

tion, that would not alter in one little their course of action. Their duty would be the same, and the same would be their determination to fulfill it. They would prepare themselves, with apprehension indeed, but without dismay, with struggle which have sometimes occurred in the history of the world, but whose a just cause and comparative weakness, and enabled it to break down the pride of power."

The success of this scheme, so long cherished, and so long projected on the part of England, turned upon the ratification of France. With it she could hope to establish this new principle in maritime law, and with that, attain her darling object of maritime supremacy. But the opposition of two such commercial nations as the United States and France to this interpolation would have rendered hopeless its general recognition. Hence her efforts to accomplish this measure; and as, for more than half a century, she had not failed in any great object of her policy, her pride and interest were equally united in this. Her journals, therefore, were filled with the subject. It occupied the attention of her government, her people, and her press; and her diplomatic agents through Europe were active and persevering. While the subject was under discussion in the French Chamber of Deputies, the eyes of Europe were directed to Paris, anxiously watching the result. That result was soon manifested. The public opinion of France spoke too loudly to be resisted. The government gave way, and refused to ratify a treaty, negotiated under its own directions, and signed by its own minister. The part which General Cass bore in this transaction is well understood and appreciated by his countrymen; and, if any doubt existed on the subject, it would have been removed by the abuse heaped upon him in the English journals, and by the declaration of Lord Palmerston, in the House of Commons, that his efforts contributed in a great degree to the rejection of the measure.

An American writing from Europe, in Niles's Register, March, 1842, says: "Gen. Cass has hastily prepared a pamphlet setting forth the true dangers and import of this treaty, and added to the General's personal influence here, will effectually turn the scales on England. The country owes the general much for his effectual influence with this government."

The London Times of January 5, 1842, says: "The five powers, which signed the late treaty for the suppression of the slave trade, will not allow themselves to be thwarted in the execution of this arrangement by the capricious resistance of the cabinet at Washington."

It is not a little curious, in reading over the papers relating to this transaction, to see how some of the party journals of the day in the United States censured the minister for his interference in foreign concerns; and foretold, very confidently, that he would be rebuked by the French government. And the London Times, of May 16, 1842, states, with apparent exultation, that the venerable patriot, who has just been called from among us, (Mr. Adams,) said in Congress that he regretted Gen. Cass.

"Should have so completely forgotten the whole some rules of the founders of his country as to interfere, without instructions from his government, in a delicate negotiation between the great powers of Europe."

This "delicate negotiation" directly involved one of the most precious rights of the United States—that of sailing the ocean undisturbed and in peace. To prevent the consummation of such a project was not to interfere with other nations, but to prevent other nations from interfering with us. As to the French government, it took no such view of the matter. The answer of M. Guizot to Gen. Cass was in a very good spirit, and exhibited the best feeling to the United States. He stated that the treaty had not been ratified, and disavowed all designs of doing anything whatever unfriendly to the United States. On the 17th of September following this transaction, the news of the ratification of the Ashburton treaty reached Paris, and General Cass immediately resigned. His reasons for so doing we gather from the following extracts of letters to Mr. Webster:

"It is unnecessary to push these considerations further; and in carrying them thus far, I have found the task an unpleasant one. Nothing but justice to myself could have induced me to do it. I could not clearly explain my position here, without recapitulation. My protest of 13th of February, distinctly asserted that the United States would resist the pretension of England to search our vessels. I avowed, at the same time, that this was but my personal declaration, liable to be confirmed or disavowed by my government. I now find a treaty has been concluded between Great Britain and the United States, which provides for the co-ordination of the latter in efforts to abolish the slave trade, but which contains no renunciation by the former of the extraordinary pretension, resulting, as she said, from the exigencies of these very efforts; and which pretension, I felt it to be my duty to denounce to the French government. In all this, I presume to offer no further judgment than as I am personally affected by the course of the proceedings, and I feel they have placed me in a false position, whence I can escape but by returning home with the least possible delay. I trust, therefore, that the President will have felt no hesitation in granting me the permission which I asked for."

In December, 1842, Gen. Cass returned to the United States. He was received by the citizens of Boston and New York with every demonstration of respect. His bold stand on the quintuple treaty had excited the feelings of the people in his favor, and he was everywhere hailed as the champion of the freedom of the seas, and the rights of American citizens. At New York he was addressed upon political subjects, to which he furnished a brief reply, stating his unshaken attachment to the principles of the democratic party, and hostility to a national bank. On his route to the west, he was received at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and Columbus, Ohio,

by the governors and legislatures of those States, who came out to meet him, and escort him to their towns. At Detroit, the governor, legislature, city authorities, and people came out to welcome him home, as children welcome the return of a long-absent father. On the 8th of January he was addressed by a committee of the Democratic State Convention of Indiana, upon political questions; to which he replied at length, declaring himself against a national bank, opposed to the distribution of the proceeds of the public lands, opposed to a tariff for protection, "that the revenue should be kept to the lowest point compatible with the performance of its constitutional functions," and opposed to altering the constitution by abolishing the Executive veto; that he should not be a candidate for the presidency unless nominated at the Baltimore Convention; and that he would support the nominee of that convention.

On the 4th of July, 1843, Gen. Cass delivered an oration at Fort Wayne, Indiana, on the completion of the Wabash and Erie canal. In this oration, while contrasting the condition and prospects of this country with the nations of the Old World, he says:

"I have stood upon the plain of Marathon, the battle-field of liberty. It is silent and desolate. Neither Greek nor Persian is there to give life and animation to the scene. It is bounded by sterile hills on one side, and lashed by the eternal waves of the Egean sea on the other. But Greek and Persian were once there. But Greek and Persian were once there, and that decayed spot was the great fight which rescued Greece from the yoke of Persia. And I have stood upon the hill of Zion, the city of Jerusalem, the scene of our Redeemer's sufferings and crucifixion and ascension. But the temple, the Greek, the Roman, the Arab, the Turk, and the Crusaders have passed over this chief place of Israel, and have left it of its power and beauty. In those regions of the East where society passed its infancy, it seems to have reached decrepitude. If the associations which the memory of their past glory excites are powerful, they are melancholy. They are without gratification for the present, and without hope for the future. Can we look forward with rational confidence to ages of progress in all that gives power and pride to man, and dignity to human nature. It is better to look forward to prosperity, than back to glory."

In the summer of 1843, Gen. Cass received the following letter from Gen. Jackson:

HERMITAGE, July, 1843.

MY DEAR SIR: I have the pleasure to acknowledge your very friendly letter of the 25th of May last. It reached me in due course of mail; but such were my debility and afflictions, that I have been prevented from replying to it until now; and even now it is with great difficulty that I write. In return for your kind expressions with regard to myself, I have to remark, that I shall ever recollect, my dear General, with great satisfaction, the relations, both private and official, which subsisted between us during the greater part of my administration. Having full confidence in your abilities and republican principles, I invited you to my cabinet; and I can never forget with what discretion and talents you met those delicate questions which were brought before you whilst you presided over the Department of War, which entitled you to my thanks, and will be ever remembered with the most lively feelings of friendship by me.

But what has endeared you to every true American, was the noble stand which you took, as our minister at Paris, against the quintuple treaty; and which, by your talents, energy, and fearless responsibility, defeated its ratification by France—a treaty intended by Great Britain to change our international laws, make her mistress of the seas, and destroy the national independence not only of our country, but of all Europe, and enable her to become the tyrant on every ocean. Had Great Britain obtained the sanction of France to this treaty—Washington, so disreputable to our national character, and injurious to our national safety—then, indeed, we might have hung our harps upon the willows, and resigned our national independence to Great Britain. But, I repeat, to your talents, energy, and fearless responsibility, we are indebted for the shield thrown over us from the impending danger which the ratification of the quintuple treaty by France would have brought upon us. For this act, the thanks of every true American, and the applause of every true republican, are yours; and for this noble act, I tender you my thanks. I admired the course of Dr. Linn in his hope his energy will carry it into a law at the next session of Congress. This will speak to England a language which she will understand—that we will not submit to be negotiated out of our territorial rights hereafter.

Receive assurances of my friendship and esteem.

ANDREW JACKSON. To the Hon. Lewis Cass.

In the spring of 1844, Gen. Cass, in reply to interrogatories upon that subject, wrote a letter declaring himself in favor of the annexation of Texas.

In the month of May following, the Democratic National Convention met at Baltimore, to nominate candidates for President and Vice President. The first balloting Gen. Cass received eighty-three votes, and continued to rise till, on the seventh, he received one hundred and twenty-three votes. Had another ballot been taken that day, Gen. Cass would, without doubt, have been nominated. Before the assembling of the convention the ward as a compromise candidate, and after two ballotings, received the nomination.

On the day that the news of the nomination of Mr. Polk reached Detroit, a meeting of the democracy was held, at which Gen. Cass, in an able and eloquent speech, gave his warmest support to the nomination, and declared his readiness to enter the contest to secure its success. In pursuance of this, he accepted the invitation of the Nashville committee, and was present at the great Nashville convention in August. His arrival was announced by the firing of cannon, and he was received with every demonstration of popular enthusiasm. Of this speech there, a leading paper says:

"We did not attempt a sketch of the eloquent and powerful speech that was made by Gen. Cass; for, word for word, and sentence for sentence, as a full measure of justice, would do him of a great statesman; and the popular thunders of applause with which it was received by the fifty acres of freedom in attendance rung through the valleys, and reverberated from hill to hill, exceeding anything that we had ever heard before."

Gen. Cass spent some time with Gen. Jackson at the Hermitage. When they parted, the scene was most impressive and affecting. An eye-witness remarks, "The tears of the veterans were mingled together as they bade each other a last farewell." In compliance with the popular demand, Gen. Cass took the tour of the States of Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan. He everywhere met with the most enthusiastic reception from the people. He was hailed as the father of the West. But a great change had been effected since first he which he traversed were now fruitful fields; the lonely cabins which he protected from the firebrand of the savage were transformed into populous cities; the Indian war-path was converted into the railroad; the harbors upon the lakes and rivers which he first surveyed, were now the seats of commerce and of wealth; and the scattered population which he governed, were now a great people. The crowds which attended his progress through those States seemed rather the triumphal procession of a conqueror, than the peaceful attendants of a private citizen.

The following incidents at the public meeting at Norwalk, Ohio, on the 17th of September, are taken from the Democratic newspaper published at that place:

"While a number of revolutionary soldiers were being introduced to Gen. Cass, one of our citizens approached the General, and asked if he remembered him. Upon replying that he did not, he gave the following account of their first meeting: 'In the spring of 1813, Fort Meigs was besieged by the British and Indians, and the militia of Ohio were called out to march to the relief of the fort. General Cass was appointed to the command. Six thousand assembled at Upper Sandusky, of whom two thousand were selected to proceed on to the fort. The marshes and woods were filled with water, making roads almost impassable. The commanding general had not yet arrived, but was daily expected. On the second day of the march, a young soldier, from exposure to the weather, was taken sick. Unable to march in the ranks, he followed along in the rear. When at a distance behind, attempting with difficulty to keep pace with his comrades, two officers rode along, one a stranger, and the other the colonel of his regiment. On passing him, the colonel remarked, 'General, that poor fellow there is sick; he is a good fellow though, for he refuses to go back; but I fear that the Indians will scalp him, or the crows pick him before we get to Fort Meigs.' The officer halted, and dismounted from his horse. When the young soldier came up, he addressed him: 'My brave boy, you are sick and tired, I am well and strong; mount my horse and ride.' The soldier hesitated. 'Do not wait,' said the officer; and, lifting him upon his horse, with direction to ride at night to the General's tent, he proceeded on foot to join the army. At night, the young soldier rode to the tent, where he was met by the General with a cheerful welcome, which he repaid with tears of gratitude. That officer was General Cass, and the young soldier was the person addressing him, our General, remembering the circumstance, immediately recognized him. Mr. Layton remarked, 'General, that act was not done in the woods, with but three to witness.'"

"Another: Our old friend Maj. Parks, on being introduced to General Cass, exclaimed with much animation, General, I thank God that I am able to see you! I fought by the side of your father, Jonathan Cass, and your uncle, Daniel Cass, at the battle of Bunke's Hill. Your father was sergeant of the company, and I was a corporal. We were brothers together during the war. God bless you, General, for his sake. The General was deeply affected in meeting the friend and companion of his father; while the old veteran, with eyes sparkling, recounted the scenes through which they passed together in the days of danger and strife—the times that 'tried men's souls.'"

Another anecdote of Gen. Cass, while on his tour through Ohio, was related with much spirit by the late gallant and lamented Gen. Hamer. The carriage containing Gen. Cass was one day stopped by a crowd, addressing the General, and saying, 'I can't let you pass without speaking to you. You don't know me, General.' Gen. C. replied that he did not. 'Well, sir, (said to him) I was the first man in your regiment to jump out of the boat on the Canadian shore.' 'No, you were not, (said Gen. Cass) I was the first man myself on shore.' 'True, (said the other); I jumped out first into the river to get ahead of you; but you held me back, and got on shore ahead of me.'"

The result of the contest in 1844 is well known. The vote of every western State, save one, and that by a meagre majority, was given for Mr. Polk. To the efforts of Gen. Cass, and his great personal popularity exerted in favor of Mr. Polk, much of this is to be attributed. In the following winter, Gen. Cass was elected to the Senate of the United States, and in the formation of the committees of the Senate, General Cass was unanimously tendered the post of Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, which however, he declined. On two subsequent occasions, the same position has been offered him, but he has uniformly declined it.

In December, 1845, Gen. Cass introduced resolutions in the Senate relative to the national defenses, with particular reference to the condition of our affairs with Great Britain, growing out of the Oregon question. These resolutions he supported in a speech, of which the following is an extract, referring to the course which should be pursued in maintaining our rights to the territory in question:

"As to receding, it is neither to be discussed nor thought of. I prefer to it but to denounce it—a denunciation which will find a response in every American bosom. Nothing is ever gained by national pusillanimity. And the country which seeks to purchase temporary security by yielding to unjust pretensions, buys present ease at the expense of permanent honor and safety. It shows the wind to reap the whirlwind. I have said a thousand times, and I will repeat here, that it is better to fight for the first inch of national territory than for the last. It is better to defend the door than to leave the hearth stone—the porch than the altar. National character is a richer treasure than gold or silver, and exerts a moral influence in the hour of danger, which, if not power itself, is its surest ally. Thus far, ours is unimpaired; and let us all join, however separated by party or by space, to preserve it."

In the month of March following, Gen. Cass delivered his celebrated speech on the Oregon question. As this speech has been circulated and read very generally, a mere allusion to it here is all that would appear necessary; but the following extract expresses so fully the sentiment of every patriotic American, that it is worthy of record:

"It pains me, sir, to hear allusions to the destruction of this Government, and to the dissolution of this Confederacy. It pains me, not because they inspire me with any fear, but because we ought to have one unpronounceable word, as the Jews had of old, and that word is *Disso-lution*. We should reject the feeling from our hearts and its name from our tongues. This cry of 'Wo, wo, to Jerusalem,' grates harshly upon my ears. Our Jerusalem is neither beleaguered nor in danger. It is yet the city upon a hill, glorious in what it is, still more glorious, by the blessing of God, in what it is to be—a landmark, inviting the nations of the world, struggling upon the stormy ocean of political oppression, to follow us to a haven of safety and of rational liberty. No English Titus will enter our temple of freedom through a breach in the battlements to bear thence the ark of our Constitution and the book of our law, to take their stations in a triumphal procession in the streets of molten Rome, as trophies of conquest and proofs of submission."

"Many a raven has croaked in my day, but the augury has failed, and the republic has marched onward. Many a crisis has presented itself to the imagination of our political Cassandras, but we have still increased in political prosperity as we have increased in years. & that, too, with an accelerated progress unknown to the history of the world. We have a class of men whose eyes are always upon the future, overlooking the blessings around us, and forever apprehensive of some great political evil, which is to arrest our course somewhere or other on this side of the millennium. To them we are the image of gold, and silver, and brass, and clay, contrary to unity, which the first rude blow of misfortune is to strike from its pedestal."

"For my own part, I consider this the strongest Government on the face of the earth for good, and the weakest for evil. Strong, because supported by the public opinion of a people inferior to none of the communities of the earth in all that constitutes moral worth and useful knowledge, and who have breathed into their political system the breath of life; & who would destroy it, as they created it, if it were unworthy of them, or failed to fulfil their just expectations."

"And weak for evil, from this very consideration, which would make its follies and its faults the signal of its overthrow. It is the only Government in existence which no revolution can subvert. It may be changed, but it provides for its own change, when the public will requires. Plots and insurrections, and the various struggles, by which an oppressed population manifests its sufferings and seeks the recovery of its rights, have no place here. We have nothing to fear but ourselves."

The part taken by General Cass in the subsequent exciting controversy on this question, and his vote in opposition to the treaty, are too well known to require further notice. Having been trained in the school which taught him, in our intercourse with foreign nations, to ask for nothing but what is right, and submit to nothing that is wrong, he had the moral courage to stand up for the right, whatever might be the consequences."

During this session of Congress, hostilities commenced between the U. States & the republic of Mexico. Gen. Cass advocated the most energetic measures for a vigorous prosecution of the war, and for carrying it into the heart of the enemy's country.

In the winter of 1847, the "Wilmot Proviso" was introduced into the Senate,

as an amendment to the three million bill, by a Federal Senator from New England. The design of the mover was evidently to defeat the passage of the bill to which it was to be attached, and to embarrass the administration in the prosecution of the war. Gen. Cass voted against the proviso, for reasons given in his speech on the occasion.

It was during the sessions of this Congress that the tariff of 1846, and the independent treasury were established. It is free trade, & the ultra advocate of a hard-money currency, that the opponents of protection, and the enemies of a paper currency; are to look for the defeat of those measures. Such men are usually in the pursuit of some theoretical abstraction, which gives them but little influence with practical men. But it is to men of enlarged character and influence carry conviction with their action, that the country is indebted for radical and beneficial reforms. Gen. Cass gave to these great measures the weight of his influence, and his zealous, and unflinching support. At the close of that Congress, General Cass was invited, by the Democratic members of the legislature of New York, to partake of a public dinner at Albany, as a mark of their appreciation of his brilliant public services, and their estimation of his character as a man. This honor, however, he declined.

In August, following, he delivered an address before the literary societies of Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, at the annual commencement of that institution. The societies afterwards prepared an elegant gold-headed cane, with appropriate devices, which was presented to him in Washington, on the 4th of March, 1848.

On the meeting of the present Congress, Gen. Cass was elected chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs—a post for which he was most eminently qualified, and which, as he had been unanimously selected, he considered it his duty to accept. His course as chairman of that committee, and his views upon the war question, have been seen in the daily proceedings of the Senate. The following brief reply, to Mr. Mangum, is probably as good a summary of his opinions as can be given:

"Now, with respect to the progress of the war, it is said that Gen. Scott is going on from town to town, and from city to city, conquering all before him. I am very glad to hear it. I hope that the commanding general will continue to go on in this way. If he does so, I have no doubt he will conquer Mexican obstinacy, and thus conquer a peace. I have already expressed my opinions with regard to the war in Mexico, and have nothing to say on the subject now, except to tell the Senator from North Carolina, what I had the honor to say to the Senator from South Carolina, that the adoption of any resolutions in this Senate with regard to any danger—if danger there be—in the progress of this war, would be but as the idle wind. You agitate, and say to its waters 'flow not,' as to the American people 'annex not territory,' if they choose to annex it. It is the refusal of the Mexican people to do us justice that prolongs this war. It is that which operates on the public mind, and leads the Senator from North Carolina to apprehend a state of things which he fears, but which, for myself, I do not anticipate. Let me say, Mr. President, that it takes a great deal to kill this country. We have had an alarming crisis almost every year as long as I can recollect. I came on the public stage as a spectator before Mr. Jefferson was elected. That was a crisis. Then came the embargo crisis—the crisis of the non-intercourse—the crisis of the bank—the crisis of the tariff—the crisis of the deposits—and a score of others. But who have outlived them all, and advanced in all the elements of power and prosperity with a rapidity heretofore unknown in the history of nations. If we should swallow Mexico to-morrow, I do not believe it would kill us. The Senator from North Carolina and myself may not live to see it, but I am by no means satisfied that the day will not come in which the whole of the vast country around us will form one of the most magnificent empires that the world has yet seen—glorious in its prosperity, & still more glorious in its establishment and perpetuation of the principles of free government and the blessings which they bring with them."

In December, 1847, General Cass gave his views at length upon the "Wilmot Proviso," in a letter to Mr. Nicholson, of Tennessee. In that letter he avowed himself opposed to the measure, and to the exercise of any legislation by Congress, over any of the territories of the United States, respecting the domestic relations of their inhabitants. He believed all questions of that nature should be settled by the people themselves, who ought to be allowed "to regulate their internal concerns in their own way," and that Congress has no more power to abolish or establish slavery in such territories than it has to regulate any other of the relative duties of social life—that of husband and wife, of parent and child, or of master and servant. He said, in conclusion:

"The 'Wilmot Proviso' seeks to take from its legitimate tribunal a question of domestic policy, having no relation to the Union, as such, and to transfer it to another created by the people for a special purpose, and foreign to the subject matter involved in the issue. By going back to our true principles, we go back to the road of peace and safety. Leave to the people, who will be affected by this question, to