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BIOGRAPHY.

A SKETCH OF THE Life and Public Services OF HENRY CLAY.

Mr. Clay, on his return, was received with the warmest public as well as private expressions of gratitude and esteem. Even before his arrival, so high was the estimation of his services, and his worth in Kentucky, he was elected to Congress; and on taking his seat, he was again elected Speaker by an almost unanimous vote. The session commenced in 1815, under circumstances of extreme difficulty and embarrassment. The circulating medium was at its lowest point of depreciation; a heavy debt hung over the national energies; public credit was seriously impaired; and the whole system of commercial law, established in prospect of or during the war, called for thorough revision and amendment. The embarrassments of the nation were severely felt; and as the initiatory measure of relief, President Madison, in his opening message, suggested the necessity of a National Bank. It was referred to the appropriate committee, and in January, 1816, John C. Calhoun, as chairman of said committee, reported a bill for the chartering of such an institution. The bank proposed in 1811 would mainly have been beneficial to Englandmen, by whom seven-eighths of its capital was owned; and it threw into their hands a power which might have been used seriously to our disadvantage. Upon this ground Mr. Clay had opposed it. But now it was a matter of absolute necessity to the welfare of the nation. Under the state bank system which had grown up during the war, the amount of bills in circulation had increased three fold; their value had of course greatly diminished; the rate of exchange had become exceedingly high—the entire destruction of all uniformity of taxation, and to the derangement of all branches of business. Called for as it was by the state of the country, induced by the war and by the necessities of a rapidly extending commerce, and so modified as to shut out all danger from foreign interference, Mr. Clay gave his support to the plan of a bank reported by Mr. Calhoun, and the bank was established. Its vast, beneficial effect upon all the great interests of the nation, its equalization of exchanges, the impetus it gave to commerce and all departments of business, the uniform worth and permanency it gave to our circulating medium, at once justified the confidence with which it had been established by its friends in Congress.

In 1817 the struggle of the Republicans of South America for independence engaged the attention of the world, and enlisted the warmest sympathies of the lovers of freedom in every part of its broad domain. Spain had ruled with a rod of iron the southern portion of this western continent. Under her dominion the beauty of the land had been blasted; her resources made to serve the brutal luxury of the land across the sea, and the energies of her people crushed or banded by despotic and corrupt misrule. They had taken up the sword in resistance to their tyrants, and in a hundred battles had humbled the pride of their haughty oppressors. They had proclaimed their independence, and had shown an apparent ability to maintain it. Their cause from the first had enlisted the hearty support of Mr. Clay; and in 1818 he moved "an appropriation of \$18,000 as the outfit and one year's salary of a minister to be deputed from the United States to the independent Provinces on the river La Plata, in South America." He was defeated; but the strength with which he vindicated the principles on which his motion was based gave triumphant victory to the great cause of liberty, in whose sacred service his whole soul was enlisted. In 1820 the same subject again came up, and again did he defend it with all his old ability and eloquence. The topic was debated for two or three weeks, and the independence of the South American Republics, mainly through the efforts of Mr. Clay, was then acknowledged. The zeal he had shown in their behalf, and the whole-souled devotion to the great principles of self-government which was thereby evinced, had won for Mr. Clay the ardent admiration of the great man of our own land, and the undying gratitude of the heroes of that country whose cause he had so warmly espoused. His speeches were read at the head of their armies; his name was held in the profoundest veneration of their hearts and their altars, and Bolivar himself addressed him a letter, expressing the highest admiration of his ability, and the deepest gratitude for his aid. In reply to Bolivar, with the dignified frankness which is so

characteristic of his spirit, he thus thanked him for his compliments: "I cannot but express the sympathy of the people of the United States with the cause in which he was engaged, and administered a lofty reproof for the ambitious designs, so foreign to the true spirit of liberty, which had once attributed to his celebrated man."

Toward the close of the session of 1818, the power of Congress to aid internal improvements was again brought before that body, generally by a passage in the President's message, but more directly by a bill introduced into Congress making appropriation, for these purposes, of the bonus paid for its charter by the bank of the United States.—Mr. Clay gave his ardent support to the bill, and it was passed, but vetoed, on the ground of constitutional objections, by President Madison. Acting as is believed, under the impression produced by this veto, and contrary to his previous convictions, President Monroe, in his inaugural address, reiterated the unconstitutionality of the exercise of such a power by Congress. In opposition thereto the declared opinion of these two Presidents, a resolution was introduced into the House claiming for Congress this disputed power. It was discussed for several days, and supported by Mr. Clay in one of his most effective and logical arguments. It was carried by a vote of 90 to 75, and thus was deeply laid, by his exertions, the foundation for the universal system.

The Seminole war, which has cost the nation so many millions of money, and involved her honor in such ineffaceable disgrace, had its origin as early as 1814, in the aid that tribe furnished the British during our contest with that nation. Gen. Jackson was sent against them, and in 1814 a treaty of peace was drawn up under his direction, by the terms of which that wretched people were subjected to conditions more odious and oppressive than human, to say nothing of savage, nature could endure. The treaty was never signed by the chiefs of more than one-third of the nation, and it is not surprising that the others should have evinced their determination not to abide by its provisions, by occasional acts of hostility. Gen. Jackson was again sent against them, and signalled his campaign by the massacre of Indian prisoners decoyed into his camp by a flag of truce; by hanging, in violation of the decision of a court constituted by himself, and in defiance of the law of nations and of humanity, two Englishmen found guilty of trading with the Seminoles—by a spirit of more than savage fierceness and bloody disregard of the rights of others, and by acts of general outrage and wrong which would have forever disgraced any man in any age. Mr. Clay, who had before been on friendly terms with Gen. Jackson, could not look with even the approbation of silence upon these unlawful and disgraceful proceedings, and gave his support to a series of resolutions of censure upon his conduct, introduced at the session of 1818—19. They did not pass, however, mainly through the interference of the President and his cabinet.

At this session of Congress Mr. Clay renewed his efforts in favor of protection to American industry, the success of which cause he regarded as essential to the completion of our independence, and to which he had already given an earnest of his devotion in the temporary tariffs that had previously been established. The principle of protection had never before been clearly recognized; but Mr. Clay now brought it forward and urged it with all his power. He based the necessity of this radical change in the policy of the country on the fact that the United States could never find in Europe a permanent market for their productions; but that to render herself independent of foreign countries, who in half a century could not purchase half her surplus products at the then existing rate of increase, she must make markets of her own, by building up manufactures which should divert part of the industry of her people from agricultural pursuits. In the House the policy prevailed, but was unexpectedly defeated in the Senate. In 1824 the greatly increased distress of the country again brought the subject to the attention of Congress, and Mr. Clay again brought forward, as a measure of relief, his system of protection. He rested his argument upon experience, and showed by clear demonstrations that the wealth of every nation was in exact proportion to the degree in which she protected her home industry. He traced the operation of the system in every nation where it had been adopted, and exposed the poverty and inglorious state of those where it never had been tried. He proved clearly that by protection the price of the protected article was, in fact, reduced; that a tariff would not diminish, but increase our exports by increasing the sources of our industry—the wants of foreign nations remaining the same, and demonstrating the necessity of the measure to the welfare of every great interest of the nation. He fought the battle of protection against powerful men, both of the north and the south; but his cause prevailed, and the whole nation became convinced of its truth and inherent justice by the high prosperity which every where followed its establishment.

The opposition of the administration to Missouri into the Union, which arose in 1819, threatened the most serious danger to the west.—A resolution of her admission had been brought forward in the House, providing for the extension of slavery within her borders; and this most inflammatory subject thus introduced into the discussions of Congress, threatened the peace and even the safety of the country. Mr. Clay at once opposed the condition on the ground that the federal government had nothing to do with the question—that it was exclusively within the jurisdiction of the state. Still it was insisted upon, and the motion for admission defeated. The discussion was then transferred from Congress to the people; and was conducted with a bitterness and a violence rarely equalled. The debate was renewed at the session of 1819, and it was then found that in the Senate there was a majority against the restriction and in the House a majority for it. A compromise was finally agreed upon, by which it was provided that Missouri might form a state government and adopt a constitution, which must not be repugnant to that of the United States. Still she could not be admitted into the Union without another vote of Congress. A constitution was adopted, in which it was made the duty of the Legislature to make some laws to prevent free negroes from entering the state. This furnished the occasion for another long and angry struggle, pending which Mr. Clay resigned his seat in Congress. He returned, however, just before the close of the debate, and, as chairman of a committee appointed for that purpose, reported a bill for the admission of Missouri, leaving the main question in dispute to be decided by the legal tribunals of the state. It was defeated after an angry debate, and on motion of Mr. Clay, a committee of twenty-three was appointed, himself at its head, to confer with a committee from the Senate. The joint committee reported a resolution not essentially differing from that reported by Mr. Clay. It was adopted; Missouri was admitted into the Union, and thus this vexed question, which, but for the efforts of Mr. Clay, would without doubt have plunged the country into new and untold dangers, was amicably settled. It was during the debate upon this topic that Mr. Clay became involved in a personal difficulty with Mr. Randolph, which in accordance with the universally prevalent temper and custom of the day, was settled by a duel.

Earnest as was Mr. Clay's desire to devote himself now to the duties of his profession, at the close of the session of 1819—20, he found it impossible to resist the importunity which urged him to continue in public life. In 1821 certain land claims came into dispute between the states of Virginia and Kentucky; and Mr. Clay was appointed on the part of the latter, in conjunction with other gentlemen of well known worth and ability, to procure an equitable settlement. This concluded, he was in 1823 again persuaded, though against his wishes, to accept a seat in Congress, and he was again, on taking his seat, elected Speaker by a large majority over Hon. P. P. Barbour, of Virginia, a gentleman of great popularity, amply qualified by commanding talents and personal worth. It was at this session that the subject of Grecian independence came up for discussion in the House. The whole land had been aroused by the heart-stirring appeals for aid and sympathy, made by the descendants of the ancient heroes, then battling with the Turks in defence of their rights and their liberties; and in January, Mr. Webster presented a resolution providing for the recognition of Grecian independence. To the mighty logic of the mover of the resolution, Mr. Clay brought the aid of his powerful eloquence, and in the same spirit which had animated his efforts in behalf of South American independence, he urged the cause, depicted the sufferings, and pressed the claims of those struggling for that freedom which seemed their birthright, in the distant islands of the Egean Sea. The appeals of both these great men were manly and powerful; but they failed, and the resolution was lost.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A Capital Story.

A good story is told of Judge Tappan, one of the Ohio Senators in Congress, who is cross-eyed. It runs thus: A number of years ago he was judge of a newly organized court in the eastern part of the state. In those days of primitive simplicity, or perhaps poverty, the bar-room of a tavern was used as a courtroom and a stable as a jail. One day during the session of the court, the judge had occasion to severely reprimand two of the lawyers, who were wrangling. An odd looking old customer, who sat in one corner, listening with apparently great satisfaction to the reproof, and, presuming on old acquaintance and the judge's well known good humor, cried out, "Give it to 'em, old gimlet eyes!" "Who was that?" inquired the Judge. "It was this 'ere old boss," answered the chap, raising himself up. "Sheriff," said the judge with great gravity, "take that old boss and put him in the stable."

If you want to make your hair curl, eat pigs tails or sleep with a corkerew under your pillow.

Whig National Convention.

The Whig National Convention for the nomination of President and Vice President of the United States was held at Baltimore on Wednesday morning, 1st May, in the Universalist church, on Calvert street, at 11 o'clock. The building is a large and convenient edifice, and has the important advantage, for the purpose to which it was now devoted, that its flat ceiling and rectangular walls reverberate sound well, so that speakers are heard with ease and distinctness.

At eleven o'clock, the seats reserved for the Convention being filled, and a dense crowd of spectators occupying to suffocation every other vacant inch of the church, (while large numbers remained in the street without)—

Reverdy Johnson, Esq., from the Committee of Arrangements, appeared upon the platform, and read over the names of the States, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the delegations were full, and whether they were all in attendance. It was found that the representation of each State was entire.

Mr. Johnson then announced that the committee of two from each delegation, who had been entrusted with the nomination of officers of the Convention, would now state what had been done on that subject.

The Hon. Jabez W. Huntington, a Senator from Connecticut, and chairman of the committee, thereupon rose, and, addressing the assembly, said that the appointed day and hour for the assembling of the Convention had arrived, when they were to enter on the discharge of the high and important trust confided to them, by nominating individuals suitable to be elected as President and Vice President of the United States. In conformity with usage, and in compliance with the request of the Delegates, he had been requested to call the attention of the Convention to that fact, and to announce that, if no objection should be made, the Convention would now be temporarily organized by the appointment of Arthur F. Hopkins, Esq., of Alabama, to act as its temporary President.

The nomination was received with acclamation. Mr. Johnson now moved that, before proceeding further, solemn prayer should be offered up to Heaven that the assembling of this body and all its acts and doings might be crowned with the Divine blessing; and, if the motion prevailed, that the Rev. Mr. Johns be requested to perform that duty.

The question having been put by the President, it passed *unanimously*; and the Rev. Mr. Johns accordingly proceeded to offer up prayer according to the forms of the Episcopal Church, of which he is a minister, devoting slightly, in some places, to render them more specifically appropriate to the occasion.

The Rev. Mr. Reed, a venerable gray-haired preacher of the Methodist connexion, then read an appropriate chapter from the Scriptures.

The President pro tem. then rose and stated further, that the preliminary committee had instructed him to lay before the Convention the following report of the individuals selected by them as officers of this Convention:

- PRESIDENT.—Hoa. Ambrose Spencer, of New York. VICE PRESIDENTS.—Wm. G. Crosby, Maine. Ichabod Goodwin, New Hampshire. Leverett Saltonstall, Massachusetts. Saml. F. Man, Rhode Island. Charles Paine, Vermont. Wm. W. Ellsworth, Connecticut. Erastus Root, New York. John B. Ayer, New Jersey. J. M. Strohm, Pennsylvania. James W. Thompson, Delaware. Saml. Sprigg, Maryland. Benjamin Watkins Leigh, Virginia. Richard Hines, North Carolina. John S. Preston, South Carolina. W. C. Dawson, Georgia. Thomas Metcalf, Kentucky. Wm. Martin, Tennessee. Jacob Burnett, Ohio. Samuel Hall, Indiana. Silas Edwards, Illinois. James Dupree, Mississippi. Henry Johnson, Louisiana. Robert A. Ewing, Missouri. H. J. Thornton, Alabama. H. Chipman, Michigan. John W. Walker, Arkansas.

SECRETARIES.—Isaac Munroe, Maryland. C. C. Norvell, Tennessee. G. Mason Graham, Louisiana. E. J. Hale, North Carolina. R. E. Hornor, New Jersey. Nesh Smith, Maine. The appointment of the foregoing officers was then concurred in by the Convention.

Mr. Archer, of Virginia, moved that a committee of two be appointed to conduct the respective officers to their seats. The motion was adopted; and Messrs. Archer and Reverdy Johnson were appointed the committee, who proceeded to perform that duty.

Mr. Speece and the Vice Presidents were welcomed with loud cheering, which, having subsided, the President rose and read, with

much animation and eloquence, the following address:

Gentlemen:—I have been honored to be invited to preside in the deliberations of this august assembly of Whigs and Patriots from every part of this wide-spread Republic. I return you my cordial and grateful thanks for the distinguished honor conferred on me, and an honor far surpassing any I have ever received, and which I cannot but regard as a crowning one of a long life, much of which has been devoted to public service. I have accustomed to presiding over such an assembly, I should have felt great diffidence in my own ability in discharging the duties of the Chair, but for the consideration that we meet as brothers in principle, animated by one common purpose to rescue our beloved country and its institutions from the degradation into which they have fallen, and to place on a firm basis its honor, its prosperity, its happiness, and its glory. In a Convention thus constituted, I feel confident that any want of tact or parliamentary experience on my part will be unimportant, for among the friends of order and the law, disorder will not be found. What a spectacle is here presented for the profound consideration of the world! A representation by delegates emanating immediately from the people of all the States of this glorious Union, to select from among our most talented and patriotic statesmen two citizens to be presented to their approval as candidates for the Presidency and Vice Presidency of these United States.

The inappreciable importance of a wise and right selection of candidates for these high trusts is so obvious that I need not say a word to enhance in your minds the great duty imposed upon us. I may, however, remark that public opinion, which is omnipotent here, has anticipated our selection to the first station, in designating an individual pre-eminent as a statesman and a patriot, whose name has conferred honor on his country, and whose counsels and voice in our cabinet and legislative halls have had a potency in favor of liberty, the honor of the country, and its best interests, which no other name has attained since our immortal Washington.

Averse as I am in general to the binding efficacy of instructions, in this case I cheerfully yield my hearty assent to the instructions imposed on me as regards the selection of a candidate for the Presidency. I need not name the man, for there is but one name that thrills our bosoms, and arouses and fixes our hopes as the saviour of our country from the misrule which has distracted and disorganized it, and brought reproach upon Representative Governments.

Gentlemen, it is not to be expected that we come here with any thing like unanimity in the selection of a candidate for the Vice Presidency. The first difficulty to be met and overcome is the fact that many persons of high attainments and distinguished statesmanship, and withal of lofty and unsuspected integrity, have been named in various sections of the Union, having equal or nearly equal pretensions. These gentlemen have their personal friends and admirers; and it may be that, to some extent, there may exist sectional feelings.

What course then, gentlemen, shall we pursue to reconcile these personal and sectional predilections? If my advice is of any value, it is that we imitate the example of the sages and patriots who formed and fashioned the glorious Constitution under which this nation has enjoyed inestimable blessings, and risen to its present high and proud distinction among the nations of the earth—give place to compromise and conciliation. Let us select some eminent citizen, conversant in public affairs, of an integrity of character well tried, and of whom we can believe he would die the death rather than betray his friends, or change or abandon the great principles which unite and animate the Whigs of this Union. If we enter upon this selection in the spirit of conciliation and compromise, yielding our individual preference, we cannot fail finally in selecting a person having all the qualities I have mentioned, who will unite on all and terminate our duties most satisfactorily.

I forbear, gentlemen, to dwell on the distinctive principles of the Whig party, this will be done in the progress of our deliberations, and proclaimed to the world. I may say, I hope without arrogance or offence, that they are vital principles, all tending to the honor of the country and the prosperity and happiness of the masses of our people, alike beneficial to all classes and sections of the nation, and such as I have ever cherished and maintained.

We have, gentlemen, been sorely afflicted as a party. The lamented Harrison by an accession removed by death from the high station to which we had elevated him, and but for this great loss and untimely death the principles of our party would have been carried out and established triumphantly. But alas! what has happened since! Here, gentlemen, allow me to draw a veil. I need not say a word as to the course pursued by the man chosen by us to succeed him in the event that took place.

The power placed in his hands for the

of the Whig party have been used to subvert the principles of order and cherished principles, and which equally to be intended, to present and prescribe the very men by whom such a course should be followed.

Gentlemen, have I not under these adverse circumstances, as principles have survived, and so commended themselves to the people that we meet together under the most happy auspices. The Whigs, though for a time dismayed and discouraged, have arisen with renovated strength and vigor, ready for the contest, more sanguine than ever, and under the leadership of their illustrious chief determined to conquer.

I congratulate you, gentlemen, on the auspicious prospect before us. Let us do our duties well, and success will crown our efforts, and our country will be redeemed and regenerated.

Mr. B. Watkins Leigh, of Virginia, then presenting himself, said that he had read to and a proposition, which he trusted would receive the hearty approbation of all now here assembled—for the purpose of nominating, or rather of expressing the nomination of their constituents, of individuals to fill the offices of President and Vice President of the United States. In regard to the first of these, as there existed not a shadow of difference of opinion, it would be a waste of time to vindicate its propriety or urge its adoption.— Happily they had a man with a mind to comprehend all the wide and diversified affairs of this extended Confederation, and with a heart to promote them; to balance any conflicting interests, (which, indeed, would be found to be but few, under a Government well conducted,) and to harmonize them on principles of just and mutual compromise; a heart of love not only to all the people of these States, but towards the whole world of mankind; a heart filled with feeling for every citizen, as well as every part of this country; a man who, if elected, would be the President, not of a party, but of this entire and blessed Union; a man possessed of both heart and mind to accomplish all these glorious objects, which our fathers cherished in their own, a man like the sun, shining by the light of its own nature, enlightening, animating, vivifying, and fruitfully all things around it. But why waste words in a vain and useless attempt at eloquence, when there was one word which comprised all and more than he was able to utter—this word was CLAY. [At the pronunciation of this name, there was a burst which shook the church to its foundations, and which had been heard to a great distance round. The sound was deafening, and the cheers long continued and repeated again and again, the venerable and aged men in the assembly waving their streaming handkerchiefs in the air, and calling out to their younger associates, "give him one more!"]

He then moved that this Convention do unanimously nominate and recommend to the people of the United States HENRY CLAY, of Kentucky, for President of the United States. [Here the acclamations were as loud and longer than before.]

Mr. L. said that he saw very distinctly that when this resolution should be put by the Chair, it would be responded to by one spontaneous "ay!" which if not heard, would be swiftly wafted by the winds of heaven to every part of this extended empire, and wherever it came would be received with hearty zeal and triumphant acclamation.

The question being put by the President, the vote was unanimous.

On motion of Mr. Leigh, a committee of five were appointed by the Chair to report this nomination to Mr. Clay, and to receive his answer. The following gentlemen compose the committee: Messrs. Derrien, of Georgia; Barnett, of Ohio; Archer, of Virginia; Abbott Lawrence, of Massachusetts; Erastus Root, of New York.

Mr. Stout, of New York, moved as an amendment, and that he be requested to appear to-morrow, in this city, before the countless thousands who would then be assembled to ratify the nomination.

Mr. B. Johnson said, in reference to this motion, that he had in his hands a letter from Mr. Clay, which if he was allowed to read, he flattered himself that no gentleman would urge any impertinently on the subject referred to.

Mr. Stout consented to withdraw the motion; and on his motion the letter was read as follows:

WASHINGTON, April 29, 1844. MY DEAR SIR:—I cannot reconcile it to my sense of delicacy and propriety, to attend either of the Whig Conventions this week in Baltimore. Such is my deliberate judgment. I hope my friends will acquiesce in my determination, and not urge me to revoke it, which I cannot do.

Yours respectfully, H. CLAY.

To B. Johnson, Esq., Baltimore.

[Crying and cries of "that's right! just like him!"]

Mr. Bronson, of Maine, read a letter from the Hon. George Evans, declining a nomination as Vice President, to which the writer added that he would have expressed this termination of an earlier period could he have done so without subjecting himself to the