

PUBLISHED

*For the Benefit of the Clay Monument Association.*



CEREMONIES

AT THE

LAYING OF THE CORNER STONE

OF THE

National Monument,

TO

HENRY CLAY,

NEAR LEXINGTON, KY.

WITH

DR. BRECKINRIDGE'S ORATION,


DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION.

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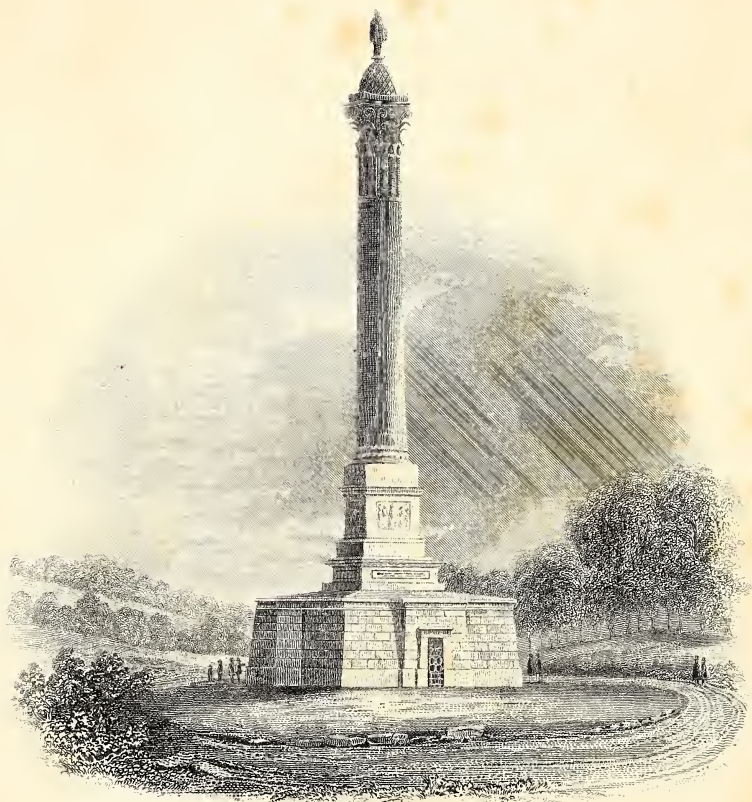
1857.





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*National Monument at Lexington Kentucky.*

IN MEMORY OF

HENRY CLAY.

# REPORT

OF THE

CEREMONIES ON THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1857,

AT THE

## Laying of the Corner Stone

OF A

NATIONAL MONUMENT,

TO BE ERECTED

NEAR LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY,

TO THE MEMORY OF

### HENRY CLAY;

TOGETHER WITH THE

ORATION DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION,

BY THE

Rev. ROBERT J. BRECKINRIDGE, D.D., L.L.D.

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PUBLISHED BY THE CLAY MONUMENT ASSOCIATION:

1857.

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Entered according to the act of Congress, in the year 1857, by  
**THE CLAY MONUMENT ASSOCIATION,**  
In the Clerk's Office of the District of Kentucky.

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CINCINNATI GAZETTE CO.

# LAYING THE CORNER STONE

OF THE

## NATIONAL MONUMENT TO HENRY CLAY.

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THE ceremonies incident to laying the Corner Stone of the Clay Monument, to be erected in the Lexington Cemetery, took place on Saturday, the 4th of July. The time selected for the purpose—the anniversary of the birth of our National Independence—was well suited to the grand and solemn occasion. The day was auspicious—the heavens smiling cloudlessly above the brilliant and patriotic display. The business houses and private dwellings on the street leading to the Cemetery, were adorned with flowers and evergreens, flags, and banners, and streamers; and the side-walks, windows and house-tops, were thronged with men, women, and children, to witness the great procession. Captain BUFORD, the Chief Marshal, with his Staff, superbly mounted and caparisoned, had every thing in order by nine o'clock, when the line of march was commenced from "head-quarters," opposite the Phoenix Hotel, amid the thunder of artillery and the enlivening music of some four or five splendid Bands in attendance.

The Masonic Fraternity, to whom the ceremonies were entrusted, were largely represented, and their magnificent regalias added greatly to the beauty and splendor of the pageant. The Odd Fellows were also out in considerable numbers and in full dress.

The military present consisted of Capt. Goins' Artillery Squad of Frankfort, Falls City Guards of Louisville, Guthrie Greys, and Continentals, of Cincinnati, National Guards of St. Louis, Independent National Guards of Indianapolis, City Guards of Baltimore, and the Madison Guards of Richmond, Ky.

The Fire Companies present were the Lafayette and Union Companies of Louisville, and the several Companies of Lexington.

The family carriage, which was presented to Mr. Clay by the Citizens of Newark, N. J., in 1833, which was the only one in the procession admitted into the Cemetery grounds, was ornamented with white funereal plumes and wreaths of evergreens and flowers. It was occupied by Aaron Dupuy, an old negro servant of Mr. Clay, who had been in his service for many years. In the back seat was a bust of Mr. Clay, and the engraving of his leave-taking of the Senate.

Long before the procession arrived at the Cemetery, a large concourse had assembled and were in waiting, occupying every eligible point to witness the interesting ceremonies.

Upon the platform near the foundation of the Monument, were the members of Mr. Clay's family, consisting of Thos. H. Clay and James B. Clay and their families, Isaac Shelby and family, and others.

The following distinguished gentlemen were observed on and in the vicinity of the platform: John C. Breckinridge, Vice President of the United States, Governor Morehead, Senator Crittenden, Hon. James Guthrie, Hon. Garrett Davis, Ex-Gov. Trimble of Ohio, Chief Justices Geo. Robertson and T. A. Marshall, J. B. Huston, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Kentucky; Hon. James Harlan, Attorney General; Hon. Richard Hawes; Dr. Green, of the Normal School; President Bartlett, of the American Council of the U. S.; Hon. Oscar F. Moore, of Ohio; Roger W. Hanson, Esq.; Zophar Mills, Esq., of N. Y.; and the President and Directors of the Clay Monument Association.

The Masonic Fraternity occupied the enclosure where the ceremonies were performed, while the Military, Firemen, and the rest of the procession, selected such positions in different portions of the grounds as they preferred.

In the stone was placed a box hermetically sealed, in a glass jar a history of the occasion, with the names of the President and Vice President of the United States, the Governor of Kentucky, the names of the Officers of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, and of the President and Directors of the Clay Monument Association; a copy of each of the papers of the city of Lexington; a picture of Cincinnati in 1802, published in the Cincinnati Gazette; also a parchment prepared by the Cincinnati Guthrie Grays, in testimony of their appreciation of the man who preferred to be right rather than to be President of the United States; a medallion in copper, struck from the die of the Clay Gold Medal, presented by the Clay Festival Association of New York, with a copy of all the festive songs and odes sung and read before that Association for the last twelve years, and giving a history of that Association; also a beautiful medallion likeness of Mr. Clay, by C. Younglove Haynes, Esq., of Philadelphia, together with copies of Philadelphia papers from the same gentleman, with coins of the present day, (American), in gold, silver, and copper; a Bible and other articles.

The President of the Association, H. T. Duncan, Esq., in a graceful manner, assigned to the M. W. Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, Mr. T. N. Wise, the duty of laying the Corner Stone, and the solemn and deeply interesting ceremonies were conducted by him in the presence of the assembled multitude in the most imposing and impressive manner. The stone was laid to its place, and pronounced by the Grand Master well formed, true, and trusty, when corn, wine, and oil, were poured upon it, and the ceremonies concluded by prayer. During and preceding the ceremonies, the Newport U. S. Band discoursed the sweetest music, and salutes were fired.

After laying the Corner Stone, the procession was re-formed and proceeded to the Fair Grounds, where the address was to be delivered. The vast amphitheater was filled to repletion, with the gathered beauty, intellect, and worth of Kentucky. A spectacle more brilliant and beautiful has rarely gladdened the eye or heart of the most enthusiastic. The gay colors of the



splendid dresses of the women, intermingled with the immense crowd of sturdy men, were picturesque in the highest degree; the whole bright circle was like to a rich garland of flowers, overhanging the area of green below, where the military marched and countermarched. The music was as fine as ever thrilled a soldier's heart, or lent enchantment to a fairy scene. The movements of the troops within the circle upon the green,

“With waving arms and banners bright,”

surrounded as they were by the beauty and chivalry of the State, presented a grand and stirring spectacle, and aroused the most generous and ennobling emotions. When the great crowd had become somewhat settled, the Band struck up the national air of the Star Spangled Banner, in a style more thrilling and touching than any we had ever heard. The fine toned instruments seemed to breathe the very words of the truly beautiful and stirring song, and inspired a deep and enthusiastic feeling of patriotism, pride, and pleasure.

After prayer by the Rev. E. F. Berkley of the Episcopal Church of this city, the orator of the day, Rev. Ro. J. Breckinridge, D.D. was introduced to the crowd by H. T. Duncan, Esq. The speech of Dr. Breckinridge was alike worthy of the great Statesman in gratitude for whose public services this magnificent ovation was gotten up; to the occasion itself which had drawn together the largest assemblage of the free citizens of our common country that had ever taken place in the West, and to his own reputation as one of the most chaste, classical, and eloquent speakers of the age. It was a noble tribute to the life and services of Kentucky's most distinguished dead son, by one of her greatest living sons, and was alike worthy of both. It was not to be expected that any considerable number of this vast concourse of people could hear this oration; no man was ever gifted with sufficient power to have made himself heard by such an assemblage; but the few who did hear it were delighted with this great effort of a master mind. We are gratified to announce, however, that Dr. Breckinridge's speech is to be shortly presented to the public in an enduring form, as a just tribute to him to whose memory this work of gratitude has now been dedicated.

After the speech, dinner was served up, on the tables prepared in the shade for the purpose, to strangers, while those from the more immediate surrounding country, had basket pic-nics on all parts of the ground.

At 4 o'clock the military were reviewed by Governor Morehead, and this was probably the most beautiful display in the whole proceedings of the day. The military occupied the hollow on the city side of the Fair Grounds, while the immense concourse of spectators, men, women, and children, occupied the green sloping hill a little beyond, commanding a full view of the evolutions of the troops. The wind being favorable, every note of the splendid music of the Newport Band, which played alone during the review, was borne full upon the ear of all present.—The glittering armor, waving plumes, and the wonderful precision of the movements of the troops, presented a scene of true grandeur, and one well calculated to inspire enthusiasm and make the

pulses fly. The whole hill side, full length, was covered with gaily dressed ladies, men, and children; and with the fine military display in the valley below, presented a picture of unusual splendor and beauty. This closed the regular proceedings of the day.

"Such honors Ilion to her hero paid,  
And peaceful slept the mighty Hector's shade."

A more brilliant Fourth of July it has never been our good fortune to enjoy, and we can scarcely hope to see such another. Every thing went off quietly and in the best order.

To the gallant Captain Buford, who conducted the affair, many thanks are due for the able and soldierly manner in which he bore himself throughout, and for the general satisfaction he rendered in the discharge of his arduous duties.

The monument, some 120 feet in height, is to be built of the magnesian limestone of this State, which resembles very much the famed Caen stone of Normandy, and is a column modeled after the Corinthian style of architecture, consisting of a stereobate, pedestal base, shaft and capital, the whole surmounted by a statue of the Statesman in bronze.

The stereobate, or sub-base, some 20 ft. in height, and 40 ft. square, is in the Egyptian style, plain and massive, and has its appropriate cornice of very simple character throughout its whole circuit, broken on each side around, a projecting facade in the same style, but of more elaborate finish. In the centre of the southern face is an entrance to a vaulted chamber, of the dimensions 12 by 24 ft., and 16 ft. high in the centre, lighted from above by heavy plate glass fixed in bronze frames in such manner as to be unseen from without. The chamber is of polished marble of Kentucky, appropriately finished as a receptacle for sarcophagi, and, if desirable, a life size statue. The opening is closed by a screen of bronze. The remaining space within the sub-base is a closed vault, access to which is had by means of a doorway, ordinarily closed with masonry.

Above the stereobate or sub-base is the pedestal of the column, divided horizontally into two members, each with its base and cornice. The lower one is  $8\frac{1}{2}$  ft. in height, and the upper 14 ft. in height. The faces of both members of the pedestal are in sunk panel, to be filled ultimately with bas-reliefs, in bronze, if desirable.

Above the pedestal rises the shaft, which, with the base and capital, is 69 feet in height. The lower diameter being 6 feet 8 inches, and the upper 5 feet 10 inches, built solid. The shaft, instead of the ordinary 24 flutes, with their intermediate fillets, is composed of a cluster of 13 spears (one for each of the "Old Thirteen"), the heads of which of bronze, interlaced and grouped with corn leaves and appropriate national emblems, form the capital of the column, conformable, in outline and proportion, to the best examples of the order. On the abacus of the capital rests an acroter of bronze, of a parabolic contour, and formed of ash and ivy leaves, serving as a pedestal to the statue. The latter to be 12 feet in height.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

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*Letter from the President of the United States.*

WASHINGTON, 13th June, 1857.

MY DEAR SIR :

I have received your kind note of the 6th instant, with an invitation from the Committee to be present on the 4th July next, at the laying of the corner-stone of the monument to the memory of Henry Clay.

I can assure you I should esteem it a high privilege to witness the interesting ceremony, and deeply regret that the pressure of public business renders this impossible. I knew Mr. Clay well for many years before his death, and although we often differed on political questions, I always admired his lofty patriotism, his high and chivalrous character, and his commanding eloquence. He has well deserved the monument his fellow citizens are about to erect to his memory; because his life has added lustre to his country. It has strengthened the bonds of that Union which he so dearly loved, and furnishes a noble example as well as a precious legacy, to the future generations of his countrymen.

H. T. Duncan, Esq.

Yours, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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*Letter from Ex-President Fillmore.*

BUFFALO, N. Y., June 26th, 1857.

HON. H. T. DUNCAN,

SIR:—Your letter of the 8th instant, enclosing an invitation from the Committee to be present in Lexington on the 4th of July, at the deeply interesting ceremony of laying the corner stone of the National Clay Monument, arrived here during my absence, and this must be my apology for any apparent neglect in answering it.

I can not be insensible to the honor you have done me by this invitation, and as a friend and admirer of the deceased, nothing could be more gratifying than to be permitted to unite with his neighbors and countrymen in laying the foundation of that monument which is to attest a nation's gratitude to one of its noblest patriots and most gifted statesmen—but I regret to say that my engagements are such that I am reluctantly compelled to decline the invitation.

With many thanks for the honor of being remembered on this most interesting occasion by my friends in Kentucky, and to yourself, personally, for the very flattering manner in which you have been pleased to communicate their request, and

With sentiments of the highest regard, I am truly yours,  
MILLARD FILLMORE.

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*Letter from Hon. Edward Everett.*

BOSTON, 26th June, 1857.

DEAR SIR:—On my return from the West a short time since, I found on my table your obliging letter of the 30th of May, with the invitation of the officers of the "Clay Monument Association," to attend the ceremonial of

laying the corner-stone on the ensuing 4th of July. It would have afforded me the highest satisfaction to be present on an occasion of so much interest, and to listen to a speaker of such distinguished ability, as the gentleman who is to deliver the oration. But a series of engagements to repeat my address on "Washington" in this quarter, will prevent my leaving Massachusetts.

I entertained the highest respect for the patriotic character and life-long services of Mr. Clay. I have often felt the transcendent power and charm of his eloquence; and I enjoyed for years the privilege of his personal acquaintance, and I may venture to add of his confidence. For these reasons, I hope you will allow me to add my mite toward the noble work you are about to erect.

With my best wishes for its successful prosecution, and assurances of friendly personal regard, I remain, my dear sir, sincerely yours,

H. T. Duncan, Esq.

EDWARD EVERETT.

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*Letter from Jared Sparks, Esq.*

CAMBRIDGE, 15th June, 1857.

MY DEAR SIR:—Your favor of the 30th of May came duly to hand, enclosing an invitation to me from the Committee of the Clay Monument Association, to be present at the ceremony of laying the corner-stone on the 4th of July. Allow me to express through you, to the Committee, my best acknowledgments and thanks for this kind mark of their attention.

My recollections of the personal qualities of Mr. Clay, my knowledge of his character and of the great services rendered by him to his country, would alike conspire to give me a very deep interest in uniting with those who will be assembled on that occasion to pay so just and honorable a tribute to his memory; but my destiny turns me in another direction. I expect to sail in two days with my family for Europe. We shall probably be absent about a year. I can only express my best wishes, therefore, that the events of the day may be as auspicious as the object is worthy of applause, and that the Association will meet with all success in carrying out their noble undertaking. I remain, my dear sir, sincerely your friend,

Henry T. Duncan, Esq.

JARED SPARKS.

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*Letter from Hon. Wm. A. Graham.*

HILLSBORO', N. C., June 20th, 1857.

GENTLEMEN:

I very sincerely regret that I cannot be present at the ceremony of laying the corner-stone of the Clay Monument, in Lexington, on the fourth of July, agreeably to your invitation.

The occasion, however, will command my ardent sympathy. Henry Clay was so extraordinary a character in American history, that a public monument is not only due, as a memorial of his illustrious life and service to the Republic, but as a memento of his patriotic teachings, and an incentive to the emulation of his noble example. For near half a century, that he was connected with our national affairs, scarce any thing of moment was transacted, in which he did not bear an eminent part. Entering the halls of Congress when the men of the Revolution were yet in full vigor, and in the maturity of their faculties, he did not finally depart from them until their grand-children had largely participated in the public counsels.

Yet in the conflicts and competitions of three generations of statesmen, (many of them unsurpassed in any age or nation,) his position was throughout conspicuous and commanding: and never at any period challenging so general an approbation as in the sunset of his career, in 1849-50, when, for

the third time, he gave peace to a distracted country. Admired always for genius and eloquence, frankness and courage, he is most missed from the public service, in his enlarged patriotism, his devotion to the Constitution and the Union, his wisdom and conservatism, and capacity for control. Ambitious, doubtless, with the weakness of noble minds, envy and the spirit of faction found no place in his breast: and though disappointed in his aspirations after power to do good, he breathed no sentiment of disloyalty to the Government, nor did "his soul contrive against his *country* aught." Though the boldest of men, he cut no Gordian knots with the sword and prescribed dismemberment for no disease of the body politic; but with a wisdom equal to every emergency, he met events as they arose, adapted his means to the ends to be accomplished, and overcame every difficulty without transcending the legitimate powers of the Government. In diplomacy and foreign intercourse, while keenly sensitive to the national honor and interests, he yet regarded war but as an agency for acquiring honorable peace, the enjoyment of which was so essential to the growth and development of the nation, and the permanent prosperity and happiness of the people.

His monument, therefore, is a monument to the grandeur and progress of the country during the first half of the nineteenth century—to national sentiments, and loyalty, and love to the Union, according to the true theory of the Constitution—to American genius and character, of which no man was ever a more true delineation and representative.

Let it rise, upon the beautiful plains of his beloved Kentucky—middle ground in the territories of the great Republic, but may the solitary influences of his noble and generous sentiments, and extended and purified patriotism, be diffused by it from the Atlantic to the Pacific shore.

Repeating my regrets, that I am unable to unite with you, in the imposing ceremonies of the day, I am, Gentlemen, with great respect,

Your obed't serv't,

WILL. A. GRAHAM.

To Messrs. H. T. Duncan, Benj. Gratz, Horace B. Hill, Henry Bell, Thomas A. Marshall.

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*Letter from Hon. Howell Cobb.*

WASHINGTON CITY, June 15th, 1857.

GENTLEMEN,

It would give me sincere pleasure to accept your invitation to be present at the laying of the corner-stone of the Clay Monument, on the 4th of July next, if my official engagements would admit of it. Being prevented, however, from attending, I avail myself of the opportunity to express my cordial concurrence in the motives which have induced this testimonial to the worth, ability, and patriotism of the man whose memory is thus to be commemorated. It was my lot to enter public life at the time Mr. Clay was playing his last part in the political drama rendered so remarkable by the association of his name and services. I had been taught to look upon him as the formidable and dangerous enemy of the political faith in which I had been reared. It is not strange then that in the ardent temperament of young manhood I should have regarded him as one not entitled to my generous confidence. Under these circumstances my personal association with Mr. Clay in public life began. The time was the memorable session of 1849-'50. The struggle which marks that era in our history is yet fresh in the memory of every one who participated in it. Mr. Clay was a prominent actor in the scene. My official position not only enabled, but required me to observe with anxious solicitude the progress of every measure connected with the adjustment of those questions which then so immediately threatened the peace and integrity of the Union. I was thrown thereby into more intimate association with him and others who bore a conspicuous

and controlling part in the scene, than, under other circumstances, I should have been. It was then and there that I first learned the true character of this great man. Discarding the prejudices of former years, and forgetting the differences which had separated him from the political party with which I had always been identified, I witnessed, with no ordinary satisfaction, the zeal, energy, and power with which he labored to restore peace to a distracted country, and give stability to the Republic. Whether agreeing with, or differing from him in the propositions which, from time to time, he presented to the Senate and the country, I felt impressed with his ability as a statesman and his sincerity as a patriot. Whatever criticisms may be made upon the political life of Mr. Clay, it may be truly said of him, that he loved his country with a freedom from simulation or hypocrisy that admitted of no question, and a devotion that never faltered in its service. No word of mine can add to his stature, or increase the regard in which his name and character are held by his countrymen, but I claim the privilege, on this appropriate occasion, afforded by your partiality, of uniting with them in the expression of sincere regard for his memory as the ablest of statesmen, and the purest of patriots.

I am, very respectfully, your obed't serv't.,

HOWELL COBB.

Messrs. H. T. Duncan, Benj. Gratz, Horace B. Hill, Henry Bell, Thomas A. Marshall, Committee, Lexington, Ky.

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*Letter from Hon. R. C. Winthrop.*

BOSTON, 25th June, 1857.

GENTLEMEN:

I have the honor to acknowledge your obliging invitation for the approaching 4th of July.

It would afford me the highest gratification to witness the imposing ceremonies with which you are about to lay the corner-stone of a Monument to the great orator and statesman of the West. I should take peculiar interest in listening to a fresh eulogium upon his career and character from the flowing and gifted speaker who has been selected for the occasion, and I should count myself fortunate, indeed, if I might add my humble tribute of admiration for the many noble qualities of which HENRY CLAY was so long the living embodiment.

Engagements at home, however, leave me no further hope of being with you, and I can only offer you my grateful acknowledgments for your kind remembrance of me, and my cordial sympathy in all the emotions of pride and of patriotism which will be excited by the occasion.

The Lexington of Kentucky, like the Lexington of Massachusetts, will more and more become a place for the pilgrimage of all who delight to recall the great events and the great men of our history,—and I trust that some of us, who are deprived of the satisfaction of seeing the laying of the corner-stone, may find an opportunity of visiting the Monument after its "top-stone shall have been brought forth with shouting."

I am, Gentlemen, with great respect, your obliged and ob't serv't.,

ROBT C. WINTHROP.

H. T. Duncan, Esq., and others, Committee.

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*Letter from Erastus Brooks, Esq.*

NEW YORK, June 29, '57.

DEAR SIR:—

In answer to the very kind letter addressed, through me, to "the Henry Clay Festival Association," to be present at the laying of the corner-stone of the Clay Monument on the 4th of July, I have the honor to say that your invitation has been most gratefully accepted.

It will not be in the power of the Association to attend as an organization, nor will any large number of members be present as Delegates, but I may say, without pretence or affectation, that the hearts and sympathies of our whole body will be with you at Lexington on this interesting occasion.

It is the privilege of Kentuckians to retain within their own honored Commonwealth all that is mortal of the distinguished dead. The dust of the one mingles with the soil of the other. And in addition to all this, from the beautiful Cemetery of your hospitable city, there will rise a noble column, not only pointing out the dwelling place of the dead, but in its lofty elevation teaching present and future generations to aspire to imitate the patriotism which it commemorates. Yours, indeed, is a great privilege,—but we of New York, and Mr. Clay's countrymen every-where, feel that all have a common share in the fame of one whose genius, stretching far beyond his native land, was as boundless as humanity itself.

We are reminded by our meeting this evening, that just five years have passed this day since Henry Clay died at the Capitol of the Nation, but passing years and days only seem to teach us that we honor one who was the bright particular star of his time and country.

We send you some memorials of our Association, making up a part of the incidents of its history during the twelve years past, and in the hope that it may be convenient to deposit them beneath the monument, and near the corner-stone which is to be laid under circumstances so imposing.

With very sincere regrets that it will not be in my power to be with you in person on the 4th of July,

I have the honor to be, with great respect and esteem, your friend,  
ERASTUS BROOKS.

In behalf of the Henry Clay Festival Association  
Henry T. Duncan, Esq., President Clay Monument Association.

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*Letter from Hon. Henry Wilson.*

NATICK, Mass., June 20, 1857.

GENTLEMEN:—

I have received your very kind invitation to be present on the occasion of laying the corner-stone of the Monument which a grateful people are to raise to the memory of the Orator and Statesman. It would afford me the most sincere gratification to unite with the people of Kentucky, on the lovely spot where rest the mortal remains of Henry Clay, in laying the foundation stone of the Monument which shall rise to mark the place of his last repose. It was my good fortune, but a few weeks ago, to visit his home, and to stand by his grave, and I can assure you that, if it was in my power, I would gladly go from Massachusetts to Kentucky to unite with you, on the 4th of July, in beginning, with appropriate ceremonies, the pious work of erecting a memorial to the memory of a Statesman who so largely influenced the public affairs of this country and age.

Yours truly,

HENRY WILSON.

To Messrs. H. T. Duncan, Benj. Gratz, H. B. Hill, Henry Bell, and T. A. Marshall.

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*Letter from Hon. Percy Walker.*

MOBILE, June 20, 1857.

GENTLEMEN:—

Your letter, inviting me to be present at the laying of the "Corner-stone of the National Clay Monument" at Lexington, on the 4th of July next, has been received.

It is proper that Kentucky should pay such an honor to the memory of her most distinguished citizen, to one whose genius and eloquence have shed

upon her so much lustre—whose statesmanship was known and acknowledged of all men, and whose name is one of the few that will not die.

I regret that my engagements are such as to prevent my being present upon an occasion so suggestive of national pride—so interesting to those who regard the lives of such men as Mr. Clay as affording the best illustration of the excellence of our Republican system.

Whether on the hustings, where men were to be swayed by stirring eloquence, passionate appeals, or cogent reasoning—in the Courts, in whose calm precincts, cold logic was needed, or in the Senate, where “high argument” was held, he was equally at home, coercing from all the acknowledgment of his great powers, and winning admiration for his knightly bearing, his wondrous eloquence, his undaunted courage, and sincere purpose.

Kentucky holds his ashes, but his fame forms a part of our national renown. Again, regretting my inability to accept your invitation,

I am, respectfully, your ob't. servant,

PERCY WALKER.

Messrs. H. T. Duncan, Benj. Gratz, H. B. Hill, Henry Bell, and T. A. Marshall,  
Committee.

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*Letter from Hon. James A. Stewart.*

CAMBRIDGE, MD., June 24th, 1857.

TO MESSRS. H. T. DUNCAN, and others:

DEAR SIR:—Allow me to express my profound acknowledgment for the honor you have conferred upon me, by your kind invitation to be present on the “grateful occasion” of laying the corner-stone of the National Clay Monument, at Lexington, on the ensuing 4th of July.

I have long cherished an ardent desire to view that highly favored portion of our common Country, interesting, not only on account of the beauty of its scenery and fertility of its soil, but absolutely hallowed by the associations connected with the domiciliary scenes of the illustrious and world-renowned patriot. Such a theater must always be memorable and inciting to every lover of his country; especially upon such a “deeply interesting occasion” as you propose, would a visit be intensely agreeable to me; but, gentlemen, I must forego the participation, as it is out of my power to attend.

The fame of Henry Clay is immortal, and it requires no labored edifice to perpetuate his name, but it is ever grateful to our feelings, to perform a patriotic service. The very day you have designated is peculiarly appropriate for such a glorious and devotional enterprise under all the circumstances that mark the present era in the country's history.

I hope all the incidents of the day and the occasion may conspire to impart additional interest to the consecration of our glorious Anniversary, and give, if possible, brighter lustre to the escutcheon of all our patriot saints.

Very truly, your ob't serv't,

JAMES A. STEWART.

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*Letter from Hon. Justin S. Morrill.*

STRAFFORD, VA., June 26, 1857.

DEAR SIR:—Your invitation to be present at the time selected, the 4th of July, to lay the Corner-Stone of the National Clay Monument, at Lexington, Ky., has been received, and while I feel that no occasion would give me a more hallowed pleasure—paying a tribute, as I should, to the memory of the idol of my boyhood, and chief in manhood—I shall be compelled to forego it, and accept other and less grateful duties.

In the muster-roll of great names which our whole country loves, and which it should be taught to love, there is not one which commands the suffrages of more hearts than that of the gallant Kentuckian, who would “rather be right than be President.” It was a leading characteristic of him, that



whatever his head suggested, and heart approved, found a courageous utterance. Certainly the whole nation approves of your design, and in its present hands it can not be tardily executed. It is eminently fitting that Kentucky should lead, as well in sorrow for his irreparable loss as in honor to his memory, by raising a monument worthy of him who has elevated the character, not only of his own State, but of the Nation, as an orator, statesman, diplomatist, and above all as A MAN.

Very respectfully yours,

JUSTIN S. MORRILL.

Messrs. H. T. Duncan, Benj. Gratz, Thos. A. Marshall, &c., of the Clay Monument Association, Lexington, Ky.

*Letter from Hon. Aaron V. Brown.*

WASHINGTON, June 22d, 1857.

GENTLEMEN:—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your invitation to be present at the laying of the corner-stone of the National Clay Monument.

The day—the place—the orator selected, and most of all the many National Associations which cluster around the great name which that Monument is to bear, will truly make it a “deeply interesting and grateful occasion.”

For nearly half a century the giant-names of America have been those of Jackson, Clay, Calhoun, Adams, and Webster. Around them parties have been formed and political battles have been fought, with a skill and fortitude never surpassed. But they have all now gone down to the grave. The vehement passions have subsided which a noble and generous rivalry for fame and the advancement of their country's good had engendered, and now a grateful and admiring country is building monuments to their memory.

Three of them died at the Capitol, exhibiting, in their exit, the most sublime and instructive moral spectacle ever presented to their countrymen. A spectacle of noble and generous confidence in each other, notwithstanding the wide differences of opinion which had separated them through their lives.

When the dead body of Mr. Calhoun, the first of this great trio who departed, was borne into the Senate Chamber, among the crowd of Senators who assembled to pay the last sad tokens of respect, you saw the tall and manly form of your own great Statesman and Orator, you heard and felt the touching tones of his eloquence, when advancing and standing over the mortal remains of his great compeer, he exclaimed: “Mr. President, I was his senior in years—nothing else. According to the course of nature, I ought to have preceded him. It has been decreed otherwise: But I know that I shall linger here only a short time, and shall soon follow him. And how brief is the period of human existence allotted even to the oldest among us! Sir, ought we not to profit by the contemplation of this melancholy occasion? Ought we not to draw from it the conclusion, how unwise it is to yield ourselves to the sway of the animosities of party feeling? How wrong to indulge in those unhappy and hot strifes which too often exasperate our feelings and mislead our judgments in the discharge of the high and responsible duties which we are called on to perform.”

Excellent, noble sentiments! When did a Nation ever stand in greater need of such counsel? We can well imagine that we almost hear his commands to us as we rear his Monument, to engrave upon it for the benefit of all his countrymen, this motto,—“Let your virtues, not your passions, be immortal.”

The prophecy of Mr. Clay, “I, too, shall soon follow him,” was not long in its fulfillment.

On the 1st day of July, 1852, the mortal remains of Mr. Clay were borne into the same hall and surrounded by very nearly the same Senators, who,

one by one, imitated the great example which he had set them only two short years before. One of his ablest opponents, Gen. Cass, who had fought perhaps, more pitched battles against him than any one else on the stage of action (save, perhaps, Mr. Benton,) came forward, and whilst gazing upon his inanimate remains, exclaimed: "Another great man has fallen in our land, ripe, indeed, in years and in honors, but never dearer to the American people than when called from the theater of his services and renown to that final bar where the lofty and lovely must all meet at last. But he has passed beyond the reach of human praise or censure, and his name and fame will be proudly cherished in the hearts of his countrymen for long ages to come—yes, they will be cherished and freshly remembered when these marble columns shall themselves have fallen, like all the works of man, leaving their broken fragments to tell the story of former magnificence, amid the very ruins which announce decay and desolation."

The portals of the tomb had but just closed upon the remains of Mr. Clay, before they were opened to receive those of Mr. Webster, who, though breathing his last not at the Capitol, but at his own favorite Marshfield, received for his virtues and his talents the profoundest homage from those who, during a long life, had differed from him in opinion.

These three examples of doing justice to political opponents, of which Mr. Clay's was the first, and perhaps the most salutary in its influence, ought never to be lost sight of. No reference to them can be too frequent, no description of them, however imperfect, can be too often attempted. If differences in political opinions are to grow into enmities, and these enmities are to last for ever, then it is no infidelity to say, that man was made for war and havoc, and not for the high purposes of enlightened Christian civilization.

But I forbear. Official duties at the Capitol will forbid my presence, and I must be content to send you the assurance, that although absent in person, my spirit will mingle freely with yours on the great occasion, in paying the highest honors to the genius, eloquence and patriotism of Henry Clay.

I am, very truly, your ob't serv't,

AARON V. BROWN.

To Messrs. H. T. Duncan, Benj. Gratz, and others, Committee, &c.

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*Letter from Hon. J. Morrison Harris.*

BALTIMORE, June 27, 1857.

GENTLEMEN:—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your invitation to attend upon the ceremonies incident to laying the corner-stone of your proposed Monument to Henry Clay, on the 4th of July, proximo.

I do not know any thing of a public national character from which I would derive more pleasure, than such an occasion, occurring as it does, at the old home of the immortal man whom it is intended to honor, and thus surrounded with associations of deepest interest. It may well be said of Henry Clay, that he needs no monument to perpetuate his great fame in the memory of the American people, his career of illustrious services being memorial enough; but I can readily understand with how much of pride and satisfaction the people of Kentucky, as of the country at large, will always contemplate the Monument which you propose to associate with his name.

I greatly regret that business engagements will deprive me of the pleasure of witnessing your ceremonies, and wishing you the greatest success in your undertaking,

I have the honor to be,

Your obedient servant,

J. MORRISON HARRIS.

Messrs. H. T. Duncan, and others, Committee, Lexington.

*Letter from Hon. Wm. D. Lewis.*

PHILADELPHIA, July 1, 1857.

GENTLEMEN :—

The possibility of my being able to avail myself of your invitation to be present at the imposing ceremony to take place on the 4th inst., of laying the corner-stone of the National Clay Monument, at Lexington, has induced me to delay till the last moment apologizing for my necessary absence.

Believe me, I yield to this necessity with sincere regret, having been honored from early life with the friendship of the great Statesman, in remembrance of whom you are about to assemble, and whose name and services are the common property of his country. His public acts and beneficent policy are known to the Nation, but the frankness of his nature and nobleness of his heart were known to me as they could have been known to but few, even of his immediate fellow-citizens. It would have, therefore, been to me a melancholy satisfaction to have witnessed the initiatory proceedings towards rearing a Monument, which may for a time be a visible memento of the illustrious deceased, although, however stable it may be, it will be long outlived by his fame.

With great respect and regard,

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your friend and servant,

WM. D. LEWIS.

Messrs. H. T. Duncan, B. Gratz, H. B. Hill, Henry Bell, and Thos. A. Marshall, Committee, Lexington, Ky.

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*Letter from Hon. Thos. L. Harris.*

PETERSBURG, ILL., June 23d, 1857.

GENTLEMEN :—

I thank you for the invitation you have given me, to attend the ceremony of laying the corner-stone of the "National Clay Monument." Nothing could afford me greater satisfaction, than to be present on such an occasion, and join in bearing testimony to the eminent talents and patriotism of that wonderful man.

I was not originally a political friend of Mr. Clay; but co-operating with him in the passage of the adjustment measures of 1850, and sharing his acquaintance and confidence during that memorable struggle, all antipathies were forgotten in admiration of his patriotism and eloquence, which never were more conspicuous than during that season of public peril. From that time forward, no one has entertained for Mr. Clay, or his memory, higher regard than myself, which I shall manifest, if in my power, by being present on the day you have so properly chosen to inaugurate your memorial, which, however splendid or enduring it may be, cannot, in these respects, equal his fame, or adequately bear testimony to his public service.

I am your obedient servant,

THOS. L. HARRIS.

Messrs. H. T. Duncan, Benj. Gratz, Horace B. Hill, Henry Bell, Thos. A. Marshall.

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*Letter from Hon. Jacob Broom.*

PHILADELPHIA, June 30, 1857.

GENTLEMEN :—

I regret that existing engagements will deny me the pleasure of accepting your kind invitation to be present on the 4th day of July next, at the laying of the corner-stone of the National Clay Monument.

Although absent, I may nevertheless be permitted to express the great pleasure I experienced in witnessing those emotions of patriotism and na-

tional pride which lead the American people to commemorate the public virtues of our eminent and illustrious countrymen. It is, indeed, the pulse which indicates the health of the nation; for when that pulse shall beat but feebly, it will be an evidence of impaired vigor, if not of constitutional decay. On the other hand, a lively and grateful recollection of the character and services of those who have devoted the best energies of life to the welfare of their country, imparts a healthful vigor to the body politic, and animates with noble impulses the spirit of its members.

In common with my countrymen, especially with those assembled on this interesting occasion, I hail with pride and delight this manifestation of a people's gratitude to the memory of an able and devoted patriot, who, by his ardent love of country, and fervent zeal for its welfare, has rendered his name immortal. Yes! give to his memory a *National* monument, for he was himself an ornament to the Nation. With a spirit far above the mere affairs of party, he could join the immortal Webster and Calhoun in laying their hearts upon the altar of their country, and, in forgetfulness of party, with the incense of patriotism, dispel the clouds of danger which lowered over our National Union.

"HONOR TO HIS MEMORY, PEACE TO HIS ASHES."

Very respectfully, your ob't serv't,

JACOB BROOM.

Messrs. H. T. Duncan, Benjamin Gratz, Horace B. Hill, Henry Bell, Thos. A. Marshall, Committee of "Clay Monument Association."

# AN ORATION

TO COMMEMORATE

# HENRY CLAY;

DELIVERED IN THE AMPHITHEATRE OF THE FAIR GROUND,

AT LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY,

ON THE

OCCASION OF LAYING THE CORNER STONE

OF THE

*National Clay Monument,*

ON THE FOURTH DAY OF JULY, 1857,

BY ROBERT J. BRECKINRIDGE.

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PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION:

IN AID OF THE MONUMENTAL FUND.

1857.



# ORATION.

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MY COUNTRYMEN:

It is by no choice of mine, that, bent under the infirmities of advancing age, and enfeebled by the ravages of protracted suffering, I stand here to-day to discharge a duty I have not been permitted to decline. Five years ago, when the remains of Mr. CLAY were brought back to us, they who had in charge the solemnities of that occasion, hardly excused my utter inability, from physical prostration, to discharge a duty similar to this. There were personal and there were public reasons, there were considerations made sacred by ancestral ties, which forbade me, all unfit as I am, thus doubly urged, to refuse what powers are left me, to this great occasion,—this last testimony of the generation to which I belong, and of my own people amongst whom I dwell. We have done all that mortals can. One line upon the base of that monument whose foundation we have this day laid, will express our finished work. Inscribe upon it, A GRATEFUL COUNTRY TO HER GREAT CITIZEN.

It only remains that I attempt to anticipate the judgment of posterity. Let us throw ourselves forward into coming ages, and mingle our thoughts with the thoughts of our children's children, and strive to make articulate that great and distant award. It is the lot of man to be forgotten; the lot even of greatness to be obscured, as name

after name is added to the roll which envelops all generations. As the eager footsteps of our race advance, and the Past recedes further and further, mankind can cherish only the greatest names; and even these rather in their vital spirit than in the minute record of their achievements. Here, to-day, by the unanimous judgment of the living generation, we are dealing with a name which cannot be forgotten. But let us respect the necessities of posterity, the very weakness of humanity, the inexorable demands of time, nay, the very nature of fame itself. It is not so much the particular acts of the most illustrious man, as it is the man himself, that distant generations can appreciate. It is the sum and spirit of a grand career, and not its separate parts which after ages cherish. Nor is it even the man and the career considered of themselves; high as he may have risen, and long and glorious as it may have been, that can justify the highest judgment of posterity. The temper of the age in which he lived, and the manner in which it affected him, and he controlled it; the point at which he started—the difficulties he surmounted—the rivalry he overcame—the ends at which he aimed—the means by which he wrought; the theatre on which he acted—the spirit of his whole course—the tenor and influence of his life,—all, all must pass that high and just ordeal, and must incur that irreversible decree, after which alone is enduring fame. If our applause shall be the echo of the applause of distant generations, the grand condition is, that it must be the truthful and impartial result of a scrutiny like this. Every great thought is imperishable; but it must be supremely great to abide forever in its separate form. Every great name is a part of the influence which pervades all generations; but its light must be transcendent, to abide singly and in its distinct glory, as ages pass away.



HENRY CLAY was born in the county of Hanover, near Richmond, the Capitol of the ancient Colony of Virginia, on the 12th day of April 1777. He died at Washington City, the Capitol of the United States of America, while serving as a Senator from the commonwealth of Kentucky in the national Congress, on the 29th day of June, 1852. His public life, from his commencement of the practice of the law till his death, lasted about fifty five years, far the greater part of which was passed in the service of his country; —a public life hardly matched in its duration and splendor by any other in our annals. He lived a little over seventy-five years; three quarters of a century more fruitful in events, or more decisive in their influence upon human society, had hardly occurred in the history of mankind. Behold that fair haired Colonial child, born in obscurity; and then behold that majestic dying sage, with the eager gaze of many millions of freemen fixed upon him! Behold the glorious life which lies between these two periods; and then behold the period of the world's history covered by that long life! An inheritance, as he said himself, of indigence and ignorance, resulting in every form of greatness to which his efforts had been directed, and in unquestioned pre-eminence as the first citizen, the first parliamentary leader, and the first Senator in the world! An existence whose commencement witnessed the first upheavings of the nation in its earliest struggle for a new and free life; whose progress ran parallel with the mighty progress of the nation itself, and with events unprecedented in their force and efficacy, which shook all other nations; and whose mortal close rested upon a universal state of human affairs, and upon a broad and settled glory of his own people, as widely different from the condition which his birth had witnessed, as his own humble infancy differed from the splendor of his ma-

tured triumph. It is a period and scene of things, in which it was no common fortune to live and act. The time, the actors, and the events, are such, that there is glory even to have partaken with them. How much more to have risen, and been maintained by the love and veneration of a great people, in a position of habitual if not chief influence in such an era ; and leaving it only to enter upon a higher state of being, to leave behind no single man qualified to take his vacant place !

It was about eight months after the Continental Congress had issued from the city of Philadelphia, the immortal Declaration of Independence, in the name of the people of the United States, that the pious wife of a faithful and laborious Baptist minister, far off in Virginia, gave birth to her seventh child. Another being added to the innumerable multitude whose common lot it is to come, and go, and be forgotten. A little circle of loving hearts accepting a common but yet precious boon, one more pledge to occupy their lives. How were they to conceive that God had bestowed upon them so great a gift ? How could any mortal suspect, that herein lay concealed a force which at the end of three quarters of a century should be felt wherever true greatness was revered,—a spirit whose mortal influence should surmount the grave, and diffuse itself for good over many generations ? And yet it is impossible to conceive that any training could have been more thorough and complete than that which the scenes, the events, the associations, and the employments, through which he passed during his whole life, furnished for the development of the great nature and gifts of this wonderful man. The language which he learned to speak, was replenished with the divine truth which pervades a christian household, and with the fervent patriotism of a whole people struggling

against odds too great to be counted, for ends more sacred than life itself. The first words he understood were words which sunk into his heart for ever,—COUNTRY, LIBERTY, INDEPENDENCE. The first names he heard beyond his father's threshold, were names that will live for ever,—the name of his neighbor HENRY, the prince of orators and patriots, —the name of his fellow-Virginian, WASHINGTON, the first of mortals. As he was taught to know those who lived and died around him, he was taught at the same time the nature of the struggle which raged so fiercely. Such an one had borne himself bravely in the deadly peril ; such an one had triumphed gloriously, and such an one had fallen still more gloriously ; such an one had given all she had to her country, and though her heart was broken she did not repine. And as his quick intelligence sought beyond the limits of his own circle, and beyond the limits of his own commonwealth, to know his whole country and its people, it was still by means of imperishable names and deeds, that his spirit opened to them all. This is Bunker Hill,—the earth shall melt before its name can be forgotten : this is Charleston, and this is Eutaw, and this Brandywine, and this Monmouth,—all glory to their heroic names : this is King's Mountain, and this is Saratoga, and this is Yorktown,—and lo ! our oppressors have bit the dust. And this loud acclaim, bursting from the grateful hearts of a free people, and swelling in solemn unison over a redeemed Continent, and this great shout of triumph, make articulate to his young heart, that COUNTRY, and LIBERTY, and INDEPENDENCE which he had learned before, are but other words for Patriots, Heroes, and Sages ; that triumph is but another name for God's blessing on the right !

Such was the earliest training of this child, born of English parents in the middle condition of life, both of

whom were descended from early emigrants to the colony. One great domestic incident marked this period; he lost his father when he was about four years of age. Who that has not tried can tell the perils and sorrows of any orphanage, and more than any, one of indigence? And yet it is most wonderful how signal is the care of God for the bereft seed of his own children, and how marvelously frequent is his choice of such, as instruments of the greatest works he accomplishes through human hands? In this case it is not hard to understand how the relation of such an orphan boy to such a widowed mother, situated as they were, and passing through such a period, must have been productive of the most important effects upon his character. And it is easy to see how such a condition would make more striking every special interposition of Divine Providence, in behalf of one springing from an estate so destitute, and led by ways so unusual, and yet so effective, to an eminence so great, so early, and so lasting.

The second period of Mr. CLAY's life commenced with his removal to Richmond, when he was fourteen years of age. He had received but three years' instruction at school; nor had he advanced farther than the simplest elements of knowledge, during this comparatively short period, under the instructions of PETER DEACON, of whom little is known except that he was the only teacher of HENRY CLAY. He was now placed by Captain HENRY WATKINS, whom his mother had married, in the store of RICHARD DENNY, of Richmond. At the end of a year PETER TINSLEY, of Richmond, Clerk of the High Court of Chancery, of Virginia, gave him a situation in his office; and about the same time, namely 1792, his mother removed with his step-father to Kentucky. Thus he who

had been left an orphan at four years of age, now at the age of fifteen years, with such advantages of instruction as three years' schooling in the Slashes of Hanover, and one year's attendance in a retail store in Richmond, might be supposed to offer, according to his own statement, was left to his own control in the city of Richmond, without a guardian and without pecuniary means of support, to make good his way in life from the stool of a junior clerk in the Chancery Court. And he did make good his way. What an illustrious commentary is this, at once upon the nature which God had bestowed on this wonderful man, upon the folly of our common notions regarding the true nature of education itself, and upon the character of our people, our institutions, and our times! That solitary, indigent, and illiterate boy—to all outward appearance might as well expect to scale the heavens, as expect to occupy a seat in the Senate of the United States, within less than fifteen years after he took his seat in that Chancery Clerk's office. To the eye of man, that slender lad at his daily irksome toil, would have been almost the last child of the Republic apt to become the greatest Tribune of the people this nation has ever beheld, and perhaps the first leader and ruler of great Legislative Assemblies the world has ever produced. But he who could have seen what powers lay hid in that frail tement; he who could estimate aright the past and the future training by which those powers had already been quickened into action, and would be more and more developed; he who could have foreseen the great occasions which must come, and the fervor with which they would be seized, and the enthusiasm with which men would hail the advent of one, whose lofty impulses were but reflections of their own best desires; to such a scrutiny as this,

nothing future and contingent could be more assured, than the great career to which this youth was destined.

Five years of his life were spent in Richmond, after his entrance upon his Chancery Clerkship; four of these years were occupied in constant intercourse with Chancellor WYTHE, one of the ablest, best, and most learned men of a period and a Commonwealth renowned for great citizens. At first he was merely his official clerk; soon he became his amanuensis, his pupil, his fellow student, his companion, his friend. So deep was his sense of what he owed to this accomplished man, that he named his first son after him. These four years reveal to us a thousand secrets of the life and accomplishments of HENRY CLAY. A genius rarely matched, had been prepared by a training singular but most powerful; and now the hour and the man had come, to light the pile, to fan the flame, to shape and polish the exquisite material. It cannot be said that Mr. CLAY was habitually a student through life; but no one ever found him ignorant of any thing. It cannot be said that he was highly learned in any department of human knowledge; but he had that higher and broader insight into most parts of knowledge, and that wide and strong grasp of the very essence and element of knowledge itself—whereby the proportions of all truth become clearest to the highest intellects. It cannot be said that he was highly refined in any part of learning; but yet while no man has written or spoken more, and none with less regard to mere elegance, no English style is clearer, or purer than his—and no productions so voluminous in any language will endure a severer ordeal of criticism. Nothing in the career of this remarkable man is more striking and influential, than his long and intimate training under the eye of Chancellor WYTHE. That venerable man, in the maturity

of his great powers, and the ripeness of his immense attainments, watching over, stimulating, and directing for years together, the earnest and intrepid intellect which he had found, lost as it were, by the wayside of life. The quick and ardent spirit of the youth, ripening into manhood under the daily lessons of age made illustrious by great services, great attainments, and great virtues. It is a spectacle not more touching in itself, than it is explanatory of the subsequent career of Mr. CLAY. It is thus that great masters have always been accustomed to form their greatest pupils. It is thus that the highest impulses are given to the human spirit, and received by it. It is thus that the greatest intellects perpetuate their force; that the highest processes of the human understanding become familiar—the deepest secrets of human thought are carefully explored—and the highest forms of knowledge itself are made distinct.

The remaining year which Mr. CLAY spent in Richmond, was especially devoted to the study of law, as his future profession, in the office of Mr. BROOKE, at one time Governor of the State, but then its Attorney General. In 1797, being twenty years of age, he was licensed to practise law by the Court of Appeals of Virginia. It is to be remembered, also, that during the whole period he resided in Richmond, six years in all, five of them were passed in continual relations with the legal profession—a large part of them in habitual intercourse with the greatest lawyers of that age, amongst whom was JOHN MARSHALL, afterwards confessedly the greatest judge our country has produced. There is no marvel, therefore, that Mr. CLAY rose so rapidly to such great eminence at the bar: nor that he maintained his great position through life—notwithstanding the practice of his profession was, during the greater part of

his career, but incidental and irregular. Nor should it be forgotten that during his early life, to the completion of his twentieth year, Richmond, in the vicinity of which he had passed his fourteen earliest years, and in which he had passed the six succeeding years, was not only the focus of all that was most illustrious in Virginia, but also one of the chief centres of influence, touching all national affairs. There was the annual assembly of the Legislature of the State; there the highest judicial tribunals sat; there the highest public officers resided; there the chief men of the Commonwealth resorted on all great occasions; there WASHINGTON, JEFFERSON, MADISON, MARSHALL, and how many more, had made a peculiar fame, dearer, if not so august as that which filled the nation with their praise; and there TAZEVELL, and WALTER JONES, and ROBINSON, and TAYLOR, and NICHOLAS, and ROOT, and how many more, his immediate compeers, were laying, like himself, deep foundations for future eminence. And how many great questions of war and peace—of government and legislation—of foreign and domestic policy, had been decided in his sight and in his hearing, during those twenty years! The war of the Revolution—the glorious peace it conquered—the gradual conviction of the nation against the old Confederation—the formation of the present Federal Constitution—the State Conventions which sat upon it—the establishment of the new National Government—the election and Administration of WASHINGTON—the rise and gradual formation of National Parties—the election of the Second President of the United States, co-incidentally with the emigration of Mr. CLAY to Kentucky. This second period in his life could not have been less fruitful in its influence on him—nay, may have been far more fruitful than the first. He was now a man, and about to launch fearlessly



upon the stream of life. With what powers, with what attainments, with what success, he would soon make manifest, and all men now fully know. With what previous training, upon what grounds to account to posterity for all that followed, it has been my object to disclose. There is no miracle in greatness: there is no miracle in fortune. That which goes before, embraces all that follows after. The gifts of God are uncontrollable by man: the Providence of God is irresistible by man. But the lesson of all greatness is a true lesson. A lesson often ill read by men: seldom unravelled fully: but full of truth and power to all who will study it aright.

At twenty years of age Mr. CLAY took up his abode in Lexington, Ky. in the year 1797, and commenced the third period of his life. Here he remained till his death, fifty-five years afterwards, a resident in this city or its immediate vicinage. He entered immediately upon the practice of his profession, and rose rapidly to great distinction in it. Two years afterwards he married Lucretia Hart, a daughter of one of the earliest and most important citizens of Lexington; who still survives, an object of respect and veneration to us all. The surviving members of his numerous family of children are also in our midst. In 1803 he was elected for the first time to the lower house of the Kentucky Legislature; and before 1811, when he commenced his career as a member of the lower house of Congress, he had served five or six years in the Kentucky House of Representatives, two or three times as Speaker of that body, and also in the Senate of the United States, first during the year 1806, and afterwards during the years 1809 and 1810. This lapse of thirteen years from 1797 to 1811, constitutes the third period of Mr. CLAY'S career;

at the close of which we find him in his thirty fourth year, taking rank, by universal consent, with the first lawyers, the first politicians, the first orators, and the first statesmen of his time. The training which the Revolution itself had commenced, which all that was striking and effective in Virginia had developed and advanced, is now completed in the bosom of Kentucky, and in the Senate of the nation. The point which he has reached may justly be considered one at which few, even of those who are esteemed great and fortunate, ever arrive. With him it is rather the point at which his peculiar glory starts; insomuch that none have thought it needful hitherto, even to trace the influence of all that went before, upon the great glory which followed. In this, as in the two preceding periods, let me briefly attempt to supply this omission.

Kentucky had been separated from Virginia, and had become a sovereign State in 1792; the first and fairest daughter of the Revolution! Her people were in chief part emigrants from Virginia—and of them an immense proportion were officers and soldiers of the Revolution, who had found themselves at the close of that great struggle, broken in fortune by the sacrifices their country had exacted, not always generously, and unfitted in some degree, by a long war, for many of the common demands of life. They turned their resolute faces to this beautiful country, and wrested from savages, through a conflict longer and fiercer than the one they had waged before, the bounty lands which their parent Commonwealth had bestowed on them as a partial recompence for their Revolutionary services. They were simple and heroic men: and whatever there may be of good or powerful in the character of our people now, one fountain of it was in their veins. To them were added, at a later period, multitudes of emigrants from

most of the middle and southern States, men in general not dissimilar from them, and embracing every condition of life. In the midst of this strong, peculiar, and homogeneous population, about twenty years after the first white settlement had been attempted, Mr. CLAY cast his lot for life. After the lapse of more than seventy years since a regular government was formed amongst us, we are not even yet so tamed that feeble men can rise to permanent distinction. Sixty years ago, in the bloom of early manhood, without patrons, without the favor of the great or opulent, without the means of paying his weekly board, as he himself described his condition in the most public and formal manner forty five years afterwards, MR. CLAY commenced his professional career in such a community, and as he habitually declared, in the midst of a bar uncommonly distinguished by eminent members. How just that estimate was, may be easily understood, when we call to mind that amongst the junior members of that bar were JAMES BROWN afterwards of Louisiana, and JOSEPH H. DAVIESS who fell at Tippecanoe; and that its leaders were GEORGE NICHOLAS, the drafter of the Kentucky Constitution of 1792, and the elder JOHN BRECKINRIDGE, the drafter of the Constitution of 1798-9, the author of those famous Kentucky Resolutions of 1798, which give the first organized expression to the constitutional doctrines of the old Democratic party—and afterwards the leading advocate of those doctrines in the Senate of the United States. The influence of this Kentucky training upon MR. CLAY, and the impression he produced and continually strengthened upon such a community, is well enough expressed by saying that of the first thirteen years he spent eight or nine in the Legislature of the State, and the Senate of the United States; and that from his first election in 1803,

till his death in 1852—during fifty years spent chiefly in the public service and occupied with every important topic which agitated the human mind during that eventful period, Kentucky not only refused him nothing, but habitually and joyfully trusted and honored him.

During these thirteen years, Mr. CLAY enjoyed a full and lucrative practice and reached great eminence in various departments of his noble profession. Such is the nature of human society, that in all free countries the first lawyer in any community is its first citizen; and in proportion as the government is popular in its nature, and the exigencies of society are unusual, political eminence is the natural inheritance of the leaders of the legal profession, and public employments are thrust upon them. It is a glorious inheritance; and it were well if men understood better the conditions on which, alone, it ought to be acquired—and felt more deeply the sacred trust which its enjoyment implies. That Mr. CLAY's professional success should conduct him directly to political life, was a result unavoidable except by his own refusal of that preferment which is the most seductive to ardent minds. Having once entered with success upon such a career, the difficulties of retreat and the inducements to advance became more serious at every step; while the professional distinction which opened and constantly widened the new career, furnished, by the varied training which had led to it, a fitness for this higher form of public life. The science of government is, indeed, a far higher science, than the science of merely remedial justice, which is but one department of it; and the duties of true statemanship exceed in importance all other public duties which mortals can discharge. Entering upon a career of public service which continued half a century, and terminated only with his life, there was much that was

striking in the period itself, as well as in all that was personal to Mr. CLAY. The dependence of the Colonies upon a distant government superior to their own, had always limited their absolute independence: and the powers of the Continental Congress,—though extremely limited and not perfectly defined, had made the Confederation in effect a Government. It was not therefore a condition wholly new—but it was, nevertheless, one very different from any they had occupied before, which the American States assumed when the Federal Government was organized under the new Constitution in 1789. The character, the abilities, and the virtues of Washington, added to the recollection of past services which were above all price, had prevented the formation of an organized opposition during his Administration of eight years, which terminated at the period of Mr. CLAY's settlement in Kentucky. But the new Constitution had not been adopted without serious opposition, and considerable amendment: and while the very theory of the Constitution, even if perfectly settled and accepted, touching the grand question of power between it and the several States, would have required the most careful handling during the first years of the new National Government, if not, indeed, at all times: in point of fact, no distinct theory was generally accepted—and parties were gradually maturing those conflicting systems of opinion, which divide the country to the present moment. The passage of the Alien and Sedition Laws during the Administration of the elder ADAMS, followed by other acts only less obnoxious than they, produced that wide outburst of national opposition, which, nourished by other causes, brought the old Democratic party into permanent control of the Federal Government, and placed Mr. JEFFERSON in the Presidency, in 1801. In the mean time, the foreign policy of the Government tended to the divi-

sion of opinion, in a line very nearly parallel with that already indicated, touching the nature of the Constitution itself. The treaty negotiated with Great Britain, by Mr. JAY, during the second term of General WASHINGTON'S Administration, had produced great dissatisfaction in the country; and the deep sympathy of the American people with the progress of the first Revolution in France, produced a certain anxiety in the public mind, at the supposed want or such a sympathy on the part of our Government, almost from its commencement. Toward the close of the last century, these various subjects had excited in the whole nation a high degree of political interest—and had produced the most thorough party divisions. In Kentucky, there were special causes to augment the agitation, which pervaded the minds of men. She was on the eve of making her second Constitution—and in addition to all other fundamental questions, was about to determine that one concerning the hereditary Slavery of the black race, which still clings like a mighty parasite to the whole fabric of our peculiar civilization, and our double system of Governments. She was moreover so vitally involved in that portion of the foreign policy of the nation, which concerned the country beyond the Mississippi, and on both sides of its lower course, as well as the exclusive national use of the majestic stream itself; that nothing but the acquisition of Louisiana by the Federal Government, would probably have prevented the people of the West from anticipating by half a century, that form of individual conquest and organized personal war, which has become, in our day, an element in the movement of society. There were besides, questions less deeply seated, but still immense: questions of finance, of the currency, and of banking—questions of internal improvement, questions of the Federal Judiciary, and the

powers of Congress relative thereto, questions of the public lands, questions of the Indian Tribes and Indian wars, questions of the formation of New States. Such is a mere sketch, designed only to convey some idea of his topics, as before of his associates and his theatre of action, during the thirteen years immediately following Mr. CLAY's emigration to Kentucky, and immediately productive of the great career which he commenced as Speaker of the Lower House of Congress, in 1811. They who are familiar with his opinions and public services, and who are conversant with the civil and political history of the country, will perceive at once from the topics I have enumerated, how many of the great principles which regulated all his public conduct, were definitively settled and announced during these thirteen years; how many of the most difficult questions he was ever called to handle, were carefully investigated at this early period; how many of the greatest efforts of his subsequent life have their germ here. On one single topic of capital importance, connected in its origin with this period of his life, he saw cause afterwards to modify, if not to change an opinion deliberately formed. It is the single incident of the kind, which his long public service furnishes; and it was avowed with perfect frankness, defined with consummate skill, and defended with great and characteristic force. As a Senator in Congress, in the Session of 1810, he resisted with all his force the re-chartering of the Bank of the United States: as a member of the House of Representatives in 1816, and repeatedly afterwards, he urged with equal earnestness, the chartering of a Bank of the United States. His reasons on both those occasions, are preserved in his published works.—The incident itself illustrates some of the greatest qualities of his mind: the steadfastness of his great understanding,

when its demands were satisfied; the noble fairness of it, notwithstanding its great tenacity; the deliberate care with which it reached conclusions which it felt to be final.—Substantially this is his exposition of an incident, which in an ordinary man, would have passed unnoticed. Here is a question of incidental power; if the power is necessary for the execution of any powers clearly granted, then it is granted, otherwise it is withheld. Upon the first examination of the question, it did not appear to me that the incidental power was necessary in any strict sense, while it did appear to me to be in its own nature liable to abuse; and while my settled political principles led me to resist the exercise of doubtful powers. Upon a second and more careful examination of the question, under new and extremely important aspects of public affairs, I became satisfied that the disputed power was not only necessary, but in a manner indispensable to extricate the country and secure some of its highest interests. To this latter opinion I adhere, and abide by the judgment of my country upon the reasons for the change of opinion, which I have laid before it.

It is far beyond the limits of a sketch like this, to discuss the merits of the particular principles avowed by Mr. CLAY; or to pass sentence on the great and numerous questions embraced in his hundred published speeches; or to illustrate, one after another, the incidents of his long public life; or to estimate the separate parts of that immense mass of policy and legislation, which grew under his hands into a mighty system. Duties such as these belong to far different hands, far different occasions. Independently, altogether, of the judgment we may form for ourselves, of any, or even the greater part of these particulars, there is a higher judgment which we may form of him to



whom they stand related in a manner more or less intimate, and of the influence which he exerted, or sought to exert, through them, upon his country, his age, and his race. At the very commencement of his professional life, we find him ardently advocating the distinctive opinions of what was called at that time the Republican, in contra-distinction to the Federal party; the questions which separated them having particular relation to the powers of the General Government, the mode of construing the Federal Constitution, the rights of the States, and the Foreign policy of the country. By the time the former party had become firmly established in the control of the government, by the election of MR. JEFFERSON in 1801, it had acquired, very generally, the name of the Democratic party; and under that appellation, controlled the administration of public affairs, for twenty-eight years, through the Administrations of JEFFERSON, MADISON, MONROE, and the younger ADAMS, to the year 1829. Throughout this whole period, MR. CLAY was thoroughly identified with this great party:— and whether in Congress, as a Foreign Minister, or as a Member of the Cabinet, was for the greater portion of it, one of its most distinguished leaders. Although Gen. JACKSON had always belonged to the Democratic party, and in that sense his election, and the elections subsequently of Mr. VAN BUREN and Mr. POLK, might be claimed as prolongations of the triumph of the party which came into power in 1801, yet from the period of Gen. JACKSON's first election, in 1829, to that of Mr. CLAY's death in 1852, his habitual position to the government had been wholly changed, except during the last three years of his life, embracing the greater part of the Administration of Mr. FILLMORE. The election of General JACKSON was strictly speaking, the initiation of a new era in American parties. It was known

to be his own desire that old party lines should be effaced; and this generous and politic impulse went far to conciliate the old Federal party—long beaten, but still strong. Besides this, his high personal qualities, his long public services, his great military reputation, and a certain feeling widely diffused amongst the people, that the popular will had been too little regarded in the selection of Mr. ADAMS over him by the House of Representatives, four years before, conspired to carry him into the Presidency with an overwhelming burst of popular enthusiasm, in 1829. He found himself in effect, the creator of a new party, personally devoted to himself, and for many years bearing his name. It was impossible for Mr. CLAY to adhere to this party. For it had occurred, that his own influence had turned the scale in favor of Mr. ADAMS, in 1825: and as the result of his conduct on that occasion, he had been assailed with an atrocious malevolence, which has no parallel in our annals, which stung his proud and sensitive spirit more deeply than all the injuries of his life combined, and which is shocking alike by its baseness, its folly, and its efficacy. But, besides this, there were in the very nature of the case, grounds upon which a party created like the one I have described, and led by a man of the controlling influence and iron will of General JACKSON, could never be the party to which such a man as Mr. CLAY was in 1829, could adhere. With the progress of events, the differences became more numerous and more decided: and as the name “Democrat” became gradually restored to the JACKSON party, the name “Whig,” which had been from of old glorious in Britain, and which our own Revolution had made doubly glorious, was gradually assumed by the opposite party, to express their hostility alike to Executive encroachment in the Government, and to Federal encroachment upon the

States—their devotion to the popular, in opposition to the regal element of the National Constitution. It is a great error to allege, that Mr. CLAY in this change of party name changed any principle whatever; or that the new name implied any such thing. The form might vary somewhat in the progress of years and of development; but in point of absolute truth, the old Whig party of the Revolution, and the recent Whig party, which the death of Mr. CLAY, and immediately succeeding events disorganized, were identical with each other, and with the old Republican party which arose with the Federal Constitution itself, and the old Democratic party, which came into power with Mr. JEFFERSON in 1801. Whether the party to which Mr. CLAY adhered during his whole political career, bore one name or another, and whether it was in power or in opposition—there can be no doubt of the distinct and unchangeable fixedness and coherence of his own political opinions, from the beginning to the end. Whatever may be thought of these opinions, no one can doubt the extraordinary courage and ability with which he maintained them. Whatever may be thought of the party, whose popular leader he was during many years of triumph, and which rallied around his person during many years of disaster, it is impossible to deny to him the glory, whether in triumph or defeat, of ranking with the greatest party leaders, the world has ever seen. One of the ablest and most generous of his opponents, standing by his dead body, boldly proclaimed, “*Here lies a man, who was in the public service for fifty years, and never attempted to deceive his countrymen.*”

The period at which Mr. CLAY became conspicuous as a member of Congress, was one which taxed in the highest de-

gree all the powers of our greatest statesmen. Our new government had indeed been fully organized, and had passed through three Administrations, covering twenty years. But each of these Administrations had presented a widely different phase, and the country a widely different state of parties under each; and new phases of administration, and new aspects of parties, and new conditions of the country, were to be powerfully developed. As a mere illustration, let it be remembered, that during the fifty years of Mr. CLAY'S political life, the population of the United States increased more than four fold—its Territorial extent more than five fold—while as the product of those causes, augmented by its enormous progress in wealth, in commerce, in manufactures, in agriculture, in the useful arts, in public works, and in every element of national power, its actual force had increased a hundred fold. It had risen from a condition so little dreaded by great nations, as to require it to vindicate by war with the greatest of them all, its right to be neutral in the bloody conflicts of distant states; and it had risen so high that all great nations felt their own safety to be involved in its foreign policy. It is in the midst of such a progress, through such a development, to such a result, that this man, confessedly so great as an orator, a lawyer, a politician, a parliamentary leader, must vindicate to himself the still higher title of a great Statesman. Two things may be confidentially asserted as the basis of his claim to a title so august. The first is that of all the statesmen of his age, he most prominently carved a policy for his country; a policy, to adopt which, or to reject which, made the system of other statesmen. A policy much disputed, and having various fortune; but a policy, nevertheless, which, whether adopted, or modified, or rejected, had a perpetual

relation to him, as the leader by whose means every great measure must be advocated, or must be resisted. From 1811 till 1852, a period of more than forty years, it cannot be denied that the opinion of HENRY CLAY was an important element in the fate of every important question of national policy. The other fact is still more honorable to his name, still more conclusive of his true greatness. To whatever cause we may see fit to attribute it, whether to his patriotism, to his justice, his sagacity, his love of fame, his ambition, the fact is still unquestionable, that of all the statesmen of his day, he was held by the common voice of mankind to be the most impartial. Impartial in striving to arrange all conflicting interests, impartial in seeking to adjust all threatening difficulties, impartial in settling the boundaries of power and right, impartial in his great spirit, in his wide intelligence, and in his dauntless conduct. It seems to me that these two qualities describe the highest type of statesmen.—A nature so high that nothing can disturb its sublime rectitude, so large that nothing can evade its serene intelligence! The passions of men, the vicissitudes of fortune, the force of events, the course of Providence itself, may give or may deny success to human efforts; may baffle or may respect human wisdom. But if there be such a thing as supreme excellence in statesmanship—every just conception of it, must embrace the qualities I have signalized as fundamental in the character of HENRY CLAY.

And now we are in the midst of that great period of his life—commencing with his election as Speaker of the House of Representatives, and terminating with his death, during which all his great endowments became so conspicuous, through services and efforts so illustrious. He had

never before been a member of that house ; which renders it still more remarkable that he should have been elected its Speaker on the day he took his seat. He was re-elected Speaker six times; and after occupying the chair about thirteen years, left it to become Secretary of State in the Cabinet of the younger ADAMS, in 1825, which situation he held till the close of that Administration in 1829. He was out of Congress during two short periods; first in 1814-15, while engaged as one of the American Commissioners in negotiating the treaty of Ghent, and again in 1820-22, when the condition of his private affairs obliged him to return to the bar. After the close of his service as Secretary of State, in 1829, he remained in private life till the autumn of 1831, when he was elected to the Senate of the United States for the third time, and commenced a Senatorial career even more protracted and glorious than his previous career in the more popular branch of Congress. He was elected to the Senate the fourth time in 1837. In March, 1842, after twelve years continuous service in the Senate, covering six years of the Administration of General JACKSON, the whole of Mr. VAN BUREN'S Administration, and the first two years of Mr. TYLER'S, he resigned his seat in the Senate and retired, as he supposed finally, to private life. In 1848, he was elected to the Senate the fifth time, and was a member of it till his death in 1852. From his entrance into public life, just fifty years had expired at his death; and of these more than forty years had been passed in the most laborious public service. From his entrance into the House of Representatives in 1811, he had served thirteen years as the Speaker of that House—about sixteen years as a Senator, and four years as Secretary of State; thus occupying far the greater part of the last forty years of his life, in a career not matched

by any statesman of his era. It cannot be said with propriety that Mr. CLAY was in private life, even when not engaged in the public service. In or out of office he was still the leader of the great party which shared his sentiments, and approved his public policy; a party many of whose members cherished for twenty years, not only a settled desire, but a vehement passion to elevate him to the Presidency of the United States. Again and again did they urge upon the people his claims upon that high office; and more than once the great prize seems to have eluded him after it had been apparently secured. His immediate friends never doubted that in 1844, when Mr. POLK became the President, Mr. CLAY was really elected by the legal votes; and that but for the frauds on the elective franchise, in New York, Pennsylvania, Georgia, and Louisiana, he would have received an immense majority of the whole electoral vote of the nation. Be that as it may, it was a convention of Mr. CLAY's friends that nominated General HARRISON, who was elected in 1841, and General TAYLOR who was elected in 1849. So that, in effect, the nation may really have been for him, during the twelve years covered by the three successive Administrations of Mr. TYLER, Mr. POLK, and Mr. FILLMORE, from 1841 to 1853. It was, at least, a signal retribution, that the death of General HARRISON and the advent of Mr. TYLER to the Presidency, should have defeated every hope, which caused Mr. CLAY to be set aside in 1841; and that the death of Mr. CLAY should have disorganized it wholly in 1852; if during so many previous years that party had it in its power by concert, by effort, and by zeal, to raise him to the Presidency, and make its own national policy triumphant. I do not say that his glory is less as the first citizen, orator, and statesman, of his age, than it would have been

as the first magistrate of his country. The difference to his party was incalculable. To his country—what and how great—this is not the occasion, nor has the time yet come, to determine.

Concerning this last, longest, and most illustrious portion of Mr. CLAY'S life—there are certain great characteristics so obvious that they cannot be overlooked, and so peculiar as to be perfectly decisive. The most obvious is the superiority which he acquired and maintained in every assembly in which he was called to act; and the mastery he exhibited over every subject submitted to his scrutiny; or to utter all in one word, his indisputable supremacy.—Both Houses of Congress, and the Cabinet of the President, are theatres peculiar in themselves; and the chair of the House of Representatives, and the table around which Ambassadors converse, are also theatres distinct and singular. Moreover Mr. CLAY encountered everywhere, during the forty years under our immediate consideration, all the ablest public men, of an age fruitful of greatness; and it was his fortune to be obliged to confront, through life, questions of the gravest importance, and the largest sweep, and to be obliged to act with regard to interests the most lasting and immense. The general impression has been, that he had enjoyed no previous training, calculated to fit him for eminence on such theatres; and his own candid and modest statements concerning his early life, have strengthened this general impression, which it is probable he deeply shared. I have sought to correct this fallacy, and to explain in the known facts of the case, applied to such a nature and such endowments as his, the causes which produced his superb fitness for his great career. Be that as it may, his success was never for a moment doubtful, in any theatre on which he acted. So



great was the impression produced of his superiority in every thing to which he addressed himself, that on the breaking out of the war with England in 1812, Mr. MADISON desired to confer on him the supreme command of our armies, though his age scarcely exceeded thirty-five years, nor had he ever studied the military art, or had a day's experience in arms. No great genius ever proved itself by this unerring test, applied more variously ; nor does the history of mankind afford a score of names, whose fitness for supremacy in affairs, was more signally marked than his. He rose with every new occasion of his life ; during forty years his country never doubted that he was entitled to rank with the ablest men of his day ; and when he passed away, the settled conviction of enlightened men, throughout the earth, ratified the solemn judgment of his country, that none greater remained.

What followed of necessity, from such a character as this, was the breadth and thoroughness of his way of viewing all subjects, and the wide diffusion of any party that might follow him. Such a spirit must expand itself, as the position from which it acts rises higher and higher ; such a leader must gather to his standard, all everywhere within his influence, who sympathize with his thought and approve his purpose. He could not limit himself to interests purely local ; he could not lend himself to ends purely sectional ; he could not appreciate measures in the narrow bearing of them ; he could not restrain himself to the transitory effects of policy ; he could not conceal from himself the influence of isolated acts upon each other and upon systems of things. The statesmanship of Mr. CLAY, therefore, continually regarded the interests of the whole nation, the relations of the parts of it to each other, and to the whole, and the relations of the nation itself to all other

nations ; and was a statesmanship, whatever may be thought of its wisdom and its fitness in the actual condition of affairs, pre-eminently large, self-consistent, and effective. And the party which adhered to his fortunes, great as may have been its personal devotion to him, was a party the farthest possible from being sectional in any of its aims, or anti-national in any of its principles. Every measure proposed by Mr. CLAY during his illustrious career, may doubtless be called in question by men of other views ; and the great system which they unitedly composed, and the high policy they combined to advance, may be rejected as being unsuitable to our country. Nor is it my purpose to discuss any of these things. But that his conception of the true destiny of this great nation, was pure and august, no one competent to judge will ever doubt, any more than that he followed the conception he had formed, with a spirit singularly true and intrepid—with a heart perfectly republican and national, and with resources whose extent, defeat itself rendered more apparent. A child of the Revolution, a pupil of the great men whom the Revolution produced, a follower of the great national ideas of that sublime era, he was, above all the statesmen of his immediate times, the statesman of the nation that Revolution founded, the nation those great men and those great ideas fashioned.

In a free and great country constituted, as ours is, of many local sovereignties on one hand, and a common national government on the other, and covering, as ours does, an area so immense, and embracing interests so diversified; it must necessarily occur that at certain periods and from various quarters, public opinion which is the very foundation on which our vast system rests, may shake in its furious commotions those very foundations, to which,

in its majestic calmness, it imparts such invincible strength. After all, and under every form which human society can put on, the only question concerning such perils is the question of remedy. Where man is made for the government, the remedy is always bloody and sudden. Where the government is made for man, the remedy may be slow, but must, without madness, always be peaceful. I confess myself unable to understand how revolution and civil war, can be permanently avoided under despotic governments, or can occur in free countries, unless some great portion of the people are steadily bent on mischief, that is, in other words, have ceased to be fit for freedom. In the whole career of Mr. CLAY, nothing more remarkably distinguishes him, than his keen appreciation of the true nature of such perils when they occur, no matter under what aspect; and his prompt and comprehensive manner of dealing with them, according to their respective conditions. Justly estimating the position of the United States with reference to human freedom, he saw more clearly than any statesmen of his age, precisely what we owed, on the one hand, to struggling liberty everywhere, and precisely what we owed, on the other, to established liberty in our own great empire. It is to this profound insight, so characteristic of true genius, not less than to his ardent patriotism in matters that related to his own country, and to his earnest desire for the progress of human civilization in matters that related to all other nations; that we should attribute his conduct, alike in our own seasons of peril from domestic discord, and his conduct toward those in all other countries, who were periling their lives for personal freedom, and national independence. For us—was his just, wise, and patriotic idea—who have acquired these inestimable treasures, let us preserve them by every mutual

concession, and every proof of exalted forbearance; remembering how poor and how low are all secondary considerations, when compared with the peace, the freedom, the independence, the union, the glory of our country. For the oppressed nations, was his equally great conception, the case is precisely reversed. For them, until personal freedom, and national independence are won, all other considerations are insignificant and transitory. To the Republics of South America, therefore, to Greece, to men in all lands who periled life for that without which life is ignominious, he lifted up his eloquent and heroic voice, cheering them and rebuking the sluggish enthusiasm of his country. But to the perilous discord of his own countrymen — rising far above all considerations of party, of section, and of mere policy — his sublime teachings were of forbearance, brotherhood, and mutual concessions for the common liberty, the common glory. On three memorable occasions, the first in the House of Representatives, the other two in the Senate of the United States, it was his fortune to exert his great powers with complete success, in the settlement of the three most threatening internal difficulties, which occurred from the adoption of the Federal Constitution till his own death. The first related to the admission of Missouri into the Union, and occurred in 1819-21. It involved and settled for thirty years, all those questions concerning the power of Congress over slavery in the Territories, which the recent repeal of the Missouri Compromise has opened afresh. The second occurred in 1832-33, and related to the whole question of the Protective policy of the country, involving the question of the power by a State to nullify an act of Congress. The third occurred in 1850-52, and embraced and settled numerous questions of the most

profound interest to the nation, and most difficult and important in themselves ; some of which, recent events, subsequent to his death, have opened again with so much vehemence and peril to the country. And where is the statesman, for whom is now in store, the great glory of doing for us *once* what he *thrice* accomplished ?

It is in the light of these great characteristics of Mr. CLAY, the immense superiority of his nature, the intense nationality of his spirit, and his exquisite perception of the immense supremacy of the question of our liberties, our independence, and our Union, over all other questions; that they who would appreciate aright, must constantly scrutinize the efforts and the acts which make his course so illustrious, during the forty years I am now surveying. Called to administer the foreign affairs of the country, to negotiate numerous and important treaties, to adjust principles of international law, to watch over the interests of commerce, and to discharge the various duties of the most important cabinet officer under the government ; called to preside for twelve or thirteen years over the National House of Representatives, and to sit for eighteen or nineteen years in the National Senate ; called to discuss and to settle the greatest Constitutional questions, the largest and most difficult parts of national policy, the most extensive interests of every kind, of the most prosperous and rapidly advancing people in the world ; called to maintain his elevated position by the most numerous and varied discourses ever delivered by any single orator ; called to endure the most systematic, vindictive, and unworthy persecution ever organized against any American statesman ; called at last to close his labors and his life together amidst the unanimous applause of his countrymen—his remains were borne in solemn triumph from the Capitol

which he had so long adorned, and delivered by the nation itself, into the hands of those who had never faltered in their loving, trustful, and proud devotion to him! Our fathers are with him to-day, in the land where good men dwell, when they are done with earth. Our hands have founded to-day a monument, not so much to commemorate his greatness, as to commemorate our love.— And of the many thousands gathered to participate in our pious labors, no just or generous heart will whisper, that I speak aught concerning him but the severest truth!

And now what was it in this great man, which the training I have pointed out developed under the fortune which attended him, into the character and career I have sketched? What was he in that distinct personal existence, which made him so remarkable, and which entered as the fundamental element into his training, his lot, and his destiny? To answer this question at once briefly, justly, and completely, is the most difficult part of my present duty: difficult always, and with regard to every human being: still more difficult, concerning a career begun from a position so narrow and so humble, covering an area so vast, and terminating at an elevation so immense: most difficult of all, when striving to utter the calm judgment of posterity, in the hearing of living men, to whose conceptions no utterance of mine might seem sufficient. This much, I think I may assert; that he of whom I speak knew perfectly, and that every one of you will grant, that not for the fame which he himself attained, would I in such a matter, depart from the truthful utterance of my own convictions.

My own judgment is that the great, original, and all pervading element of the greatness of HENRY CLAY, was,

so to speak, the extreme *naturalness* of the man. He was a man like the times in which he lived, like the men who surrounded him, like the nature he bore. There was nothing distorted about his nature—nothing out of sympathy with his times—nothing that could make him, or any one else, feel that he was not a man of the very living generation. He was not a common,—on the other hand he was a grand specimen, but yet he was a real and faithful specimen of a man, of an American, of a Kentuckian. And all who beheld him would have owned, if their thought had been so directed, that there stood before them a type, a noble type it may be, but yet a real type of a man, an American, a Kentuckian, of that long and glorious period, commencing with the Revolution, and terminating in the middle of the nineteenth century. It was thus that there was begotten between him and the generation with which he acted, a sympathy so profound and so enduring: and if he had never been called to act in public affairs, except concerning questions with regard to which the national mind was substantially agreed—he would necessarily have been as much the idol of the nation, as he was of those who shared his principles. In that case he would have taken his place in history, by the side of those heroes and sages of the human race, who with this same glorious endowment enjoyed a higher fortune, and whose names scattered thinly across the track of ages, keep our race alive to the highest glory which humanity can reach, and to the sublime conditions of attaining it.

With such a nature God had bestowed on him a personal presence and bearing, as impressive as any mortal ever possessed. Whatever was in his heart his very organization and manner seemed perfectly fitted to express; whatever was in his mind his outward man seemed in all things

exactly calculated to make articulate. The force which all that in its widest sense can be called action lends to every utterance, abode in him without measure ; and with him, as with all great masters of human passion, the voice and the diction were not less striking than the thought and the emotion which they enriched and made vital. The spirit which animated an organization so fine seemed, as is not uncommon in the highest class of men, to possess two natures : one genial, playful, loving, gentle, frank, and placable ; the other firm, wary, heroic, persistent, and capable of the most daring, fiery, and impetuous movements : and the two combined made up a temper which was habitually kind, self-reliant, lofty, and just. The basis of his moral character was akin to that which lies at the foundation of supreme moral excellence,—integrity and love of truth. Honest in all things, truthful always : to deceive, to prevaricate, to act unfairly,—the refuges of base, timid, and feeble natures,—no more entered into his thoughts in the high and difficult emergencies of life, than in the daily round of his commonest duties. His was a high, fair, brave, upright nature. His intellectual character, by which he will be chiefly known to posterity, was, as all men acknowledge, of the highest order. Clear, powerful, and comprehensive, no subject seemed to be difficult under its steady insight, and it embraced with equal readiness every department of human knowledge to which it became his duty to attend. A great and original thinker, he encountered without hesitation, the widest and most intricate problems, and acted with absolute confidence on the conclusions at which he arrived. Sagacious in the highest degree, in detecting all fallacy, the highest studies of ordinary minds amused his leisure ; and speculations which begun in his day to pass for the elements of science



in certain departments of the wide domain of political philosophy, he publicly classed with the fictitious literature of the hour. No genius was ever capable of a wider diversity of use than his. And the vast and searching common sense, which was the most striking characteristic of his intellect, revealed the purity, the truth, and the force with which the ultimate elements of our rational nature dwelt and acted in his noble understanding. If we add now the power of that patient, dauntless, and heroic will, which executed the desires of such a heart, and obeyed the behests of such an intellect, we complete the survey of this extraordinary man. It was undoubtedly as an orator, that he was most illustrious in his own generation. Posterity may change this verdict, and give him superior rank, both as a statesman and as a man consummate in the greatest practical affairs. But if the ages to come, could be made aware of the influence which was added to his great discourses, by the power of his action, his voice, and his imposing presence ; if they could appreciate the rapidity and truth of his intuition, the depth of his common sense, the grasp of his understanding, both logical and practical, the vitality of his convictions, the directness of his method, the fierceness of his withering sarcasm, the fervor of his high intellectual movements, his boundless confidence in truth, his dauntless sense of right, his profound sympathy with his audience, the sublime completeness of the whole to the whole, the man to the occasion, the utterance to the subject,—it would be felt how justly, after a struggle of fifty years, and in comparison with a succession of men greatly distinguished in his own great art, he was held worthy to take rank with the greatest orators the world has produced. To sum up all, I do not hesitate to apply to him the words which the sublime character of HAMPDEN

wrung from CLARENDON, “He was a man that durst always, “at all risks, support the liberty and property of the “country ; a man above all others possessed of the most “absolute spirit of popularity, and the most absolute fac- “ulties to govern ; a man to whom all came to learn, and “of whom it could not be discovered that he learned from “any one.”

I have said in the commencement of this discourse that Mr. CLAY was the child of Christian parents, all the more likely to be jealous of the heritage of God’s love to their boy, as they had little else to bestow upon him. His own repeated declarations, made in the most public and solemn manner, at every period of his life, that he cherished the highest veneration for the Christian religion, and the most profound conviction of the divine mission of the Savior of sinners—fully justify the importance which I have attached to this element of his destiny, even if he had not attested, in his latter years, the sincerity of his life-long convictions, by openly professing his faith in the son of God, and uniting himself with his professed followers. He lived some years, and closed his days, in communion of the Protestant Episcopal Church, to which his venerable wife had long been attached. It was my fortune to have personal knowledge under circumstances which do not admit of any doubt in my own mind, that according to the measure of the light he had, he was during a few years immediately preceding his death, a penitent and believing follower of the Divine Redeemer. It may be well allowed, that the frank and habitual avowal, even of speculative faith in the Christian religion, by a man of his character and position, was not without its value, and was not free from reproach, during that terrible season of

unbelief which marked the close of the last century, and stretched forward upon the first quarter of the present. And that the crowning efforts of his life were sustained by a sense of Christian duty, and its last sufferings assuaged by the consolations of Christian hope, are facts too important, as they relate to him, and too significant in their own nature, to be omitted in any estimate of him. It is not, however, on account of such considerations as these, that I reiterate with so much emphasis the undeniable fact, that Mr. CLAY never was an infidel, that he was always an avowed believer in true religion. But it is because such is my sense of the shallowness, the emptiness, and the baseness of that state of the human soul, in which it can deny the God who created it, and the Savior who redeemed it, and can empty itself of its own highest impulses—and disallow its own sublimest necessities; that I have no conception how such a soul could be what this man was, or do what he did. It is because I do understand with perfect distinctness, that belief in God, and belief in a mission given to us by him, and to be executed with success only by means of his blessing upon our efforts; must be a conviction, at once profound and enduring, in every soul that is great in itself, or that can accomplish everything great. Wonderful as Mr. CLAY'S career was, it would be a hundred fold more wonderful, to suppose that such a career was possible to a scoffer and a sceptic.

Nor is it possible for us to forget, that in some sort he anticipated what has occurred this day, and habitually desired that, wherever the exigencies of his life might require him to die, his dust should mingle with our dust. Ten years before his death, speaking for the last time, as he then supposed, to the Senate of the United States, and speak-

ing of you, his words were these, "I emigrated from Virginia to the State of Kentucky, now nearly forty-five years ago. I went as an orphan boy who had not yet attained the age of majority, who had never recognized a father's smile, nor felt his warm caresses, poor, penniless, without the favor of the great, with an imperfect and neglected education, hardly sufficient for the ordinary business and common pursuits of life; but scarce had I set my foot on her generous soil, when I was embraced with parental fondness, caressed as though I had been a favorite child, and patronized with liberal and unbounded munificence. From that period, the highest honors of the State have been bestowed upon me; and when, in the darkest hour of calamity and detraction, I seemed to be assailed by all the rest of the world, she interposed her broad and impenetrable shield, repelled the poisoned shafts that were aimed for my destruction, and vindicated my good name from every malignant and unfounded aspersion. I return with indescribable pleasure to linger a-while longer, and mingle with the warm-hearted and whole-souled people of that State; and when the last scene shall forever close upon me, I hope that my earthly remains will be laid under her green sod with those of her gallant and patriotic sons." On one of the last days of his life, he said to Judge UNDERWOOD, his colleague in the Senate, "There may be some question where my remains shall be buried. Some persons may designate Frankfort. I wish to repose in the Cemetery at Lexington, where many of my friends and connections are buried." And so it is, this day. His earthly remains are under her green sod—and many of her gallant and patriotic sons are lying by his side. Many a friend, who in his life stuck closer than a brother, and many a connection by

ties of blood, and ties closer than blood itself,—repose in silence around the illustrious sage. Piously, to him and them, in all reverence and love, our filial hands have now wrought his last behest. All blessings on that glorious name, “which will be repeated with applause wherever liberty is cherished or is known.”

I ought not to pass wholly without notice the affecting coincidence which makes the day which is sacred to the liberty of mankind, and the independence of nations, the fit occasion for solemnities which are designed to commemorate our own veneration for a patriot, whose whole life was at once an illustration of what may be won through the freedom, the independence, and the union of his country, and a sublime plea for their endless continuance. It is two hundred and fifteen years, this day, since the Long Parliament of England established an Executive Government, and thus laid the foundation of the English Commonwealth. JOHN HAMPDEN, next to WASHINGTON, the greatest name in history, at the head of ten members from the Commons, united with five from the House of Lords, was charged with the safety of the kingdom, the defence of the Parliament, the preservation of peace, and the resistance by force, of any force that might be used on the part of the King. Seven years afterwards, on the 29th of January, 1649, the warrant for the execution of CHARLES STUART, King of England, Ireland, and Scotland, was signed by fifty-nine commissioners under the presidency of that illustrious JOHN BRADSHAW, of whom MILTON said that he so demeaned himself always as if he was sitting in judgment upon a King; and the next day at one o'clock, the head of Charles the First, rolled upon the scaffold in front of his Palace of White Hall. They who did this deed,

were our lineal ancestors—and the true founders of all existing freedom, public and personal. And I this day, in the name of God and of true and regulated liberty everywhere under heaven, avouch their great deed, and magnify their sacred names!

On the fourth day of July, 1776, eighty-one years ago this day, another free nation was born. On that day fifty five Representatives of the United States of America, met in the city of Philadelphia, adopted and issued our immortal Declaration of Independence. After a war of seven years, George the Third, King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, by solemn treaty confirmed by the Continental Congress on the 14th day of January, 1783, recognized the dismemberment of his empire, and the erection in this new world of that majestic nation which is ours this day. These were our immediate ancestors: perhaps greater, at least more fortunate than their heroic predecessors. These were they who, having conquered tyrants, forgave them: who, having won and established freedom, sat down in mutual trust and common brotherhood, beneath its hallowed shade.

Now here are we—the children of the English Commonwealth,—the children of the American Revolution,—the inheritors of all that wisdom and courage could wrest from tyrants and from fortune, in the two most fruitful struggles which history records. Here are we, more than two centuries beyond the point at which our liberties were baptized in the blood of HAMPDEN—a century and a quarter beyond that where WASHINGTON commenced the most glorious life in History. Here is our country—great—free—united—invincible. What have we to say this day, to the shades of our mighty ancestors,—what to the teeming generations who are to follow us? Oh! my countrymen, may I not

dare to respond from the bosom of such solemnities as these—in the spirit and from the very presence of our mighty dead—may I not dare in your name, proudly and firmly to respond, after a fashion like this : We are the inheritors of personal freedom, of national independence, of country still united. We intend, God helping us, to transmit the sacred treasure to our children's children, undiminished and without a blot. We love the memory of our fathers : we cherish the deeds of our great ancestors : we know the day of our visitation : we intend to be faithful in our lot—just to the glorious Past—true to the still more glorious Future ! This day, in the hearing of heaven and earth, and to the farthest limits of time and space that our vow can reach, we consecrate ourselves and our posterity, and we mean that the very work in which we are engaged shall attest the completeness and sincerity of that consecration,—to the FREEDOM, the INDEPENDENCE, and the UNION of our COUNTRY !

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