

not either *as* I expected, but in a way ever so much better than I had dared to hope.

A quick peremptory knock on my door just as I was ready to start out in the morning didn't surprise me in the least, though it wasn't time for the postman. I wasn't one bit surprised either when I opened the door to see the original of the dark soldier in Electra's room standing like a sentinel before me, and quite filling up our little entry.

"She is living? Tell me all! I must bear it!" wringing my hands the while in a way I could not bear at all.

"She is living, and gaining slowly. She will get well now. I am just going round to see her."

Explanation was useless. I could not have found words to answer if he had questioned.

What this fine soldier thought or what he had endured on that sea-voyage, or, hard-

er still, as we made our silent way through such strange devious ways up to that high white room, will never be known.

I led, he followed, up, up, up. I motioned to him to wait on the landing. I opened the door softly. She was standing by the window, training a spray of fuchsia with crimson drooping bells about his picture. Max had been lying at her feet. As I opened the door he rose, with an eager, expectant look in his dark wistful eyes, and stood trembling with excitement, scarce restrained by the firm white hand laid caressingly on his head.

Without speaking I withdrew.

Electra turned her sweet pale face. Out of the darkness came one with open arms reaching to the light.

"Electra!"

"Siegfried!"

And the light that shone was pure and white and warm.

## DE WITT CLINTON AS A POLITICIAN.

By JOHN BIGELOW.

**T**HE most intimate, and perhaps, in the common acceptance of the term, the most useful, friend that De Witt Clinton had during the latter half of his life was a merchant of New York, of whom very few of the present generation have ever heard.

In the very month and year that Benjamin Franklin died, and in the second year of Washington's Presidency, a young man by the name of Henry Post came down from Westfield, in Connecticut, to New York, and entered the counting-house of Prior and Co.

These people were friends of Clinton, who during his mayoralty was in the habit of frequenting their office—a sort of political rendezvous in those days—and where in due time he made young Post's acquaintance. This acquaintance soon ripened into an intimacy which only terminated with Clinton's life.

Of that intimacy precious memorials are happily preserved in a most confiding correspondence, covering a period of more than twenty years of Clinton's most active public service. There was no subject so trifling that Clinton did not solicit Post's advice about it; no end to be served in which he did not invite Post's co-operation. If he wished a public meeting called or a hamper of wine sent to him, a note discounted or a newspaper brought into line, or public sentiment manufactured for any purpose whatever, Mr. Post—or Colonel Post, as he was familiarly designated—was the ready and efficient friend whom he first took into his counsels. In periods of critical interest he used to write to Post daily; and it is a curious illustration of the absorbing nature of Clinton's interest

in public affairs that in the vast collection of from twelve to fifteen hundred of his letters found in Mr. Post's possession at his death there were not a dozen which were not devoted mainly, if not exclusively, to political concerns. None of these letters have been published, nor do they appear to have been consulted by any of Clinton's biographers.

De Witt Clinton is now only remembered as the author of the most important commercial highway of its kind in the world. Of the other events of his laborious public life, characterized as a large proportion of them unquestionably were by a high order of statesmanship—of his furious party strifes and struggles, conducted with a degree of acrimony from which the politics of our day (not yet specially renowned for decorum) are comparatively free—but little is known. His contemporaries for the most part are with him in the grave. His biographers have left very meagre details of his life, and what they have given us were generally selected and colored with the strong partialities of political as well as personal friendship. Clinton's letters to Colonel Post, written as they were under the conditions of the most unreserved intimacy and confidence, admit the reader, therefore, and for the first time, to Clinton's most interior life. They give us Clinton the politician rather than Clinton the statesman; they uncover the most secret recesses of his heart, his passions, his prejudices, his ambition, his lofty pride, his scorn of every form of meanness, his singular indifference to all such distinctions as wealth alone can con-

fer; and they enable us to comprehend the otherwise unintelligible virulence of his adversaries on the one hand and the reckless devotion of his friends on the other.

Before proceeding to lay before our readers, as we propose to do, some specimens of this correspondence, which has been kindly intrusted to our editorial discretion, they may be pleased to become somewhat better acquainted with the person who was able to inspire so eminent and sagacious a man as De Witt Clinton with such a cordial and enduring friendship.

At the conclusion of his clerkship Mr. Post entered into business as a shipping merchant with a Mr. John Russell, under the partnership title of Post and Russell, and shortly after became united in marriage with Mary, daughter of William Minturn. During the "embargo" under Jefferson's administration the firm of Post and Russell was dissolved, and a new firm was formed, of which Mr. Post was the head, under the name of Post, Grinnell, and Minturn. This was the beginning, and Mr. Post deserves to be regarded as the parent of one of the oldest and most distinguished commercial houses in this country, still flourishing under the familiar and honored title of Grinnell, Minturn, and Co.

Mr. Post was for many years one of the governors of the New York Hospital, and from 1803 to 1813 was secretary of the board. He was also a member of the Academy of Fine Arts, of the New York Historical Society, of the New York Agricultural Society, of the Manumission Society, and of the Linnean Society of London.

Colonel Post and his family for many years occupied what was known as the old Franklin House, on Franklin Square, part of which is now covered by one corner of the vast publishing house of Harper and Brothers. In his journal, which is preserved, Colonel Post makes an interesting allusion to this classic residence:

"When I arrived, Congress was in session, it being at the Federal Hall, Wall Street, and George Washington lived at the Franklin House, in F. Square, and soon moved from it to M'Comb's four-story Double House, Broadway, from which, when Congress moved to Philadelphia, he also went there. I saw George Washington ride out several times, and once walk by E. Prior's house, in company with Tobias Lear, the President's secretary, Thomas Jefferson, and Page of Virginia. I little thought then I should by any course of accidents live in the same Franklin House in which he resided as first President under the new Constitution, while putting the govt. into operation. I even slept with my wife for about ten years in the same room in which slept Washington and his wife, as also the great De Witt Clinton, who resided in the same House several years previous to my occupancy. The House was built by Walter Franklin in the year 1770. He dying in a few years, his daughter

(Widow of David Bowne, a Quaker speaking Elder) married James Osgood, one of the Commissioners of the Treasury under the old Constitution, who lived in it till Gov. D. Witt Clinton occupied it. The Walton Houses, near Peck Slip, in Pearl St., were during the war of the Revolution distinguished for size and consideration, and were considered as far up town, and by some called out of the Main City, which was low down."

The Franklin House has been thus more minutely described by one of Colonel Post's children:

"It was a handsome old house, with its thick walls, richly carved staircase, deep window-seats, wainscoted partitions, and open fire-places quaintly tiled with blue India china, I remember, in one room, although the house was somewhat modernized when my father went to live in it. The wall-paper in the Second Hall was of never-failing interest to us children, with its gay pictures of men and women of full size walking in beautiful gardens, sitting by fountains with parasols, or sailing on lakes with guitars and flutes in their hands."

Silvanus Millar, for many years surrogate of New York, was also at one time a tenant of the Franklin House.

Colonel Post seems to have been a man of great prudence, and endowed with rare capacities for ascertaining the drift of public opinion. Of both these qualities Clinton learned the value by experience. He used sometimes to take a playful revenge for the checks which his more impetuous temperament received from his friendly Mentor by addressing him as "Colonel Prudence."

This correspondence abounds in expressions of respect for Post's character, energy, and sagacity; for as Clinton loved to be reminded of his own strong points, he did not begrudge the same pleasure to others. Thus in one of his letters he writes:

"In a word, timidity is the Bohun upas which prevents our people from getting the complete control at the November election. The least reverse sinks them to the earth. Energy like yours would do every thing, and twelve men of your intelligence and decision would save the city."

In 1823 Clinton had noticed one of his younger political protégés showing a disposition to burn incense to strange gods; and on the 11th September, alluding to the fact in a letter to Post, he adds:

"The whole is an arrangement for his own benefit, and I think, with very little heart and with an overrated head, he will sink into utter insignificance in time. Remember this prediction in Silence. We must take the world as it is, and, my friend, I should think it a very bad world were it not for such virtuous and enlightened men as yourself, who redeem human nature from the odious imputations that are cast upon it. I speak this *Seriatim* [*sic*], and with some warmth of feeling. I know your friendship, and I respect you in every point of view. I am your

friend, and I hope that you will experience the benefits of my friendship."

De Witt Clinton was born at New Windsor, on the Hudson, on the 2d of March, 1769; he was admitted to the bar in 1788, and the same year reported the debates of the State Convention which ratified the new Constitution of the United States for a New York journal. He was sent to the Assembly in 1797, to the State Senate in 1798; he became a member of the Council of Appointment in 1801, and at the exceptionally early age of thirty-three was chosen United States Senator. In 1803 he resigned his seat in that body to take the office of Mayor of the city of New York—an exchange scarcely intelligible to those who judge by the relative importance of those positions in our time. He held this dignity almost continuously till 1815, during part of the time—from 1805 to 1811—occupying also a seat in the State Senate. He was also Lieutenant-Governor from 1811 to 1813, besides being an unsuccessful candidate for the Presidency against Madison in 1812, receiving 89 against 128 electoral votes.

In 1815 he wrote a memorial in favor of uniting the waters of the Great Lakes and the Atlantic by a canal, which was adopted at a large meeting of the citizens of New York, and so numerous signed that it may be said to have overcome all effective opposition in our State Legislature to the prosecution of that great enterprise, which had already seriously occupied Clinton's thoughts and time for many years.

In compliance with the prayer of his memorial an act was passed by the Legislature on the 17th April, 1816, "to provide for the internal navigation of the State," and Stephen Van Rensselaer, De Witt Clinton, Samuel Young, Myron Holley, and Joseph Elliott were named commissioners to devise plans, etc., with instructions to report within twenty days after the commencement of the next annual session of the Legislature, and \$20,000 were appropriated for the expenses of the commission.

The commissioners set about their work without delay. The following are extracts from letters written by Clinton to Mr. Post from Buffalo and Utica, while engaged in executing the instructions of the Legislature.

"BUFFALO, 28 July, 1816.

"MY DEAR SIR,—.....All the commissioners are here except V. Rensselaer, who was forced to go home by the peculiar situation of his wife. We had a full board at Utica, with the exception of Elliott, who was detained home by indisposition. We have as hitherto proceeded with the most perfect harmony, and every thing pre-  
sages well. The whole route of this as well as the Champlain Canal will be finished in season. Our measures will unite prudence and energy.

"Our business here is to locate the source of the Canal. We will then move eastwardly, ex-

amining the land and the water with a scrutinizing eye, superintending our operations, and exploring all our facilities and embarrassments.

"I have had the pleasure of seeing many of our friends, and all seem to be so. The people of this country are uncommonly intelligent. The pretended constitutional difficulties are viewed with the most supreme contempt.

"I write this with a view of Lake Erie from my open window. The wind northerly, and the surface of this sea gently ruffled—a square-rigged vessel sailing up the Lake—a sail-boat passing to Canada, and a British vessel of war in sight. A little to the right is the site of Fort Erie, and before me I see the remains of a house destroyed in the general conflagration of this place. Some of our red brethren are in the street, and on the ruins of an old battery are some young gentlemen from the South contemplating the magnificent scenery of the Lake. When we look to the past, and conceive that about thirty years ago this land flowing with milk and honey (I speak figuratively) was exclusively occupied by the wandering Tartars of America—that since that period it has been the theatre of naval and military achievements which will render it classic ground to future generations—that these immense seas will in a few years be whitened with commerce—that they will be connected by inland navigation with the ocean, and that the place where I now write will, in all human probability, before the passing away of the present generation, be the second city in the State—the mind is lost in wonder and perplexed and confounded with the immensity of the ideas which press upon it."

"UTICA, 14 August, 1816.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am so far on my way back, but shall be detained some weeks in visiting the country down and the Champlain Canal. The commissioners are now all scattered, but will be together in 8 or 10 days. Buffalo is to be the point of beginning, and in 50 years it will be next to N. York in wealth and population. We have looked at all the difficult points, ascended mountains, penetrated forests, descended into wide-spreading and deeply excavated ravines, and have, upon the whole, encountered more fatigue than I thought I could bear. The result is most satisfactory. The work can be easily effected, and the utmost cost will not exceed our calculations. The public sentiment is also fixed in its favor. There is scarcely a dissentient in this vast country. One-half of the line from Rome to the Seneca River is nearly run, making a distance of 90 miles, and the scenery exceeds the most sanguine expectations—a level of 45 miles after a descent of 6 feet, then a descent of 16 and a new level of 30 miles, then 6 or 8 feet to the Seneca River.

"In other respects this exploration has been most satisfactory. I have seen many valuable subjects in Natural History, and have made many interesting remarks on the antiquities, geology, etc., of this important country.

"Our reception has been friendly throughout. On all sides we have met with every attention.

"As to the constitutional question, it is mooted at by every body. My colleague, Mr. Y.\* and Genl. P. B. Porter have no doubt on the

\* Samuel Young.

subject. Govr. T.\* is well understood by the intelligent. On all points connected with great political bearings you may be assured that there is almost an unanimous coincidence with your feelings and wishes."

At the election in 1816 Tompkins had been chosen Governor of the State of New York, and also Vice-President of the United States. The Legislature of the State ordered a new election for Governor in April, 1817, which resulted in making Clinton Tompkins's successor. As Clinton's standing with the Republican party had become somewhat compromised, his relations with Tompkins had not been either politically or personally quite friendly; hence the truce between them described in the following letter. Van Buren had engineered the opposition to Clinton, and had chosen Porter as its candidate. This will explain the allusion to V. B. in the postscript. The chancery suit to which reference is made in the same letter, and in which Clinton says, emphatically, that the Court of Errors "without doubt" would decide in his favor, was brought by the residuary legatees of his wife's father to set aside a sale of a large tract of land that gentleman had made to Clinton and a Mr. Norton. It was a regrettable circumstance that every Senator who voted in caucus against Clinton's nomination for Governor voted for reversing the judgment of the court below, and every one who voted for Clinton in caucus voted for sustaining it. Thirty-five men voting as judges upon a purely legal question exactly as they had already voted upon a strictly party measure was a coincidence not particularly favorable to the tribunal in which it occurred, and none the more so because of Clinton's confident prognosis of the result. Van Buren was a member of the Senate and of the court, but, as he had been of counsel for one of the parties in the court below, did not vote on the appeal.

"ALBANY, 6 April, 1817.

"DEAR SIR,—I have just come from a visit to Vice-P. T.† At the close of it he said that if the oppugnation of the *Columbian* to the District Senatorial nomination was discontinued there would be no difficulty there, as he was assured by one of the most violent men, probably meaning Targee. Upon a review of the whole case, and in accordance with the general sentiment, I believe that if our friends observe these three negative rules there will be no disturbance now or hereafter from our present opponents:

"1. Not to quarrel with Monroe. He is, as Gen. B. assures me, friendly—all about him very hostile.

\* Governor Tompkins. This gentleman had separated from Clinton at the date of this letter, and had discouraged the canal project, partly, no doubt, because its fortunes were so closely identified with those of Clinton.

† Daniel D. Tompkins, Vice-President.

"2. To treat the V. P. well; if this can not be digested by all, not ill.

"3. Not to stir up strife with the Martling men. In contention they live and move and have their being. *Cessante causâ, cessat effectus*, is a maxim as true in politics as in philosophy. Remove the aliment of their dominion, and they dwindle into nothing. The fire-brand is their sceptre, and their throne is composed of tomahawks and scalping knives.

"My stay here is unexpectedly protracted. If I go away, the Canal Commissioners can not form a board, and the law is not yet decided on. Something will be done. But if that also fails, it will be owing, I think, to invidious or foolish friends. The appeal from Chancery will be decided to-morrow—favorably, I have no doubt.....

"We are all harmony. An obscure painter of the Flemish school has made, if my recollection serves me, a very ludicrous and grotesque representation of Jonah immediately after he was ejaculated from the whale's belly. He is represented as having a very bewildered and dismal physiognomy, not knowing from whence he came nor to what place bound. Just so looks V. B., the leader of the oppugnation army."

The following letters were written after Clinton had resumed the Governor's chair, in July:

"ALBANY, 24 July, 1817.

"DEAR SIR,—I received your letters, and thank you for them.

"My Western journey was pleasant and highly satisfactory. The Canal is in a fine way. Ten miles will be completely finished this season, and all within the estimate. The application of the simple labor-saving machinery of our contractors has the operation of magic. Trees, stumps, and every thing vanish before it. The blockheads who manage the Martling paper with you appear to be ignorant of the A B C of the subject. It is questionable whether they even know what a cubic yard is.

"We located ourselves in the new house to-day, and will continue in a disorganized state until the latter end of next week. My library will exact severe labor for its arrangement.

"I will thank you to request Mr. Astor to send me a small box of new tea; Comstock, the cyder merchant, six dozen of his best cyder; and William Bruce, of Broadway, a barrel of his best porter—all to be charged to me.

"Let me hear from you often, and believe me,

"Yours sincerely,

"DE WITT CLINTON."

The "friend on Staten Island" referred to in the following letter was Vice-President Tompkins, whose accounts with the government for expenditures made in the war of 1812 while he was Governor had been so carelessly kept as to place him before the public for a time in a very embarrassing position. He did not resign the Vice-Presidency, however, but on the contrary was re-elected to that office in 1820. The Comptroller was Archibald McIntyre, who was charged with the auditing of Tompkins's accounts.

"ALBANY, 21 Sept.\*

"MY DEAR SIR,—.....The Comptroller has returned, having done, and expecting to do, nothing. Our friend on Staten Island is unfortunately sick in body and mind. He talks of resigning and taking the Collectorship, and making Anthony Lamb his Deputy. This is, no doubt, his serious intention, and you may look out for it. I do not think he will be appointed unless he settles his accounts at Washington. His situation is upon the whole deplorable, and calculated to excite sympathy.

"The Canal proceeds wondrously well. The Martling opposition *has ruined them forever*. The public mind was never in a better train for useful operations. John Townsend has just come from the West. There is but one sentiment.

"Jacob Barker has bought up the Sandy Hill Bank. He is a dangerous friend in politics. His conduct in relation to Slocum and Staff is highly exceptionable.

"Peaceful's letter from Owasco makes a great noise. The foot of Hercules is to be seen in it.

"Yours truly."

In the fall of 1807 Jesse Hawley commenced the publication of a series of papers in the *Genesee Messenger* to develop the idea of uniting the Great Lakes and the Atlantic by a canal. These papers were thought very able, and to have done very much to prepare the public mind for its practical consummation by Clinton. His letters were signed "Hercules." This explains the allusion to the probable authorship of "Peaceful's" letter in the last paragraph of the preceding letter.

Clinton's relation with the administration or Republican party had been any thing but cordial for many years, and he thought he had reason to believe that President Monroe was using the patronage of the Federal government against him. Stung with these suspicions, Clinton, on the 19th of November, 1820, wrote as follows to Colonel Post:

"ALBANY, 19 Nov., 1820.

"DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter, and, like its author, it is very good—very wise and very politic.

"The Tammany Horse rides through the Legislature like a wild ass's colt. All will end well. Thousand and tens of thousands of Office Seekers under the new Council.

"I want authenticated testimony of the interference of the National Govt. in our Elections. Our friends must be up and doing on this subject. It is all-important. I have written to Haines on this subject.

"Pell will hand you a correct speech. He will also speak to you on the above subject.

"The trial of Verplanck for a riot must be published. Give the manuscript to him."

The paragraph about Verplanck deserves a word of explanation.

During the year 1814 Gulian C. Verplanck, under the *nom de plume* of Abimelech Coady,

published some papers in a New York journal on the impropriety of opposing the war, and urging a manful defense of the country. In these communications he criticised Clinton with great severity. They were answered under the signature of "A Traveller," supposed to be Clinton, who attributed Verplanck's hostility to a charge to a jury given by Clinton while Mayor of New York, on an occasion when Verplanck was indicted with others for provoking a riot during the Commencement exercises at Columbia College in 1811.\* Near the close of his paper the Traveller says: "He (Coady, *alias* Verplanck) has become the head of a political sect called the Coodies, of hybrid nature, composed of the combined spawn of Federalism and Jacobism, and generated in the venomous passions of disappointment and revenge, without any definite character—neither fish, flesh, nor bird nor beast, but a nondescript made up of

"All monstrous, all prodigious things."

The paragraph in the text goes to confirm the suspicion that Clinton was the "Traveller."

Eight days after the preceding letter was written Clinton applies more specifically for evidence of the abuse of Federal patronage.

"What," he asks, "is the annual amount of the patronage of the National Government in this State? Custom-house we have —; Navy-yard, —; army, —; navy, —; contracts, —; Judiciary, —; Treaty of Ghent, —; Post-office, —. Knowing the accuracy of your calculations, I rely much on you. The question is important. Consult Eckford and Davis cautiously."

Clinton approved of Quakerism in religion, but not in politics. Post had evidently cautioned him against an aggressive warfare upon the administration, for which the list of Federal office-holders in the State was to furnish ammunition. To this he furnishes a most characteristic reply, for Clinton's political church was nothing if not militant.

"ALBANY, 20 Nov., 1820.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter, and approve of its proper and judicious remarks in all respects excepting its general tendency to cramp energy. In political warfare the defensive side will eventually lose. This is also the case in military collision, and you may trace its influence to a game of chess. Energy in a good cause will carry every thing. The meekness of Quakerism will do in religion, but not in politics. I am not in the least apprehensive of the investigation about official interference. I repeat it—every thing will answer with energy and decision.

"Our friends are in high spirits. The month of February will shake the faction to atoms."

\* See a full account of this riot, and the trial which ensued, and Clinton's charge to the jury, in the admirable eulogy of Verplanck read before the Century Club in 1870 by Judge Daly.

\* No year given. Probably 1819.

In 1818 Mr. Van Buren, who had for many years been estranged from Clinton, set on foot a new organization of the Democratic party of the State of New York, and was the ruling spirit of a coterie of clever politicians, among whom William L. Marcy, Edwin Crosswell, Azariah C. Flagg, and Benjamin F. Butler afterward became prominent, by whom the political control of the State was uninterruptedly exercised for more than thirty years. This was the "faction" alluded to in the foregoing letter. The apprehensions about Van Buren expressed in the following letter were confirmed by his election to the United States Senate in 1821, defeating the combined forces of the Clintonians and Federalists:

"30 N.\*  
"DEAR SIR,—Yours of 28th duly received. Its contents quite interesting.

"The hint about Dutchess good, quite good—had ought to be followed up. The present Atty. Genl.† will certainly be turned out. Suppose he resigns before the 1st of February, the time of the expiration of the old Council, whom shall we appoint in order to defeat the arch-scoundrel V. B.‡ I am afraid he will beat Sanford for Senator. He will, unless his friends stand out against a Caucus decision. This intimation is a great secret.

"I think that we will give the faction a great prostration, with suitable energy. Go on with your collection of proofs. I think that with a little industry this matter will stand well.

"Yours."

During the session of the Legislature in 1818, Ogden Edwards, then a member of that body from the city of New York, introduced a bill into the Assembly calling for a State Convention to revise the constitution, the main object of his partisans being to abolish the Council of Appointment. The bill was rejected by the Assembly, but the policy of a convention was adhered to by the party, of which Van Buren was then the leader, until in 1821 a bill calling a Constitutional Convention was finally passed. Clinton discountenanced Edwards's bill, and any other which conferred upon the convention unrestricted powers. The following letter states compactly the grounds of his qualified opposition:

25 Nov. §

"DEAR SIR,—.....The objections of the Council will be sustained by public opinion. There is no inconsistency. I am in favor of a Convention properly and fairly called, but not for one got up precipitately for bad purposes, under bad auspices, and with a view to shake society to its foundations in order to sustain the predominance of bad men.

"The public mind is in fine order. Nothing but energy is necessary to carry every thing.

The vulgar insolence of the Senate has destroyed the respectability of that body.

"Washington is in terror and confusion. We must confine the express charge to the officers and the Postmaster-Genl., leaving a wide door open for implication. We have nothing to gain by temporizing with these gentry. Have you seen Pell? I referred him to you because one can not speak *in extenso* on paper.

"Woodworth and Yates have d—d themselves. Against a convention, and yet in favor of the bill calling one; preferring other provisions, and yet in favor of those they did not approve—weak men with sinister purposes.

"There are great and consoling views in future. Republican govt. must and can be supported in its purity. The people are wiser than the man who attempt to deceive."

It would seem from the foregoing that Post's statistics of Federal interference had taken effect in Washington, and that Clinton meant to avail himself of them to the uttermost. His "leaving a wide door open for implication" shows that at least some of the uses and abuses of a partisan press were quite as well understood half a century ago as to-day, and were the familiar resources of statesmen at least as prominent in those days as those who employ them in ours. In the following letter Clinton shows that his proposal to leave "a wide door open for implication" was neither a hasty nor careless expression. He says that in discussing the policy of the government they must not limit themselves to facts, but "recourse must also be had to inferences," therein uniting "boldness with prudence."

When such maxims were laid down by the *sommités* of political circles, we need hardly be surprised to find such epigrams as the following circulating freely about the swash-bucklers of the press:

"Lie on, Duane, lie on for pay,  
And, Cheetham, lie thou too;  
More against truth you can not say  
Than truth can say 'gainst you."

"ALBANY, 27 Nov., 1820.

"DEAR SIR,—.....From the developments of public opinion which are constantly occurring it really appears that the people are hostile to a convention.

"The letter of V. B. is a precious morceau. It sets grammar and truth at defiance, and it speaks out plainly that the aid of the General Govt. is necessary in the election, and this aid was unquestionably afforded.

"The course of exposition ought, I think, to be this: to collect a voluminous mass of documents detailing facts, and to form from them a lucid, intelligible statement. On the representation of facts recourse must also be had to inferences, and it ought also to unite boldness with prudence.

"Y. and Woodworth were both frightened,

\* Probably November, 1820.

† Thomas J. Oakley was appointed Attorney-General in 1819, Samuel A. Talcott succeeding him in 1821.

‡ Van Buren.

§ Probably 1820.

\* William Duane was editor of the *Aurora* and Cheetham was editor of the *Citizen*. This epigram appeared in the *Evening Post* in the days when those prints were most influential and disreputable.

and have damned themselves. The latter supposed also that he would distinguish himself by his independence. I don't know a fellow more intrinsically despicable. I intend the first convenient opportunity to cut him to the quick. Y. is a miserably fellow—the dupe of his own vanity and the tool of bad principles.”

Owing to the rapid growth of the State in commerce and population, the Supreme Court, as early as 1819, had become surcharged with business, and some relief had become indispensable. It was proposed by one of the Clintonian members of the Senate that, besides filling the vacancy created by the resignation of Judge Thompson, two more judges should be added to that bench, and that one of the three new judges should be Van Buren. Referring to this situation, Judge Hammond wrote:

“I am not authorized to say that Mr. Van Buren would have accepted the appointment, but I have some reason to believe he would have done so. He appeared to be tired of the eternal political struggles to which he seemed doomed, and such, in truth, he told me was the fact. The probability is that if at that moment the office of judge had been tendered to him he would have gladly retired from political contests, and employed the great powers of his mind in the discharge of his official duties, and would have confined his ambition to the acquisition of distinction and fame as a jurist. Had this scheme been adopted (if one may be allowed to speculate on probabilities), it is reasonable to conjecture that the then existing judicial system would not have been broken up, that Mr. Clinton would have been sustained, and that probably Mr. Van Buren never would have been President of the United States. It must be confessed that one object of the proposer of this plan was to get Mr. Van Buren out of the Legislature, and detach him from the active management of the party of which he was the life and soul.”\*

A knowledge of the foregoing facts adds interest, if not importance, to the following. It farther illustrates Clinton's way occasionally of permitting the end to sanctify the means:

“ALBANY, 2 December, 1820.

“DEAR SIR,—W. P. V. N.† and the Burrite portion of the Bucktails, and others opposed to V. Buren, were very anxious to know some time ago whether he had not made overtures to Govr. Clinton, and promised to withdraw himself from office if appointed a judge, about the time that question was pending. Such overture was made through two respectable men, and rejected. The fact may be communicated and boldly asserted, leaving my name out of view. He dares not bring it to a scrutiny. The mode of communication is left to you. It is very important to destroy this Prince of Villains.

“Go on and collect testimony. The public mind is in good trim.

“Your friend in verity.”

\* Political Hist. of New York, vol. i., p. 499.

† William P. Van Ness, Burr's second in his duel with Hamilton.

As early as 1822 Clinton's correspondence betrays the preoccupation of his mind with the question of a successor to Mr. Monroe. On the 21st of August in that year he writes:

“I have just received a letter from H. Howland, of Scipio, who has just returned from Pennsylvania. He says: ‘I can not descend to the meanness of flattery. I think I never have with thee. Circumstances may require frankness. I find thou art much approved in Pennsylvania, and that not limited to parties. There is a time when public envy is satisfied. Public opinion is running rapidly in thy favor in this Country, and here not confined to parties. It is my wish, as one American Citizen, that thou shouldst be a candidate for the next Presidency. Ohio, now powerful, has a deep interest in internal improvements. Indiana limited. My friend Wm. H. Brown, editor of the Illinois State Paper, constantly advocates thy measures. Missouri looks this way.’

“I have also received a letter from Col. Meeks, of Kentucky, quite enthusiastic; from Robert Smith, of Pennsylvania, Pittsburg, who signs himself Printer. Can you find out who he is? The affair of S. H.\* will, I am afraid, turn out badly for him. I know his history; caution and courtesy are requisite. Duane is correct. A life of adventure and intrigue. He is, I have no doubt, friendly, but when he finds it his interest he will leave you. Mullet is a farmer at Greenbush, is a drunkard, and has had communication with Russell, who is a Yankee rascal adventurer, with sharp wits and total destitution of principle. The whole is a bad affair, and Hunt will be ruined, I am afraid. Russell is too cunning to have committed himself on paper.

“I am sorry for W. Duane.† I think that his circumstances must be very low. His paper has lost much of its circulation, and most of its influence. The *Columbian Observer* is an able paper. I have ordered it.

“Van Buren is very busy. I left him at the Springs waiting the arrival of Secretary Thompson and family, who leave Albany this day for that place. He was very civil, and looks distressed. Young I have seen frequently lately, and several of his adherents; their tone is sensibly altered. Yates is unpopular, and Southwick will beat him in this city and Schenectady. Adams stands no chance, and Crawford's friends exhibit more smoke than fire. Be assured he has no strength of any magnitude in this State.”

Near the commencement of the century the William Duane referred to in the preceding letter, intoxicated with the new political ideas of the period, started a paper at Philadelphia, which he called the *Aurora*, and which espoused the most advanced ideas of the Jeffersonian Democracy. For some years it exerted considerable influence. Mr. Jefferson even flattered the editor by attributing his election to its vigorous support. When the seat of government was transferred from Philadelphia to Washington the political importance of the *Aurora* began to decline, and its editor to become needy and

\* Seth Hunt.

† Editor of the *Aurora*.

dependent. Among Mr. Post's letters were many from Duane, most of them revealing different aspects of the desperate situation of his affairs, and his anxiety to ingraft his financial fortunes upon the political fortunes of Governor Clinton. In January, 1822, we find him acknowledging the receipt of fifty dollars from Mr. Post. On the 2d of August he writes again:

"You may judge of the necessity of my doing something when I tell you that yesterday my wife and children had no dinner, nor money to purchase one, and I can not run in debt without a prospect of paying. I have very promising prospects by going on a mercantile adventure to Caracas, and have been solicited to go to Mexico, but the imperial atmosphere is not fit for my lungs.....I have declined taking the *Advocate* from a sense of decency, which, I regret to perceive, does not prevail much in my native State, or such a nuisance could not exist there, in the fermentation of its own corruption."

On the 12th of August in the same year he wrote again:

"As to the *Aurora*, the 'powers that be' have not been idle nor unsuccessful in their efforts; they have gradually withdrawn 300 subscribers from it, all principally in the Southern direction, and have actually embarrassed me so much, in addition to the hard times, and the War Department withholding above \$7000 due me, that it is even now problematical whether I can weather the storm, having in vain endeavored to obtain \$1000 only till May, for which I tendered a bond and mortgage on my whole office. Confidence is entirely gone here, and I find it difficult, with \$40,000 due to me, to collect domestic subsistence and half wages to my establishment. If I could obtain about fifty subscribers to Franklin's works, it would carry me triumphant through the winter, and, the State election completed, I should be better off than at any time since the war. I should suppose this would not be difficult, if there was any one who would set about it. It would keep my mind free from the most painful of all incommodations—the applications for money when there is none to pay."

It will be apparent from the paragraphs above cited that the correspondence between Post, as the agent of Clinton, and Duane was not entirely disinterested on either side; that Duane had a pen for which he was anxious to find a market, and Clinton had ambitions to the gratification of which such a pen might contribute. This explanation and the letter from Duane which follows seem a needful introduction to the next succeeding letter to Post from Governor Clinton.

"PHILA., 3d April, 1822.

"DEAR SIR,—An article from the *Ontario Messenger*, published in the *Advocate* of yesterday, has somewhat surprised me. Be so good as to let me know whether that article speaks the intentions of Mr. Clinton's friends, or if it be an act of the individual only.

"I have not written to you for some time, for, in fact, I had nothing to say that was not public, and my situation has been such as to render what was formerly a recreation—that of editing my paper—now a hard and hopeless task. I have struggled through the last eleven months under a weight that I can not well endure, and see no prospect now before me but utter deprivation. The morbid state of the public mind is not suited to my temperament, and my paper and my ideas of right and wrong are not suited to the actual state of society. Necessity drags me along as the wrecked mariner clings to the plank that remains; but the slightest ruffle of the waters overwhelms him. I am just so, and out of sight of land, without compass to steer by, and every thing overlclouded.

"Were I of that kind of stuff that is most current, I could make terms of sale for myself. I have had overtures most audacious from Adams, and some oglings from Calhoun, and some of Clay's friends have been trying what ground I should take. I have had no reserves, and have none. If Mr. C. is to be a candidate for the Presidency, let me know explicitly. If any other course be pursued, let me know; for in the event of his not being the man, it will be wholly indifferent to me who is.

"Clay has been in this city a week; he is now confined to his chamber, having been bled. I suspect incipient pleurisy. As I do not personally know him, I can not say any thing of what he is doing or means to do. I met him at the South American minister's, but did not exchange even a bow. He lodges with Mr. Meade, he being counsel for Meade in the Florida treaty indemnities.

"Do not delay to apprise me of what is the state of things. If all is abandoned, in the spirit of that Ontario article I shall indeed be mortified, because a good plan of operations, well digested and acted upon, with the time that is to elapse, would, in my mind, be effectual. Seven weeks before Thos. Jefferson's nomination his nearest friends and the most active politicians had no hope of his election. It was a well-digested plan, well executed, that produced the effect. I am a too *pauvre diable* to do any thing but write and think; and tho' I shall be wrecked, I trust my faculties will not sink under the shock. At least personal ill or privation could not affect me for an instant. I could live on bread and water, and so I was only warmly clad, a plank would not discompose me in my natural sleep; but there is a little circle of sweet sensible girls, to whom I am the raven, and whose wants would be more wounding than bayonets.

"Pardon my incoherency; but do not neglect to advise me, as I must call up all my force to extricate myself from the peril that I am in.

"Yours, very truly."

The following from Clinton was obviously written after a perusal of the preceding:

"ALBANY, 5 April, 1822.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I return you the letter. It is, as usual, very interesting. The *Ontario Messenger* article is the exclusive work of J. C. Spencer, who has been for a long time a Malcontent on account of the Office of District Atty. being confined to a County, and because he was not appointed Atty.-Genl. He is an incubus on



the party, and the loss of Ontario and some of the neighboring Counties may be imputed to his deleterious management. Apart from him, we will stand well; with him, we participate in all his unpopularity. His father,\* who is really —, and who has injured us a thousandfold, disavows his conduct; but that he is in favor of Yates, with a view to retain his office, is not doubted, and there is but one general undivided sentiment of contempt. The friends of Young say they will be now with us; the obstacle is removed; and the friends of Yates implore them to be silent.

"Pell's conduct is not a little surprising. It exposes me to reproach, and himself to more than suspicion. I shall not give him up until I know why he has disobeyed my peremptory orders.

"The tax on banks will not pass. It is a ramification of a system of Jacobinism—a war against property.

"The policy of our party is to be concentrated for action, to be silent, and to act when an opportunity offers. Our prospects are excellent. We shall prevail as sure as fate.

"As for Crawford, and Calhoun, and Adams, and Clay, they have outraged public sentiment by their obtrusive claims."

Clinton's Presidential aspirations made him a very censorious judge of all who did not sympathize with them. The four competing candidates, Crawford, Clay, Calhoun, and Adams, could hardly be paralleled, Clinton being judge, by any equal number of the twelve Cæsars of Suetonius. Crawford is "as hardened a ruffian as Burr;" Calhoun is "treacherous," and "a thorough-paced political blackleg;" Adams "in politics was an apostate, and in private life a pedagogue, and every thing but amiable and honest," while his father, the ex-President, was "a scamp." Rufus King's speech in the United States Senate on the Missouri Compromise was "an absurd declamation." Judge Smith Thompson, of the United States Supreme Court, "is one of the domestic circle of President Monroe, and one of the coterie of old women that surround him;" "a tool of Van Buren." Governor Yates is "perfidious and weak." Henry Wheaton's "conduct is shamefully disgraceful, and he might be lashed naked round the world; but he has already got an exuberant portion of public contempt, and he has destroyed himself forever." "There is but one opinion about Wheaton, and that is that he is a pitiful scoundrel." Chief Justice Ambrose Spencer is classed as a minus quantity, and his son John C., "the political millstone of the West." Peter B. Porter "wears a mask." Mullett is a drunkard. Russell is "a Yankee rascal adventurer, with sharp wits and total destitution of principle." Hoffman is "a poor devil; he goes to bed drunk every night." Dr. Stuart "is a notorious story-teller;" "he will lie to any conceivable extent." Wood-

worth, "a weak man, with sinister purposes." Root is "a bad man." General Bogardus was "a mere driveler." Cramer and Rogers "are always in the market, and you can infer nothing from what they say." Mallory and Wright are scoundrels. Gardner, "as stupid as base; a fool in talent and a scoundrel in grain." Hackley is "a great scamp."

"The publication of Adams's letters" (he writes in 1823), "altho' highly dishonorable, will be very detrimental to the views of his son. They show that every body must have known, that the conversion of the son was a personal arrangement. I never had a doubt but that it was a treaty well digested between him and Madison."

Samuel Young "is unpopular, and suspicions are entertained of his integrity;" he is, besides, "much of an imbecile." J. B. Murray is "a busy meddling fellow," "the mere machine of a machine." "There never was a lot of greater scoundrels combined in deluding the people than Halsey, Rogers, Suydam, Meyer, Goodell, Wheeler," etc. The *Advocate* and the *Patriot* newspapers—"put them in a bag and shake them, and the one that comes out first is the greatest scoundrel."

When we have such accounts from a man like Clinton of the most prominent statesmen of his generation, we are constrained either to think less favorably of him or less unfavorably of those who look after political affairs in our own "more degenerate days." It is certain that no responsible statesman of this generation would use more unmeasured language in denouncing the greatest political reprobate of our day than Clinton applies to the most eminent statesmen of his.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

## LITTLE ICEBERG.

"THIS is the place, then," said Clarence Broughton to himself, as he paused to bestow a contemptuous glance on the faded green door of a photographic establishment in an out-of-the-way street of a German town. "Number 7 Steinstrasse—and well named too. I only hope Tina's photographs are ready, for I don't see the joke of hobbling over these confounded stones twice in one day." With which he opened the green door and entered.

There was nobody visible inside, and Mr. Broughton, to beguile the period of waiting, lounged up to the counter and began listlessly turning over some photographs lying there. But in another moment the listless air changed to one of pleased interest, as, pushing the others aside, he fixed his attention on a single picture, which he turned now this way, now that, to catch the varying light on the face.

He was still deep in the study of it when

\* Chief Justice Ambrose Spencer.

## DE WITT CLINTON AS A POLITICIAN.—(Concluded.)

BY JOHN BIGELOW.

WITH the quick instinct of an insatiable ambition, Clinton early discerned in Van Buren his most formidable competitor for political leadership in the State of New York, and therefore upon no one is he so virulent and unrelenting in denunciation. Between the years 1817 and 1824 nearly every letter to Post contains some vituperative allusion to Van Buren, as for example:

"Whom shall we appoint to defeat the arch-scoundrel Van Buren?"

"It is very important to destroy this Prince of Villains."

"We can place no reliance upon the goodwill of Van Buren. In his politics he is a confirmed knave.

"Honey in his mouth, words of milk, Gall in his heart, and fraud in his acts."

"With respect to Van Buren, there is no developing the man. He is a scoundrel of the first magnitude, beset by enemies at home and abroad, having the shadow of influence, and able to do much for a good cause, but without any fixture of principle or reality of virtue."

"Your plan of uniting the State is a good idea, but you can never effect it through treachery and duplicity, through Van Buren and Skinner."

"Van Buren must be conquered through his fears. He has no heart, no sincerity."

"Van Buren is now excessively hated out of the State as well as in it. As he falls we will of course rise. There is no doubt of a corrupt sale of the vote of the State, altho' it can not be proved in a court of justice. The very idea is destruction, and it is indelibly fixed in the public mind.....He had been courted all round, and finally closed with the highest offer."

But, unhappily, not content with exhausting the rogues' calendar in search of epithets to apply to a gentleman whom the State of New York delighted to honor—Van Buren, be it observed, was all this time a Senator of the United States—Clinton did not scruple to employ the poisoned weapons of calumny and scandal against his more successful rival. Not to dwell upon Van Buren's alleged sale of the State to President Madison just cited, and which is repeatedly charged in this correspondence, though, as he admits, not susceptible of proof in a court of justice, we will select two cases, neither of a political nature, and both lacking the quality and degree of authenticity that justify the use that he made of them.

At the close of a letter dated October 24, 1824, he writes:

"You see what they say about Mrs. M. It is said that V. B. paid her rent when under distress in this place."

In another letter he speaks of this Mrs. M., whoever she was, as having borne a bad

character, in justification of an insinuation he had thrown out to Post that John Q. Adams had been too intimate with her.

The following letter, written shortly after Van Buren's election to the United States Senate, opens with a piece of scandal yet more unworthy of the circulation he gave it:

"ALBANY, 30 August, 1822.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Since writing my last a rumor which has been insinuated to the disadvantage of Van Buren has been embodied in a tangible shape. On his way to the West the back seat (to which he had a claim) was occupied by Genl. Breckinridge, of Virginia, the uncle of Mr. Porter, formerly a member of Congress—a man of character and decided courage—with two ladies. V. B., considering him a plain countryman, as his looks would indicate, patted him with his cane and demanded his seat. This was indignantly refused, and on Duer's announcing him as a Senator, the Genl. stated that he was sorry the State of N. Y. was disgraced in being represented by a blackguard. The next stage produced a challenge, which V. B. declined, and he must either crouch or be whipped. So goes the report, probably exaggerated, but in substance correct; and this humiliation may account for his evident embarrassment and distress of physiognomy when I have seen him. Of his cowardice there can be no doubt. He is lowering daily in public opinion, and is emphatically a corrupt scoundrel."

As to the "rumor" here cited, and the sweeping epithets applied to Van Buren throughout this correspondence, there is every reason to believe that Van Buren would have been spared them all if he had not had the ill fortune to be, or seem to be, an obstruction in the path of Clinton's ambition.

It is but just to Mr. Van Buren to say that he was never provoked or betrayed by Mr. Clinton's example to neglect any of the proprieties of official life in his demeanor toward that statesman. We hazard little in saying that not a syllable of what is technically known as "unparliamentary language" about Clinton can be traced either to his lips or pen. We may even go farther, and say that he never permitted Clinton's undisguised and aggressive hostility to him to blind him in the least to Clinton's merits as a servant of the public. In this respect, if no other, his revenge upon Clinton was condign.

When the act authorizing the Erie Canal, upon which Clinton had staked his entire fortunes as a statesman, was before the Legislature, Van Buren, then a member of the State Senate, rose, and, to Clinton's surprise, made what Colonel Stone, who was present, characterized as his great speech of the session, in favor of the bill. In a letter to Dr. Hosack describing the scene that followed, Colonel Stone says:

"When Mr. Van Buren resumed his seat, Mr. Clinton, who had been an attentive listener in the Senate-chamber, breaking through that reserve which political collisions had created, approached him and expressed his thanks for his exertions in the most flattering terms."

When Clinton was inditing the bitter paragraphs to Post, of which we have cited specimens, he little suspected that the finest tribute that would ever be paid to his memory was destined to fall from Van Buren's lips. We might almost say the noblest tribute ever paid to any statesman, for we do not know where can be found a much finer bit of mortuary eloquence than closes the paragraph we are about to cite from the speech with which he prefaced some resolutions which he offered at a meeting of the Congressional delegation at Washington on the occasion of Clinton's death:

"We can not, indeed, but remember that in our public career collisions of opinion and action, at once extensive, earnest, and enduring, have arisen between the deceased and many of us. For myself, Sir, it gives me a deep-felt though melancholy satisfaction to know, and more so to be conscious that the deceased also felt and acknowledged, that our political differences have been wholly free from the most venomous and corroding of all poisons, personal hatred. But in other respects it is now immaterial what was the character of these collisions. They have been turned to nothing, and less than nothing, by the event we deplore, and I doubt not that we will with one voice and one heart yield to his memory the well-deserved tribute of our respect for his name, and our warmest gratitude for his great and signal services. *For myself, Sir, so strong, so sincere, and so engrossing is that feeling that I, who while living never—no, never—envied him any thing, now that he has fallen, am greatly tempted to envy him his grave with its honors.*"

It is not easy to determine whether to have merited such a tribute or to have paid it, under all the circumstances, should confer the greater distinction.

The following letter has reference to a duel in which De Witt Clinton had been concerned with John Swartwout as long ago as 1802. Swartwout was a devoted friend and admirer of Aaron Burr, then Vice-President. The friends of Clinton, among whom Cheetham was most conspicuous and most scurrilous, accused Burr of coquetting with the Federal party—the gravest offense which in those days could be laid at the door of a Republican. It reached Clinton's ears that Swartwout had accused him of opposing Burr upon personal and selfish grounds. Clinton responded, in his gentle and unimpassioned way, by proclaiming Swartwout "a liar, a scoundrel, and a villain!" This was reported to Swartwout, and of course a challenge immediately followed. Colonel Smith, Swartwout's second, has left us the following account of what occurred on the ground at

Weehawken, where the combatants respectively sought satisfaction. Clinton was accompanied by Richard Riker, the hero afterward of Halleck's *Recorder*:

"The gentlemen took their stations, were each presented with a pistol, and, by order, faced to the right, and fired, ineffectually. At the request of Mr. Riker I asked Mr. Swartwout, 'Are you satisfied, Sir?' He answered, 'I am not.' The pistols then being exchanged, and their positions resumed, they by order faced to the right, and fired a second shot, without effect. At the request of Mr. Riker I again addressed Mr. Swartwout, 'Are you satisfied, Sir?' He answered strongly in the negative. We proceeded, and a third shot was exchanged, without injury. At the request of Mr. Riker I again asked Mr. Swartwout, 'Are you satisfied, Sir?' He answered, 'I am not, neither shall I be until that apology is made which I have demanded. Until then we must proceed.' I then presented a paper to Mr. Riker, containing the apology demanded, for Clinton's signature, observing that we could not spend our time in conversation; that this paper must be signed, or proceed. Mr. Clinton declared he would not sign any paper on the subject; that he had no animosity against Mr. Swartwout; would willingly shake hands and agree to meet on the score of former friendship.

"Mr. Swartwout insisting on his signature to the apology, and Mr. Clinton declining, they stood at their posts and fired a fourth shot. Mr. Clinton's ball struck Mr. Swartwout's left leg, about five inches below the knee. He stood ready and collected. At the request of Mr. Riker I again addressed Mr. Swartwout, 'Are you satisfied, Sir?' He answered that it was useless to repeat the question: 'My determination is fixed, and I beg we may proceed.' Mr. Clinton repeated that he had no animosity against Mr. Swartwout, was sorry for what had passed, proposed to advance, shake hands, and bury the circumstance in oblivion. During this conversation Mr. Swartwout's surgeon, kneeling by his side, extracted the ball from the opposite side of his leg. Mr. Swartwout standing erect on his post, and positively declining any thing short of an ample apology, they fired the fifth shot, and Mr. Swartwout received the shot in the left leg, about five inches above the ankle, still, however, standing steadily at his post, perfectly composed. At the request of Mr. Riker I again addressed Mr. Swartwout, 'Are you satisfied, Sir?' He forcibly answered, 'I am not, Sir; proceed.' Mr. Clinton then quit his station, declined the combat, and declared he would fire no more. Mr. Swartwout declared himself surprised that Mr. Clinton would neither apologize nor give him the satisfaction required, and, addressing me, said, 'What shall I do, my friend?' I answered, 'Mr. Clinton declines making the apology required, refuses taking his position, and positively declares he will fight no more; and his second appearing to acquiesce in the disposition of his principal, there is nothing further left for you now but to have your wounds dressed.' The surgeons attended, dressed Mr. Swartwout's wounds, and the gentlemen in their respective barges returned to the city."

It was currently rumored at the time that during the duel Clinton was heard to say,

"I wish I had the *principal* here." The letter which will now be cited states that Clinton actually challenged Burr on the field, and regretted that he had not challenged him in the first instance, with whom was his quarrel, instead of Swartwout, for whom he had no unkind feelings whatever.

How Clinton should have challenged Burr on the field without its resulting in a meeting is not quite intelligible to us now. Though not much given to the redress of personal grievances in that way, Burr was the last man to leave a hostile message from an adversary like Clinton, then a Senator of the United States, unanswered.

Had they met, it is curious to reflect how the history of this State and country might have been modified. Hamilton might have still been living, perhaps an ex-President; the Erie Canal might have been anticipated by the railway; Clinton might have gone to his grave execrated as an assassin, and Burr have become, instead of Hamilton, the martyred hero of a barbarous code.

"ALBANY, 21st September, 1822.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I return S.'s letter. It is satisfactory. The affair of the duel ought not to be brought up. It was a silly affair. Clinton ought to have declined the challenge of the bully, and have challenged the principle, who was Burr. There were five shot, the antagonist wounded twice, and fell. C. behaved with cool courage, and after the affair was over challenged Burr on the field. It will not do to re-agitate this question. Jackson and Clay have both been in duels.

"The loss of the *Aurora*\* is not irretrievable. The *C. O.* must be supported.

"Y. is despised and talked against openly; his holding on when he had an opportunity to resign properly is considered the result of avarice. Savage and Skinner talk plainly against him, and he is the subject of commonplace ridicule."†

The contest in which this duel had its rise produced a crop of similar appeals to the code of honor.

The year after, Clinton was challenged by Senator Dayton, of New Jersey, a warm partisan of Burr. This affair, however, was arranged without a meeting, but the year following Robert Swartwout fought with Richard Riker, who had been Clinton's second, and severely wounded him. The same year Coleman, the editor of the *Evening Post*, was provoked by Cheetham, the *Thersites* of the press in those days, to challenge him. Friends, however, interfered, and the affair was settled upon the understanding that

Cheetham would behave more discreetly in future. Out of this challenge, however, grew another quarrel which was attended with altogether deplorable results. A harbor-master of New York by the name of Thompson—he was called Captain Thompson—gave it out that it was Coleman, not Cheetham, who had shown the white feather on the occasion just referred to. Coleman heard of it and challenged him. They met in what is now Twenty-first Street, then called "Love Lane," at the edge of a winter's evening. The ground was covered with snow, and it was cold and nearly dark. A shot or two was exchanged without effect. The principals were then brought closer to each other, that they might see one another more distinctly. At the next shot Thompson cried out that he was hit, and fell headlong into the snow, mortally wounded. Coleman and his second hurried away, while the surgeon raised the bleeding man and examined his wound, at the same time suggesting to him the propriety of never mentioning the names of any of the parties to the meeting. Thompson promised he would not, and kept his word. "He was brought," says Mr. Bryant,\* "mortally wounded, to his sister's house in town; he was laid at the door; the bell was rung; the family came out and found him bleeding and near his death. He refused to name his antagonist, or give any account of the affair, declaring that every thing which had been done was honorably done, and desired that no attempt should be made too seek out or molest his adversary."

At the caucus of the members of Congress by which Madison was nominated as the successor of Jefferson for President but one member from New York was present. The caucus which renominated Madison contained only twelve persons from States east of New Jersey. Those Republicans who objected to the caucus system of nomination fixed their eyes upon Clinton as the candidate most available for breaking down the caucus system of nominations and the Virginia dynasty at the same time. Clinton was accordingly nominated by the Republicans of the State of New York, and received 89 electoral votes to 128 given to Madison. He triumphed in the overthrow of King Caucus, but, like Samson, he was obliged to fall himself under the ruins of the temple which he pulled down upon the heads of his enemies. It placed him under the ban of the Republican administration at Washington, threw him into suspicious relations with its enemies, which subjected him to the charge of Federalism—a crime fatal to politicians in those days as that of "Abolitionist" became in later times—and resulted in his removal from the office of

\* Duane did not succeed in interesting the friends of Clinton sufficiently in his paper to sustain it through the year. He got some business agency in South America, where he remained during the struggles of the South American republics for their independence. On his return he was appointed prothonotary of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania for the Eastern District, which office he held until his death.

† And yet Yates was elected Governor almost unanimously only a few months after this letter was written.

\* "Reminiscences of the *Evening Post*."

mayor in 1815; it arrayed the New York city delegation in the Legislature solidly against his canal policy, merely because it was his; it gave him a hostile Legislature in 1819; it placed his friends in the minority in the Council of Appointment, and also in the Constitutional Convention of 1821; it transferred from him to Yates the office of Governor in 1823; and finally, what he felt more than all else, it provoked the Legislature on the last day of the session, the 15th of April, 1824, to remove him from the office of Canal Commissioner.

At the date of this most unworthy act of partisan vindictiveness Clinton had devoted fourteen of the best years of his life to promoting the internal commerce of the State by the development of a wise and comprehensive system of canal navigation; and whether in or out of office, though a comparatively poor man, he never received any compensation, directly or indirectly, for his services.

Like all wrong and injustice, in due time this also returned to plague its inventors. The news of his removal had no sooner reached the principal towns of the State than public meetings were held to denounce the proceeding. In the city of New York, the home of Clinton's most active opponents, not less than ten thousand persons—a very large meeting in those days—assembled to testify their discontent, and the proportion in other places was still greater. Clinton was immediately put in nomination again for Governor in place of Yates, whose term was about to expire, and he was elected over Samuel Young, the administration candidate, by a majority of over 16,000.

Crawford too, whose election to the Presidency it was a part of this intrigue to secure by the defeat of Adams, who was popular in the State, was defeated, and Adams was elected, thus righteously accomplishing the very results which by foul means they had sought to prevent. Three days after his removal from the Canal Commission, Clinton writes thus briefly to Post:

"There is to be a meeting here to-morrow night about the removal of Canal Commissioner. Never was there a meaner act or more unpopular one. It has roused the most apathetical. There was a complete understanding between Suydam\* and Wheaton,† and the latter went about among the members to get the resolution passed."

This comparatively accidental association of the friends of Clinton and Adams in resistance to the Crawford conspiracy in the

\* A prominent lawyer of Kingston, a member of the Senate, and a staunch Federalist. It is said that many years previous to this, hostile messages passed between him and Van Buren, which, however, through the interposition of friends, did not result in spilling any of the blood of either.

† Henry Wheaton, the historian of international law.

Legislature furnished Adams, when he became President, with an opportunity, of which, no doubt, he was glad to avail himself—after his election, but before his inauguration—of offering the English mission to Clinton. Clinton, unwisely, we think, and unfortunately, declined the invitation. "Having recently," he says in his letter to the President, "accepted from the people of this State the highest office in their power, I can not, consistently with my sense of duty, retire from it until I have had an ample opportunity of evincing my gratitude and my devotion to their interests."

In a letter written to Post on the 5th of September previous, and before the Presidential election, he speaks of some proposition made to him through Post, by which, he says, "It is proposed to bind him [Clinton] hand and foot, and put him completely in the power of his enemies, and intrust his fate to the negotiations of a devoted tool of theirs."

"The proposition," he goes on, "is also involved in intrinsic difficulties, and is repugnant to my sense of propriety in reference to all persons connected with it directly or indirectly, and it therefore has my unqualified negative. It would be very questionable whether, all things proper, I should consider it expedient to accept of any place at W. [Washington]. I do not attach much importance to it, nor do I think that it can be a stepping-stone. On the contrary, it can be a stumbling-block for an honest man, and can only promote the views of corruption and knavery."

Evidently the proposition was one by which Clinton was in some way to ally his political fortunes to those of one of the more prominent candidates for the Presidency.

On the 7th of March of the same year, 1825, Clinton, in a letter to Post, alludes to the English mission, and intimates that he did not give the President all his reasons for declining it:

"I have declined the London mission, as I told you I would any office from any source. Any other course would have been incompatible with my fealty to the people of this State after the signal honors conferred on me. Various other considerations entered into this determination, but the leading one above mentioned was the only one mentioned in my answer to Adams."

It will be remembered that the English mission was then offered to Rufus King, whose term of office as United States Senator had just expired, and was by him accepted. Of this selection Clinton thus writes to Post on the 18th of April, not many days after it transpired:

"R. King's appointment is very unpopular. Better, however, than any of the other candidates. All his negotiations will fail. It is ut-

terly untrue, as his friends say, that he had an offer before Clinton.\*

Why Clinton took such a discouraging view of King's mission does not appear. It may be attributed to the well-known condition of Mr. King's health, which did, in fact, render his mission fruitless, and sent him home after a few months' sojourn in London, or to the fact that King was a leading Federalist, and therefore had great difficulty to contend with in trying to do any thing that should appear right in the eyes of a Republican.

Clinton was the last person to abandon the hope that he would be the successor of Monroe to the Presidency. Doubtless the pathology of the Presidential rabies is much the same in all cases, but few persons ever have an opportunity of a clinical inspection of its ravages. These letters of Clinton constitute perhaps the fullest and most instructive record of the complaint that is known to exist.

Clinton was not an exception among American politicians in desiring the people to enjoy to the fullest extent the right to select their own servants, with the understanding always that they would be sure to select such as suited him. *Ex. gr. :*

At the opening of the Legislature in January, 1822, he writes :

"10 Jan., 1822.

"MY DEAR SIR,—.....You may rely on these things :

"1. First, that none of the high-minded men will be appointed.

"2. That the present judges may be nominated, but will be rejected.

"3. That Yates and Van Buren are both prostrate, and the latter particularly so.

"4. That Young's party is friendly to Clinton, and growing.

"5. That Root is going down hill.

"6. That all that we want is organization and exertion. If Clinton can get this State, the Eastern and Western States will unite in his favor, and in that of no other."

On the 21st October, 1822, he writes :

"The odium attached to the name of Federalist has been a millstone round the neck of true policy. It is now almost universally dropt in this District, in the District of which Oneida County is part, and in the Herkimer County Meeting. I hail this as an auspicious event. Names in politics as well as science are matters of substance, and a bad name in public is as injurious to success as a bad name in private life. In the adventures of Tristram Shandy the Hero got a deprecated name fixed on him, which, like a bird of evil omen, pursued him thro' life..... Have you seen the attack on Crawford in the *New Haven Herald*? What an *exposé!* chiefly from Clark's pamphlet. In what a ruffian light he appears! The rancorous and stiletto spirit

\* This, like all the letters of Clinton in which he speaks of himself in the third person, though in his handwriting, is not signed.

betrayed by — appears to have been a germination from the Crawford School. Without the epicurean elegance, the fascinating manner, and the acute intellect of Burr, he appears to be as hardened a ruffian, and exhibits the clown instead of the Gentleman aspiring to the highest seats in the community.

"One observation. In all the litigant papers of the belligerent little men you see latent fears and jealousies of Clinton.

"Our friends are up and doing in Ulster. The inferences I draw from the Signs of the Times are—

"1. The ascendancy of our party from the collisions of parties. In proportion as they quarrel with each other they will draw closer to us. The last hate being the most violent (on account of its recency and its being a family quarrel), will supersede the former antipathy.

"2. The old names as well as the old lines of party will be abolished.

"3. Nominations by Caucuses will be exploded.

"4. Yates, Van Buren, etc., will go down like the stick of a rocket.

"5. The prostration of Crawford. Jackson and Clay will not get up. Calhoun and Adams are now *hors de combat.*"

It will be observed by this letter that Jackson, whose candidacy for the Presidency Clinton espoused so warmly at a more advanced stage of the canvass, was regarded at this time in the light of a rival.

On the 25th November, 1822, Clinton writes to Post :

"Col. Dwight, a member of Congress from Mass., was here last night, very bitter against Crawford and V. B. Write to *C. [Columbian] Observer* that the latter [Van Buren] has sold the vote of the State for the Vice-Presidency or a foreign mission."

On the 24th December, 1822, Clinton writes :

"Where can *Publicola* be procured? It is J. Q. Adams's answer to Paine's *Rights of Man*. It ought to be republished.

"I think that Crawford is completely done over, beyond the possibility of resuscitation. It appears that he has no hold of the public mind. He has never distinguished himself by speeches, by writings, or by actions. The display in his favor altogether arose from the venality of some printers, from the bustling activity of a few imprudent friends, and from the obtrusive impudence of his pretensions. He has expired like the rattlesnake, with a very slight blow; he has received the *coup de grace*, altho' he may continue to move his tail until the setting of the sun.

"The piece of Clay is not calculated to reflect honor on him; it is evasive and insidious, and Adams's prompt reply has a manly aspect. I think that Clay must descend into the Arena, or be disgraced. If he does, he will not stand upon *terra firma*. He does not possess that quality which a Poet calls 'Nature's chief Masterpiece'—the art of writing well.

"Can you procure a collection of the patriotic addresses and answers during John Adams's Reign of Terror? In his defenses of American Constitutions, or Essays on Davila (I forget

which), he says 'that a limited monarchy is the best species of republican Government.' This is a key to the political opinions of his son."

On the 8th January, 1823, Clinton writes:

"However strange you may think it, *Van Buren himself* has an eye to the Presidency. When I say this I speak understandingly. It arises from his past success, from his inordinate vanity, and from his enthusiastic references to himself. The strength of Van Buren consists in his having possession of the State Press."

On the 18th January, 1823, he writes:

".....A coalition between Adams and Crawford—between an acid and an alkali! What a Munchausen tale!—a tale told by a wise man, signifying nothing. Is it possible that your credulity could be enlisted by such a fable?"

"I give a different version to the report. Calhoun's friends as well as Clay's want Clinton to decline; attempts have been made in various ways to produce this result; and this is a bugaboo they got up to accomplish it. It proceeds from that quarter at Washington—Vandevanter, Dix, etc."

Early in the winter of 1822-23 Mr. Cantine, one of the editors of the *Albany Argus*, died, and on the 31st of March, 1823, the Legislature appointed Edwin Croswell and Isaac Q. Leake State printers. Yates had just succeeded Clinton as Governor. On the 18th of March of that year Clinton writes:

"A bill has passed the Assembly making Croswell and Leake State printers, when Riggs would have taken the office at an annual saving of 1000 dollars to the State."

In the course of the year 1823 Clinton openly avowed his preferences for Jackson, and his letters for that year abound with allusions to Jackson's prospects, though by the following paragraph in a letter written March 4, 1824, it would appear that Clinton had still some Presidential illusions. A Democratic convention had just nominated Jackson at Harrisburg, and, shortly before, Dallas had withdrawn Calhoun's name as a candidate, and represented that his friends, who were numerous in the State, would support Jackson.

"I am surprised to see that you think that Dallas gave up Calhoun by concert, or that you suppose that he has withdrawn. Depend on it that neither is the case.

"The Crawfordites are out of spirits. The Virginia ticket of Electors is a very feeble one. You see that Jefferson and Madison, notwithstanding ————boastings, are not on.

"What course we ought to pursue is uncertain. But we ought not to recede without strong reasons, nor ought we to hold on against hope.

"I think that Crawford is *hors de combat*. Calhoun never had force, and Clay is equally out of the question. Pennsylvania has made Jackson strong. As for Adams, he can only succeed by the imbecility of his opponents, not by his own strength.

"In this crisis may not some other person bear away the palm?"

As late as December of the same year Clinton betrays his conviction that something favorable to his aspirations would yet "turn up."

"Do you recollect," he writes, "the story of Themistocles the Athenian? After the naval victory of Salamis a council of Generals was held to determine on the most worthy. Each man was to write down two names, the first and the next best. Each General wrote his own name for the first and that of Themistocles for the second. May not this contest have a similar result? I am persuaded that with common prudence we will stand better than ever."

On the 17th February, 1824, Clinton writes:

"The impression here is that V. B. [Van Buren] and his junto are politically dead. The impression will produce the event."

He had written on the 6th of August previous in the same strain:

"Van Buren is now excessively hated, out of the State as well as in it. There is no doubt of a corrupt sale of the vote of the State, altho' it can not be proved in a court of justice. The very idea is destruction, and it is indelibly fixed in the public mind. V. B. was closeted with Crawford the day before he left Washington, and wrote a note to Calhoun, hoping political differences would not affect private friendships. Old R. [Rufus] King wrote to the President recommending V. B. in the highest terms for the vacant judgeship."

The friends of Crawford, of whom Van Buren, General Root, and Samuel Beardsley were prominent in the State of New York, desired that a nomination should be made by a Congressional caucus, it being certain that of the members who would take part in such an assembly a majority would favor Crawford. To this end a caucus of the Republican members of the Legislature was held at Albany on the 22d of April, Walter Bowne in the chair, wherein it was resolved that a Congressional caucus for the nomination of a President ought to be held, and its candidate supported. It was while this caucus was impending, and on the 17th of April, that Clinton wrote as follows to Post:

"The *National Intelligencer* speaks of Crawford's success in this State as certain. This is the result of a corrupt coalition to support them. Halsey, Rogers, Suydam, Meyer, Goodell, the Speaker, and Wheeler were the men that brought about the nomination. Porter is also for Crawford. Cramer plays another fiddle, with a view of gathering from the other flocks.

"You may rely on it that there never were greater scoundrels combined in deluding the people.

"Clay ought to resign forthwith. His chance is worse than nothing. Jackson would then prevail with all the Western States if we can get New Jersey."

On the 21st April, 1824, Clinton writes:

"As for New Jersey, we can get her. I see

no terrors in Adams's papers; his influence has gone with his morals. The next point is Ohio. If we succeed there—and I think we will—Adams is out of the question.

"Unless the next election effects a complete revolution, this State goes for Crawford. The signs of the times are very auspicious. Pierson, Wheaton, and Drake are, I take it, down in New York. Tallmadge can scarcely get a vote in his own county. He is the prince of rascals—if Wheaton does not exceed him.

"I have no doubt of Jackson's success in all the Southern States except Georgia and Virginia. The West—the West—and all is right. Clay can do no good to himself by holding out, and if he plays the dog in the manger he will receive general execration."

On the 23d July, 1824, Clinton writes:

"Calhoun is acting a treacherous part to Jackson, and is doing all he can for Adams. The policy of this step is obvious. I have no doubt but that it entered into the choice of your Convention Delegates in N. Y. How easily a signal victory might have been obtained! But this step will have no decided result.

"The appointment of Wheaton as a Delegate is a barefaced insult, and must be met as such.

"The policy of Calhoun is base and dishonorable. A preference of Adams is one thing, but a deceptive course on this subject is another."

On the 27th July, 1824, Clinton writes:

"I am glad that you have communicated to Mr. E. your views of the duplicity and treachery of C. and Co.\* Perhaps there is not a man in the U. S. more hollow-hearted and base. I have long observed his manœuvres, and after a short observation my opinion was formed on this subject, and every day's notice confirms it. The object of this little junto is to associate us in their disgrace by prevailing on us to come out in favor of Adams. This will shield their treason, and at the same time give them the benefit of all our influence. Mr. L. and S—d are the mere automata of C., and J. B. M. is the unconscious creature of their duplicity, and as such ought to be guarded against."

On the 28th July, 1824, Clinton writes:

"You will return these letters immediately. They show the treachery exercised against Jackson. C—n is at the bottom of the whole—a thorough-paced political blackleg."

On the 21st August he writes:

"I do not think that any thing can be made out of the Clay affair. Oil and vinegar can not unite.....The great danger is that there will be a quarrel between the friends of Jackson and Adams, and that in the war between the lion and the unicorn the cur may slip in and carry off the prize.

"In Jackson we must look for a sincere and honest friend. Whatever demonstrations are made from other quarters are dictated by policy and public sentiment."

On the 23d October, 1824, Clinton writes:

"I have received a confidential communica-

tion from Washington which states that on the 12th instant, when Lafayette was received by the President, Crawford was present, and his whole appearance and behavior indicated mental fatuity, and a moral and physical wreck. On passing the President, who was conversing with Adams and Calhoun, he made his way directly between them, forcing them all to fall back in order to get out of his way. After sitting for some minutes with his hat on, he took it off."

The failure of an election of President by the people in 1824, the choice afterward of Mr. Adams by the House of Representatives through the influence of Mr. Clay, and Mr. Clay's subsequent acceptance of the office of Secretary of State from Mr. Adams, are among the most widely known events of our political history. After the ineffectual vote by the people, but before the House of Representatives had made its selection from the three most popular candidates, Clinton wrote as follows to Post:

"5 Jan., 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—.....Your letter assumes a tone in respect to the Presidential Election which I own surprises me. I have no faith in the discernment of your Washington Correspondents, and very little in their candor. J. B. M. is the creature of the P.M.G., and Genl. B. has lost his mind with his health. I can not trust driveling intriguants or shallow-pated tools, who derive all their importance abroad from their supposed influence at home.

"I have received letters from J. B. M., and they are of a piece with those he wrote from Washington on another occasion. I detect deception in every line. My accounts are very different. I can readily believe that Clay will take the course pointed out, but it will be ineffectual, and end in his ruin. Crawford's friends it is impossible can coalesce; but if such an event takes place, and the coalition is as you represent, it will prostrate the conspirators as an unprincipled and profligate league, and I shall have nothing to do with it. A dying administration is without power, and I do not believe that Monroe can enlist a single vote.

"My choice is a very plain one. My preference for the hero is known and avowed, and  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the people of this State are of the same opinion. The question is now before Congress, and by them will it be decided. There is a concert at Washington to make a mob and attempt to drown the public sentiment of this State. It is a pitiful manœuvre, and worthy only of contempt. With this view Tracy and two or three more members have been duped to write letters boasting the certainty of Adams's success. The very great earnestness displays conscious imbecility, and gives the lie to their statements."

On the 7th March, 1825, and after Clay had accepted office under Mr. Adams, Clinton wrote to Post:

"I truly regret the appointment of Clay. It augurs badly for the purity of our Republican institutions. I did not think it in the compass of possibility."

On the 3d of the month following Clinton writes again:

\* Calhoun and Co.



"Clay has sent me his vindication. He does not touch the main points, and his intimation that his office has a claim upon the Presidency is very unwise."

As soon as it was understood that Mr. Clay had consented to enter the cabinet of Mr. Adams a general shout of "bargain and corruption" was put up by the friends of the defeated Presidential candidates throughout the country.

Mr. Kremer, a member of Congress from Pennsylvania, publicly charged Mr. Clay with having sold his influence in Congress to Mr. Adams. James Buchanan, of the same State, was designated by General Jackson as one who could testify to the fact. John Randolph provoked a challenge and the privilege of firing two pistol-charges at Clay, and having Clay fire the same number at him, by stigmatizing the Clay-Adams alliance as "a coalition of Puritan and black-leg."

Buchanan was finally compelled to repel the responsibility with which General Jackson had clothed him as a witness of the corrupt understanding alleged to have existed between Clay and Adams, asserting that the general had probably inferred their corruption from the fact that Buchanan himself had tried unsuccessfully and through precisely the same temptation to seduce Clay to the support of Jackson.

The essential indecorum of Mr. Clay's conduct in taking the first cabinet office from Mr. Adams, whom his vote had just elevated to the Presidency, furnished all the proof of corruption that the public required, and neither the denials nor duels of Mr. Clay nor the protestations of Mr. Buchanan could restore to Mr. Clay the confidence of the nation. As a specimen of the popular reasoning upon the subject we will cite the following paragraphs from a letter of Clinton's to Post, bearing date August 15. The year is not given, but we presume it was 1827.

Clinton looks upon the allegation purely as a piece of partisan artillery, which he thinks had been badly manœuvred, of which Buchanan's card was evidence, and he then goes on to show the aspect in which the case should have been presented to the people. The Jackson party of that day, and Clinton among the rest, went upon the principle that if the allegation was not true, it was as good as true.

"After my letter of yesterday I have seen Mr. Buchanan's publication. It appears to me that this affair has been badly managed. It was never to be expected that positive, direct testimony could be adduced to establish a charge of corruption of that nature. It must emanate from circumstantial evidence, and on this footing it alone ought to be put as sufficiently conclusive.

"1. The known habits of the parties.

"2. An arrangement for their mutual benefit; and,

"3. This in opposition to C.'s constituents, his interests, and Western popularity.

"4. In opposition to the opinions of Adams's best friends.

"5. The silence of Clay for a long time.

"6. His imputed advances to General Jackson.

"7. The known irregularities of his conduct and the selfishness of Adams.

"8. The profligate men associated in the corrupted East and West.

"It appears to me that no other evidence is wanted but the circumstances of the case.

"Jackson, Eaton, and D. W. have shown great imbecility in this concern. You can see that B.\* is boiling with rage, and that he is only restrained by political considerations.

"In cases of this kind it is difficult to procure the evidence of an accomplice, and if you can, it is rarely worthy of credit."

The administration of Mr. Adams did not prove popular; the friends of Crawford and Jackson united at once against him in favor of Jackson for their candidate in 1828; and from the following paragraph in a letter from Clinton to Post, on the 5th December, 1827, it appears that Clinton, if he could not have the first place on the ticket, would not have refused the second:

"From some late indications, if C. [Clinton] was associated with J. [Jackson] as Vice-P., the great body of the Adams men would ground their arms."

On the following day, the 6th December, Clinton writes:

"There is no doubt of Jackson's success. Conversions as miraculous as St. Paul's daily take place. The people are sick at heart of Adams. He is personally hated and politically abhorred."

In less than three months from the day these last two notes were penned, De Witt Clinton was in his grave. He died very suddenly on the 11th of February, 1828, at the comparatively early age of fifty-nine. He had enjoyed all his life most excellent health, and in all this body of correspondence there is but one allusion to his health. We will quote it, if for nothing but its singularity. It was written on the 30th of December, 1827, scarcely six weeks before his death:

"With the compliments of the season, you will accept my best prayers for your health and happiness. Without the former the latter can not be expected. The kind anxiety you express for mine is really gratifying. I can not account for the numerous rumors propagated on that subject. The fears of friends and the anticipations of foes are proofs of some importance, and would make me vain, were it not that the latter exhibit human nature in too mortifying an aspect. I believe that your prescriptions, founded on personal experience, are generally good. My complaint is of the same character vulgarly

\* Buchanan.

called dyspepsia, or a derangement of the chest. It is cured by diet, by exercise, and change of air; and nurtured by excess, by a sedentary life, and by violent irritations. Of the first and the last I am guiltless, but the want of exercise is my besetting sin."

The first impression produced by a perusal of the correspondence, of which we have sought to give our readers a faithful and intelligent impression, is one of astonishment that a man capable of such great things as Clinton proved himself to be could ever have taken such a lively interest, as he seemed to, in the mere scullionery of politics. To be at the head of a successful party seemed to absorb him utterly. There was no detail of party management with which he did not occupy himself personally and persistently. He did not foresee that the only work of his which survived him, and which has transmitted his name to later generations, owed its successful initiative to the involuntary leisure to which he was condemned by his removal from the office of mayor in 1815, and the prostration of all his political prospects apparently forever.

Had Lord Bacon been allowed to remain upon the woosack, it is not likely that his name would ever have descended to posterity imperishably associated with the inductive philosophy; and had Clinton's political career been as uninterruptedly successful as Van Buren's, it may well be doubted whether his fame would have been more durable.

It must be said, however, in extenuation of Clinton's folly in giving to party so much of what was meant for mankind, that none of his political contemporaries in this State seem to have less overrated the rewards of political success than he did, or to have been more fastidious about the means of securing them, while none of them sought more earnestly than he to achieve their own through the public good. Clinton no doubt put too much faith in the arm of flesh and in political arts of man's device, but his ends were always noble and patriotic. If he failed as a statesman, like Phaeton driving the chariot of the sun, he failed in attempting great things. His hands were always clean. He was never poorer in worldly wealth than when he died; and he scorned all the baser motives of the selfish throng that ever infest

"party's pond, wherein  
Lizard, toad, and terrapin,  
Your ale-house patriots, are seen  
In Faction's feverish sunshine basking."

These letters betray a willingness to criticize and censure, a proneness to ascribe unworthy motives, a blindness to the faults of his partisans and to the merits of his adversaries, which impair the symmetry of his greatness, as in life they impaired his popularity and influence. Had his days been lengthened, and had he been permitted to

emerge from the somewhat provincial arena in which he spent his entire public life, he would have learned no doubt by experience what the Russians have cast into a proverb, that "the wise man when alone thinks of his own faults, and when in company forgets the faults of his friends," and that in politics more especially we should never forget that the adversary of to-day may to-morrow be an indispensable ally.

## MAGASS, THE OUTLAW OF THE CARPATHIANS.

FROM THE GERMAN.

THROUGH the floating mist which spread like a dreary sea around the massive round tower of the manor-house of the lord of Jauma, the britzka of the proprietor, drawn by three work-horses, had sailed, as it were, into the court-yard. The old Cossack, Petreuko, stood by the step, with drowsy eyes and hair half filled with straw, helping out first the gracious Herr Adam Kanwizki, and then the young priest whom his lord had brought from Lemberg to be the tutor of his children.

"Hey, Lucas," drawled out the old servant, "rub your eyes open! Here's the young father's trunk!"

Meanwhile the lady of the house had come out, a little, slender, Polish woman, sallow but piquant, her brown hair *en papillotes*, her hands in the pockets of her prettily fitting outside sacque, and a big cigar in her small red mouth. She received the tutor with expressive Polish courteousness, apologizing for the poor hospitalities her house could furnish.

"Nothing new?" asked the lord.

Frau Celina shrugged her shoulders.

"There was a great red fire to be seen in the night," said the old Cossack.

"Is all the work done?" asked the proprietor.

"All but drawing in the wood," replied the Cossack. "We have had no horses."

"The peasant might drive out there now," remarked Frau Celina.

This peasant, Kvitka, born on the estate, and rendering socage service, was about thirty years old, and with his black hair hanging down over his forehead, his long mustache and unshaven beard, presented rather a forbidding appearance.

"Do you hear, Kvitka?" said the Cossack. "You are to drive to the wood."

"Not I."

"Are you crazy?" screamed the Cossack.

"What does he say?" inquired the proprietor.

"That he won't drive."

"I have driven the master to Lemberg and back again," said Kvitka, humbly; "I've done my tenure service for the week."