who has won a purer fame; and I am happy to offer this tribute, because I would do something, no matter how little, to hasten the time when the spirit of Christian humanity shall be accounted an essential attribute and the brightest ornament of a public man.

"He returns to Washington, and is immediately ordered to the Cherokee nation, to take charge of the very difficult and hazardous task to his own fame of removing those savages from their native land. Some of his best friends regretted, most sincerely, that he had been ordered on this service; and, knowing the disposition of the world to cavil and complain without cause, had great apprehensions that he would lose a portion of the popularity he had acquired by his distinguished success on the Canadian frontier. But, behold the manner in which this last work has been performed! There is so much of noble generosity of character about Scott, independent of his skill and bravery as a soldier, that his life has really been one of romantic beauty and interest."

CHAPTER XXIV.

POLITICS—GENERAL-IN-CHIEF—STOPS UNLAWFUL PUNISHMENTS—ATTEMPTS TO ABOLISH HIS RANK AND TO REDUCE HIS PAY—MR. ADAMS AND MR. C. J. INGERSOLL.

It was about this time that the autobiographer was, without wish or agency on his part, brought into the arena of party politics, although long before a quiet Whig. A convention of delegates of that party met early in December, 1839, at Harrisburg, to select candidates for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency at the election in November of the following year.

Mr. Clay, the head of the party, and General Harrison were the principals before the convention. Scott had also a respectable number of supporters (the dele-

gates of five States, including those of New York) in that body; but Scott wrote a number of letters to members, friends of Mr. Clay, to be seen by all, expressing the hope that the latter might, with any prospect of success, before the people, be selected as the candidate, and if not, that General Harrison might be the nominee.

So far as respects the younger, or third candidate, himself, the result is not, at this day, worth a single remark. But the accidental circumstances which finally ruled the convention, are too curious within themselves, as well as too important to the future of the country, to be longer suppressed.

There was abundant evidence from the beginning of the convention that Scott was the second choice of a great majority both of the Clay and Harrison members; but Mr. Leigh (the Honorable B. W.), who led the Virginia delegation, and that led the other Clay delegations—all Southern and Southwestern men;—by a singular infelicity, contrived that those delegations should lose both their first and second preferences. The supporters of Scott, after a great many ballotings, communicated to the separate assemblages of the Clay men, that if the latter did not, after the next vote, come over to Scott, their known second choice, they, the

New Yorkers and associates, would, in that case, next vote for Harrison, their second choice. Here the strangeness alluded to must be told.

Mr. Leigh—a man of perfect uprightness of character, of high abilities; and early in life a passionate and successful cultivator of polite literature—had now, and for many years before, become the slave of his profession—without any diminution of business, but with a yearly decrease of fees and increase of family—so fagged, for twelve and fourteen hours a day, that his acquaintance with the advancing world, literature, and politics, did not extend beyond the narrow circle of Richmond. Being without a rival in that sphere, and now for the first time in his life three days north of Washington;—conscious of the purity of his intentions, and having made up his own mind that Mr. Clay ought to be the next President, he carefully avoided everybody likely to perplex and distress him with the contrary wishes or calculations.

Congress met three days before the convention. The Whig members of the former, desirous of conversing understandingly with their friends as they passed through Washington to Harrisburg, held informal meetings, by States, and came to the conclusion,

after inquiry and reflection, that Mr. Clay could scarcely carry a district represented by one of them—Mitchell, alone, being confident that his, the Lockport or Niagara District of New York, would vote for the illustrious Kentuckian; but Mitchell could not be relied upon; for he was long before the election put into the State prison as a forger.

Mr. Leigh, apprehending such interference at Washington, and true to his provincial superiority, quietly passed down the James River and up the Chesapeake Bay, through Baltimore, with a large number of dependent delegates, to Harrisburg — where he was taken possession of by two veteran and inveterate Clay supporters from the city of New York (traders in politics, but not members of the convention), who so mesmerized him that he could not believe a word said to him by men of the highest standing in the North and East. Hence, when the message, just mentioned, was received by the Clay supporters, that is, by Mr. Leigh, who was not only the organ, but the sole voice of that party, his mesmerizers told him to treat it with contempt, that it was a mere fetch, and that the Scott delegates would be obliged in a few ballots more to vote for Mr. Clay.

This assurance was speedily falsified, and then some

of the dupes, including Mr. Leigh himself—wished to move for a reconsideration of the vote; but Scott's friends very judiciously said, "No; it is too late. Harrison's name, as our nominee, will, in five minutes, be on the wings of the winds to all parts of the Union, and now to nominate another would distract the party and make us contemptible."

But the nomination and success of General Harrison, if his life had been spared some four years longer, would have been no detriment to his country. With excellent intentions and objects, and the good sense to appoint able counsellors, the country would not have been retarded in its prosperity, nor disgraced by corruption in high places. No one can, of course, be held responsible for sudden deaths among men. A single month in office, ended President Harrison's life, when the affecting plaint of Burke occurred to all: "What shadows we are, what shadows we pursue!"

Mr. Leigh's great error at Harrisburg is yet to be narrated, and referred to the same virtues combined with the inaptitude of one long ignorant of the world. All the able men who voted early or late for Harrison, were inclined to name Mr. Leigh, as a slight indemnification to Mr. Clay, for the Vice-Presidency;—but Mr.

Tyler, of the same delegation, wept audibly for the loss of Virginia's candidate, and intrigued quietly with the weaker brethren to secure that honor for himself. Mr. Leigh being sole committee man of his delegation on the selection of candidates, and the reverenced adviser of many others, delicately hesitated about receiving the nomination, and worse, from delicacy toward a colleague, neglected to tell distant members how utterly unfit Mr. Tyler was for the second place in the Government—nobody, of course, thinking of a vacancy in the presidential chair,—a case that had never occurred. Thus by the double squeamishness of a good man, the United States lost an eventual President not inferior to more than one man that had ever filled that high place.

Of Mr. Tyler's administration of the executive branch of the Government, but little will be said here. He soon committed the grossest tergiversation in politics, from the fear of Mr. Clay as a competitor for the succession, and to win that for himself, all the patronage of the Government, all the chips, shavings, and sweepings of office, down to the lowest clerkship, the posts of messengers and watchmen, were brought into market and bartered for support at the next election.

To the honor of the country, Mr. Tyler was allowed to relapse into a private station.

In June, 1841, Scott was, on the death of Major-General Macomb, called to reside in Washington as the General-in-Chief of the entire army. In that capacity he made several ordinary tours of inspection, but nothing occurred in the next five years that called him to any mission of importance. Many specimens of orders might be given to show his regard for the soldier, as well as love of military discipline and efficiency; but they would not be interesting to the general reader. One only will here be inserted to exhibit his long persevering and successful efforts to stop arbitrary, that is, illegal, punishments in the army.

GENERAL ORDERS. No. 53. } HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY, WASHINGTON, *August* 20, 1842.

1. . . . Intimations, through many channels, received at General Headquarters, lead to more than a suspicion that blows, kicks, cuffs, and lashes, against law, the good of the service and the faith of Government, have, in many instances, down to a late period,

been inflicted upon private soldiers of the army by their officers and non-commissioned officers.

2. . . . Inquiries into the reported abuses are in progress, with instructions, if probable evidence of guilt be found, to bring the offenders to trial.

3. . . . It is well known to every vigilant officer that discipline *can* be maintained (—and it *shall* be so maintained—) *by legal means.* Other resorts are, in the end, always destructive of good order and subordination.

4. . . . Insolence, disobedience, mutiny, are the usual provocations to unlawful violence. But these several offences are denounced by the 6th, 7th, and 9th of the rules and articles of war, and made punishable by the sentence of courts-martial. Instead, however, of waiting for such judgment, according to the nature and degree of guilt, deliberately found—the hasty and conceited—losing all self-control and dignity of command—assume that their individual importance is more outraged than the majesty of law, and act, at once, as legislators, judges, and executioners. Such gross usurpation is not to be tolerated in any well-governed army.

5. . . . For insolent words, addressed to a superior,

let the soldier be ordered into confinement. This, of itself, if followed by prompt repentance and apology, may often be found a sufficient punishment. If not, a court can readily authorize the final remedy. A deliberate, or unequivocal breach of orders, is treated with yet greater judicial rigor; and, in a clear case of mutiny, the sentence would, in all probability, extend to life. It is evident, then, that there is not even a pretext for punishments decreed on individual assumption, and at the dictate of pride and resentment.

6. . . . But it may be said, in the case of mutiny, or conduct tending to this great crime—that it is necessary to cut down, on the spot, the exciter or ringleader. *First* order him to be seized. If his companions put him into irons or confinement, it is plain there is no spread of the dangerous example. But, should *they* hesitate;—or should it be necessary in any case of disobedience, desertion, or running away—*the object being to secure the person for trial;*—as always to repel a personal assault, or to stop an affray—in every one of these cases any superior may strike and wound; but only to the extent clearly necessary to such lawful end. Any excess, wantonly committed beyond such measured violence, would, itself, be punishable in the supe-

rior. No other case can possibly justify any superior in committing violence upon the body of any inferior, without the judgment of a court—except that it may sometimes be necessary, by force, to iron prisoners for security, or to gag them for quiet.

7. . . . Harsh and abusive words, passionately or wantonly applied to unoffending inferiors, is but little less reprehensible. Such language is, at once, unjust, vulgar, and unmanly; and, in this connection, it may be useful to recall a passage from the old *General Regulations for the Army* (by Scott):

"The general deportment of officers toward juniors or inferiors will be carefully watched and regulated. If this be cold or harsh, on the one hand, or grossly familiar on the other, the harmony or discipline of the corps cannot be maintained. The examples are numerous and brilliant, in which the most conciliatory manners have been found perfectly compatible with the exercise of the strictest command; and the officer who does not unite a high degree of moral vigor with the civility that springs from the heart, cannot too soon choose another profession in which imbecility would be less conspicuous, and harshness less wounding and oppressive." (*Edition* 1825.)

8. . . . Government not only reposes "special trust and confidence in the patriotism, valor, fidelity, and abilities of" army officers, as is expressed on the face of commissions; but also in their self-control, respect for law and gentlemanly conduct on all occasions. A failure under either of those heads ought always to be followed by the loss of a commission.

9. . . . At a time when, notwithstanding the smallness of the establishment, thousands of the most promising youths are desirous of military commissions, the country has a right to demand—not merely the usual exact observance of laws, regulations, and orders, but yet more—that every officer shall give himself up entirely to the cultivation and practice of all the virtues and accomplishments which can elevate an honorable profession. There is in the army of the United States, neither room, nor associates, for the idle, the ignorant, the vicious, the disobedient. To the very few such, thinly scattered over the service—whether in the line or the staff—these admonitions are mainly addressed; and let the vigilant eye of all commanders be fixed upon them. No bad or indifferent officer should receive from a senior any favor or indulgence whatsoever.

10. . . . The attention of commanders of departments, regiments, companies, and garrisons is directed to the 101st of the rules and articles of war, which requires that the whole series shall be read to the troops at least once in every six months.

WINFIELD SCOTT.

In this interval of comparative inactivity, high army rank again came to be considered useless and burdensome. Several movements were made in the House of Representatives, to cut down Scott's long-fixed pay and emoluments, and one, quite formidable, in its inception, to abolish his office.

A previous motion to reduce his pay, etc., was defeated by a side battery, opened by the Hon. Charles J. Ingersoll, member of the House from Philadelphia. There was another bill lying on the clerk's table touching the daily compensation of the members of both Houses of Congress, and Mr. Ingersoll argued that the latter should first become a law, before Congress could, with decency, cut down the pay of the army.

Both propositions affecting Scott came to a definite vote in the House of Representatives, March, 1844.

Mr. Adams (J. Q.) "felt bound to declare that he did think it a very ill reward for the great and eminent services of that officer [Scott] during a period of thirty-odd years, in which there were some as gallant exploits as our history could show, and in which he had not spared to shed his blood, as well as for more recent services of great importance in time of peace—services of great difficulty and great delicacy—now to turn him adrift at his advanced age."

In respect to the reduction of his pay, etc., Mr. Adams "could not a moment harbor in his heart the thought that General Scott, if he had received from Government thousands of dollars more than he had, would have received one dollar which he did not richly deserve at the hands of his country."—*National Intelligencer*, *March* 30, 1844.

"Mr. C. J. Ingersoll wished to add but a single word. Perhaps he was the only member present who could recollect the day when this same General Scott had been the first man to show that the disciplined soldiery of our own country were fully able to cope with the trained troops of a foreign nation. When gentlemen were about to legislate General Scott out

of office, he must be permitted to add one consideration to those which had so properly been stated by the venerable gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Adams), and it was this: That, while we were sitting here very coolly giving votes to legislate General Scott out of office, we ought not quite to forget that it was by virtue of his brave achievements we possessed the opportunity of voting here at all. It was easy for gentlemen to call those 'caterpillars' who, in the hour of peril, had been the 'pillars' of the public trust. He should be sorry indeed that this blow should fall upon the man who had struck the first blow in that struggle through which alone this Government had been preserved in being down to this hour. But it was obvious that neither office nor officer was in the slightest danger."—*National Intelligencer, March* 30, 1844.

Both propositions were voted down by large majorities.

It may be remarked that Mr. Adams and Mr. Ingersoll, in a common service of six years on the same floor of Congress, scarcely ever before agreed on any subject whatever. Indeed Mr. C. J. Ingersoll was an object of unusual hatred with the Whig party generally. Dr. Johnson "loved a good hater," and Mr. Ingersoll, to do him justice, fully repaid the Whigs in kind. Yet he was always to the autobiographer a valuable friend. Their acquaintance and friendship commenced early in the War of 1812, when no man, in the House of Representatives, struck more valiantly for his country than Mr. Ingersoll.

During a residence of some three years in Philadelphia, beginning in 1819, and always afterward, when on a visit to that city, Scott, perhaps never failed, a single Sunday, to be invited to Mr. Ingersoll's hospitable table, after the second church, where were met the usual guests — Judge Hopkinson, the author of *Hail Columbia;* Nicholas Biddle (two of the most accomplished and amiable men in America), Joseph Bonaparte, James Brown, Ex-Senator and Minister to France, and any stranger of eminence that might be passing through. In all these agreeable reunions, Mr. Ingersoll, a good scholar and linguist, bore his part well—giving and receiving pleasure.