

## FRANKLIN PIERCE.

LIKE many eminent men in the United States, Franklin Pierce is the son of one of the old heroes of the revolutionary war. His father was a certain Benjamin Pierce, of Hillsborough County, New Hampshire, a New England yeoman, who, when eighteen years of age, was ploughing one day when the news arrived that blood had been spilled by the British, at Lexington. He instantly unyoked his team, went home, and took down his rifle from over the fireplace without saying one word, and marched off to the scene of action.

him one daughter. In 1789, he married a second, who bore him eight children, of whom Franklin was the sixth. The latter was born on the 23rd of November, 1804, and is now, consequently, in his forty-ninth year. His father had felt throughout his life the want of a regular education, and determined his son should not labour under the same disadvantage. Franklin was therefore sent at an early age to an academy at Hancock, and afterwards to another at Francestown. He was distinguished in these places by his diligent application to his



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From that day until the war was over, a period of seven years, he never returned to his native place. He enlisted as a private soldier, fought at Bunker's Hill, and rose by successive grades to the command of a company. Two years after the close of the contest, he was appointed brigade-major of the militia of Hillsborough County, which office he retained till his death, at which period he was a general, and a member of the Council of the State. He was a brave, stern, inflexible old man, a thorough democrat, and a good soldier. He was married twice—his first wife dying a year after their marriage, leaving

lessons and the uniform kindness of his disposition; and the women of the neighbourhood still conjure up reminiscences of his blue eyes, curling hair, and the sweet expression of his face.

In 1820, at the age of sixteen, he entered Bowdoin college, at Brunswick, Maine. Here he endeared himself to his fellow-students by his cheerfulness, vivacity, and unfailing good temper. Amongst his most intimate friends and companions was Nathaniel Hawthorne, who, during the thirty years that have elapsed since then, has led a life as remarkable for its

unobtrusiveness and retirement as Pierce's has been for its stormy vicissitudes. Singularly enough, the quiet scholar has crowned himself with laurels, which promise to bloom for many a year after the more ambitious labours of the lawyer and soldier have been forgotten. Professor Stowe was also one of his class-mates.

During the first year of his course Fierce was not by any means remarkable for his scholarship, but towards the close he became more diligent, and obtained a very high degree. During his collegiate career, the first spark of the military ardour displayed itself, which in a few years after induced him to abandon a lucrative profession, in which he held a high position, for the toils and dangers of active service in the army. He was an officer in a student's corps, of which Hawthorne was private. Here he was as distinguished for the proudness of his port and his attention to points of discipline, as for his manly and yet gentle demeanour. During one of his winter vacations he taught a country school. So did Webster, and so did many other New England statesmen. It seems as if in America some practice in wielding the birch was necessary for the skilful handling of the wand of office.

In 1826 Franklin returned to his father's house at Hillsborough, and was present at an entertainment given by the aged veteran to eighteen of his old companions in arms who had survived the seven years' war. He chose the law as his profession, and entered the office of Judge Woodbury as a student. He afterwards studied for two years in the law school of Northampton. In 1827 he was called to the bar, and commenced his legal career by making a miserable failure in the first case in which he was engaged. This was by many of his friends regarded as a damning misfortune, but it seems to have had the good effect of revealing to Pierce for the first time the full extent of his own resources. "I will try nine hundred and ninety-nine cases," said he, "if clients continue to trust me, and if I fail, just as I have to-day, I will try the thousandth."

He did not, however, at this time persevere in the pursuit of legal distinction. His father was so largely mixed up in the politics of the state, that his attention naturally enough began to be turned to them too. He came out as a thorough-going democrat, and was elected a member of the legislature by the town of New Hampshire, in 1829. He sat for four years in this body, in the two latter of which he held the office of speaker, to which he had been elected by a majority of 155 over 58. Though he displayed some diffidence at first, he proved himself in the sequel to be admirably adapted for its duties. He was firm and yet courteous, and his great clearness of intellect enabled him to seize the point of a question at a glance.

In 1833 he was elected a member of Congress. Here his conduct bears a striking analogy to what we are told of Sir Robert Peel, in the first year of his parliamentary life. Few men said less, and few men did more. He was a diligent attendant upon the committees, and went through all the drudgery attendant upon them with sedulous industry. He thus had a far greater share in transacting the real business of the country than many men who occupied a much larger space in the public eye. He seldom spoke, and then shortly and to the purpose; always rising in answer to an unmistakeable call of circumstances, and, what was more remarkable, always stopping when he had delivered his opinion.

He continued in the House of Representatives four years. In 1837, when he had barely reached the legal age, he was elected to the Senate of the United States. He found himself the junior member of that august body; and such men as Calhoun, Webster, and Henry Clay, occupying the foremost places, and fighting out the battles of party, with the eyes of the nation fixed upon them. He saw it would not be becoming for him to intrude himself too prominently amidst such combatants in such an arena. He, therefore, devoted himself, as before, to the thorough mastery of great public questions of financial and other importance, and with such diligence that he soon became an authority upon all matters requiring great research. Whenever he spoke, he proved himself a

powerful debater, and soon found himself ranged amongst the great guns of the democratic party.

In 1840 Mr. Van Buren was defeated, and the whig party after a severe struggle came into power for the first time in twelve years. Consternation spread through the ranks of the democrats, and they set every engine to work to win back the power of which they had been despoiled. But in all their plans and consultations Pierce took a leading part. He distinguished himself in particular in a debate upon a motion made by Mr. Buchanan for a return of all the persons whom the whigs had dismissed from their employment upon their accession to office. It appears they had loudly denounced the practice of changing the subordinates in the government offices upon each change of the administration. When they got the reins of power in their hands they changed their tune, and made a regular clearance of all the old democratic employés, and justified their conduct by the plea of "state necessity." Pierce's denunciation of necessity as an excuse for anything in itself wrong, was a fine piece of oratory.

In 1834 Pierce married Jane Mears, daughter of the Rev. Dr. Appleton, formerly a president of Bowdoin College. Three sons, the first of whom died in infancy, were the offspring of this marriage. Finding a young family growing up about him, he perceived the necessity of making provision for them. In this country, however, politics are not found to "pay," and after his years of state service Pierce still found himself poor. He was obliged to return to his first love, the bar, and in 1842 he bid an affectionate farewell to his colleagues, and returned to Concord, the capital of his native state. Though he had achieved no great legal reputation before his departure for Congress, so great had his political reputation now become, that he rose into practice immediately. His habits of patient investigation immediately came into play. He never undertook a case without giving the whole energies of his mind to the task of understanding it, and having once grasped it in all its details, he thoroughly identified himself with his client's cause, and left no stone unturned to achieve a victory. His speeches were always distinguished for their clearness, and the close rivetting of every chain of his argument. His gentle earnestness always produced a powerful effect upon the jury. In the cross-examination of witnesses, that part of his duty in which so much of an American or English advocate's skill is shown, he displayed consummate tact and great knowledge of human nature. Without bullying, with an air of great confidence and calmness, with unwearying courtesy, sharply on the watch for the ridiculous, he invariably managed to ferret out the truth, no matter how surly, or cunning, or interested the witness might be. He was a great master of pathos, so powerful in its influence upon the crowd, and in his addresses to juries he used it with striking effect. This, combined with his ready generosity in undertaking the causes of the poor and oppressed, rendered him one of the most popular advocates in the state.

In 1846 President Polk wrote to him offering him the Attorney-Generalship of the United States, couching his proposal in terms in the highest degree complimentary. Pierce declined it, partly on account of his wife's health which forbade her return to Washington, and partly because of his own wish to spend the remainder of his life in a private station. He stated that when he returned from Congress he had formed the resolution not to again allow himself to be separated from his family unless it were at the call of his country in time of war. Previous to this he had refused to be nominated a candidate for the governorship of New Hampshire by a democratic convention. In 1844 one of his two children had died at the age of four years, thus centering all his hopes in the remaining boy.

The Mexican war broke out in 1847, and Pierce enlisted as a private soldier in a volunteer company raised in Concord. When a bill was passed for the increase of the army, he received the appointment of colonel of the ninth regiment. In March of the same year he received his commission as brigadier-general in the army and prepared to set out for Mexico. The call had come; and the studious lawyer abandoned his briefs and

fees, quiddets, quibbles, and quirks, for the sterner "arbitrement of bloody strokes and mortal staring war."

He sailed from Newport on the 27th of May, 1847, with three companies of the ninth regiment of infantry, and landed at Vera Cruz, after a tedious voyage of a month's duration. After a long and dangerous march through the enemy's country, daily exposed to the attacks and ambuscades of the Mexican guerillas, he joined the main body of the army under the command of General Scott, at Puebla, on the 7th of August; and on the following day they commenced the advance upon the city of Mexico. On the 19th of August, the Mexican army was found drawn up in a strongly-intrenched camp at Contreras, and numbering 7,000 strong. Two divisions of the American army were sent against the enemy's flanks; the third, among which was General Pierce's brigade, was directed to make an onslaught in front. The ground across which they had to pass was bristling with sharp rocks, being the crater of an extinct volcano.

The troops had to move slowly onward, exposed to an incessant shower of shot and shell. Pierce leaped his horse upon a slight eminence, and addressed a few stirring words of exhortation to the officers of each regiment as they defiled past, but when riding on to the head of the column, the animal thrust his foot into a crevice, broke his own leg, and fell heavily, crushing his rider beneath him. When raised, the general was insensible, but it was found he had sustained no serious injury beyond a sprain of the knee, and some severe bruises. His orderly placed him under the shelter of a projecting rock, and the regimental doctor having afforded him what assistance was in his power, he insisted on being again placed on horseback, and going into action. The assault

failed, and Pierce, having remained in the saddle till eleven o'clock that night, passed the time till morning lying on the ground, without any protection from the torrent of rain that was falling, and suffering great agony from his knee. At daylight the attack was renewed, and was this time successful, the Americans storming the entrenchments with great slaughter.

In the battle of Churubusco, and the bloodier one of Molino del Rey, Pierce gave equal, if not higher proofs of his courage and fortitude, at one time lying on the field under the enemy's fire, when unable to stand, that he might encourage his troops by his presence. His energy and activity contributed in a considerable degree to the success of the American arms.

In the month of December the war was over, and he returned to the United States. New Hampshire received him with open arms, and presented him with a splendid sword.

He now resumed the practice of the law, and began to take a part in politics, as before. In 1850 he gave his strenuous support to the series of measures known as the "Compromise," amongst others, the Fugitive Slave Law.

He was nominated as a candidate for the presidency by the Democratic Convention assembled at Baltimore in June, 1852, and in last November he was elected by a majority of 215,000 over the whig candidate, General Scott. The joy attendant on his success was marred by a domestic calamity. In travelling on the railroad with Mrs. Pierce in the month of January, the car went off the rails, and was precipitated down a steep embankment. The general and his wife escaped unhurt, but his only remaining son, a fine boy of eleven years of age, was killed on the spot. He is thus left childless.

### THE SHRINE OF PRINCE ARTHUR, IN WORCESTER CATHEDRAL, ENGLAND.

WHEN the cold, crafty, and avaricious Henry the Seventh wished to carry out any scheme of his crooked policy, no consideration was allowed to stand in his way. His love of money and power overbore all other considerations, and sunk all natural feelings. To these projects he sacrificed the happiness of his children. His eldest daughter, Margaret, when little more than thirteen years of age, was married to the King of Scotland; and his eldest son, Arthur, in consideration of a jointure of 200,000 crowns, though scarcely fifteen years of age, was married to the Princess Catherine, the fourth daughter of the King of Spain. This marriage, which took place at St. Paul's Cathedral, London, on the 6th of November, 1501, was celebrated with the greatest pomp. The king, on this occasion, seeming to have forgotten his wonted parsimony, spent large sums in feasts, masquerades, pageants, and tournaments, the nobility vieing with each other in splendour and magnificence. Heraldic devices, as tending to strengthen the claims of Henry to the crown, were used in abundance; and as the king claimed, through Owen Tudor, descent from the famous King Arthur, and had named his son after him, this formed the chief ground-work of the allegorical masques which, according to the usage of the time, were performed at the marriage. His descent from so high a source was minutely traced, and predictions made of the long line of descendants which was to spring from this union. No prophecy, however, could more signally have failed; for this boy, on whom, from his amiable disposition and personal beauty, the hopes and affections of the nation had been fixed, died before he had been married five months.

Immediately after all this pageantry was over, the young prince, with his bride, was sent to keep his court as Prince of Wales at the magnificent castle of Ludlow; and by undertaking duties far beyond his years he, no doubt, shortened his life, for he died here on the 2nd of April, 1502. The transition from one pageant to another was sudden, the marriage-feast being scarcely ended before the funeral rites began.

His remains were removed to the cathedral of Worcester, where his obsequies were celebrated with as great pomp as his marriage had been a few months before. Bishops and abbots, priors, priests, and choristers, with torches innumerable, received the corpse, and the crowd of nobles and clergy rendered the ceremonial as solemn and imposing as had been that of his nuptials.

Immediately after the death of Prince Arthur, the King of Spain proposed that the young widow, his daughter, should be affianced to her brother-in-law, afterwards Henry VIII. This union, therefore, in the sequel, led to consequences of the utmost importance, not to the English kingdom alone, but to the world at large.

The gorgeous Chantry Chapel was erected in 1504, and a chantry founded for the performance of masses for the repose of the prince's soul. It is similar in its general design to that of William of Wykeham, in Winchester and other cathedrals, but its architecture, though of the style denominated the *Percipitular*, is of the latest period, and is usually known as the *Tudor* style.

It is situated on the south side of the choir, filling up the space of the last arch next the altar. The engraving will explain the details better than a description. The chapel consists of a small room, the entrance to which is by a door from the choir. It is divided into compartments by rich buttresses, covered with richly canopied niches containing figures. The spaces between the buttresses are filled with panelling, which at the ends is solid, but in the other parts pierced into windows. The whole is surmounted by a rich pierced parapet and pinnacles.

The interior is richly panelled, and the roof groined. The east end, where the altar formerly stood, is a mass of elaborate tabernacle work, containing figures of saints in niches, and divided into four compartments by buttresses similar to those on the exterior, but the figures are much mutilated.