VARIOUS

THE BAY STATE MONTHLY. VOLUME 2, NO. 1, OCTOBER, 1884

Various

The Bay State Monthly. Volume 2, No. 1, October, 1884

Various

The Bay State Monthly. Volume 2, No. 1, October, 1884 / Various — «Public Domain»,

Содержание

Various
The Bay State Monthly – Volume 2, No. 1, October, 1884

JAMES GILLESPIE BLAINE

In the long list of illustrious men who have held the high office of President of the United States, a few names stand out with such prominence as to be constantly before the American people. While Adams, Jefferson, Monroe, Jackson, Grant, and others, did the country service that never will be forgotten, it is indisputable that Washington, Lincoln, and Garfield gained a firmer hold upon the confidence and affection of the masses than any others. And now, as we approach another presidential campaign, the result of which is to place in the highest office of the nation a new man, it is alike a source of pride and satisfaction that the Republican party has put in nomination a man, who, if elected, will bring to the discharge of his duties as high a degree of honesty as Washington, as thorough an acquaintance with human nature as Lincoln, and as profound a knowledge of political economy as Garfield. Through all the years of his manhood he has been a central figure in American politics, and his achievements are indelibly written on almost every page of American history for the last quarter of a century. With such a man as a candidate the country may well congratulate itself that if he proves to be the choice of the majority he will, by his ability and experience, bring as great renown to the office as any of his predecessors, and that under his guidance the material prosperity and intellectual growth of the nation will be such as to gain for his administration great popular favor, the admiration of his friends, and the respect of all nations.

James Gillespie Blaine, the nominee of the Republican party for President of the United States, was born on January 31, 1830, in Washington County, in the southwestern corner of Pennsylvania, in West Brownsville, a village on the west bank of the Monongahela. Here Neil Gillespie, before the British army left America at the close of the Revolution, had established his family, purchasing the land of the Indians. Nearly twenty years later the Blaines came from Carlisle, seeking investment and development in this new West, and the father of James G. Blaine, who had left Carlisle when a child, married the daughter of Neil Gillespie the second.

The first of the Blaine family of whom much is known was Colonel Ephraim Blaine, who lived at Chester, and in the Revolution was purveyor-general of the Pennsylvania troops, and incidentally of the whole Revolutionary array. He married Rebekah Galbraith in 1765. Elaine is a well-known Scotch name. Galbraith and Gillespie are Scotch-Irish; in fact, the ancestors of James G. Blaine were nearly all Scotch and Irish. It is a circumstance worthy of comment that Blaine comes from a stock which has furnished the United States with many of her ablest public men, notably among them being Andrew Jackson and Horace Greeley.

Colonel Ephraim Blaine had two sons named Robert and James, and each of these sons named his son for Colonel Ephraim Blaine. Old Ephraim Blaine did not leave his property to his sons, but to these two grandsons, (1) Ephraim, who remained in Carlisle, and (2) Ephraim Lyon Blaine, who grew up in western Pennsylvania. Ephraim Lyon Blaine was named for his mother, Miss Lyon, the daughter of Samuel Lyon from about Carlisle. Ephraim Lyon Blaine married Miss Gillespie, a devout member of the Roman Catholic Church, but most of their seven children—five boys and two girls—adhered to the traditional faith of the Blaines. The second of these sons, James Gillespie Blaine, is the subject of this sketch. He would have inherited large blended fortunes, had not his father, like his grandfather, been a spendthrift. Therefore, soon after James G. Blaine was born his parents had to move out of the big house which they could no longer keep up, and occupy a frame-house called

the Pringle dwelling, also in West Brownsville, about a quarter of a mile distant. Here young Elaine lived and went to school both in Brownsville and in West Brownsville, until his father was elected prothonotary of the county, in 1843, when the whole family removed to Little Washington, twenty-four miles distant.

James G. entered Washington College in 1843, being then thirteen years of age, and became at once prominent as a scholar among the two or three hundred other lads from all parts of the country. He was also a leader in athletic sports. He was not a bookworm, but he was a close student and possessed the happy faculty of assimilating knowledge from books and tutors far more easily and quickly than most of his fellows. In debating-societies he held his own well, and was conspicuous by his ability to control and direct others.

After leaving college young Blaine started for Kentucky to carve out his own fortune. He went to Blue Lick Springs and became a professor in the Western Military Institute, in which there were about four hundred and fifty boys. A retired officer who was a student there at the time relates that Professor Blaine was a thin, handsome, earnest young man, with the same fascinating manners he has now. He was popular with the boys, who trusted him and made friends with him from the first. He knew the given name of every one, and he knew his shortcomings and his strong points. He was a man of great personal courage, and during a fight between the faculty of the school and the owners of the springs, involving some questions about the removal of the school, he behaved in the bravest manner, fighting hard but keeping cool. Revolvers and knives were freely used, but Blaine only used his well-disciplined muscle. Colonel Thornton F. Johnson was the principal of the school, and his wife had a young ladies' school at Millersburg, twenty miles distant. There Blaine met Miss Harriet Stanwood, who subsequently became his wife. She was a Maine girl of excellent family sent to Kentucky to be educated.

After teaching for a while Blaine left Kentucky and went to Philadelphia to study law. While there he taught for a short time at the blind asylum and also wrote for the newspapers. He soon, however, was irresistibly attracted to the State of Maine, and left his native State for a home in the community with which his name is now indissolubly connected. It is somewhat remarkable that this ambitious young man should have gone East instead of West, choosing a State which the young men were fast leaving—one whose population in the last forty years has increased very little. He is, indeed, almost the only man who has gone East in the last half-century and risen to any prominence.

Mr. Blaine went to Maine in 1853, and soon afterward married Miss Stanwood, whose family are well known in New England. Through their influence he soon found an occupation in journalism, and until 1860 was actively engaged in editing at different times the Kennebec Journal and the Portland Daily Advertiser. He retained a part ownership in the Kennebec Journal until it began to hamper him in his political career, and then he sold out. A friend has said of him as a journalist: "I have often thought that a great editor, as great perhaps as Horace Greeley, was lost when Mr. Blaine went into politics. He possesses all the qualities of a great journalist: he has a phenomenal memory; he remembers circumstances, dates, names, and places more readily than any other man I ever met."

Wielding a strong, vigorous, aggressive pen, Mr. Blaine soon made its power felt among politicians. He went to Maine at a time when the Whig and Democratic parties were breaking up. Previous to 1854 the Democratic party had governed the State for a quarter of a century, but its power was broken in the September election of that year, through a temporary union of the anti-slavery and temperance elements. In 1855 the different wings of the new party were well consolidated, and in the famous Frémont campaign of 1856 they carried the State, electing Hannibal Hamlin governor by twenty-four thousand majority. Mr. Blaine, during all these exciting times, did not by any means confine himself to writing political leaders. He took an active part in politics, attending Republican meetings throughout the State, and soon made himself one of the recognized Republican leaders in Maine. Of this period of his career, the late Governor Kent, of Maine, who himself stood in the front rank of public men in his State, once wrote as follows:—

"Almost from the day of his assuming editorial charge of the Kennebec Journal, at the early age of twenty-three, Mr. Elaine sprang into a position of great influence in the politics and policy of Maine. At twenty-five he was a leading power in the councils of the Republican party, so recognized by Fessenden, Hamlin, the two Morrills, and others, then, and still, prominent in the State. Before he was twenty-nine he was chosen chairman of the executive committee of the Republican organization in Maine—a position he has held ever since, and from which he has practically shaped and directed every political campaign in the State, always leading his party to brilliant victory. Had Mr. Blaine been New-England born, he would probably not have received such rapid advancement at so early an age, even with the same ability he possessed. But there was a sort of Western *dash* about him that took with us Down-Easters; an expression of frankness, candor, and confidence, that gave him from the start a very strong and permanent hold on our people, and, as the foundation of all, a pure character and a masterly ability equal to all demands made upon him."

Mr. Blaine's early political addresses, and especially the ability which he displayed in them as a debater, won him great local reputation, and, during the Frémont campaign, he achieved a distinction as a speaker which insured him a seat in the Legislature, in 1858, though he was not yet thirty years of age and had been but five years in his adopted State. The ability which he displayed as a legislator was so marked that his constituents returned him four years in succession, and the Legislature, recognizing his talents, elected him speaker in 1860 and 1861, a rare honor for so young a man. As a presiding officer he displayed those fine qualifications which afterward made him one of the most brilliant of the long line of able men who have occupied the speaker's chair in the National House of Representatives.

By this time Mr. Blaine had become a professional politician. In other words he had given up all other occupations and made politics his sole employment. This is a fact worthy of serious consideration, for few men in this country have avowedly chosen politics as a calling and succeeded in it as James G. Blaine has succeeded. Most of our statesmen, like Webster and Lincoln, have been eminent lawyers. Blaine studied law thoroughly, but never applied for admission at the bar. Some, like Greeley, have been eminent journalists. Blaine made journalism merely a means to an end, discarding it as soon as it had served his purpose. Blaine has made a systematic and thorough study of politics and political affairs. Constitutional history and international law he made it his business to master. Above all, he has studied men, has learned by careful observation how to handle, to mould, to use his fellow-beings. No man in America to-day is more learned in everything pertaining to the science of statesmanship than James G. Blaine. It is the fashion in this country to decry professional politicians, to uphold the doctrine that the office should seek the man and not the man the office. Yet there can be no more honorable profession than the service of one's country, and surely no man should be blamed for fitting himself for that service as thoroughly and as carefully as for any other profession.

A man of Mr. Blaine's ability, of his rare knowledge of parliamentary usages, and, above all, of his ambitions, was not likely to remain long content with the position of a representative in the State Legislature. As early as 1859 he had an ambition to go to Congress, and he was talked of as a candidate in 1860. But Anson P. Morrill was nominated, Mr. Blaine not having strength enough to obtain the honor. In 1862 Mr. Blaine was nominated to the office, although he was not then so desirous of it as he had been two years before. His patriotic utterances in the convention which nominated him met with a hearty response, and he was elected over his Democratic competitor by the largest majority that had ever been given in his district, it exceeding three thousand. This majority he held in six succeeding and consecutive elections, running it up in one exciting contest to nearly four thousand.

During his first term in Congress Mr. Blaine gave himself up to study and observation, but in the next Congress, the Thirty-ninth, he gained some prominence, and from that time to the end of his congressional career he occupied a foremost place among the Republican leaders. His reputation was that of an exceedingly industrious committeeman. He was a member of the post-office and military committees, and of the committees on appropriations and rules. He paid close attention to the business

of the committees, and took an active part in the debates of the House, manifesting practical ability and genius for details. The first remarkable speech which he made in Congress was on the subject of the assumption by the general government of the war debts of the States, in the course of which he urged that the North was abundantly able to carry on the war to a successful issue. This vigorous speech attracted so much attention that two hundred thousand copies of it were circulated in 1864 as a campaign document by the Republican party. In the winter of 1865-66 Mr. Blaine was very energetic in promoting the passage of reconstruction measures. In the early part of 1866 he proposed a resolution which finally became the basis of that part of the fourteenth amendment relating to congressional representation. In the second session of the Thirty-ninth Congress he also distinguished himself by the "Blaine amendment" to the military bill, which was universally discussed in the public press of the day.

In 1867 Mr. Blaine made a trip to Europe, returning in time to fight against the greenback heresy, of which he was the foremost opponent. In December he made an elaborate speech on the finances, in which he analyzed Mr. Pendleton's greenback theory. "The remedy for our financial troubles," said he, "will not be found in a superabundance of depreciated paper currency. It lies in the opposite direction, and the sooner the nation finds itself on a specie basis the sooner will the public treasury be freed from embarrassment and private business be relieved from discouragement. Instead, therefore, of entering upon a reckless and boundless issue of legal tenders, with their constant depreciation, if not destruction, of value, let us set resolutely to work and make those already in circulation equal to so many gold dollars."

This was the last great question in the discussion of which Mr. Blaine took part on the floor of the House, his colleagues in 1869 electing him to the office of speaker, vacated by the promotion of Schuyler Colfax to the vice-presidency. The vote stood one hundred and thirty-five votes for Blaine to fifty-seven for Kerr, of Indiana. Mr. Blaine proved himself eminently fitted for the position. As a speaker he may be classed with Henry Clay and General Banks, who are acknowledged to have been the best speakers we have ever had. Blaine was their equal in every respect. The whole force of such a statement as this cannot be felt unless it is fully understood that the speaker of the House of Representatives stands next to the President in power and importance in the United States. The business of Congress is done largely by committees, and the committees of the House are appointed and shaped by the speaker. Then, to say that Blaine was one of our three ablest speakers is to say a great deal, for a long line of very able men have filled the speaker's chair. His quickness, his thorough knowledge of parliamentary law and of the rules, his firmness, clear voice, impressive manner, his ready comprehension of subjects and situations, and his dash and brilliancy, really made him a great presiding officer. He rose to a high place not only in the estimation of his Republican friends, but also of his Democratic opponents, and he was re-elected to the speakership in 1871 and again in 1873. In 1875, the Democratic majority took control, and Mr. Blaine resumed his place on the floor to win fresh laurels as a debater, and to discomfit the majority in many a projected scheme which his quick eye detected and his ready words exposed.

The governor of Maine, on the tenth of July, 1876, appointed Mr. Blaine to the national Senate, in place of Mr. Morrill, who had resigned to become secretary of the treasury. He was afterward elected for the unexpired term and the full term following. On his appointment he wrote to his constituents thus:—

> Beginning with 1862, you have, by continuous elections, sent me as your representative to the Congress of the United States. For such marked confidence, I have endeavored to return the most zealous and devoted service in my power, and it is certainly not without a feeling of pain that I now surrender a trust by which I have always felt so signally honored. It has been my boast, in public and in private, that no man on the floor of Congress ever represented a constituency more distinguished for intelligence, for patriotism, for public and personal virtue. The cordial support

> you have so uniformly given me through these fourteen eventful years is the chief honor of my life. In closing the intimate relations I have so long held with the people of this district, it is a great satisfaction to me to know that with returning health I shall enter upon a field of duty in which I can still serve them in common with the larger constituency of which they form a part.

While in the Senate Mr. Blaine advocated the Chinese immigration bill, and opposed the electoral commission and Bland silver legislation. Here, as throughout his political career, he was never on the fence on any question. His position has always been clear and he has always taken strong grounds.

Mr. Elaine was a candidate for the presidential nomination in 1876, and came within twenty-seven votes of being successful. His vote increased from two hundred and ninety-one on the first ballot to three hundred and fifty-one on the seventh, but he was beaten by a combination against him of the delegates supporting Morton, Conkling, Hartranft, Bristow, and Hayes, who united upon Hayes, and made him the nominee. He was also one of the leading candidates for the presidential nomination at the Republican National Convention in Chicago, in June, 1880. Out of a total of seven hundred and fifty-five he received, on the first ballot, two hundred and eighty-four votes. On the thirteenth and fourteenth ballots he received his highest vote, two hundred and eighty-five, which very gradually declined to two hundred and fifty-seven on the thirty-fifth ballot. On the thirty-sixth ballot General Garfield was nominated by a combination of the elements opposed to General Grant and a third term. As before, Mr. Blaine yielded to the inevitable, remaining true to his party principles, and contributing his aid to the election of James A. Garfield.

When President Garfield made up his Cabinet he offered Mr. Blaine the control of the state department. This is how Mr. Blaine accepted the offer:

WASHINGTON, December 20, 1880.

> *My dear Garfield*,—Your generous invitation to enter your Cabinet as secretary of state has been under consideration for more than three weeks. The thought had really never occurred to my mind until, at our late conference, you presented it with such cogent arguments in its favor, and with such warmth of personal friendship in aid of your kind offer. I know that an early answer is desirable, and I have waited only long enough to consider the subject in all its bearings, and to make up my mind, definitely and conclusively. I now say to you, in the same cordial spirit in which you have invited me, that I accept the position. It is no affectation for me to add that I make this decision, not for the honor of the promotion it gives me in the public service, but because I think I can be useful to the country and to the party; useful to you as the responsible leader of the party and the great head of the government. I am influenced somewhat, perhaps, by the shower of letters I have received urging me to accept, written to me in consequence of the mere unauthorized newspaper report that you had been pleased to offer me the place. While I have received these letters from all sections of the Union, I have been especially pleased, and even surprised, at the cordial and widely extended feeling in my favor throughout New England, where I had expected to encounter local jealousy and, perhaps, rival aspiration.
>
> In our new relation I shall give all that I am and all that I can hope to be, freely and joyfully, to your service. You need no pledge of my loyalty in heart and in act. I should be false to myself did I not prove true both to the great trust you confide to me and to your own personal and political fortunes in the present and in the future. Your administration must be made brilliantly successful and strong in the confidence and pride of the people, not at all directing its energies for re-election,

> and yet compelling that result by the logic of events and by the imperious necessities of the situation. To that most desirable consummation I feel that, next to yourself, I can possibly contribute as much influence as any other one man. I say this not from egotism or vainglory, but merely as a deduction from a plain analysis of the political forces which have been at work in the country for five years past, and which have been significantly shown in two great national conventions. I accept it as one of the happiest circumstances connected with this affair that in allying my political fortunes with yours—or, rather, for the time merging mine in yours—my heart goes with my head, and that I carry to you not only political support, but personal and devoted friendship. I can but regard it as somewhat remarkable that two men of the same age, entering Congress at the same time, influenced by the same aims and cherishing the same ambitions, should never, for a single moment in eighteen years of close intimacy, have had a misunderstanding or a coolness, and that our friendship has steadily grown with our growth and strengthened with our strength. It is this fact which has led me to the conclusion embodied in this letter; for however much, my dear Garfield, I might admire you as a statesman, I would not enter your Cabinet if I did not believe in you as a man and love you as a friend. Always faithfully yours,
> *JAMES G. BLAINE.*

Mr. Blaine's diplomatic career began with his appointment as secretary of state on March 5, 1881, and ended with his resignation on December 19, three months after President Garfield's death. The two principal objects of his foreign policy, as defined by himself on September 1, 1882, were these: "First, to bring about peace, and prevent future wars in North and South America; second, to cultivate such friendly commercial relations with all American countries as would lead to a large increase in the export trade of the United States, by supplying those fabrics in which we are abundantly able to compete with the manufacturing nations of Europe." President Garfield, in his inaugural address, had repeated the declaration of his predecessor that it was "the right and duty of the United States to assert and maintain such supervision and authority over any interoceanic canal across the isthmus that connects North and South America as will protect our national interests." This policy, which had received the direct approval of Congress, was vigorously upheld by Secretary Blaine. The Colombian Republic had proposed to the European powers to join in a guaranty of the neutrality of the proposed Panama Canal. One of President Garfield's first acts under the advice of Secretary Blaine was to remind the European governments of the exclusive rights which the United States had secured with the country to be traversed by the interoceanic waterway. These exclusive rights rendered the prior guaranty of the United States government indispensable, and the powers were informed that any foreign guaranty would be not only an unnecessary but unfriendly act. As the United States had made, in the Clayton-Bulwer treaty of 1850, a special agreement with Great Britain on this subject, Secretary Blaine supplemented his memorandum to the powers by a formal proposal for the abrogation of all provisions of that convention which were not in accord with the guaranties and privileges covenanted for in the compact with the Colombian Republic. In this state paper, the most elaborate of the series receiving his signature as secretary of state, Mr. Blaine contended that the operation of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty practically conceded to Great Britain the control of any canal which might be constructed in the isthmus, as that power was required, by its insular position and colonial possessions, to maintain a naval establishment with which the United States could not compete. As the American government had bound itself by its engagements in the Clayton-Bulwer treaty not to fight in the isthmus, nor to fortify the mouths of any waterway that might be constructed, the secretary argued that if any struggle for the control of the canal were to arise England would have an advantage at the outset which would prove decisive. "The treaty," he remarked, "commands this government not to use a single regiment of troops to protect its interests in connection with the

interoceanic canal, but to surrender the transit to the guardianship and control of the British navy." The logic of this paper was unanswerable from an American point of view.

The war between Chili and Peru had virtually ended with the capture of Lima on January 17, 1881. The state department made strenuous exertions to bring about the conclusion of an early peace between Chili and the two prostrate states which had been crushed in war. The influence of the government was brought to bear upon victorious Chili in the interest of peace and magnanimity; but, owing to an unfortunate misapprehension of Mr. Blaine's instructions, the United States ministers did not promote the ends of peace. Special envoys were accordingly sent to South America, accredited to the three governments, with general instructions which should enable them to bring those belligerent powers into friendly relations. After they had set out from New York Mr. Blaine resigned, and Mr. Frelinghuysen reversed the diplomatic policy with such precipitate haste that the envoys on arriving at their destination were informed by the Chilian minister of foreign affairs that their instructions had been countermanded, and that their mission was an idle farce. By this reversal of diplomatic methods and purposes the influence of the United States government on the South American coast was reduced to so low a point as to become insignificant. Mr. Blaine's policy had been at once strong and pacific. It was followed by a period of no policy, which enabled Chili to make a conqueror's terms with the conquered and to seize as much territory as pleased her rapacious generals.

The most conspicuous act of Mr. Blaine's administration of the state department was his invitation to the peace congress. The proposition was to invite all the independent governments of North and South America to meet in a peace congress at Washington on March 15, 1882. The representatives of all the minor governments on this continent were to agree, if possible, upon some comprehensive plan for averting war by means of arbitration, and for resisting the intrigues of European diplomacy. Invitations were sent on November 22, with the limitations and restrictions originally designed. Mr. Frelinghuysen lost no time in undermining this diplomatic congress, and the meeting never took place.

On the morning of Saturday, July 2, President Garfield was to start from Washington by the morning limited express for New York, en route for New England and a reunion with his old college mates at the Williams College commencement. His secretary of state accompanied him to the train, and has recorded the great, almost boyish, delight with which the President anticipated his holiday. They entered the waiting-room at the station, and a moment later Guiteau's revolver had done its work. The country still vividly remembers the devotion with which the head of the Cabinet watched at the President's bedside, and the calm dignity with which, during those long weeks of suspense, he discharged the painful duties of his position. On September 6 the President was removed from Washington to Elberon, whither he was followed the same day by Mr. Blaine and the rest of the Cabinet. The apparent improvement in the President's condition warranted the belief that he would continue to gain, and Mr. Blaine went for a short rest to his home in Augusta. He was on his way back to Elberon when the fatal moment came, and reached there the next morning. It is the universal testimony of the press and people that, during the weary weeks which intervened between the President's injury and death, Mr. Blaine's every action and constant demeanor were absolutely faultless. Selected by Congress to pronounce a formal eulogy upon President Garfield, Mr. Blaine, on February 19, 1882, before President Arthur and his Cabinet, both Houses of Congress, the Supreme Court, the foreign legations, and an audience of ladies and gentlemen which crowded the Hall of Representatives, delivered a most just, comprehensive, and admirable address upon the martyr's great career and character.

Since his withdrawal from President Arthur's Cabinet and his retirement to private life at Augusta, Mr. Blaine has busied himself with his history, entitled Twenty Years of Congress, the first volume of which was given to the public last April. When finished, this work will cover the period from Lincoln to Garfield, with a review of the events which led to the political revolution of 1860. The story he tells in his first volume is given with the simplicity and compactness of a trained journalist,

and yet with sufficient fulness to make the picture distinct and clear in almost every detail. The book is as easy to read as a well-written novel; it is clear and interesting, and commands the attention throughout, the more for the absence of anything like oratorical display or forensic combativeness. In literary polish it is not beyond criticism, though occasional infelicities of expression and instances of carelessness do not outweigh the general clearness and force of style. It is not at all points unerring in portraiture, nor infallible in judgment, though the writer's impartiality of spirit and desire to be just are conspicuous, and he gives cogent reasons for opinions expressed. But in broad and comprehensive appreciation of the forces by which the development of public opinion has been affected, the work is one of great merit. It seems to be entirely free from those personal qualities which have characterized Mr. Blaine in politics. It is very remarkable that a man so prominent as a partisan in political affairs could have written a book so free from partisanship.

Mr. Blaine is now in his fifty-fifth year. Although above medium height, he is so compactly and powerfully built that he scarcely seems tall. His features are large and expressive; he is slightly bald and his neatly trimmed beard is prematurely gray; his brows are lowering—his eyes keen. On the floor of Congress he manifested marvelous power and nerve. His voice is rich and melodious; his delivery is fluent and vigorous; his gestures are full of grace and force; his self-possession is never lost. He has appeared on the stump in almost every Northern State, and is an exceedingly popular and effective campaign speaker. But it is not when on the platform, speaking alone, that he has shown his greatest strength. He is strongest when hard pressed by opponents in parliamentary debate. He is a thorough believer in the organization of men who think alike for advancing their views. He believes that in order to carry out any great project it is necessary to have a party organization, not for the purpose of advancing individual interests, but to push ahead a great line of policy. He is a positive with the courage of his convictions, and believes in aggressive politics. As a consequence of this he has always had both very strong friends and very bitter enemies. It is probable that no man in this country has had a stronger personal following since the days of Harry Clay.

Blaine is a man of great physical capacities. He has great powers of application. His mind works quickly. He is as restless as the ocean and has the power of accomplishing an immense amount of work. Another quality which he possesses—rare but invaluable to a public man—is that of remembering names and faces, of remembering men and all about them. This ability is partly natural, partly the result of his training. He has made it a study to get acquainted with men.

His knowledge of facts, dates, events, men in our history, is not only remarkable, but almost unprecedented. It would be difficult to find a man in the United States who can, on the instant, without reference to book or note, give so many facts and statistics relating to the social and political history of our country. This has been the study of his life, and his memory is truly encyclopædic.

Mr. Blaine was not a poor man when he entered Congress in 1863, and he is not a millionaire now. For twenty years he has owned a valuable coal tract of several hundred acres near Pittsburgh. This yielded him a handsome income before he entered Congress, and the investment has been a profitable one during his public life. He is said to have speculated more or less, and to have made and lost millions. Yet in general his business affairs have been managed with prudence and shrewdness, and he now has a handsome fortune. His home in Augusta, near the State House, is a plain two-story house. Several institutions in the State have received benefactions from him, and his charity and generosity are appreciated at home. He is a member of the Congregational Church in Augusta, and constant attendance at divine service is a practice that he has always inculcated upon his family. He has constantly refused to take religious matters into politics, but his respect for his mother's belief has made him tolerant and charitable toward all sects. In his own house he is a man of culture and refinement, a genial host, a courteous gentlemen. No man in public life is more fortunate in his domestic relations. He is the companion and confidant of every one of his six children, and they fear him no more than they fear one of their own number. Mrs. Blaine is a model wife and mother. The eldest son, Walker Blaine, is a graduate of Yale College and of the Law School of Columbia

College. He is a member of the bar of several States, and has been creditably engaged in public life in Washington. The second son, Emmons Blaine, is a graduate of Harvard College and the Cambridge Law School. The third is James G. Blaine, Jr., who was graduated from Exeter Academy last year. The three daughters are named Alice, Margaret, and Harriet. The eldest was married more than a year ago to Brevet-Colonel J.J. Coppinger, U.S.A.

But however Mr. Blaine may have distinguished himself as an author, a diplomatist, or a man of varied experience and knowledge, in the present political campaign, in which he is destined to play so important a part, he will necessarily be largely judged in a political sense, and as a politician. What does the record show in these directions? Has he been true or false to his political convictions? Assuredly no man, be he friend or foe, can point to a single instance in Mr. Blaine's long and varied political career, in which he has betrayed his political trust or failed to respond to the demands of his political professions. Through the anti-slavery period; during the trying years of the war; through the boisterous struggle for reconstruction, and constantly since, Mr. Blaine's voice has always been heard pleading for the cause of equality, arguing for freedom, and combating all propositions that aimed to restrict human rights or fetter human progress. That he has sometimes been swayed by partisan rather than statesmanlike considerations is highly probable, but even that can but prove his zeal and devotion to party principles.

No one claims for him political infallibility, and his warmest admirer will admit that he, like other men, has faults. But those who look upon Mr. Blaine as an impetuous and rash politician have but to read his letter of acceptance to see how unjust that judgment is. Calm, dignified, and scholarly, it discusses with consummate ability the issues that to-day are engaging the attention of the American people, and whether it be the tariff question or our foreign policy, he shows a familiarity with the subject that at once stamps him as a man of remarkable versatility and rare accomplishments. As the standard-bearer of the great Republican party, he will unquestionably inspire in his followers great enthusiasm and determination, and, if elected to the high office to which he has been nominated, there is every reason to believe that he will make a Chief Magistrate of whom the entire people will justly be proud.

THE BOUNDARY LINES OF OLD GROTON.—III

By the Hon. Samuel Abbott Green

The running of the Provincial line in 1741 cut off a large part of Dunstable, and left it on the New Hampshire side of the boundary. It separated even the meeting-house from that portion of the town still remaining in Massachusetts, and this fact added not a little to the deep animosity felt by the inhabitants when the disputed question was settled. It is no exaggeration to say that, throughout the old township, the feelings and sympathies of the inhabitants on both sides of the line were entirely with Massachusetts. A short time before this period the town of Nottingham had been incorporated by the General Court, and its territory taken from Dunstable. It comprised all the lands of that town, lying on the easterly side of the Merrimack River; and the difficulty of attending public worship led to the division. When the Provincial line was established, it affected Nottingham, like many other towns, most unfavorably. It divided its territory and left a tract of land in Massachusetts, too small for a separate township, but by its associations belonging to Dunstable. This tract is to-day that part of Tyngsborough lying east of the river.

The question of a new meeting-house was now agitating the inhabitants of Dunstable. Their former building was in another Province, where different laws prevailed respecting the qualifications and settlement of ministers. It was clearly evident that another structure must be built, and the customary dispute of small communities arose in regard to its site. Some persons favored one locality, and others another; some wanted the centre of territory, and others the centre of population. Akin to this subject I give the words of the Reverend Joseph Emerson, of Pepperell,—as quoted by Mr. Butler, in his History of Groton (page 306),—taken from a sermon delivered on March 8, 1770, at the dedication of the second meeting-house in Pepperell: "It hath been observed that some of the hottest contentions in this land hath been about settling of ministers and building meeting-houses; and what is the reason? The devil is a great enemy to settling ministers and building meeting-houses; wherefore he sets on his own children to work and make difficulties, and to the utmost of his power stirs up the corruptions of the children of God in some way lo oppose or obstruct so good a work." This explanation was considered highly satisfactory, as the hand of the evil one was always seen in such disputes.

During this period of local excitement an effort was made to annex Nottingham to Dunstable; and at the same time Joint Grass to Dunstable. Joint Grass was a district in the northeastern part of Groton, settled by a few families, and so named from a brook running through the neighborhood. It is evident from the documents that the questions of annexation and the site of the meeting-house were closely connected. The petition in favor of annexation was granted by the General Court on certain conditions, which were not fulfilled, and consequently the attempt fell to the ground. Some of the papers relating to it are as follows:

A Petition of sundry Inhabitants of the most northerly Part of the first Parish in *Groton*, praying that they may be set off from said *Groton* to *Dunstable*, for the Reasons mentioned.

Read and *Ordered*, That the Petitioners serve the Towns of *Groton* and *Dunstable* with Copies of this Petition, that they show Cause, if any they have, on the first Friday of the next Sitting of this Court, why the Prayer thereof should not be granted.

Sent up for Concurrence.

[Journal of the House of Representatives (page 264), March 11, 1746.]

Francis Foxcroft, Esq; brought down the Petition of the northerly Part of *Groton*, as entred the 11th of *March* last, and refer'd. Pass'd in Council, *viz.* In Council *May* 29th 1747. Read again,

together with the Answers of the Towns of *Groton* and *Dunstable*, and *Ordered*, That *Joseph Wilder* and *John Quincy*, Esqrs; together with such as the honourable House shall join, be a Committee to take under Consideration this Petition, together with the other Petitions and Papers referring to the Affair within mentioned, and report what they judge proper for this Court to do thereon. Sent down for Concurrence.

Read and concur'd, and Major *Jones*, Mr. *Fox*, and Col. *Gerrish*, are joined in the Affair.

[Journal of the House of Representatives (page 11), May 29, 1747.]

John Hill, Esq; brought down the Petition of the Inhabitants of *Groton* and *Nottingham*, with the Report of a Committee of both Houses thereon.

Signed *Joseph Wilder*, per Order.

Pass'd in Council, *viz.* In Council *June* 5th 1747. The within Report was read and accepted, and *Ordered*, That the Petition of *John Swallow* and others, Inhabitants of the northerly Part of *Groton* be so far granted, as that the Petitioners, with their Estates petition'd for, be set off from *Groton*, and annexed to the Town of *Dunstable*, agreable to *Groton* Town Vote of the 18th of *May* last; and that the Petition of the Inhabitants of *Nottingham* be granted, and that that Part of *Nottingham* left to the Province, with the Inhabitants theron, be annexed to said *Dunstable,* and that they thus Incorporated, do Duty and receive Priviledges as other Towns within this Province do or by Law ought to enjoy.

And it is further *Ordered*, That the House for publick Worship be placed two Hundred and forty eight Rods distant from Mr. *John Tyng's* North-East Corner, to run from said Corner North fifty two Degrees West, or as near that Place as the Land will admit of.

Sent down for Concurrence.

Read and concur'd with the Amendment, *viz.* instead of those Words, … *And it is further Ordered, That the House for publick Worship be* … insert the following Words … *Provided that within one Year a House for the publick Worship of* GOD *be erected, and....*

Sent up for Concurrence.

[Journal of the House of Repesentatives (page 26), June 6, 1747.]

To his Excellency William Shirley Esquire Captain General and Governour in Chief in and over his Majestys Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England The Hon^{ble}: the Council and Hon^{ble}: House of Representatives of the said Province in General Court Assembled at Boston the 31st. of May 1749.

The petition of the Inhabitants of the Town of Dunstable in the Province of the Massachusetts Bay

Most Humbly Shew

That in the Year 1747, that part of Nottingham which lyes within this Government and part of the Town of Groton Called Joint Grass preferred two petitions to this Great and Hon^{ble}: Court praying that they might be Annexed to the Town of Dunstable which petitions Your Excellency and Honours were pleased to Grant upon Conditions that a meeting house for the Publick Worship of God should be built two hundred and forty Eight Rods 52 Deg^{s}: West of the North from North East Corner of M. John Tyngs land But the Inhabitants of the Town Apprehending Your Excellency and Honours were not fully Acquainted with the Inconveniencys that would Attend placeing the Meeting House there Soon after Convened in Publick Town Meeting Legally Called to Conclude upon a place for fixing said meeting house where it would best Accommodate all the Inhabitants at which meeting proposals were made by some of the Inhabitants to take the Advice and Assistance of three men of other Towns which proposal was Accepted by the Town and they accordingly made Choice of The Hon^{ble}: James Minot Esq^{r}. Maj^{r}: Lawrence and M^{r}. Brewer and then Adjourned the Meeting.

That the said Gentlemen mett at the Towns Request and Determined upon a place for fixing the said meeting house which was approved of by the Town and they Accordingly Voted to Raise the sum of one hundred pounds towards defraying the Charge of Building the said House But Upon

Reviewing the Spot pitched upon as aforesaid many of the Inhabitants Apprehended it was more to the southward than the Committee Intended it should be And thereupon a Meeting was Called on the Twenty Sixth day of May last when the Town voted to Build the meeting house on the East side of the Road that leads from Cap^{t}: Cummings's to M^{r} Simon Tompsons where some part of the Timber now lyes being about Forty Rods Northward of Isaac Colburns house which they Apprehended to be the Spot of Ground the Committee Intended to fix upon.

And for as much as the place Last Voted by the Town to Build their meeting house upon will best Accommodate all the Inhabitants,

Your pet^{rs}. therefore most humbly pray Your Excellency and Honours would be pleased to Confirm the said Vote of the Town of the 26th: day of May last and order the meeting house for the Publick Worship of God to be Erected on the peice of Ground aforementioned,

And in duty bound they will ever pray &c.

Simon tompson
Eben Parkhurst
Com^{tee} for the
Town of Dunstable

[Massachusetts Archives, cxv, 507, 508.]

The Committee appointed on the Petition of a Committee for the Town of *Dunstable,* reported according to Order.

Read and accepted, and thereupon the following Order pass'd, *viz. In as much as the House for the publick Worship of GOD in* Dunstable *was not erected within the Line limitted in the Order of this Court of* June 6th 1747, *the Inhabitants of* Groton *and* Nottingham *have lost the Benefit of Incorporation with the Town of* Dunstable: Therefore

Voted, That a Meeting House for the publick Worship of GOD be erected as soon as may be on the East Side of the Road that leads from Capt. *Cummins* to *Simon Thompson's,* where the Timber for such a House now lies, agreeable to a Vote of the said Town of *Dunstable*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.