

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

OF

HON. JOHN C. BRECKINRIDGE,

Democratic Nominee for President,

AND

GENERAL JOSEPH LANE,

Democratic Nominee for Vice President.

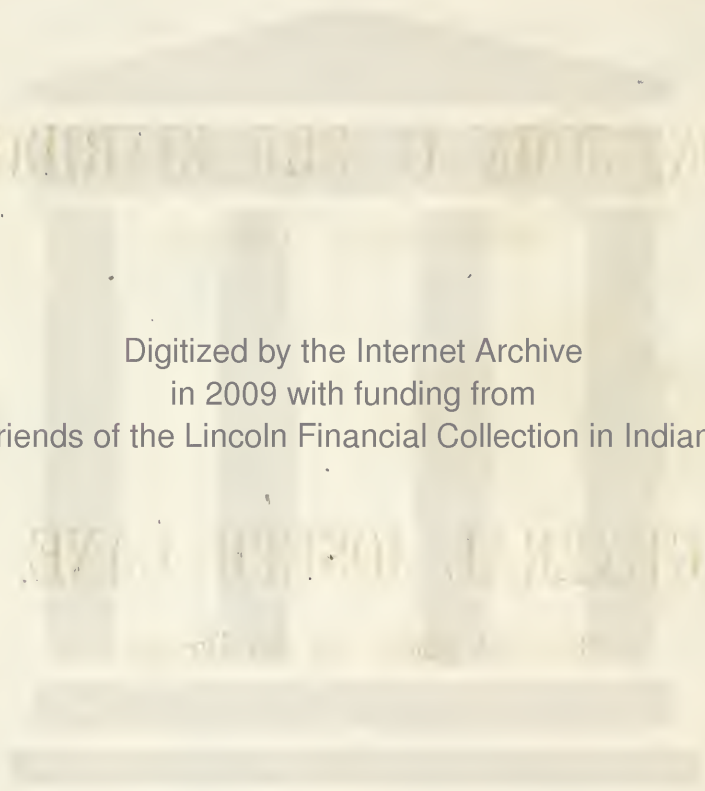
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WASHINGTON:

ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

1860.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
OF  
HON. JOHN C. BRECKINRIDGE,  
OF KENTUCKY.

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The history of John C. Breckinridge, the nominee of the National Democracy, for the highest office within the gift of the American people, is one of the most brilliant and successful in the annals of the distinguished men of our country. He was descended from an ancestry, both on his paternal and maternal side, who were distinguished in the wars of the Revolution; in the subsequent political conflicts and history of the country, and especially distinguished for their great services in the advancement of religion, learning, and good morals. In Kentucky the name of Breckinridge is held in special veneration; for it is connected

with the authorship of the first regular constitution of Kentucky and the celebrated State-rights resolutions of 1798, and is also connected with the first efforts made in Kentucky to open the navigation of the Mississippi to the great West. Of his ancestors on the maternal side are Witherspoon and Smith, the former a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and both presidents of Princeton College. The connection is an extremely large one, and has been characterized by patriotic and useful services through several generations. He was born near Lexington, Kentucky, on the 16th of January, 1821, and, although not forty years of age, is the second officer of the Government—a position, it is universally conceded, he fills with great ability, dignity, and impartiality; and now, by the unanimous voice of his party, he is presented for the first office—selected to bear their standard in the approaching Presidential contest, to contend for those great constitutional principles of justice, right, and equality for which his fathers struggled during the stormy days of the Revolution, and who dedicated the energies of their gifted minds in establishing and defining the true principles of our glorious Constitution, under which we have grown from a few feeble and sparsely-peopled colonies to be a great confederacy of thirty-three sovereign States, teeming with a population of more than thirty millions of free, prosperous, and happy people.

Mr. Breckinridge lost his father at an early age, and with his mother and her four other children, was left almost entirely dependent. With,

however, the generous aid of relatives and his own constant exertions, he was enabled to pass through the necessary course of studies required to enter upon the professional career he had marked out for himself. He graduated at Centre College, Kentucky, in 1838, passed six months as resident graduate in Princeton, pursued his law studies under the instruction of Judge (afterwards Governor) Owsley, and completed them at the Transylvania Law School.

Admitted to the bar in 1841, he determined to try his fortune in a new land. Accordingly, with no heritage but his talents and fair name, he set out in the fall of that year with a friend, and, leisurely pursuing his way to observe the country, he settled in Burlington, Iowa. It was, indeed, the then far-distant West; for Mr. Breckinridge, during his two years' residence in Iowa, hunted the elk and buffalo on the site of its present capital. Thus, in the earliest period of his manhood, was Mr. Breckinridge thrown upon the remote frontier; and he knows, from the warm and heartfelt associations of those days, the patriotic, noble, and self-sacrificing character of the American pioneer.

In 1843, on a visit to Kentucky, he addressed and married Miss Mary C. Burch, of Scott county, his present wife, a lady endeared to all by her domestic virtues and her accomplished manners. She was largely connected with the influential families of Kentucky, aided by whose influence the friends of Mr. Breckinridge induced him to abandon the idea of returning to Iowa. He settled in Georgetown, Kentucky, and rose rapidly to distinction in his profession. But he early took part in the political contests of his State in 1844, canvassed it for Mr. Polk, and from that period has borne a prominent share in every political conflict.

The Mexican war broke out, and the gallant sons of Kentucky were to be found in the front rank of the armies of the Republic. The glorious yet mournful history of Buena Vista especially rejoiced and saddened the heart of Kentucky. There many of her bravest sons, her Clays, her McKees, her Hardins, slept their last sleep. It was resolved that their remains should be gathered up, taken to the capital, and there consigned to the tomb amidst the tears of the people, and with all the solemnities which reverence and love could dictate. Mr. Breckinridge was the orator of the occasion, and pronounced a most admirable and affecting eulogy. A call was soon made upon Kentucky for additional troops. It was deemed a critical and turning point of the war. General Scott had advanced upon the city of Mexico. His rear was in possession of the enemy. His troops had been greatly reduced in battle and by disease. Larger and more perilous movements were in contemplation. Under these circumstances Mr. Breckinridge volunteered, and received from his old preceptor, Gov. Owsley, the only commission of field officer conferred by him upon a Democrat, viz: that of major. On reaching the city of Mexico, in December, he found the war virtually at an end, and the regiment to which he belonged was employed in garrison duty to hold the city of Mexico, and to protect its inhabitants from pillage and disorders. During his stay in the city of Mexico, Major General Pillow was tried by a court of inquiry. Major Breckinridge's fine legal talents were required on that occasion, when he distinguished himself by his able and successful defence of General Pillow.



At the close of the war he rejoined his family and resumed his profession. Frank, manly, generous, and just, with a heart that never throbbed with one pulsation, save for the honor and welfare of his country, he soon became a great favorite with the people, who, fully appreciating his commanding talents and noble qualities, called him from retirement to represent them in the legislature of the State. Although the county was opposed to him in politics, being Whig by a large majority, yet such was the admiration of the people for the sterling qualities of his heart, and the brilliant character of his mind, that he was elected in the year 1849, by a decisive majority over his Whig competitor. Among the foremost in support of Mr. Breckinridge was that unrivalled orator, Henry Clay, who abjured his politics to pay a just tribute to the worth and ability of the gallant young Kentuckian.

Upon the meeting of the legislature, he was honored with the Democratic nomination for Speaker, and received the unanimous vote of his party. His term of service was brief, but he left upon the legislature the impress of his eloquence and talents, by his able advocacy of the cause of education, internal improvements, and every other measure which tended to promote the cause of moral and material progress. During this session, he introduced a series of resolutions affirming many of the principles subsequently enacted into the compromise legislation of 1850, and they received the support of the entire Democratic party in the legislature.

Duty to his young and growing family required that he should return to his profession, when he declined a re-election; but the people, quick to discern and prompt to reward true worth and true greatness, would not permit him to pursue that course which the dictates of his sound judgment and affectionate heart had marked out for himself. In January, 1841, the Hon. L. W. Powell was nominated as the Democratic candidate for Governor. Yielding to the urgent solicitations of his personal friends, and the pressing demands of one of the most enlightened constituencies in the world, who assured him that his candidacy would materially aid Mr. Powell's election, he reluctantly consented to become a candidate for Congress in the Ashland District. It was a serious proposition. A young man with a family depending upon him for support, was called on to lead a forlorn hope, when defeat seemed inevitable. The name and home of Clay, hallowed the ground of contest in the hearts of his devoted followers. They were loyal in their attachments and confident in their strength; they had wealth, influence, numbers, and they would sacrifice all before the spot of their idolatry should be profaned by the triumphant march of those they deemed infidel to their principles. To defend their citadel, to represent their sentiments, the Whigs selected their most gallant champion, General Leslie Coombs, whose fame is as extended as the Republic. He had been a soldier with Harrison and Croghan; had shed his blood to rescue the women of Kentucky from the savage and brutal foe, and to avenge her men betrayed and murdered at the River Raisin. He had given a gallant son and a fortune to the cause of struggling

Texas. He was identified with the fortunes of the great chief he had served so faithfully and loved so well. He was an eloquent and experienced speaker, a politician perfectly familiar with the questions past and pending. He was an able, manly, and generous foe, and therefore the more formidable before a Kentucky constituency. With a full foreknowledge of the inequalities of the contest, Mr. Breckinridge, obedient as he has ever been to the call of duty, at great personal sacrifice, entered the contest, and, to the consternation of his opponents, and to the surprise and delight of the Democracy throughout the Union, after a most protracted struggle of seven months, was elected by 530 majority, a change of more than two thousand votes.

When it was subsequently insinuated in Congress that he owed his election to foreign aid, "No, sir," said Mr. Breckinridge; "I came not here by the aid of money, but in spite of it. I have to say that I represent a district in which the money power of the Commonwealth is concentrated, and that money power is in the hands of my opponents. It was loudly proclaimed in the streets of the city where I live that I should be defeated if it cost \$50,000 to do it; and I can tell the member from New York that at least \$30,000 were spent for that purpose, and, as the result shows, in vain."

The opposition were defeated, but not conquered; they determined to make another desperate struggle to rescue the district from the grasp of the Democracy. They cast carefully about for the strongest of their champions, and decided in convention to call Governor Letcher to the conflict of 1853. He was a *strong man*; he had reached the highest honors his State could confer on him; in his hands the Whig banner had never lost a victory or suffered a defeat, and his friends deemed him invincible. The nomination of this gentleman was announced with shouts which reached the ears of his youthful competitor, as he lay stretched upon a bed of sickness; his courteous competitor called to tender him a short respite from the toils of the canvass, but the shouts of his opponents had aroused the indomitable spirit of the gallant invalid, when, after returning his thanks to Gov. Letcher for his courtesy, he replied: "No, sir, do not delay your canvass on my account; take the stump, and I will meet you as soon as my strength will allow." He did so; the contest was long, fierce, and bitter; again was the invincible Breckinridge triumphantly re-elected by a majority as decisive as that over his first competitor—his invincibility proved, the prestige of success stamped upon his brow, and his district, which for the first time was rescued by him from the Whigs, now lost to the opposition, in all probability, for ever.

His brilliant career in Congress for four years is fresh in the recollection of all. While he was the faithful and efficient representative of all the interests of his immediate constituents, he was the bold, manly, and fearless advocate of Democratic principles and measures, and was universally acknowledged as the leader of his party by his friends and foes.

Indeed, his power to combine a proper attention to the minutest wants of his constituents and to the details of the public business, with a steady and powerful grasp of the great political and public questions of the day,



evince a breadth of capacity and systematic habits of business which fit him for the first place in the Republic. Thus an indemnity for the widow and orphans of the gallant McKee, relief for certain constituents who had made expenditures by order and on account of the government, reimbursement of losses to a contractor for the discontinuance of a mail service of great importance to Kentucky, the removal of restrictions upon the location of military land warrants, the getting an appropriation for the purchase of an American cemetery near the city of Mexico, where the remains of our gallant soldiers were gathered under the protection of their country's flag, were, among others, objects to which he gave his exertions, and in all of which he was successful, except in the case of removing restrictions upon the location of military land warrants.

As an evidence of his great judgment and capacity in conducting measures through the House, we will refer to the deficiency bill of 1853. It had been rejected by the House, and recommitted to the Ways and Means. The committee reported back the same bill, and entrusted Mr. Breckinridge with its management in the House. It was vigorously resisted. The discussion lasted several weeks. Mr. Breckinridge was always at his post, answering objections, explaining doubtful points, interposing to cut off indiscreet speeches from friends, turning of the hostility of opponents by a kindly word, and finally, with scarcely the loss of a single item, carried the bill through by a vote of 138 to 111. In the course of the debate, Mr. Breckinridge said: "I am perfectly aware, Mr. Chairman, of the responsibility which I have personally incurred in attempting to conduct this bill through the committee, [of the Whole,] and that it would be impossible, having the bill in charge, to engage in irrelevant and heated discussions."

Upon the advent of the Know-Nothing party Mr. Breckinridge was the first to take the stump in Kentucky to attack it. There he laid down the broad proposition that all men, citizens by our laws, were equal, and that any distinction made on account of birth or creed was at war with the principles of our government, and tended to overthrow the liberties of our country; and in Congress he made the first speech upon the subject, in which, standing upon this proposition, he exposed in a most masterly manner the fallacy and destructive tendencies of its creed, as at war with the social relations of life, and a fatal blow aimed at civil and religious liberty.

In a debate on a bill reported by Mr. Wentworth, of Massachusetts, on the 3d March, 1855, to prevent the importation of certain classes of foreigners to this country, after an able exposition of its absurdity and injustice, Mr. Breckinridge said:

"I do not propose to enlarge on this subject. I regard this bill as one of the fruits of the proscriptive feeling which is just now pervading this country. I know it is popular, and I know it is sweeping like a hurricane from one end of the country to the other; but it is in conflict with the fundamental principles of our system of Government, and I am willing to oppose my hand to it, and await the time when there shall be a reaction in the public sentiment, as I know there will be. I want the gentlemen of this House to know that, if they vote for this bill, they draw a distinction between the poor and the rich, and allow only the latter class to come, nor can they come except with a pass in their hands, like a negro going from one plantation to another."

The reaction in public sentiment, which Mr. Breckinridge's sagacity

foresaw, quickly came, when Know Nothingism vanished before the light of investigation like the mists of the morning before the rising sun.

In general debate Mr. Breckinridge discussed, in a philosophical and elaborate manner, some of the greatest questions of the day, and distinguished himself by his hand-to-hand encounters with the most experienced gladiators of the House. Thus, in the discussion between him and Mr. H. Marshall, the real issue was so directly and vigorously thrust back by the former, that, notwithstanding Mr. Marshall's great logical acumen and fertility of resource, the equilibrium of the contest was fully restored. Mr. Breckinridge, in an encounter with Mr. Giddings, so pressed him that the latter fiercely denied the power of the federal government to enact a fugitive slave law, or to employ the force of the country to enforce it. But he particularly signalized his fidelity to his friends and principles by his defence of the gallant soldier of Kentucky, General William O. Butler, and of a long array of able and experienced statesmen, attacked in the January and February numbers of the Democratic Review, 1852. The name of General Butler had been presented to the Democracy of Kentucky as a nominee for the Presidency. Francis P. Blair having in this event signified his intention to vote for him, General Butler was falsely charged with being infected with free-soil sentiments, and indeed with having formed a coalition with the Free-Soilers. These charges were repeated and grossly exaggerated in the February number of the Democratic Review. An incidental allusion having been made on the floor of the House to the slander against General Butler, Mr. Breckinridge, on the 3d March, 1852, rose in his vindication, and that of the other statesmen villified and slandered in the Democratic Review. The letter of General Butler on the subject, which was endorsed by Mr. Breckinridge, and which the latter read to the House, was so sound and national in its enunciation of constitutional rights and principles as to forever put to rest the infamous slander uttered against him. Taking the sentiments of this letter in regard to the Territorial question, which were endorsed and defended by Mr. Breckinridge, in connection with the several speeches of the latter, and especially his speech in the House of Representatives on the 23d of March, 1854, on the Kansas Nebraska Bill, it will be found that the question of the equal right of the several States to participate in the enjoyment of the Territories is placed on the precise grounds of the platform adopted in June last by the National Democratic party which put Mr. Breckinridge in nomination.

At the risk of subjecting ourselves to the imputation of presenting this question out of its regular order, we will now consider Mr. Breckinridge's views in regard to the slavery question.

General Butler, in his letter to Mr. Breckinridge, said :

"In a few years more our wild Territories will become prosperous States, and each State will settle within its own borders the question of slavery by constitutional enactments. That none can question. In the meantime the right of the contending parties, whether real or imaginary, will remain unimpaired."

Thus, at that early day, the veteran hero and statesman of Kentucky and his champion on the floor of the House, clearly enunciated the great principle held this day by the National Democracy—that the question of



slavery in the Territories was to be settled by constitutional enactments on their admission as States into the Federal Union. In the speech of Mr. Breckinridge, on the Kansas and Nebraska bill, delivered in the House of Representatives, on the 23d of March, 1854, the soundest and most enlarged views are given upon the subject of territorial power. Not a sentence is to be found in this speech in conflict with the platform of the National Democracy in June, 1860, or with the speech of Mr. Breckinridge at Frankfort, accepting the office of Senator in Congress, to which he had just been elected by the Legislature of Kentucky.

This speech is remarkable for its clear statement of the legislation of Congress at critical periods of our history, and its powerful analysis of the motives and movements of parties. The compromise of 1820 was simply a plan of adjustment to ward off threatened peril to our country. It abridged southern rights. It gave to the North undue influence and ascendancy. Yet Mr. Breckinridge showed that it was repeatedly violated by the parties under free-soil and abolition influences, and that in repeated epochs of our history—the admission of Missouri—the annexation of Texas—there had been exhibited on the part of the great Democratic party of our country a fixed determination to abide by it. The great struggle came in 1850, when that compromise was trampled under foot by the refusal to extend the line of 36° 30' to the Pacific, and the issue was joined between those who insisted upon Congress prohibiting slavery in the Territories, and those who demanded that the question of slavery in the Territories should be left to the people who inhabit them, subject only to the Federal Constitution. This latter principle prevailed. It was determined that all parties should abide by the decisions of the courts in the matter of the title of a master to his slaves in the Territories. Thus these compromise measures of 1850 practically repealed the Missouri compromise line, and established the principles of the Kansas-Nebraska act, and of the platform of the National Democracy of 1860.

Referring to the compromise of 1850, Mr. Breckinridge, in the speech alluded to, said :

“But by the other construction [that it was a permanent policy] it was indeed a final settlement, a settlement which removes from the federal theatre the only question that can disturb our domestic tranquillity, and leaves Congress in the future nothing to do in connection with it, except to apply the established principles as the occasions arise. No, sir; whatever some gentlemen may say now, the people were not guilty of the folly imputed to them by the opponents of this bill. Their patriotic acclamations went up to Heaven over an act of healing statesmanship, not over a political job. They accepted those measures, not as a truce to faction, but as a bond of lasting concord.”

Again, speaking of the compromises of 1820 and 1850:

“They [the abolitionists] opposed both these settlements. They will adhere to neither in good faith, but will appeal to them or reject them as may best promote their incendiary purposes” \* \* \* “These are the questions to be decided in good faith by those who recognize compromises as something more important and durable than ordinary acts of legislation. While for those who opposed them both, and who spurn all settlements touching slavery, the less that is said either of compromise or of plighted faith the better.” \* \* \* “Such was not the sense in which that *great compromise* [of 1850] was accepted by the American people” \* \* \* “Who, then, are the agitators? Who are faithful to the compromise of 1850?”

In discussing the principles of the Kansas and Nebraska bill, Mr. Breckinridge used the following expressions :

“The effect of the repeal, [Missouri compromise line,] therefore, is neither to establish nor to exclude, [slavery,] but to leave the future condition of the Territories dependent

wholly on the action of the inhabitants, subject only to such limitations as the federal Constitution may impose." \* \* \* "It will be observed that the right of the people to regulate in their own way all their domestic institutions is left wholly untouched, except that whatever is done must be in accordance with the Constitution—the supreme law for us all. And the rights of property under the Constitution, as well as legislative action, is properly left to the decision of the federal judiciary.

"Then, sir, neither the purpose nor effect of the bill is to legislate slavery into Nebraska and Kansas; but its effect is to sweep away this vestige of congressional dictation on this subject, to allow the free citizens of this Union to enter the common territory with the Constitution and the bill alone in their hands, and to remit the decision of their rights under both to the courts of the country. Who can go before his constituents refusing to stand on the platform of the Constitution? Who can make a case to them of refusing to abide the decision of the courts of the Union?"

After discussing the relations between the General Government and the Territories, he thus sets forth the principle which should govern and limit the power of Congress to legislate for the Territories:

"I have already said that the Constitution nowhere expressly grants political power over the Territories. Let us bear in mind, then, that it can only be an implied power, to be exercised by a limited government, over a region, the common property of States which created this limited government; and the inference is irresistible that it must be exercised in the spirit of the political system out of which this limited government springs. It would follow, if the power were expressly granted; but flows with greater force since it is only derivative. What, then, is the spirit of the system? I answer, *the equality of the States.*" \* \* \* The Territories "are regions of country acquired by the common efforts and treasure of all the States; they belong, therefore, to the States, for common use and enjoyment. The citizens of the States are to inhabit them; and, when the population shall be sufficient, they are to become equal members of the Union."

These extracts are sufficient to show how Mr. Breckinridge went to the heart of the matter in 1854. The principle then was, both on the part of Congress and of the Territorial legislature, the equality of the States. Questions of property under the Constitution were to be decided by the courts. Congress, then, had simply to see that the principle of equality was maintained inviolate, and that the decisions of the courts were enforced.

But to resume:

The January number of the Democratic Review attacked almost every man in the Democratic party whose name had been mentioned in connection with the Presidency. The veteran and experienced statesmen, who had stood by Andrew Jackson, and had in various fields of duty advanced their country's honor and renown—Buchanan, Marcy, Houston, Butler, and Cass—were held up to public odium and contempt as the fossil remains of a past generation, altogether antiquated, unequal to the progressive tendencies of the age. It was boldly asserted that the times demanded men with "not only young blood," but "young ideas," to conduct the affairs of State.

Mr. Breckinridge, after exposing the gross misrepresentations of the Review, and declaring it had traduced the most honored names in the Democratic party, thus gave his own views of conservative progress:

"Let me say a word now upon this question of progress. I profess to be a friend of rational progress; but I want no wild and visionary progress, that would sweep away all the immortal principles of our forefathers; hunt up some imaginary genius, place him on a new policy, give him 'Young America' for a fulcrum, and let him turn the world upside down. That is not the progress I want. I want to progress in the line of the principles of our fathers; I want a steady and rational advance—not beyond the limits of the federal Constitution; but I am afraid that such progress as is now talked about would carry us clear away from that sacred instrument. I want to progress by ameliorating the con-



dition of the people by fair, just, and equal laws, and by simplicity, frugality, and justice marking the operations of the federal government. Above all, I hope to see the Democratic party adhere with immovable fidelity to the ancient and distinguishing landmarks of its policy. These are my opinions on progress; and I think the sooner we canvass and winnow and sift away opposite opinions the better."

The writer of these articles was known to be the devoted partizan of the only prominent man mentioned in connection with the Presidency who had not been referred to by him in terms of disparagement. The Review, in fact, assailed, to use Mr. Breckinridge's words, "all the candidates except the distinguished Senator from Illinois, (Mr. Douglas,) who seems to be a particular favorite." This called up Mr. Richardson, of Illinois, who protested that these articles were written without the knowledge of Judge Douglas, and were against his views and wishes; and also that Mr. Douglas having learned that a violent attack was to be made upon General Butler in the February number, did all he could to prevent it, but without effect. Mr. Breckinridge concluded in these words: "Again, I say, let us be just; let us be fair. Let no man by himself, or through his friends, attempt to promote individual interests by traducing others. If this course be continued, we will not succeed; we ought not to succeed."

Ever the faithful advocate of the reform of abuses in the Government, and economy in its expenditures, he boldly opposed all monopolies, subsidies, and extravagance.

Amongst the various combinations which were formed, to fasten themselves upon the Government, as perpetual stipendiaries, during his service in Congress, were "the Ocean Steam subsidies."

Steam lines had been built chiefly with public money, to run to Liverpool, California, and Oregon, and applications were made to admit other parties to participate in the national gratuity. Lines were asked to Antwerp, to the West Indies, to Brazil, Venezuela, Havana, Hamburg, Genoa, Gibraltar, Marseilles, Toulon, and China, and with an expansive enterprise not to be controlled by considerations of race or region. This combination of enterprise and capital appealed to all sections of the Union, and to all interests of society, appealing alike to the patriotism of the honest, the aspirations of the ambitious, and the interests of the sordid. The aggregate appropriations asked for this purpose, with the sum already applied to a similar purpose, amounted to more than six millions of dollars.

The combination to carry this gigantic monopoly was powerful and harmonious. In the language of Mr. Breckinridge, the steam bounty system commanded "the most powerful and determined outside pressure ever brought to bear upon any deliberate body."

It was against this powerful monopoly that Mr. Breckinridge signaled his stern integrity of character and devotion to the public weal, by one of the most powerful, brilliant, and successful assaults upon this monopoly ever made in any deliberative assembly.

Upon an amendment made in the Senate to House bill to supply deficiencies in the appropriations for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1852, granting additional compensation to the Collins line of steamers, he made his great speech. He demonstrated that the proposed amendment of the Senate was to supply no deficiency, because it was not pretended that the Government of the United States had failed to per-



form strictly its agreements with Mr. Collins and his associates; he denounced it as the result of a practice becoming too common of requiring necessary appropriations to sustain others of doubtful propriety, and regarded it as a fruitful source of mischievous legislation, which he was ever ready to oppose. He said:

"Heretofore the money expended upon our ocean mail system has been paid on the principle of a contract, and the Government was supposed to receive a valuable consideration. The two objects avowed were to obtain for a fair price the transportation of the mails and the germ of an economical marine. But the question now presented is wholly different. We are urged to open the Federal Treasury for the purpose of sustaining certain commercial lines 'in a national competition.' We are told they must go down, in the rude contests of commerce, unless they are sustained by the public money. The true question, when stripped of all disguises, is, Shall the Government become the partner of individuals and companies in commercial operations, thus inflicting a double wrong, by giving peculiar advantages to a small fraction of the community, and at the same time collecting the capital it subscribes by taxation from those who are to be oppressed by the monopoly?" \* \*

"If, by the adoption of this amendment, the principle is established that Government money shall be expended to support private commerce, what limit shall be assigned to the application of this principle? The precedent, if adopted for the benefit of the Collins line, like every other bad precedent, will be the fruitful parent of a pernicious brood of laws, and will engraft a radically false policy upon the legislation of the country.

"Sir, in my judgment the proposition before the committee involves the highest interests of trade and the true policy of America. As we shall decide it, so will we determine whether commerce shall be free or fettered; whether the carrying trade of the country shall be fastened upon the public treasury; whether the free ocean shall be covered with the hulls of commercial monopolies, wielded by the power of the Government, and levelled against the enterprise of its own citizens."

Having exhibited elaborate tables to show the present character and cost of the ocean postal service, and of the additional expense of similar propositions pending before Congress, he says: "These lines will involve a yearly expenditure to the government above the present contracts of at least four and a half millions of dollars. This estimate is sufficiently low, though not, perhaps, strictly accurate, because all the applicants have not specified the compensation. If to this amount be added the present appropriations, we have a total annual expenditure for this single branch of the public service of about six millions of dollars, and after these are established we shall, doubtless, as heretofore, have numerous applications for new lines, pressed with great industry and ability, as well as for increased pay to those already in operation."

Besides, however, exposing the vast expenditures which the proposed system involved—a system exceeding, "both in the number of lines and amount of appropriations to them, the whole net work of navigation, with which we are told England has encompassed the globe"—in continuing his speech, Mr. Breckinridge showed how the steam interest had escaped the responsibility of their first engagement to furnish an auxiliary steam navy, and he proved, by official data, that the vessels built by Collins & Sloo, and others, for naval service, were unfit for that purpose.

In the course of his able argument, which exposed the unconstitutionality, extravagance, and inexpediency of granting this gratuity, he paid a beautiful compliment to our navy and commercial marine. He said:

"I am a friend to our commerce, and favorable to all proper facilities for extending our communications with foreign countries; I am a friend, also, of the navy. The history of my country presents too many pages adorned by its achievements, to allow me to speak aught in its disparagement. I never can be false to the memories that connect it with the

crisis of 1776 and 1812, nor ever forget that when the commerce of America retired from all the seas, and hid itself under embargoes and acts of non-intercourse, our gallant navy contended, not ingloriously, with the first power in Christendom, and avenged the wrongs we had long suffered from England.

"I am by no means insensible to the national honor and commercial renown which the Collins steamers have conferred upon our country. In common with others, I have exulted over the victory in steam navigation won by them for America, and should regret to learn that the enterprising capitalists to whom they owe their existence had sustained losses from their princely adventure. My sympathies are warmly enlisted for those who have contended so nobly with the first naval power on earth for the mastery of the seas. But are such sympathies a proper basis for legislation, when, too, that legislation must impose still greater burdens upon the people. Admit the plea in one case; legislate away five hundred thousand dollars upon it from an almost exhausted Treasury in one instance, and where are you to stop? Where is the builder, and where are the owners of the yacht 'America,' which lately won such brilliant honors in English waters? With what consistency could Congress deny financial aid and protection to them, when demanded upon the ground that they, too, had conferred national honor and naval glory upon our country? The pride of Britain boasting that she holds the trident of the seas, was not more humbled by our triumph in steam navigation, than it was in August last by the success of that little American craft, built in New York by American shipwrights, and manned in England by American freemen. The British people have spent centuries in perfecting their sailing vessels, and English supremacy on the ocean has been the cherished object of national desire. One of her poets sang, in exulting strains—

"Her march is o'er the mountain wave,  
Her home is on the deep."

But such a boast is now idle; Albion no longer 'rules the wave.' The last plank to which she clung was wrested from her by an American shipwright and by American individual enterprise."

Having shown that all such payments from the public treasury as contemplated by the ocean mail service were made "to private individuals, for the construction of private ships for private gains," he continued: "If any reference to the Constitution of the United States may be made in these days of magnificent monopolies and wholesale plunder, without calling up a smile of derision, I would inquire where that instrument confers the power to give such gratuities? And I desire to be pointed to the clause empowering us to tax one interest for the purpose of building up another. I put the question to Republicans everywhere, and especially do I commend it to gentlemen of the Democratic party—a party whose cardinal principles have ever been in direct conflict with such abuses."

Heroically resisting the influences around him, with an eye single to his country's weal and renown, the impassioned orator closed his powerful speech on this occasion in the following manner:

"Mr. Chairman, this amendment may pass this House, as it has passed the Senate. I know the power of the influences at work in its favor; personal friendships, local interests, continued solicitations—all these are actively exerted, and are hard to resist. You may succeed in giving to the Collins line alone nearly one million of dollars a year; you may succeed in maintaining a little longer this ocean aristocracy, supported, like the British nobility, by the sweat of the people, but the day of its destruction will come. Every step taken in continuation of this system increases the number to be retraced, because a principle which is both false to our destiny, and unjust, cannot find a permanent resting place in the American statute book. When the country comes to understand and realize the effects of this legislation, it will demand its instant and final repeal.

"Mr. Chairman, the time will not allow me to pursue this subject further, nor to speak of other abuses now weighing down the Government. The universal tendency among those who hold delegated power in a country whose resources are ample, is to extravagance. It is time again to inscribe on our banners ECONOMY, RETRENCHMENT, REFORM; and for one, I will labor faithfully with those who, instead of constantly seeking for new resources of expenditure, shall strive to curtail the already enormous cost of this Government."

The President sustained the grounds taken by Mr. Breckinridge, in his veto message, from which the following extract is made:



“This bill will, in effect, confer a gratuity, whilst nominally making provision for the transportation of the mails of the United States.”

“To provide for making a donation of such magnitude, and to give to the arrangement the character of permanence which this bill proposes, would be to deprive commercial enterprise of the benefits of free competition, and to establish a monopoly, in violation of the soundest principles of public policy, and of doubtful compatibility with the Constitution.”

Not receiving the requisite two-thirds on the taking the vote on the receipt of the veto message, the bill failed to become a law.

The little opportunity afforded Mr. Breckinridge, owing to the universal acquiescence of the Democratic party in the tariff of 1846, to participate in any Congressional discussion upon that subject, accounts for the absence from his record of anything with reference thereto, except in a single and important instance.

In 1854 an immense lobby congregated at Washington, in the pay of the vast interests desiring the repeal of the duty on railroad iron, with the selfish purpose of enriching themselves out of the immense amount of the depletion in the revenues of the country which would follow their success.

Mr. Breckinridge being opposed to special legislation in all its forms, but more particularly where it proposed to disturb a well-composed system of acquiring revenue at the mere demand of rich capitalists, and always opposing a firm resistance to the march of the lobbyist against the integrity of legislation, took an active part in defeating the bill for that purpose, and succeeded by his untiring energy and great influence in the House in killing it.

His tribute to the character and services of Henry Clay, upon introducing resolutions of respect to his memory, the day after his death in Washington, was the most beautiful, touching, and eloquent ever delivered in the Halls of Congress. When the tall, manly, and dignified form of the young orator arose to offer the resolutions, every eye was turned upon him; a breathless silence pervaded the Hall and the crowded auditory in the galleries, and, as he portrayed, “in thoughts that breathe and words that burn,” the virtues and talents of the illustrious orator and statesman of Kentucky, and mourned the nation’s loss of this great man, many an eye was bathed in tears, and many a bosom heaved with emotion, in response to his glowing eulogy upon the departed statesman, orator, and patriot.

The hand of no master ever painted a more faithful, life-like portrait than is to be found in the vivid delineation of the character of the unrivalled orator and statesman, Henry Clay, when Mr. Breckinridge said:

“As a leader in a deliberative body, Mr. Clay had no equal in America. In him, intellect, person, eloquence and courage united to form a character fit to command. He fired with his own enthusiasm and controlled by his amazing will, individuals and masses. No reverse could crush his spirit, nor defeat reduce him to despair. Equally erect and dauntless in prosperity and adversity—when successful, he moved to the accomplishment of his purposes with more resolution; when defeated, he rallied his broken bands around him, and from his eagle eye shot along their ranks the contagion of his own courage. Destined for a leader, he everywhere asserted his destiny. In his long and eventful life he came in contact with men of all ranks and professions, but he never felt that he was in the presence of a man superior to himself. In the assemblies of the people, at the bar, in the Senate, everywhere within the circle of his personal presence, he assumed and maintained a position of pre-eminence.

“But the supremacy of Mr. Clay as a party leader was not his only nor his highest title to renown. That title is to be found in the purely patriotic spirit which, on great occasions,



always signalized his conduct. We have had no statesman who, in periods of real and imminent public peril, has exhibited a more genuine and enlarged patriotism than Henry Clay. Whenever a question presented itself actually threatening the existence of the Union, Mr. Clay, rising above the passions of the hour, always exerted his powers to solve it, peacefully and honorably. Although more liable than most men, from his impetuous and ardent nature, to feel strongly the passions common to us all, it was his rare faculty to be able to subdue them in a great crisis, and to hold towards all sections of the Confederacy the language of concord and brotherhood.

"Sir, it will be a proud pleasure to every true American heart to remember the great occasions when Mr. Clay has displayed a sublime patriotism—when the ill-temper engendered by the times and the miserable jealousies of the day seemed to have been driven from his bosom by the repulsive power of nobler feelings—when every throb of his heart was given to his country, every effort of his intellect dedicated to her service. Who does not remember the three periods when the American system of government was exposed to its severest trials; and who does not know, that when history shall relate the struggles which preceded and the dangers which were averted by the Missouri compromise, the Tariff compromise of 1832, and the Adjustment of 1850, the same pages will record the genius, the eloquence, and the patriotism of Henry Clay?"

"The life of Mr. Clay, sir, is a striking example of the abiding fame which surely awaits the direct and candid statesman. The entire absence of equivocation or disguise in all his acts was his master key to the popular heart; for, while the people will forgive the errors of a bold and open nature, he sins past forgiveness who deliberately deceives them. Hence, Mr. Clay, though often defeated in his measures of policy, always secured the respect of his opponents, without losing the confidence of his friends. He never paltered in a double sense. The country was never in doubt as to his opinions or his purposes. In all the contests of his time, his position on great public questions was as clear as the sun in a cloudless sky.

"Sir, standing by the grave of this great man, and considering these things, how contemptible does appear the mere legerdmain of politics! What a reproach is his life on that false policy which would trifle with a great and upright people! If I were to write his epitaph, I would inscribe, as the highest eulogy, on the stone which shall mark his resting-place: 'Here lies a man who was in the public service for fifty years, and never attempted to deceive his countrymen.'"

It may be remembered that the relations between Mr. Clay and Mr. Breckinridge were of the most cordial and friendly character. We have already mentioned the support given him by that statesman upon his election to the Kentucky Legislature; and we may add, that Mr. Breckinridge was much with him in the latter years and closing scenes of his life, and always cherished a sincere admiration for his talents, and veneration for his virtues.

During the second term for which Mr. Breckinridge was elected to Congress, he was nominated by President Pierce, and confirmed by the Senate, as Minister to Spain; but he declined the honor, preferring to comply with his representative pledge to the people who had elected him.

After four years of continuous service in Congress, where he demonstrated his high qualities as a statesman, and his power as a brilliant orator, he retired again from public life, and resumed the practice of the law.

In the language of a speech made by him, in 1855, he said:

"During the past four years, in which he was wholly devoted to public life, his private affairs and the health of his family had so suffered, as to have left him without a choice, but compelled him, by the highest obligations he could recognize, to retire from a position in which he must neglect the care he owed to one whom it was his first duty to cherish."

To show how he was esteemed, even by his political opponents, we give the following extract from the Louisville Journal, edited by the talented Prentice:

"We believe him to be a conscientious and honorable as well as a most able man. We have been half-afraid, during the canvass, to express fully our opinion of him, lest our Whig friends in his district, and elsewhere, might deem it untrue to the interest of our party."

Mr. Breckinridge is a pure and noble-hearted man, and a liberal-minded politician; he has earned and won at home, and at Washington, as high a reputation for talents as belongs to any man of his age in the United States. \* \* The Hon. John C. Breckinridge, in a letter to his constituents, declines a re-election to Congress. He will be much missed in that body. His great urbanity, his perfect fairness, and his powerful talents, made him one of the very foremost of its master-spirits. He has a national reputation, and nobly has he won it."

Mr. Breckinridge was chosen one of the delegates from Kentucky to the Cincinnati Convention. The circumstances under which he was nominated by that Convention for Vice President of the United States, we give from John Savage's book, styled "Our Living Representative Men." After the nomination of Buchanan for the Presidency, several names were offered for the second office—among others, that of John C. Breckinridge, proposed by the Louisiana delegation, through General J. L. Lewis. Acknowledging the flattering manifestation of good will, Mr. Breckinridge begged that his name would be withdrawn. On the first ballot, however, the Vermont delegation, through Mr. Smalley, believing that no Democrat has a right to refuse his services when his country calls, cast its five votes for Breckinridge. Many other States followed; and of the total he received fifty-one votes—second on the list, and only eight under the first, General Quitman. On the second ballot, Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont led off for Breckinridge; Massachusetts followed, with eleven out of thirteen votes. Rhode Island followed, with her four; then the New York Softs gave him eighteen; Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia voting in the same way. It became quite obvious that he was the choice of the body; and though several of the remaining States voted for other candidates, they quickly, one by one, changed their votes—the several delegates making neat and appropriate speeches in announcing the change. The names of other candidates were withdrawn, and the whole poll went for John C. Breckinridge; at which the Convention rose, and with waving of handkerchiefs and the loudest vocal demonstrations directed its attention upon the tall and graceful delegate from Kentucky, who had been so unexpectedly nominated for so exalted a post. It was long before the demonstrations subsided, so as to allow a word to be heard. At last, the commanding figure of Mr. Breckinridge stood, fronting the mighty triumph. It certainly was a time to try a young man. He spoke briefly and becomingly. The result just announced was unexpected, and his profound gratitude was without words. He gave the Convention the simple thanks of a true heart; and expressing his appreciation of their first choice, and linking his humble name with that of the tried statesman of Pennsylvania, cordially endorsed the platform, and sat down amid the booming of cannon and the vociferous applause of the multitude outside, breaking in upon and almost overpowering the loud cheers within the hall.

By virtue of the office of Vice President, Mr. Breckinridge is President of the Senate; but can take no part in its deliberations. With a commanding person, a full and melodious voice, and a quick perception, no officer has ever presided over that august body with more graceful dignity and impartiality, is the universal sentiment.

Upon the removal of the Senate from its old and time-honored chamber to the new and beautiful chamber where it holds its meetings, Vice



President Breckinridge delivered an address, replete with noble and patriotic sentiments, clothed in language remarkable for its purity and beauty, and closed with the following stirring appeal to Senators to preserve the Constitution.

“And now, Senators, we leave this memorable chamber, bearing with us, unimpaired, the Constitution we received from our forefathers. Let us cherish it with grateful acknowledgments to the Divine Power who controls the destinies of empires, and whose goodness we adore. The structures raised by men yield to the corroding tooth of time. These marble walls must moulder into ruin; but the principles of constitutional liberty, guarded by wisdom and virtue, unlike material elements, do not decay. Let us devotedly trust that another Senate, in another age, shall bear to a new and larger chamber, this Constitution, vigorous and inviolate, and that the last generation of posterity shall witness the deliberations of the Representatives of American States, still united, prosperous, and free.”

With that modesty and diffidence which ever characterizes merit, John C. Breckinridge has never sought any of the responsible offices and distinguished honors which the American people have conferred upon him, as a willing tribute to his talents, his patriotism, and his integrity. He has rather avoided than courted them. In a speech which he delivered in the hall of the House of Representatives, at Frankfort, Ky., December 21, 1859, after his election as United States Senator, he feelingly and beautifully returns his thanks for the honor conferred, pays a just tribute to the merits of his competitors, and clearly and forcibly defines his views upon the great and absorbing question of the equality of all the States in the Territories, purchased by the common treasure and blood of all. We quote the following :

“This election occurred in my absence. If I had been in private life, it would have given me pleasure to mingle personally and interchange opinions with my fellow-citizens here. But under existing circumstances, I thought it more respectful to the Legislature, to remain where my public duties called me.

“It is probably not necessary, yet I am sure every generous spirit will pardon me for referring to some vague rumors which have reached my ears, tracable to no distinct source, and apparently owning no respectable parentage, to the effect that my election was the result of some understanding or arrangement between certain distinguished gentlemen and myself, or between their friends and mine. Nothing could be more unjust and insulting to you, and to all embraced by the imputation. Standing in the presence of the men who elected me, I pronounce these rumors to be wholly unfounded and false; and for myself, I publicly declare that I have not, in connection with these proceedings, said, written, or done anything which I am unwilling should be known to the whole Legislature. This trust was your free gift, and when it came to my hands I received it unstained by the slightest taint of bargain or intrigue. I accept it, proudly, gratefully—happy to be associated in the public service with your admirable delegation in the House of Representatives, and the able and true-hearted gentleman who will be my colleague in the Senate; and with a loyal purpose to deserve your confidence.

A breathless silence pervaded the immense auditory of Representatives and citizens, as they listened with the deepest attention to this masterly effort. With his eye beaming and his heart glowing with patriotic devotion to the Constitution and Union, Mr. Breckinridge closed with a soul-stirring appeal to the national and conservative men of all creeds to unite in the overthrow of the Republican organization, whose doctrines if carried out will sap the very foundations of our Government. He said :

“The first duty of all who love their country is to overthrow the Republican party; and with this conviction I should be untrue to Kentucky, if I did not plead for the union of all opposed to that dangerous organization; and to fall to pieces on questions of less magnitude than its defeat, is to surrender to its domination, and all the fatal consequences that may ensue.



"There is another element at the North, not large, but noble and true. It consists of the scattered cohorts of the old Whig party—of men like Everett, Choate, and their associates—whose conservatism, culture, and patriotism rebelled against the Republican alliance. Besides, there are many thousands in the Northern States who seldom attend the polls, and whose voices have not been heard amidst the clamors that surround them. To all these let us appeal, let us solemnly demand a general revolt of the virtue and loyalty of the country against the pernicious principles that threaten its safety; and when all the forces are arrayed in their proper ranks, we shall be able to see what remains to hope or fear.

"For myself I cherish a buoyant hope in the destiny of our common country. It is not well to doubt that the good Providence which has protected us in the past will take care of us in the future, and out of these commotions will lead us to an era of tranquillity and peace."

The tried, trusty, and successful leader, in many a hard-fought battle, the Democracy at Baltimore, with a unanimity as flattering as it was just, selected Major Breckinridge as their standard-bearer in the approaching Presidential contest. Shrinking from no responsibilities which his country would impose upon him, he nobly accepts the post in his letter of acceptance of the nomination for the Presidency, which so forcibly elucidates the true principles upon which this Government should be administered. He truthfully says:

"I have not sought or desired to be placed before the country for the office of President. When my name was presented to the Convention at Charleston, it was withdrawn by a friend in obedience to my wishes. My views had not changed when the Convention reassembled at Baltimore; and when I heard of the differences which occurred there, my indisposition to be connected prominently with the canvass was confirmed and expressed to many friends.

"Without discussing the occurrences which preceded the nominations, and which are, or soon will be, well understood by the country, I have only to say that I approved, as just and necessary to the preservation of the national organization and the sacred right of representation, the act of the Convention over which you continued to preside, and thus approving it, and having resolved to sustain it, I feel that it does not become me to select the position I shall occupy, nor to shrink from the responsibilities of the post to which I have been assigned. Accordingly I accept the nomination from a sense of public duty, and, as I think, uninfluenced in any degree by the allurements of ambition.

"I avail myself of this occasion to say, that the confidence in my personal and public character, implied by the action of the Convention, will always be gratefully remembered; and it is but just also to my own feelings to express my gratification at the association of my name with that of my friend General Lane, a patriot and a soldier, whose great service in the field and in council entitle him to the gratitude and confidence of his countrymen.

"The resolutions adopted by the Convention have my cordial approval. They are just to all parts of the Union, to all our citizens, native and naturalized, and they form a noble policy for any administration."

It has been the purpose of this brief memoir of the life of Mr. Breckinridge to present him as he is—to exhibit his public character by his public acts. Left an orphan in his early years, with a mother and her little ones dependent upon him, he is found steadily and valiantly fronting adversity, and, almost entirely by his own exertions, laying the broad foundations of his future usefulness. All the elements of a great and noble character seem blended in him—truth, generosity, prudence, judgment, intrepidity, a devoted love of his country. It would seem that he was the fruit of the generations of valor, patriotism, and learning from which he sprang. In the conflicts of war and peace he has never shrunk from danger or responsibility; but has intrepidly encountered them, and always triumphantly achieved his aim. Yet so considerate and just has he been to all, that he has rarely had, and never deserved to have, an enemy. To provide and care for those nearest and dearest to him, he retired to private life; to fulfil his pledges to constituents, he declined honorable and high positions. He has resisted firmly the seductions of flattery; and when grave and more experienced men yielded to the allurements of interest, or were influenced by the appliances of the hungry

leeches of the public treasury, he was the censor, rebuking the departure from the principles of the fathers, and calling men back to the fundamental doctrines of economy, sobriety, and frugality in the management of the affairs of the government. In the early prime of his manhood, we find him invoking reverence for years and services, and holding up to rebuke and indignation the attempt to bring into disrespect with the people men that had dedicated to them long years of service. Is he not a character fitted for this critical emergency of our history, when factions rend the land, and the two portions of our Confederacy are looking threateningly into each others' faces? On the one side, a fierce and bitter determination to impress an iron law upon all these States; and on the other, an equal determination to resist unto the death this attempt at domination.

There are indeed other parties and other candidates, but the contest must ultimately be between these two. Who can doubt the devotion of John C. Breckinridge to the Constitution and the union of these States? Who can doubt that he will administer the government, if elected President, with a firm and vigorous hand; with a lofty patriotism; with a purity and a forecast worthy the early days of the republic?

It is right that the young man who defended age and service should succeed one of the very eminent men he defended, and that he should do so at a period of life, when a mature judgment and a large experience are united with the highest physical strength and development.

We will relate an incident which occurred during the last days of that distinguished man, Henry Clay, which, while it illustrates his sagacity, the subsequent career of the youthful Breckinridge attests the truth of his prophetic remark.

A gentleman who was constantly with Mr. Clay during his last illness, states that, upon going into his room one day, he found Mr. Breckinridge sitting by the bedside of the dying statesman, reading aloud to him. After Mr. Breckinridge left the room, Mr. Clay said: "That young man is serving now his first term in Congress; I perceive in him so much judgment and talent, so many of the elements of true statesmanship, that I clearly foresee he will yearly grow in the confidence and esteem of his countrymen, and eventually receive the highest honors it is in their power to bestow."

The prediction, now partly accomplished, will doubtless be completely fulfilled in November next, when the people speak their sentiments at the ballot-box.

In the glowing language of the eloquent and gifted Kentuckian, let our motto be "THE CONSTITUTION AND THE EQUALITY OF THE STATES; THESE ARE THE SYMBOLS OF EVERLASTING UNION; LET THESE BE THE RALLYING CRIES OF THE PEOPLE."



BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
OF  
GENERAL JOSEPH LANE,  
OF OREGON.

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General Lane, the nominee of the National Democratic Convention at Baltimore for Vice President of the United States, is one of the most remarkable men of the age. His history is a fine illustration of the genius of our institutions, and demonstrates that the high places of honor and distinction are accessible to all who possess ability, energy and perseverance.

General Lane descended from Revolutionary ancestors; was born in the State of North Carolina, on the 14th of December, 1801. In 1804 his father emigrated with his family to Kentucky, where the hero and statesman was reared and educated. Having received a substantial education he removed to Indiana and settled on the banks of the Ohio, in the county of Vandenburg, where, without the adventitious aid of fame, family, or fortune, he worked his way from an humble plowboy and flatboatman on the Mississippi to his present distinguished position.

If any man can be styled a man of the people General Lane is truly that man. Through a period of more than a quarter of a century the people have evinced their admiration for the sterling honesty of his character, the strength of his intellect, and his pure and unselfish patriotism by clothing him with trusts of great responsibility and honor, which he has performed with signal ability and success. With a strong intellect and a mind eminently practical, with an honest, manly, and generous heart, its every pulsation beating in sympathy with the masses, he won the admiration and confidence of the people of Indiana to such a degree that, unsolicited, before he was twenty-one years of age, they elected him to the Legislature over their former representative, who was an able and experienced legislator and had been Speaker of the House of Representatives of the State.

The strong and practical mind of the youthful legislator, taking a liberal, judicious, and statesmanlike view of all questions affecting State or national interests, which he enforced with a persuasive elo-



quence, soon made him one of the master spirits of the Legislature, when the people were anxious to elevate him to still higher posts in the National Councils; but having no heritage but poverty and an honest name, with a large and increasing family to support and educate, he had to forego higher honors and a wider field of usefulness to his people. He continued, however, to represent the people either in the House or the Senate of the State for nearly a quarter of a century.

His name is indissolubly connected with some of the most important measures which developed the resources, advanced the prosperity, and improved the finances of the State, especially his able and successful efforts to preserve untarnished the public faith and to prevent the repudiation of the public debt, which was boldly advocated by some of the strongest men in Indiana.

When the Mexican war broke out General Lane was a member of the State Senate, and when a requisition was made upon Indiana to furnish volunteers for the war, obedient to the call of patriotism, he resigned his place in the Senate and volunteered as a private for the war. When the companies assembled to organize and elect their officers, such was their unbounded confidence in Joseph Lane, that they elected him colonel of their regiment, although he had seen no military service either as a soldier or an officer. Before he could put his regiment in motion, President Polk illustrated his sagacity by sending him a commission as Brigadier General, a compliment as unexpected as it was unsolicited by General Lane.

The opponents of the Administration and of the war, throughout the country, denounced and ridiculed the appointment, declaring that he might make a good general of the flatboatmen on the Mississippi river, but that the idea of Jo Lane, who had never commanded a company in his life, taking command of a brigade in war was simply ridiculous; that he would disgrace himself, his State and the nation. Thus the plain, humble volunteer, without prestige or pretension, amidst the jeers and taunts of the Mexican sympathizers, set his brigade in motion for the theatre of the war, where he not only falsified all the predictions of his enemies and realized the most sanguine expectations of his friends, but won a fame for daring, gallantry and successful generalship which has linked his name with the brightest history of his country's renown, while his generosity to the vanquished and solicitude for and care of the sick and disabled, made him universally popular with the soldiers and officers of the army who, scattered all over the Union, are burning to signalize their appreciation of his worth, by crowning him with the highest of earthly honors.

In less than three weeks after General Lane received his commission, he was at the seat of war with all his troops. In communicating his arrival to General Taylor, he wrote him thus: "The brigade I have the honor to command is generally in good health and fine spirits, anxious to engage in active service."

The indomitable energy, the self-sacrificing spirit, the sound judgment, and firm purpose which he displayed in the active service of civil life, were eminently conspicuous in all the stirring scenes of battle, blood, and carnage, through which he passed, illustrated by a

daring bravery and heroism, which placed him among the most distinguished heroes of that memorable war. To recount the battles in which General Lane was engaged, the dangers to which he was exposed, the brave deeds he performed, the skill and judgment with which he planned his battles, and the unvarying success with which he fought them, would consume more space than we have to spare. Such was the celerity of his movements, the skill and stratagem of his plans, the boldness and rapidity of their execution, and the enthusiasm and courage with which he inspired his men, by his impassioned appeals to their valor, as they visited the most fearful slaughter upon the enemy, that the name of Lane struck terror to the Mexican heart, and by common consent he was styled "the Marion of the Mexican War." Of all the battles fought in Mexico, the battle of Buena Vista was the severest and most hotly contested, and one of the most remarkable in the annals of the world. There the American army, consisting of about five thousand, mostly raw militia, met twenty thousand of the chosen troops of Santa Anna, in deadly conflict, and after a protracted struggle of two days, achieved a glorious triumph.

In that battle General Lane performed a most important part. No officer contributed more by his gallantry and generalship to win the fortunes of the day. Upon the left wing of the American army which General Lane commanded, Santa Anna directed his most obstinate and deadly assaults. With but four hundred men General Lane repulsed a large body of Mexicans, six thousand strong. While nothing could exceed the fearful array of the assailants, as they moved toward the little band of Lane, with their long line of infantry, presenting a continued sheet of fire, nothing could surpass the undaunted firmness and bravery with which Lane and his men maintained their position and poured their volleys of musketry into the advancing columns of the enemy, which made them break and fall back. Throughout the varying fortunes of that trying day, General Lane with his little band of heroes maintained his position and repulsed the enemy at every point. On the second day of the battle, Santa Anna, finding his strength defied and his most skillful manœuvres defeated, as the day was drawing to a close, determined to make a most desperate effort to turn the tide of the battle in his favor. Collecting all his infantry, he made a charge on the Illinois and Kentucky regiments. Gallantly did those brave troops resist the onset, until seeing their leaders fall, and overpowered by numbers, they began to waver and fall back. At this critical moment the eagle eye of General Lane observed the movement, when he hastened with his brigade to the rescue in time to enable the retreating regiments to form and return to the contest and drive back with great loss the advancing column of the enemy. This was Santa Anna's last struggle. On that bloody and hotly contested field night soon closed over the sanguinary scene, and when the morning sun arose, it shone upon the battle-field, deserted by Santa Anna, with his shattered legions, while the star-spangled banner waved in triumph over the American army.

No officer went into the Mexican war with less pretension than



General Lane—none came out of it with a brighter fame. The testimony of eye witnesses, historians, and official records attest the fact. The New Orleans Delta, of May 2, 1847, recorded the popular estimation in which General Lane's conduct was held in the battle of Buena Vista as follows:

“BRIGADIER GENERAL LANE.—The bearing of this gallant officer in the battle of Buena Vista, as described by persons who were present, was in the highest degree gallant, noble, and soldier-like. When his brigade, composed of the two Indiana regiments, was exposed to a murderous fire from the Mexican batteries on their flanks, and a front fire from a large body of the enemy's infantry—when the grape and musket shot flew thick as hail through the lines of our volunteers, who began to waver before the fiery storm, their brave General could be seen fifty yards in advance of the line, waving his sword with an arm already shattered by a musket ball, streaming with blood, and mounted on a noble charger, which was gradually sinking under the loss of blood from five distinct wounds: A brave sight indeed was this!”

This brave man, whose check never blanched with fear, or eye quailed amidst the hottest conflicts of battle, has a heart of tenderness which melts at human woe. His solicitude for and care of the sick, the wounded, and the dying, was manifested on many occasions. Numerous incidents and anecdotes are narrated, illustrating his kindness and tenderness, in relieving their sufferings and administering to their comfort in the hospitals and on the battle fields, which so endeared him to his troops that it made him always invincible when their leader. On his return home, wherever he stopped citizens of all classes vied to do honor to the distinguished hero. Whilst in the city of Cincinnati, the guest of General Moore, an incident occurred illustrative of his native kindness and tenderness, and the gratitude of the recipient. A German citizen ushered himself into the presence of General Lane, amidst the guests in the parlor. He asked if General Lane was in. The German, with emotion, asked: “Do you know me, General?” “I do not,” said the General. German: “Well, sir, I recollect and will thank you to the last day of my life. Do you remember after the fight with the guerrillas at Manga de Clava, in which we routed the scoundrels so finely, you found a soldier dying by the way-side, exhausted by the heat of the sun and the exertions of the day, and dismounted from your horse and placed him on it, walking by his side until you reached the camp, where you did not rest till you saw him well taken care of?” The General replied, that he recollected the circumstance very well. “Well,” said the German, “I am the boy, and by that act of kindness you saved my life. I am here to thank you. How can I ever forget to cease to pray for you? God bless you, you were the soldier's friend.”

In his own State of Indiana it was a perfect ovation wherever he went. The masses—the hard sons of toil—turned out from all the country, and from every hamlet and village, to welcome and do honor to the man of the people. He was feasted and toasted, and congratulatory addresses were made to him in the name of the people, by the most distinguished men of the State. He bore all the honors and compliments showered upon him meekly, and with characteristic modesty, claimed for himself nothing more than having done his duty. In his emphatic language, he said: “To the volunteers under my command, I feel that the honor is justly due; without their aid I could have done nothing.”

After General Lane's brilliant exploits under General Taylor on the Rio Grande, he was transferred in September, 1847, to General Scott's line. We insert from a biographical sketch, published in the *Democratic Review*, of May, 1858, an exceedingly interesting history of his battle with Santa Anna at Huamantla, when he again defeated him, and his rapid and successful assault upon the remnant of his retreating forces at Atlixo :

"Gen. Lane having been transferred in the summer of 1847 to the line of Gen. Scott's operations, reached Vera Cruz in the early part of September. On the 20th of that month he set out towards the city of Mexico with a force of about two thousand five hundred men, consisting of one regiment of Indiana and one of Ohio volunteers, two battalions of recruits, five small companies of volunteer horse, and two pieces of artillery. This force was subsequently augmented at Jalapa by a junction with Major Lally's column of one thousand men, and at Perote its strength was further increased by a company of mounted riflemen and two of volunteer infantry, besides two pieces of artillery. Several small guerrilla parties appeared at different times on the route and attacked the advance and rear guards, but were quickly repulsed ; and the column continued its advance unmolested along the great road leading through Puebla to the city of Mexico.

"At this time Col. Childs, of the regular army, with a garrison of five hundred effective troops and one thousand eight hundred invalids, was besieged in Puebla by a large force of Mexicans commanded by Santa Anna in person. This general, notwithstanding his many defeats, with a spirit unbroken by misfortune, and an energy that deserves our highest admiration, however much we may reprobate the cause in which he was engaged, had collected the remnant of his beaten army, determined, if possible, to wrest Puebla from the grasp of the American General, Scott, and thus cut off his communications with the sea-coast. The gallant Childs well understood that the maintenance of his post was of the utmost importance to the success of the campaign. Every officer and soldier under his command seemed also to comprehend the immensity of the stake ; and both officers and soldiers exhibited the loftiest heroism, and the most unyielding fortitude, in meeting the dangers and enduring the fatigues and privations of a protracted siege. Aware that a strong column, under Gen. Lane, was marching from Vera Cruz to their relief, the great object to be gained by the garrison was time. Santa Anna, also aware of Gen. Lane's approach, redoubled his exertions to carry the place by storm, superintending the operations of the troops in person, directing the guns to such parts of the defences as appeared most vulnerable, and watching with intense anxiety the effect of every shot. Convinced at length by the obstinate resistance of the besieged, and the lessening distance between him and his advancing and dreaded foe, that he must abandon his position and encounter the "Marion of the War" in an open field, he silently and cautiously withdrew, and with the main body of his troops moved in the direction of Huamantla, intending, when Gen. Lane had passed that point, to make attack upon his rear, while another strong force should assail him at the same



time from the direction of Puebla. Gen. Lane being informed of Santa Anna's movements, at once penetrated his designs. With the promptness of decision displayed in all his military operations, he divided his force, leaving the Ohio volunteers and a battalion of recruits, with two field guns, to guard the wagon trains. With the remainder of his column he marched, by a route diverging from the main road, directly towards Huamantla.

"On the morning of the 9th of October, the people of Huamantla were startled and dismayed to behold the formidable and glittering array spread out over the neighboring hills. White flags were immediately hung out in token of submission, and the place seemed to have surrendered without a blow from its panic-stricken inhabitants. But suddenly the advanced guard, under Capt. Walker, having entered the town, was assailed on every side by volleys of musketry. He immediately ordered a charge upon a body of 500 lancers, stationed with two pieces of artillery in the Plaza. A furious and deadly combat ensued. Gen. Lane advancing at the head of his column encountered the heavy reinforcement ordered up by Santa Anna, who had now arrived with his whole force. Soon the roar of battle was sounded through every street, and street and Plaza were reddened with blood and covered with heaps of the slain. The Mexicans for a short time combated their assailants with the energy and fury of despair. But the steady and well-directed valor of the soldiers of the "Republic of the North" bore down all opposition. The Mexican ranks were broken and thrown into disorder; the order to retreat was given; and the American flag waved in triumph over the treacherous city of Huamantla.

"This was the last field on which Santa Anna appeared in arms against the United States. This remarkable man, universally acknowledged to be an able and active, was never a successful commander. Whether this want of success is to be ascribed to the superior generalship of the leaders and prowess of the troops opposed to him, or to his own instability of purpose in the very crisis of battle, when vigor and decision are most required, we will not stop to inquire. Having, during the progress of the war, collected several large armies, and led them to defeat, he had determined with that which remained to him to make a last effort to retrieve his fortunes, and Huamantla was selected as the Waterloo, where his waning star should shine out in cloudless effulgence, or sink to rise no more. If he did not encounter a Wellington on that field, he encountered one who, with Wellington's courage, united many of the higher qualities of a military commander. Perhaps he relied upon General Lane's want of experience; but the courage and conduct of the latter at Buena Vista should have admonished him of the hopelessness of a contest in an open and equal field with such an officer, at the head of troops comparatively fresh, in high spirits, with full confidence in the skill and courage of their leader, and burning to rival the heroic deeds of their countrymen at Chapultepec and Cerro Gordo. Although Santa Anna from this time withdrew from an active participation in the contest between the belligerent nations, the bloody drama in which he had played so con-

spicuous a part was not yet closed. Much remained to be done to complete the conquest so auspiciously begun on the banks of the Rio Grande, and prosecuted with such vigor by Scott in the valley of Mexico. Many bloody fields were yet to be won; many desperate bands of guerrillas yet to be defeated and dispersed, to render the subjugation of the country complete.

"Defeated at Huamantla, the remnant of the Mexican force fell back on Atlixo, where, on the 18th of October, a large body, with munitions and supplies, and two pieces of artillery, were collected, under the orders of Gen. Rea. Gen. Lane hearing of the concentration of the enemy's troops at that point, hastened with the small force at his disposal to attack them. After a long and fatiguing march on a hot and sultry day, he encountered the enemy strongly posted on a hillside, within a mile and a half from Atlixo. The Mexicans made a show of desperate resistance, but being vigorously assaulted by the cavalry, closely followed by the entire column, they gave way and fled in confusion towards the town. It was not until after nightfall that the whole command of Gen. Lane reached Atlixo, having marched ten Spanish leagues since eleven o'clock in the forenoon. Disposing his troops in such manner as to command the approaches by the main roads, he opened a vigorous cannonade from a height which commanded the town. The guerrillas, however, had fled, and the authorities having soon after surrendered the place into his hands, his wearied troops entered the town and sought the repose they so much needed."

It is impossible, within the limited space allotted to this sketch, to present a detailed account of all Gen. Lane's military operations at this period. In authentic histories of the war and official documents filed in the archives of government, the reader will find the record of his achievements—his long and toilsome marches by night and by day over a wild and rugged country, full of narrow defiles and dangerous passes; his frequent surprises of the enemy; his sudden incursions far away into remote valley and plain; his fierce combats and glorious victories. At Tlascalla, Matamoras, Galaxa, Tulaucingo, Zicaultiplan, as at Huamantla and Atlixo, Mexican valor yielded to the force of his impetuous and well-directed assaults. On every field the ranks of the enemy went down before the thundering charge of his cavalry, the fierce onset of his resistless infantry. The fame of his achievements soon spread through Mexico, and the terror with which the enemy was inspired by his death-dealing blows and almost ubiquitous presence, was equalled only by the unbounded confidence and enthusiasm infused into his followers by his gallant bearing, and the *prestige* of a name ever relied on by them as the sure guarantee of victory. For one quality as much as any other, perhaps even his dauntless courage, Gen. Lane was distinguished throughout the war—*humanity to the vanquished*. His bright fame was unsullied, his escutcheon untarnished by a single act of wanton outrage or cruelty during the whole time he bore a commission in the American army. When the fight was over, and the victory won, the field of carnage, where a short time before foeman met foeman in deadly conflict, presented the spectacle of stern and swarthy warriors, imbued with the



humane spirit of their leader, bending over the heaps of the dying and the dead, selecting now a friend, and now a foe, from whom the vital spark had not yet fled, staunching his wounds, and if the sufferer had not yet passed beyond the power of human aid to save, restoring him by their kind ministrations to life and health, family, home, and friends. An officer thus distinguished for courage and humanity; unyielding fortitude under the severest privations; an originality and promptness in the formation of his plans, surpassed only by the boldness and rapidity of their execution; a celerity of movement which annihilated time and distance; with a power of endurance that defied hunger and thirst, heat and cold—such an officer, never for a moment relaxing his exertions, and adding some new name to the list of the last of his conquests, could not fail to attract the attention and excite the admiration of the army, and win the approbation and applause of his countrymen in all parts of the United States. There was a tinge of romance in his exploits, which possessed an irresistible attraction, and captivated the imagination of all classes of admirers. But imagination has had little to do with the final judgment which his countrymen have pronounced upon his conduct. The parallel traced at the time between his deeds and character, and those of an illustrious hero of the Revolution, suggested to his countrymen a suitable way of testifying their appreciation of his services and admiration of his character; and they have, with a unanimity which shows that the parallel is not altogether imaginary, bestowed upon him a title, prouder than any ever conferred by a patent of nobility from prince or potentate—the title of “The Marion of the Mexican War.”

Before the close of the war the Government of the United States, appreciating the valuable services rendered by Gen. Lane, conferred on him the rank of Major General. This was so expressed in the order of the department, as a special mark of approbation for his “gallantry and skill displayed in numerous engagements with the enemy.”

“Peace has her victories, no less renowned than war.”

So successful and brilliant as the commander of armies, a few days after he returned to his peaceful home, crowned with laurels and the honors which an admiring people showered upon him, he was called to a different scene of duty, where he could exercise his sound judgment and practical knowledge in organizing and putting in practical operation a civil government on the shores of the Pacific for a remote people, who had been long neglected and uncared for. In August, 1848, he received a commission as Governor of Oregon Territory, another compliment as unexpected as it was unsolicited from Mr. Polk. In less than one month from the time he returned to the bosom of his family from the stirring scenes of war, he was en route for the distant shores of the Pacific, with hardships, perils, and privations to encounter in crossing the Rocky mountains at that season of the year to reach his post of duty; which required an energy, hardihood, and self-reliance to overcome which but few men possess. Col. Fremont, who followed him a few weeks afterwards, taking a different route across the mountains, lost almost his entire party amid the cold and

snows in the gorges and defiles of the mountains, and nearly perished himself.

A narrative of the hardships and sufferings endured and the perils encountered by Governor Lane and his party in crossing the Rocky mountains, would fill a volume. We can now no more than quote from a speech made by Mr. Voorhies, of Indiana, last winter to the citizens of Washington, who had assembled to congratulate Gen. Lane upon the admission of Oregon into the Union, and himself into the United States Senate as one of her Senators. He said :

“There is a history of events connected with the pioneer movements of Gen. Lane to Oregon, not generally known to the American people. On the 11th September, 1848, at the foot of the eastern slope of the Rocky mountains, with a commission from President Polk as Governor of Oregon Territory in his pocket, he, to whom you tender the honor of this demonstration, gave evidence to his country and to the world of a will and a courage in the discharge of duty surpassing that which Napoleon displayed in his immortal passage of the Alps. The great hero of Austerlitz and Marengo was told by his guide, that the route was barely passable, and the order came from the bold spirit to set forward immediately. Gen. Lane, in consultation with Col. Dougherty, a mountaineer of twenty years' experience, was told that the passage of the Rocky mountains at this season of the year, with certainty of spending the winter in their midst was a human impossibility. ‘We will set forward in the morning,’ was the reply of the American hero and patriot, who never knew fear in the achievement of public duty. He and his little band moved in the morning, and for five weary and desolate months were lost and buried amid the gorges and defiles and snows of the mountains. Fancy may paint, but the tongue cannot sketch even the faint outlines of that expedition. On the 3d of March, 1849, Gen. Lane reached the capital of Oregon, and before he slept, put the Territorial Government in operation, and started a communication to the President informing him of the fact.”

In the discharge of the duties of Governor of the Territory of Oregon, and ex-officio superintendent of Indian affairs, General Lane evinced the highest order of ability. His messages to the Territorial Legislature abound in sound and practical views relative to the wants and interests of the Territory, and in the recommendation of wholesome and judicious measures, calculated to develop the resources and promote the prosperity of the people. He found the Indian affairs in a most troubled condition—the troops disbanded, the various tribes in a hostile attitude to the citizens, had committed depredations upon their property, and murdered several families—the murderers unpunished, and no restitution of stolen property. As soon as he put the government in operation, without troops he proceeded to the scenes of depredation, robbery, and murder, and by his superior address, tact and judgment, he quelled all disturbances, had the murderers arrested and punished, and without war or bloodshed, accomplished what both had failed to effect. An incident occurred in Gov. Lane's “talk” with the Rogue River Indians, a warlike and predatory tribe, which illustrates his remarkable self-possession, coolness and judgment in imminent peril. He entered their country with twelve or fifteen men; these Indians had fiercely rejected all attempts by the whites at conciliation. The safety of the border citizens required decided terms of war or peace. Gen. Lane chose the latter; with some difficulty he succeeded in assembling four or five hundred warriors in council. During the interview, one of his company recognized two horses stolen from him, in the possession of the Indians, and two pistols in the belts of the two chiefs. The Governor demanded restitution of the property, which restored, he said, would evince their willingness to treat



and preserve peace. The head Chief ordered restitution, but the possessors refused. The Governor then stepped forward and took one of the stolen pistols from the Indian's belt and gave it to the owner, and was about to take the other pistol, when the Indian who had it presented his gun and raised the war whoop. Instantly four or five hundred guns were pointed at Gen. Lane and his small party.

A single false step would have led to the most disastrous results, but Gen. Lane's coolness and promptness were equal to the crisis. He said, I have come here to make a treaty of peace, not to have a fight; and promptly stepping to the side of the principal chief, with his firm eye fixed on him, pistol in hand, he told him, if a drop of blood of any of the whites was shed, it should be avenged by the destruction of the entire tribe. This well-timed move had the desired effect. The chief told his warriors to cease their demonstrations. The Governor then advanced among the foremost, took their arrows from their bows and returned them to their quivers, and uncocked their guns, and knocked the priming from their pans.

Gen. Lane did not hold the office of Governor of Oregon more than about two years before he was superseded by President Taylor. Whereupon the Legislature of Oregon passed resolutions expressive of their high sense of the energy, ability, and success which characterized his administration as Governor of Oregon, and superintendent of Indian affairs, and their "sincere regret that the President of the United States has deprived the Territory of Oregon of the future services of one so eminently useful, and whose usefulness was enhanced by the unbounded confidence of the people over whom he was placed."

As soon as the intelligence of the death of the lamented Thurston, the faithful, able, and efficient delegate in Congress, reached Oregon, General Lane was unanimously selected as his successor, and was elected by an almost unanimous vote of the people.

Upon the eve of General Lane's departure from Oregon to the National Capitol, as their delegate to Congress, the people, *without distinction of party*, held a mass meeting to tender "him a public expression of opinion in regard to his distinguished talents and services." Among other things they resolved, "that as friends of Gen. Joseph Lane, without distinction of party, we tender him our hearty and entire approbation of his acts as Governor of Oregon Territory," and that from "the ability, energy, fidelity and purity of purpose which have characterized all his public acts among us, it is but fitting that we express our approbation and admiration of his course," and "that General Lane came to us covered with military glory, and leaves us, upon the business of the Territory, clothed with our confidence and attachment." That confidence and attachment the people of Oregon have ever since manifested towards him, by continuing him as their delegate in Congress until the Territory was admitted as one of the States into the Union, when, in obedience to the unanimous voice of his party, he became one of the Senators from that State.

All the responsible positions to which General Lane has been called, were *unsolicited and unexpected by him*, what but few public men can

say, and he has filled them with signal ability and success. Endowed with a strong and practical mind, stored with the most useful knowledge, acquired by extensive reading and accurate observation; sound, liberal, and conservative in his views of the policy and principles of our Government, he combines personal traits of character, eminently calculated to win the popular heart; with a warm, generous, and manly spirit, with a kind, frank, and social disposition, with a demeanor so modest and unpretending that he excites no one's envy, he has acquired an influence and popularity which but few men attain.

In Indiana, in the legislature and with the people, he was universally popular, and one of the leading men of the State, and styled "her favorite son." On the battle fields of Mexico the soldiers viewed him as invincible, and he was the pride of the officers of the army. In Oregon his name is a tower of strength. In the halls of Congress his popularity and influence are unsurpassed. Indeed, it was chiefly owing to his influence and exertions that the bill to admit Oregon into the Union passed the House at the session before last.

The passage of that bill was attended by great excitement. It was violently opposed by the ultra men, North and South. When the final vote was taken, a breathless silence reigned through the Hall and the crowded galleries, broken only by the emphatic answer of yea or nay, as the members answered to the call of the clerk for their vote; as the vote was being taken members were to be seen, in all parts of the hall, keeping count, and when Felix K. Zollicoffer responded to the last call, parties from all parts of the hall surrounded General Lane with their warm and hearty congratulations, which indicated the result, and when formally announced by the Speaker from the chair, round after round of applause arose from the members in the Hall, which was caught and repeated by the crowded galleries of anxious spectators, with waving of handkerchiefs by the ladies, and clapping of hands by the sterner sex, which showed that "he lives in the hearts of his countrymen." When the news of the passage of the bill, and that a seat in the Senate was thereby secured to General Lane, spread through the city, there was a general rejoicing by the citizens, and the demonstrations of honor paid to General Lane at his lodgings that night were of the most enthusiastic character. A band of musicians serenaded him with the most delightful music; the people assembled in crowds; the strong men of the nation were there, and made congratulatory speeches from the portico of Brown's hotel, which were received with the enthusiastic cheers of the assembled masses, which made the welkin ring. General Lane appeared, and responded to the unexpected compliment, in a chaste, appropriate, and eloquent speech, then opened his rooms and his heart to receive his friends, and gave them the best cheer that could be provided at so short a notice.

The fidelity, ability, and success with which General Lane has represented the interests of his people in Congress, is attested by the fact that, from the time he was first elected, he has been re-elected their representative, with little or no opposition, for a period of more than eight years, until, by an almost unanimous vote, he was chosen one of the United States Senators, by the legislature, upon the admis-



sion of Oregon into the Union, having received forty-five of the fifty votes cast.

Short as has been his service in the Senate, he has more than sustained the reputation he acquired in other spheres of public duty. His remarks in the Senate, on the 19th December last, on the territorial question, did honor to his head and his heart. They breathed the spirit of a patriot and the sentiments of a statesman. He enunciated the true principles of the Constitution in a concise, but clear and forcible exposition of the heresy of squatter sovereignty, and the duty and importance of maintaining the equality of the States, in all their constitutional rights in the territories and elsewhere, in order to preserve "the Constitution and the Union, the richest political blessings which Heaven has bestowed upon any nation."

To preserve the Constitution, and to perpetuate the Union; the *equality of the States must be maintained*; was the sentiment he expressed and enforced, with such strong and practical arguments as will carry conviction of their truth to the mind of every patriot who reads them. In the language of a distinguished Senator, who arose immediately after General Lane concluded his speech, to express the deep gratification he felt at its delivery, it contained more conservatism, more of genuine nationality, more of that broad sentiment which covers this whole country, than any speech which had been pronounced in the Senate during that session; and it might not be extravagant to add, during half a-dozen sessions.

No man has a purer or a brighter record as a citizen, a patriot, or a statesman, than General Lane. The prudence, wisdom, firmness, and ability, which he has displayed in all the responsible trusts committed to him, whether as the commander of armies in battle, or as a legislator in the State or national councils, illustrate his fitness for the second office in the gift of the nation, for which he has been unanimously nominated.

In sunshine and in storm he has been true to Democratic principles, as the needle to the pole.

His sound national views of governmental policy, with a patriotism broad enough to embrace with equal warmth his *whole country*, commend him to national, conservative men, in every quarter of the Union.

But few public men have ever lived so strongly entrenched in the affections of the people as General Lane. From the toiling masses he has risen to his high position by the force of his intellect, and the energy and purity of his character. With no vanity to grow into arrogance from success, he is as simple and unpretending in his manners as a child, endowed with some of the noblest attributes that can dignify man—brave, generous, kind, and true. While he commands the admiration, he wins the warmest friendship, alike of the high and the low, the rich and the poor.

Pages might be written, giving the details of many noble, brave, and generous deeds, which have characterized his eventful life, which are the secret of his success, and the reason of his strength with the people, who are always prompt to appreciate and reward merit.

In conclusion, we will relate only one incident which occurred after

the suppression of hostilities by the Rogue river Indians, in southern Oregon, in the spring of 1853, an incident which illustrates his sterling patriotism, and the kindness and generosity of his heart, which stamps him as one of the noblest of nature's noblemen.

As soon as General Lane heard of the outbreak he left his home, and repaired to the scene of hostilities as a volunteer, and placed himself under the command of Captain Alden, of the 4th infantry, United States army. The regular troops not being sufficient to quell the disturbance, volunteers were called for. Governor Curry, learning that General Lane had proceeded to the scene of action, forwarded him, at once, a commission of Brigadier General. The hostilities were promptly suppressed by a short but decisive battle at Table Rock, on the part of the regulars and volunteers, with the Indians, in which General Lane was severely wounded in the right shoulder; when, through his great influence with the Indians, a treaty of peace was made with them. At the ensuing session of Congress a law was enacted to pay the volunteers for their services. Major Alvord, the United States paymaster, paid the troops in full, with the exception of General Lane, who did not appear to claim the amount due him. He then wrote to him that there were due for his services about four hundred dollars. General Lane replied, that he had offered his services, without intending to receive any compensation, simply because he deemed it his duty, whenever a war broke out in his country, to contribute his aid in suppressing it, desiring no other reward than the consciousness of having done his duty in aiding to protect the homes and the firesides of his people from the assaults of the enemy, and directed the amount due him to be paid for the benefit of two orphan boys, the only survivors of the Ward family, who were most cruelly murdered by the hostile Indians. These were the children of a large family of emigrants, whom General Lane had never seen, but whose active sympathies were deeply touched by the cruel butchery of the entire family, except these two little boys saved from the slaughter, but left without a home to shelter them, or a friendly hand to relieve them in their deep distress and destitution.

The life of General Lane will stand out prominently in history as that of a remarkable man, illustrating the fact that the humblest individual may, under our free and liberal institutions, attain the highest point of distinction, by industry, energy, and perseverance, and will furnish an example to incite ardent and ambitious minds to emulate his virtues, and cultivate their noblest faculties, with the confident assurance of the most triumphant success.