government and against the people. This, of itself, tended to give Gov. Trumbull a peculiar

¹ The *Genealogy in the Buckingham Family* is in error in giving his birth as on the 25th.

iar prominence in that war, and to make Lebanon a peculiar place. Gov. Hawley, of Connecticut, in his address delivered in the Hall of Representatives at Washington, after Gov. Buckingham's death, says of Gov. Jonathan Trumbull, "Every other colonial governor went with the king. Brother Jonathan stood by the people and they stood by him from the beginning to the end,—the square, straight, solid, brave, indomitable old man."

When to his official position we add his sterling qualities of character, lifting him into a clear and radiant atmosphere, his large and comprehensive views of the situation, his calm confidence in the future, even in the darkest hours, his unsullied patriotism, his immense activity, it may well be doubted whether any other man in all the thirteen colonies, Washington only excepted, had so much to do in shaping the destinies of that long and wearisome conflict as he. This man, the elder Gov. Trumbull, was dead at the time of Mr. Buckingham's birth; but another Jonathan Trumbull, his son, was governor of Connecticut from 1798 until his death in 1809. Col. John Trumbull, the painter, brother of the last named, had already achieved a European as well as American reputation by his celebrated pictures, now to be found in the Trumbull Gallery at New Haven. William Williams was also alive, but an old man, in young Buckingham's early childhood. He was a son of the old minister of the place (Solomon Williams), a signer of the Declaration, and bore a very prominent part in the war of the Revolution, both as a military officer and in civil affairs.

Senator Ferry, of Connecticut (who now has followed the subject of this sketch to the unseen world), in his eulogy upon Gov. Buckingham, delivered in the Senate of the United States just after his death, most graphically described the ancient town of Lebanon. We have room, at this point, for only a few of his eloquent words. He said:—

"There is no spot in the world where the conditions which mould a human life are more auspicious than those which existed in his native town from fifty to seventy years ago. Its natural aspects were simple and peaceful. . . . The air of the place was full of patriotic associations. It was the home of many

prominent characters of the Revolutionary period. Chief among these was the family of the Trumbulls. The plain frame house in which they had lived through two generations of distinguished service, and the old 'war-office,' as it was called, where the elder Trumbull had transacted his public business during his long administration of State affairs, remained landmarks of the past until a period even now recent. Schoolboys entering the latter looked with awe upon the marks of spurs still to be seen on the side of the counter where orderlies and express riders had sat awaiting the governor's orders during the War of Independence. In that house Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, Lafayette, Rochambeau, and many other old-time worthies had been guests. French troops had gone into winter quarters here, and five regiments had been reviewed by Washington himself on the spacious street. More than five hundred men from that little town had been in the Revolutionary armies at one time, and every house was full of their reminiscences."

Dr. Buckingham, of Springfield, in a private letter written some years since, says of the place: "The old Trumbull tomb contains the dust of 'Brother Jonathan';¹ Faith Robinson, his wife, of the Leyden stock; Jonathan Trumbull, the second governor, and William Williams, signer of the Declaration of Independence, and was enough to awaken patriotism in any boy, as he wandered through that old burying-ground." But when we pass from these historical memories and associations to contemplate the ancient town in another aspect, we have a result still more surprising. There is not probably, in all New England, another place of the same population that can point to so many eminent graduates of colleges among her sons, as Lebanon. Some happy, favoring influence early set this stream in motion, and once started it flowed on, broadening as it ran. Some of the ablest ministers of New England, and some of

¹ Many readers will know, what others may not, that the expression, "Brother Jonathan," now so common, came from the familiar intercourse of Washington with Gov. Trumbull. Drake, in his "Dictionary of American Biography," has doubtless stated the matter correctly, when he says that he [Trumbull] "was relied on by Washington as one of his main pillars of support. The phrase sometimes used by him, 'Let us see what Brother Jonathan says,' is supposed to have originated the humorous term frequently applied to the United States."

her ablest lawyers and judges, came from this town. Among these earlier ministerial names we find such as these: Dr. John Smalley, Dr. Eliphalet Williams, Dr. Elijah Parish, Dr. Ezra Stiles Ely, Dr. Ralph R. Gurley, and Dr. Walter Harris. In civil life the result is no less remarkable. Jeremiah Mason, that giant among lawyers, among the very greatest certainly that New England has reared, had his birth and early education here. John Wheelock, LL. D., the second president of Dartmouth College, and son of Dr. Eleazer Wheelock, the first president, was reared at Lebanon, where his father was settled in the ministry. This and some other of the eminent names belonged to that part of the ancient town now known as Columbia. Not far from sixty ministers were sent forth from this one township, with its different ecclesiastical parishes, and the whole number of its graduates cannot fall far short of one hundred.

Lebanon has given to the State of Connecticut five governors, who have held the office nearly one third of the time for the last hundred years. These are Jonathan Trumbull, the elder; Jonathan Trumbull, his son; Joseph Trumbull, nephew of the last named; Clark Bissell (also Judge of the Supreme Court, and Professor in the New Haven Law School), and William A. Buckingham. It passed into a kind of adage or pleasant saying among the people of Lebanon, that "they supplied Norwich with butter and eggs, and the State with governors." This same town also gave Gov. Dewey to the State of Wisconsin.

There was here enough certainly to stir the imagination of a child, and to awaken in him a sense of the value of individual character. But it is, after all, to the home life that we must look for the choicest and most decisive influences in moulding the character of a child; and here young Buckingham was as fortunate as he was in his general surroundings. Mrs. Stowe, in her *Men of Our Times*, has finely drawn the outlines of this parentage. "His father was a thrifty farmer, a deacon in the church, a man of remarkably sound judgment and common-sense, and a public-spirited man, abounding in hospitality. His mother was one of those women in whom the strong qualities of the Puritan stock came to a flowering and fruitage

of celestial quality, a rare union of strength and soundness. She had a mother's ambition for her children, but always directed to the very highest things. 'Whatever else you are, I want you to be Christians,' was one of her daily household sayings. Her memory is cherished in the records of many words and deeds of love and beneficence, written not with pen and ink, 'but in fleshly tables of the heart,' in all the region where she lived."

This mother came from the old town of Lyme, fruitful in good influences and in good character. The mother of the present Chief Justice of the United States, Morrison R. Waite, was her sister; and in that town he himself had his birth and early education.

One of the pastors of the Lebanon Church (his name is not given, but from the circumstances of the case we judge it to be Rev. John C. Nichols, settled there from 1840 to 1854) gives the following most impressive testimony as to the character of this woman:—

"When I became pastor of the church, I was struck wherever I went with the love and gratitude which all poured out at the mention of one individual. That individual was the mother of our now good governor,—a noble son of a noble mother. Beneath every roof her name was most affectionately mentioned, as her memory is now sacredly cherished. I wondered how she had thus endeared herself to the hearts of that people. But when I saw her at the bedside of the sick and dying, ministering like an angel from above to their relief; when I saw her gifts scattered wherever they were needed; when I saw how little she spent upon herself and how cheerfully she gave to others, I understood the secret."

The oldest child in this household was a daughter, about three years older than the subject of this sketch. A sister standing in such relations of age is not to be overlooked in computing the influences which circle about the mind and heart of the growing boy; and especially in this instance these influences are not to be forgotten, for all witnesses agree (and the facts are within the personal knowledge of the writer) in ascribing to Abigail Buckingham a saintly beauty of character. Her thoughts, hopes, and aspirations were not in the line of com-

mon earthly ambitions, but were set towards choice and refined culture, and a heavenly purity of heart and disposition.

Such were the aspects and conditions of life within the house when this boy first came to years of childish thought and activity. But the world without was also attractive and beautiful. Though the town, in some parts, is as rocky and rough as the ancient mountain of this name that furnished cedars for the temple of Solomon, yet the cattle find sweet pasturage in these rocky fields, and strong hands have subdued large portions of the territory, until it spreads out in fertile beauty, in corn-lands and mowing-lands, neat and refreshing to the eye. Like many of the ancient towns of Connecticut, the centre of Lebanon is well up on the hills, where the winds blow freely, and where the eye may look off in almost any direction. It is a quiet old place now. In our times the "gods of the valleys" have prevailed over the "gods of the hills." The manufacturing villages, the railroads, and the cities have drained the very life out of these old hill-towns. But no one can pass along that wide and generous street in Lebanon Centre, — so wide that it is quite a little evening walk to go across it, — and not feel that this was a place of ancient dignity and respectability. Without exaggeration, it may be said that land enough was thrown open in making this street to constitute a farm of large dimensions. The five regiments which Washington reviewed there could march and countermarch in those great spaces without any impediment. The houses stand at frequent intervals on both sides, and ancient trees spread their covering branches for friendly shade in the summer, and to make weird music when the winter winds sweep through them. The farms, on which successive generations of hardy freemen have toiled, slope off to the east and west, — a picture of beauty to the eye of the traveller coming into the place from either direction.

Four miles away westward, but still in the same town, is the old ecclesiastical parish of Exeter, with its meeting-house planted on well-nigh the highest hill. Two or three miles southerly is another ecclesiastical centre, the old parish of Goshen. Some miles to the north was the ancient Lebanon Crank, where Dartmouth College first had its birth as "Moor's

Indian Charity School"; and after a few years' existence in this form, and under this name, was moved up into the wilderness of New Hampshire in 1769, and planted at Hanover. Lebanon Crank was another ecclesiastical parish, over which, more than a hundred years ago, the famous Dr. Wheelock was settled. This part of the primitive township is now set off, and forms the present town of Columbia.

We have given, perhaps, an undue portion of the space allotted us to what might be called preliminary details. But Gov. Buckingham's public life was so very *public* that it is "read and known of all men," and if we should go over it, in minute specification, we could hardly hope to deepen the impression already upon the minds of the people. We have thought it more important to reveal what is not so generally known, — the ancestral traditions, and the household and town associations out of which he came; to show how truly he was a product of our New England life and habit, and that, too, under most favoring conditions.

For the first eighteen years he was a farmer's boy, — up early in the morning to milk and drive the cows to pasture, and bring up the wide-horned oxen for the labors of the day. He brought back the wandering sheep, when they had climbed over the stone walls into the street, or into other people's lands; he took care of the tender young lambs when the cold storms of the early spring came upon them; he ploughed and hoed, and helped still further to civilize those hard and rocky fields on which other generations had wrought. But this was not the whole of his life. The district school was busy, and winter evenings were long; and seven or eight miles away, at Colchester, Bacon Academy was doing its work, a work which even then it had long been doing, and is active in the same way to this day; and hither the youth could repair for that higher instruction which the district school could not give. Gov. Buckingham was well educated in early life, though he did not, like so many of the youth of his town, "go to college."

At eighteen he taught a winter school in Lyme, his mother's birthplace. Hardly any young man at that age teaches school without receiving, at least for the first winter, as much education as he imparts; and the more thoroughly he works

for others, the greater is the advantage which he reaps for himself. He was wanted for the same school another season, but he thought it better to help his father a little longer, for he was now getting ready to embark upon mercantile life. At twenty he went into a dry-goods store in Norwich as clerk, where he remained two years. At twenty-two he went to New York as clerk in a wholesale store, but soon returned and established himself in Norwich in the dry-goods business for himself. In 1830 he became a carpet-manufacturer, making that style of carpets known as "ingrain." He continued in this business eighteen years. In 1848 he went into the rubber business, and became a leading member of the Hayward Rubber Co., having its workshops at Colchester. This place was sixteen miles from Norwich, where Mr. Buckingham still kept his residence, with no railroad communications whatever. All the raw material had to be carried from Norwich by teams, and the manufactured goods brought back in the same way. But it made Colchester a busy place; for many hands were employed, and the company was exceedingly prosperous. Mr. Buckingham was its treasurer and largely its business manager. From the thriving condition of his affairs in this connection he became a stockholder, and to some extent a manager, in eight or ten different manufacturing companies, so that he now touched the great business world at many points.

Up to this period of his life (about 1850), though he had been an active and somewhat prominent Whig and Republican, he had had little official connection with political life. He had been chosen mayor of Norwich in 1849 for a term of two years, and was again elected for a two years' term in 1856. But about that time the Republicans of Eastern Connecticut began to turn towards him as a candidate for governor. He would probably have been nominated at the convention in 1857 had not a heavy snow-storm prevented many of the delegates from Eastern Connecticut, especially from Windham County, from reaching the place of meeting. This was regarded afterwards as a providential event: for if he had been nominated and chosen in 1857, he would, by party usage, have gone out in 1859, and some other man would have been in

office in 1860, when the war broke out. It is the deep conviction of the people of Connecticut that no other man could in that crisis have done what he did. His previous large connections with business enabled him to command resources in this pressing exigency upon which other men could not have laid hold. He *was* nominated and chosen governor, as before stated, in 1858, and the little Commonwealth did not dare to drop him in 1860, and so he was governor for eight years, and in some of those years was elected by such sweeping majorities as the Republicans of that little State may not soon see again.

We have no wish or purpose to exalt Gov. Buckingham unduly above many other governors in the Northern States. Not a few of them have left noble records, and this is not a place for rude comparisons. Nor can we venture even to enter upon that war record in detail. It is too voluminous. From the first outbreak, when he hurried Gen. Aiken, afterwards his son-in-law, away to Washington, to assure President Lincoln that the troops were coming, through all those gloomy four years, till General Lee's final surrender, he was boundless in his activity. He seemed a man as truly raised up for the exigency as did his great townsman, Gov. Trumbull, in the years of the Revolution. Is there anything weak or superstitious in the thought, that the God who of old prepared Abraham and Moses and David, by a peculiar early experience and discipline, for the great part they were to act in the history of our race, was just as distinctly preparing him in those early years, on the hills of Eastern Connecticut, for the great crisis that came upon this nation in 1860? Was it a mere chance that enveloped his childhood in such an atmosphere of patriotism; that opened his eyes to look upon the monuments of the illustrious dead, and upon the faces of men yet living, who had done so noble a work for their country in her great struggle for liberty? We do not so understand the events of human life. Such men as Abraham Lincoln, John A. Andrew, William A. Buckingham, and others, were chosen, trained, and prepared for that sharp crisis of the Rebellion, as truly as Moses was fitted and appointed to lead the children of Israel out from the house of their bondage.

In the year 1865, when the war closed, Gov. Buckingham, after seven years of service, was re-elected governor for the last time, by such a majority as even he had never received before. It was the crowning testimony of his fellow-citizens to his faithfulness and to the great value of his services. He filled the office for the eighth year; but the war was now over, and he desired to retire. From 1866 to '69 he had a kind of respite from public cares, but in the last-named year he was chosen a member of the Senate of the United States for the full term of six years. We shall not stop to dwell upon the particulars of that senatorial service, but will leave others to tell the story, before we close.

Let us turn back now for a few moments, to view him in his domestic relations, and in the more quiet walks of his large and beneficent life.

Gov. Buckingham was united in marriage, Sept. 27, 1830, to Miss Eliza Ripley, daughter of Major Dwight Ripley, a prominent merchant of Norwich in the early part of the present century. In this happy relation he lived thirty-eight years, his wife dying April 19, 1868, greatly beloved and cherished in the large circle of kindred and friends among whom she had so long lived. They had two children,—a son, William Ripley, who died when two years old, in 1838; and a daughter, Eliza Coit, now the wife of Gen. William A. Aiken, who was an honored Aid of the governor in the years of the war.

In the Broadway Church at Norwich, Deacon Buckingham was even more of a "pillar" than his great ancestor, Thomas Buckingham, had been in the ancient church of Milford. It was largely through his agency that the church was organized. He made public profession of his faith in Christ in 1830, and connected himself with the Second Church in Norwich, of which Rev. Alfred Mitchel was then pastor. He continued in this connection for twelve years, and was most useful and happy in it. Meanwhile Mr. Mitchel had died, and after another brief pastorate, Dr. Alvan Bond, now venerable with age, in 1835 had entered upon his long ministry. The congregation were most cordially united under him, and the affairs of the parish were eminently prosperous. In no divi-

sive spirit, but simply because he thought, for the honor of Christ and His cause, that Norwich ought to have another Congregational church, he made a report to that effect in 1838, which, four years later, resulted in the going forth of a colony to establish what is now known as the Broadway Church and Society. He gave to the new society an organ, and built for it a Mission Chapel, besides all that he had given for the main edifice.

He is said to have been the largest individual donor to the Norwich Free Academy, an institution founded upon a truly catholic basis, and justly the pride of that unique and beautiful little city. His gifts to this institution, built by the subscriptions of many, are said to have amounted to about \$10,000.

For the reorganization and uplifting of the Yale Divinity School, which, after Dr. Taylor's death, fell into some measure of neglect and decay, he made the generous offering of \$25,000. Through this donation, and others which have followed, that institution now occupies a prominent position among our theological schools. As governor of the State of Connecticut, he was a member of the corporation of Yale College, as his ancestor, Rev. Thomas Buckingham, of Saybrook, had been more than a hundred and fifty years before. In 1866, just after he had ceased to be a member, that corporation worthily bestowed upon him the degree of LL. D.

He was a corporate member of the American Board, and officially connected with several of our benevolent societies. As an instance of his faithfulness in all these more quiet walks of usefulness, the following circumstance may be mentioned. At the time of the union of the "American Education Society" and "The Society for the Promotion of Collegiate and Theological Education," which took place in May, 1874, under a new charter from the Legislature of Massachusetts, Gov. Buckingham was elected its president. At the same time he was frankly told that the Society did not wish to impose new burdens upon him, amid his many private and public cares; that it wanted his name for the weight and dignity in it; and that he need not feel constrained to attend the quarterly meetings except at his own convenience. The first

quarterly meeting fell in the July following; and very unexpectedly to the directors, but to their great gratification, their new president was on hand in Boston, at the moment, and presided at the meeting.

These details might be almost indefinitely extended, but we must hasten to a conclusion.

Gov. Buckingham died in his own home at Norwich, on the night of Feb. 4, 1875. He had completed his "threescore years and ten" which the Psalmist so long ago fixed as the "days of our years." Such had been his failing health and strength in the months preceding, that he had not been able to join his associates in the Senate at Washington during that session. But the news of his death was quickly conveyed to them, and all that could be done to the honor of his memory was promptly done. Some great men have died out of the Senate of the United States within the past few years, and fitting tributes have been paid them, but it may be doubted whether any one has drawn more upon the fountains of tenderness than he. In the speeches both in the Senate and the House there is a remarkable absence of what may be called formal and conventional. They are such words as mourners speak when the eye is moist and the heart full. It was Saturday, Feb. 27, when the commemorative service was held in the Senate, and Senator Ferry said:—

"I love to contemplate that portion of his life when, a simple private citizen, he was doing the work which he found to do, without thought of the greater future which awaited him. No opportunity to do good, great or small, escaped him. He taught little children in the Sunday School. As deacon of the church, he was its almoner to the poor, and the distributor of the sacred emblems to the membership of its communion and to the stranger within its gates. He helped to found academies, build up public libraries, provide or feeble churches, promote temperance reform, endow colleges, and to send the light of Christian civilization to the remotest corners of the globe. And all this so quietly, so naturally, as it were, that, proceeding from him, it seemed nothing extraordinary. Moreover, there were ever flowing from him streams of hidden beneficence, gladdening many hearts and drying the tears in many eyes, whose story never will be told till the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed.

"An incident which occurred on the day of his funeral may perhaps fitly close these reminiscences. All the morning, in the home where he

had so long dwelt, his body lay in its still repose, while friends and acquaintances from his own and adjacent communities passed in long procession through the silent room, taking one last look at the face of the departed. It was an impressive scene: great dignitaries were there, cabinet officers, senators, representatives, governors, and judges of the land; young and old, rich and poor, men and women, the wise, the brilliant, and the beautiful. Among them all was observed a humble negro couple advanced in years. With bowed faces they paused at the coffin, gazed upon the calm features with tears streaming down their dusky cheeks, and passed on, bursting into irrepressible sobs as they moved from the apartment. No one knew the story of those tears, but from what I know of the dead I am sure that there was a story in them, and I call to mind the words of Him who said, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'

No one spoke more tenderly on that occasion than Senator Howe, of Wisconsin. These are a few of his moving words:—

"Mr. President, I put on no sable, none of the trappings of woe, to stand by the bier of Buckingham. I recall no single trait in his character, no incident in his career, to bow me with a sense of humiliation. On the contrary, the memory of all the years I knew him fills me with exultation. To be sure, as I look to the chair he occupied, I miss the breathing benediction which always seemed to emanate from it while he sat there. As I look into the saddened faces of the Senate, I see clearly 'he is not here.' But not one angel only, a multitude rather which no man hath numbered, all in shining garments, assure me 'he is risen.'

"And then, sir, I remember with grateful pride that he was an American Senator.

.....

"One incident in his life I will venture to recall, which not inaptly illustrates his enduring excellence. By command of the Senate I was with others assigned but three years ago to aid the deceased on the investigation of alleged abuses in the customs service in New York. It was an irksome task, yet we prosecuted it for weeks. Daily we were splashed with the foul humors engendered in the slandered politics of a great city. Malice unwound a hideous web before us, shot with a thread of fact to a shuttleful of falsehood.

"During the whole trial I did not once hear from him a censorious remark or even a petulant exclamation. It was evident he was human, and that he felt. . . . But the poultice of a night relieved the suffering, and each succeeding day restored him to his work, showing no more trace of scars from the inflictions of the yesterdays than the sun bore which lighted him to his work.

"Mr. President, I have long felt to regret that I never heard Jenny Lind sing, that I never saw Rachel act. They must have been marvellous specimens of art. Gov. Buckingham was a grand piece of nature. I shall

always regret that I could not have known him in domestic life. I am persuaded that was his masterpiece. I never saw him in the presence of a child, but I partly know what he was as a father. Once he spoke to me of a daughter, and no June morning ever suffused the eastern sky with a more genial radiance than that which broke over the face of the father as he told me how good that daughter was."

Senator Pratt, of Indiana, bore this happy testimony to the quality of that public service which Gov. Buckingham had rendered to the country:—

"He was a statesman in the best sense of that term. What makes a statesman? Not knowledge alone, however wide, deep, varied, and all-comprehensive; not mere quickness of apprehension to detect the latent fallacy in argument or proposition; not large experience with men and subjects in the legislative forum, nor familiarity with parliamentary rules; it does not consist alone in great powers of debate. All these may coexist and yet something be wanting to complete our *beau ideal* of the statesman. What is the lack? What is still wanting? I reply, Perfect integrity, broad philanthropy, and an ardent patriotism, which, discarding selfish aims and local benefits, seeks to elevate the whole people; to make them wiser and better, and to promote their material welfare.

"To this highest type of statesmanship he belonged whose memory we honor to-day. He was not a great orator, upon whose utterances men hung with bated breath; he did not mingle frequently in debate; he did not aspire to the honor of leadership, nor was his education as comprehensive as that of many,—he made no pretence to superior mental culture. But he possessed that practical knowledge of the affairs of the country; its varied industries and wants; its internal and foreign commerce; its growing manufactures; its vast agricultural and mineral resources, and especially that knowledge of our relations with the various Indian tribes, to which subject he gave so much of his attention as the chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, as to eminently qualify him to be a judicious adviser in this body, and to frame appropriate laws upon these subjects."

The following touching incident came out in the speech of the veteran Gov. Morton, also Senator from Indiana:—

"Just before the close of the last session, and before his departure, he came across to my seat where I am now sitting, and said, 'Well, we are about to separate. I hope we will meet next winter in better health.' He said, 'I am an old man, and feel that my race is nearly run.' He said, 'There are only three of us left who served as governors of our respective States throughout the entire war,' referring to himself, to Gov. Curtin of Pennsylvania, and to myself. He said that Yates and Andrew were

gone, and that we, notwithstanding our utmost hopes, must soon follow ; and taking me by the hand expressed the hope that we should meet the coming winter in better health. We parted to meet no more."

The commemoration service in the House took place the same day, Feb. 27, and while we would like to quote from the speeches of Mr. Starkweather¹ and Mr. Kellogg of Connecticut, as also from that of Mr. Wilson of Iowa, we have space only for the following passage from Gov. Hawley of Connecticut. He said :—

"I do not know that men would call Gov. Buckingham a great man, but he is like many others who are revered in history. Sometimes men sit down and dissect the character of George Washington, and tell us he was not great ; but the world persists in remembering him, walking about his character, pointing out all its virtues, and admiring its symmetry and power. So of our lamented friend : I do not know as we can call him a great orator, or a great writer, or great in anything especially ; but you can look at no element of his heart or head in which he does not appear excellent. As a son, as a husband, as a father, as a brother and friend, all who knew him speak of him in terms of the most devoted affection and respect. They say there was none like the old governor in all these things, and as he moved among his fellow-citizens his appearance commanded their respect. Strong in his affections, kindly and courteous in his manner, he attracted the love of all about him. . . .

"Our troops always went out so well equipped that on reaching the field they were immediately stripped of some of their surplus. Interested in the widows and orphan children of the dead soldiers, and urging upon the Legislature the care of them, sending his agents continually to inspect the condition of our troops, and communicating with them constantly by messengers and telegrams, from the beginning to the end, I do not know what more our Commonwealth would have asked of William A. Buckingham."

When the great leaders of the race
Come forth upon the earth,
Not from the loins of haughty kings
Do they derive their birth ;

¹ There is a singular and sad story connected with Mr. Starkweather. Mr. Ferry and Mr. Starkweather—the former in the Senate and the latter in the House at Washington—both made fitting and beautiful addresses commemorative of Gov. Buckingham. A few months later, as already noticed, Senator Ferry died. When the service of commemoration for him came, Mr. Starkweather was to have been one of the speakers, and he had committed to paper the remarks which he intended to make. But before the day came, Mr. Starkweather too was numbered with the dead. His address was read in the Senate Chamber amid the solemn stillness of the assembly.



They are not nursed in princely halls,
And with choice dainties fed ;
They do not wear the robes of state,
Or sleep on downy bed.

Out in the open world of God,
Where Nature's pulse beats strong,
They hear the wingèd tribes of air
Pour forth their morning song ;
They feel the glory of the hills,
The glory of the sky,
And watch the nightly pomp of stars
In splendor marching by.

They know the great, rude heart of man,
With all its homely cares,
They know the sorrows and the joys
The toiling peasant shares ;
The wants, the passions, the desires,
The hatred and the strife, —
They learn this lesson, broad and deep,
Taught by our common life.

So God makes kings in quietness,
Unconscious of their might,
Until the fulness of the time
Unfolds them to the light.