

Mountain Sentinel.

"WE GO WHERE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES POINT THE WAY;—WHEN THEY CEASE TO LEAD, WE CEASE TO FOLLOW."

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TERMS.

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All letters and communications to insure attention must be post paid. A. J. RHEEY.

From the Louisville Journal.

BLINDNESS.

The following lines will be read with much interest, partly because they are the production of a young gentleman who for several years has been utterly blind, and partly because they are exceedingly fine poetry:

Light of my darkened path, a moment stay;
With hand so tremulous, thou hast led me far
Since from the grass at early dawn we shook
The glittering dew, and greeted gratefully
Upon the hill the joy-dispensing morn.
With rambling thou art weary, gentle friend—
This grassy eminence invites repose—
Here let us take our leave of waning day.
A thousand insects hum their evening hymn,
The night bird's lonely tone breaks on the hour,
And through the woods its drowsy echoes creep;
The mellow lowing of the distant herd,
The lamb, neck bleating and the steeds, wild neigh
Mingling accordant soothe the listening ear,
And love for him inspire who made them all,
The reapers homeward from the half-gleamed fields
With many a merry laugh and jocund song
Are homeward. How happy all, and I rejoice,
Though all to me is night—perpetual night—
A night so dark that I perceive it not,
And only know it by its lack of change.
Pity follows days, night follows night, yet day
For me is naught but round of wakefulness
And sad renewal of my darkness; 'neath
Brights back my day,' when balmy sleep sets free
My darksome soul to roam through dreary realms,
Where light once more upon my vision bursts
And cheering face of man mine eyes behold,
Of brighter days reminding! Oh what joy
In dreaming! Empty though it seems to minds
With joy more stable blest, yet 'tis to me
A joy, nor let cold reason take away
What she is loath to give, and to thee, Night
Thou likeness of myself, deep thanks I owe.

Oh I am sad, Pensylva, that mine eyes
Are shut forever from the sight of things
By God created for the joy of man,
And open to naught but ever-deepening night.
What gloom! It seems of solid substance formed
And scolding round me; like a blackened wall
It stands impervious even to a ray of thought.
I strive to look far forth, but back recoil
At such unfinching darkness. Oh how sad!
I am the foster-child of night, for day,
My natural mother, long has deemed me dead.
I turn mine eyes to heaven—'tis all a blank;
I turn to earth, and all is shadow there—
Fain would I look once more on human face—
But sight of heaven and sight of earth and sight
Of human face I never shall see again.
'Tis all a void—a universal void;
I'm lost in this infinity of night,
To which no bounds by space or time seemed fixed.

But say, can darkness circumscribe the range
Of thought—thought boundless as immensity—
Or smother in its folds that heavenly spark
Which flashed from God's own brightness, and inspired
The new-made man with immortality?
Look up, my sorrowing soul, nor quench thy fires
In unavailing grief; to mortal ken
Inscrutable are the ways of Providence.
For higher sphere than this thou art ordained,
And death, mild death alone can end thy night,
And with night end thy woes, thy fetters break,
Thy doubts remove, and usher thee to life.
Where day rolls on without a vesper wane,
Where light is God's own presence, and that light
Forever at its zenith.

I will mourn
No more, nor with unmanly sorrow Him
Uphraid, but close mine eyes and be resigned
To momentary darkness, since from God
It comes as well as light. If I have mourned,
'Tis but the natural weakness of the flesh.

Pensylva, to the closing gates of day
Now turn thine eyes—thy sight is sight to me—
Thou art the lamp of my benighted steps.
Thou seest, methinks, the sun, the setting sun,
Slow merging in a sea of liquid gold,
And shooting slant and far his parting beams,
His light makes visible our nether world;
He hides his face, and lo! the virgin moon
And shining stars, sparks of the deity,
Rejoicing on their nightly rounds, advance;
With solemn mien they tread the azure plain,
Silent, yet in their numbers speaking power,
And in their glory beaming grateful.

Thus set my day, thus my long night approach-
ed,
And may my night, ere its meridian death
Impend, some excellence in me reveal,
Which God may deign, in future, time to own.
Spencer county, Ky. J. M. H.

A Scott campaign paper is about to be started at Harrisburg, to be called the "Bomb Shell." A friend of ours will commence a Democratic sheet called the "Spear," for the purpose of piercing the Whigs.

THE PRESIDENTIAL EXCITEMENT. All About the Pierce Family.

Biographical Sketch of Governor Benjamin Pierce, the Father of General Franklin Pierce.
His early life—he enters the army of the Revolution—he becomes a captain—removes to New Hampshire—is appointed Brigade Major—Sheriff of Hillsborough County—elected representative—councillor—Governor—retires from public life—dies at Hillsborough—his character—his monument.

Benjamin Pierce, the father of Gen. Franklin Pierce, the Democratic candidate for President of the United States, was born at Chelmsford, a town near Lowell, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in 1757; and, as he was the son of a farmer, his early life was devoted to agriculture. He was descended from a respectable Irish family, who originally emigrated, along with many other Irish emigrants, from Londonderry, in the north of Ireland, and settled in New Londonderry, in New Hampshire. On the memorable nineteenth of April, 1775, the revolutionary committee of Boston sent out couriers in every direction, and one of these messengers came up to the door of the farm house, while young Pierce, then only eighteen years of age, was plowing in his father's field; and having delivered a brief message, hastened on to arouse the country to action. It was the news of the battle of Lexington which the stranger was commissioned to proclaim, and which, like a trumpet's voice, roused all the inhabitants of the land. Young Pierce left the plough, and, shouldering his musket, proceeded on foot towards Lexington, where he found, on his arrival, that the troops had fallen back upon Boston; and he proceeded to Boston, and enlisting as a private soldier in the army of the revolution, was assigned to the regiment commanded by Col. Brooks. In the battle of Bunker Hill, which occurred on the 17th of June following, Pierce took a part, and from that time to the close of revolution, he continued in the service of the country, and followed the fortunes of his regiment, fighting when it was called into action, and attracting the notice and winning the commendation of his superior officers for his gallantry and good conduct, by which means he rose gradually to the command of a company, so that at the disbanding of the revolutionary army, in 1784, he held the rank of captain. The leaders of the revolution had been driven, by necessity, to the issuing of paper money; and in that currency, already depreciating, the troops were paid off. Pierce was amongst the sufferers; and when he set out to return to his native village, he found the continental money which he had received from Congress so far depreciated, that the whole amount in his possession, the arrears of his pay for eight years of service, would not suffice purchase of a farm. He was obliged, like many other officers of the revolution, to go into the wilderness, where lands were cheap, and begin the cultivation of wild lands. He removed to the State of New Hampshire, into the town and county of Hillsborough, and having made a clearing, erected a rude habitation, felling the trees with his axe, and procuring food for sustenance with his gun. In that town his son, Franklin Pierce, was born, and there lived until he removed to Concord, the capital of the State, where he now resides.

In the autumn of 1788, Gen. John Sullivan, who was then President of New Hampshire, and whose grandson, John Sullivan, is now Attorney General of that State, determined to form the militia of the county of Hillsborough into a brigade, and having sought out Benjamin Pierce, commissioned him as a brigade major; and he, being a veteran soldier, immediately took the necessary steps for the perfect organization and discipline of the several regiments. He had already served eight years in the regular army, and he continued for twenty-one years in the militia, leaving it finally in the station of brigadier general. Gen. Miller and Gen. John M'Neil (who was a son-in-law of Benjamin Pierce), both of whom served with so much distinction in the war of 1812, and the latter of whom recently deceased at the city of Washington, both belonged, when they were young men, to the militia regiment commanded by the father of the Democratic nominee; and it is said that several other valuable officers who have distinguished themselves, have been proud to declare that they received their first lessons of military discipline from Gen. Benjamin Pierce, in the militia of Hillsborough.

From 1789 to 1802, he was a representative of the people in the Legislature of the State; and, in 1803, was first elected a member of the Governor's council, where he continued six years, five of which were passed in the council of the celebrated Governor John Langdon. This brings us to the year 1809. Soon after that time, he was appointed Sheriff of the county of Hillsborough, which office he held till 1813. In that year, at the June session of the Legislature, a change was made in the judiciary system of the State, which resulted in abolishing the offices of the existing judges, and gave to the dominant party an opportunity to appoint their successors upon the bench. The name of the highest court of the State, which had been styled the superior Court of Judicature, was

by the new law, changed to the Supreme Judicial Court. Arthur Livermore, Chief Justice of the former court, was retained as an Associate Justice in the new one. Jeremiah Smith, of Exeter who had resigned his seat on the bench to accept the office of Governor, was again appointed Justice. The remaining seat was filled by Caleb Ellis, of Claremont, a young but distinguished member of the bar. This nominal change in the courts was made, as the republican party contended, for the sole purpose of getting rid of the old court, and was unconstitutional. A warm controversy ensued, and both courts sat and claimed a right to administer the public business was thrown into confusion, by the jurors and witnesses sometimes obeying the summons to attend one court and sometimes the other. In consequence of the confusion resulting from this unsettled state of things Gov. John Gilman, then Chief Magistrate of the State, convened the Legislature on the 27th day of October, several weeks earlier than the day to which it had been adjourned. At an early period of this session, Josiah Butler, sheriff of the county of Rockingham, and Benjamin Pierce, sheriff of Hillsborough, were removed by address. Pierce, however, was elected four years successively to the Governor's council, and ultimately again appointed sheriff of Hillsborough county. While holding that office an event occurred, which strongly marked his character and erected for him an enduring monument in the hearts of the people. It was in the year 1818, at the time when the enormous abuses of the creditor over the debtor were exciting the attention of the people, and calling forth execrations from the philanthropic and liberal everywhere. In some instances the father of a poor family, was for years immured in a dungeon for the amount of the prison charges, and his family, meanwhile, were reduced to pauperism and beggary. No age, no condition was exempt. The poor and decayed veteran whose best years had been spent in the service of his country, was often confined with felons, and year rolled on after year, leaving him in hopeless imprisonment.—In Amherst jail there were three aged prisoners, one of whom had groaned in confinement almost four years. When Pierce was appointed sheriff, he gave these prisoners notice that they were to be released, and appointed a day for their deliverance, the 20th of November, 1818, the more grateful to the prisoners that it was to occur just at the coming on of winter. The inhabitants thought the occasion worthy of public demonstrations, and when they had assembled together at the prison to witness the release, the sheriff, Benjamin Pierce, having opened the prison door, thus addressed the three prisoners:

"Moses Brewer, Isaac Lawrence and George Lancy—By the return made me by Israel W. Kelly, Esq., my predecessor in the office of sheriff for the county of Hillsborough, it appears that you Moses Brewer, was committed, December 13, 1814; and you, Isaac Lawrence, was committed, December 27, 1815; and you, Geo. Lancy, July 2, 1817.

"My unfortunate fellow citizens!—The feelings excited by a view of your situation are inexpressible. That those heads, silvered by age and hardship, and those hearts throbbing with kindly emotions, should be held for this long period of time by their fellow citizens, without the imputation of a crime, in a capacity unparalleled even in the annals of the French Bastille, or Algerine slavery, always viewed by us with sentiments of inexpressible horror, is more than my nature is able to endure. To be immured in a dungeon, standing on the very soil of liberty and in the midst of men boasting its high privileges, is in my mind, with which the ideas and the value of freedom are closely interwoven, infinitely worse than to be enslaved in a foreign land by enemies and barbarians, from whom nothing better could be expected. But as an officer of the country, I have a duty to perform. I must either be governed by the law and suffer you still to remain, the devoted victims of unavoidable misfortune and honest poverty, shut out from the genial light of heaven and the vital air, God's equal gift to all; to endure, perhaps perish under the privations incident to your situation and the stern ravages of approaching winter; forlorn and destitute, with no friend to comfort, no society to cheer, no companion to console you—or, I must be directed by the powerful impulse of humanity, pay the debt myself, and bid you leave this dreary and gloomy abode.

"My unfortunate fellow citizens—My duty to myself will not suffer longer to remain here an old companion in arms, who fought for the liberty of which he is deprived, for no crime but that of being poor. My duty to my country, whose honor is deeply implicated by your sufferings—and it is one of my first wishes that it should be untarnished—and my duty to my God, who has put it into my power to relieve, irresistibly urge me to the latter course. This I am sensible, takes from me a large sum of money; however, the liberal and generous people, among whom it is my happy lot to reside, may participate; if not, none but my children will have any right to reproach me; and I am confident they will do no more than say their father was generous to a fault. In this view, go;

receive the uncontaminated air which is diffused abroad for the comfort of man; go to your families and friends, if you have any. Be correct in your habits. Be industrious—and if your tottering and emaciated frames are so far exhausted as to prevent your getting a comfortable support, apply to the good people for relief—and may the best of heaven's blessings accompany you the remainder of your days."

In 1827, Benjamin Pierce was elected Governor of the State of New Hampshire; but in 1828, when the republican party in the North became divided between the partisans of General Jackson and John Quincy Adams, the large part sustaining Mr. Adams, Pierce, who declared for General Jackson, was defeated, but was re-elected in 1829, when the star of the hero of the Hermitage rose into the ascendant in New Hampshire. After this he lived in comparative retirement, on his farm, in Hillsborough. At the commencement of the last war with Great Britain, his spirit entered into the contest, but the infirmities of age admonished him that he could hasten no more to the battle field. Two of his sons, with his consent and advice, entered the public service.

Endowed by nature with a strong mind, Governor Pierce had overcome the obstacles springing from a want of education, and, by practice and perseverance, had acquired a knowledge of business, and a skill in the conduct of public affairs. It was not from his high public station that he acquired a commanding influence, but from his integrity of character, his benevolence, hospitality, and love of justice. Cheerful in his disposition, and delighting to contribute to the happiness of all around him, youthful vivacity found in him a congenial spirit, while sedate manhood and sober age discovered in his conduct nothing to reproach. When he was removed by death, the public felt the loss of a man who had sincerely loved and faithfully served his fellow men, and his country. He died in the town of Hillsborough, where his remains are deposited, and over them a monument of plain brown granite has been erected, which stands in a prominent position, the burying ground of the town, which is on the brow of a hill, and in full view of the traveller, when passing on the stage route from Amherst to Hillsborough.

Such is a faithful outline of the life and public career of Governor Benjamin Pierce, the father of General Franklin Pierce, the nominee of the Baltimore Democratic National Convention, which assembled at Baltimore on the 24 day of June, 1852, and selected its candidate on the forty-ninth ballot.

Biographical Sketch of General Franklin Pierce.
His birthplace—early education—enters college—graduates at Bowdoin—his legal studies—commences practice—elected a representative—Speaker of the house—chosen to congress—becomes U. S. Senator—retires from public life—resumes his profession—outbreak of the war with Mexico—volunteers as a private soldier—commissioned as colonel—generous treatment of the lamented Ransom—military career—enters the city of Mexico—retires and resumes his profession—character of his oratory—private character—chivalrous manners—death of Ransom—personal courage of Gen. Pierce—ability as a commander—experience in legislative business—performs the duties of district attorney—Ichabod Bartlett—character of Gen. Pierce as an advocate at the bar—courtier—nomination by the Baltimore Convention.

General Franklin Pierce was the son of Gov. Benjamin Pierce, whose biography is given above, and was born in the year 1804, in the town of Hillsborough, in the county of Hillsborough, in the interior or rather the western part of the State of New Hampshire. Hillsborough is a farming town, hilly, as its name imports, having no considerable village, and has long been distinguished for its unfinching devotion to the principles of the Democratic party. After completing his academical studies, he entered college, and graduated at Bowdoin College, in Maine, with the degree of Bachelor of Arts.—Immediately on leaving college, he entered the office of Judge Gould, a jurist of distinction at Litchfield, Connecticut; but subsequently returned to his native State, and finished his studies at Amherst, the residence of Hon. Charles H. Atherton, father of Hon. Charles G. Atherton, late Senator, and is the shire town of the county of Hillsborough. He was admitted to the bar, and commenced the practice of law in his native town, Hillsborough. But he had not been in practice two years, when he was elected a representative in the Legislature of the State, and during his second year of service in that body, was elected Speaker of the House, in both of which positions he manifested so much talent and so admirable a capacity for legislative business, and so thoroughly won the confidence of the Democratic party, that in the year 1833, while yet hardly more than a youth, he was elected to a seat in the House of Representatives of the United States. As a member of the house, he was not of that number who appear to desire to distinguish themselves by much speaking. He was rather quick to hear and slow to speak; modest and unassuming, but attentive to business, and strongly marked even then by what he has displayed so much of in his later life—that is, good common sense. He was an

unwavering supporter of Democratic measures—was a ready though not a frequent debater; and, during his four years continuance in that body, steadily advanced himself in the warm friendship of almost all with whom he came in contact, and rose rapidly in the general confidence and good will of the people of New Hampshire. In 1837 he was elected, by the Legislature, a Senator from that State. In all these various and responsible stations, and during the succeeding five years on the floor of the Senate, good sense, caution, prudence, modesty, attention to business, and a certain chivalrous and lofty tone of manners, with kindness and good temper, rather than frequent speech-making, enabled Gen. Pierce to quit the Senate in 1842, with an amount of popularity which few men have ever possessed on leaving the Senate of the United States. He had now been more than ten years in public life, and having entered it very young, felt the necessity of devoting himself to his private affairs, which had suffered while he was absent. He resigned his seat in 1842, one year before his term expired, with the frankly avowed purpose of devoting himself to his profession, in order to earn a competence for his family; and with this view, removed his office to Concord, the capital of the State. In the Senate, Gen. Pierce ranked amongst the high-minded and honorable men of that body.—In private life, seldom has a political man been more beloved, even by his opponents; and very seldom, if ever, has a retired Senator been able to look back with more satisfaction on his career. Integrity, business habits, industry, and magnanimity, were the great secrets of his success in all the various and high stations which he had occupied. His speeches were generally short and to the point—he never rising unless he had something to say, and leaving off when he had done. When he resumed his practice at the bar, it was with a firm resolution to be withdrawn from public life, and the offices of Governor of the State and Senator, which were more than once offered to him, he declined. President Polk urged upon him the acceptance of the office of Attorney General of the United States, and afterwards that of Secretary of war, both of which he declined, with a declaration that he had no desire for public office, and would not consent to leave his home again, unless, in case of war, his country should demand his services. If it be asked, "what is he as a speaker?" it must be replied, General Pierce is an orator. Reasoning power and pathos are the characteristics of his addresses to juries, in which he is known to have had, during his practice, such remarkable success. Those brilliant flights of imagination, for which Mr. Choate, the great orator of the Massachusetts bar, is so much distinguished, do not belong to all Gen. Pierce. He goes at once to the heart of the matter, or to more the heart; and where the case admits of combining the two, he wields a masterly power. His clear, good common sense and knowledge of the human heart, must have struck every one who has had frequent opportunities to see him in the management of trials before a jury. These marked features in his forensic efforts have made him sought after, and his professional services to be in demand, in all the counties of the State of New Hampshire.

The breaking out of the Mexican war brought about the contingency for which he made a reservation when he rejected the overtures of President Polk, so honorable to him and so flattering to his professional pride; and he at once enrolled himself as a volunteer, in the capacity of a private soldier. As soon as the New England regiment was raised, he was elected colonel, and his military services from that time till the American army entered the halls of the Montezumas in triumph, have already been given in detail in the columns of the New York Herald. His treatment of the brave and lamented Ransom was magnanimous in the extreme. Ransom was a military man by profession. He was educated at Norwich, Vt., under Capt. Alden Partridge, who for many years kept a military school there, for the education of young men. Ransom was one of his pupils; and after Capt. Partridge retired, continued to form classes and give instruction in military tactics. He was every inch a soldier. Brave, and knowing himself competent, naturally desired a position in which he might show his military talents.—Pierce felt this, and generously urged upon President Polk the appointment of Ransom to the command of the New England regiment.—But President Polk, having been associated with Pierce in Congress, knew his man, sent him a commission, as colonel, accompanied by one for Ransom, as major of the same regiment. Ransom was shot through the head while rushing upon the enemy in one of the most bloody fights in the whole war. Poor, gallant Ransom—the very soul of honor and valor—even now we seem to see his erect and elegant, but slender form, driven on by a spirit seemingly too mighty for the flesh in which it was encased, leading up, up the fatal hill, in the face of that deadly fire to which, in the very pride and exultation of his daring, he fell a victim. General Pierce was made a brigadier general by a commission dated March 3, 1847, and his brigade consisted of the ninth regiment, New England men, the twelfth, men from Texas, Missouri,

Arkansas, northern Mississippi, and Louisiana, and the fifteenth, raised in Ohio, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan, the eastern part of Missouri, and the western part of Indiana. Thus General Pierce saw ranged under his banner 2,500 men, assembled from all sections of the Union, and at the head of this command he landed at Vera Cruz, from the bark Kepler, on the 28th of June 1847. His career from that time till the American army entered the city of Mexico in triumph, has all become matter of history. In general, it may be remarked that he was lavish of personal sacrifices, and magnanimous towards others, when laurels were to be bestowed. As soon as the restoration of peace between the two republics became a thing settled, Pierce resigned his commission, left the city of Mexico, and returned home, leaving others to settle preliminaries, and quarrel over the distribution of honors.—His personal courage, and his ability to command had both been repeatedly displayed. He had rendered all the service required of him by the exigencies of the country; he had won the good will, nay, the enthusiastic love, of the troops under his command. The men looked upon him as a friend and a father. There was no hardship which he was not willing to share with them; no allowance of food or water in his possession, however small, which he was not willing to divide with a sick and wounded soldier, although few suffered more than himself from the diseases of that deadly climate. He now stands before the world, with health and strength renewed, and honors thick upon him, a candidate for President of the United States; and should he be elected, there is one immense advantage which he possesses over General Scott, viz: experience in public affairs. As Representative to the Legislature, Speaker of the House in New Hampshire, Representative to Congress, Senator, and, lastly, Commissioner in Mexico, he has seen, and been through the whole routine of public business. He has passed nine years at least at Washington as a legislator, and has, therefore, thoroughly seen the working of the machinery of our government.—He has also seen the working of that other machinery—the distribution of patronage—and this will be of immense service to him in the bestowing of appointments and the distribution of government patronage—points in which some of our best Presidents have signally failed, and have involved themselves thereby in inextricable difficulties with their personal friends and their party. At the time when the offer of a seat in the cabinet was tendered to General Pierce, by President Polk, an occurrence took place characteristic of Pierce, and to which we have not seen any allusion made in any of the attempted sketches of him with which the press has teemed for the last four days. That was the acceptance of the comparatively trifling and unimportant office of District Attorney for the district of New Hampshire, which office he actually held, and the duties of which he was discharging when he received his military commission, and was called upon to set out for Mexico.—That office at the departure of Gen. Pierce, fell to his law partner, Mr. Minot.

Very seldom do human annals afford an instance of a man declining a high, honorable and lucrative station, like that of Attorney General of the United States, for one like that (though a very honorable one certainly), which General Pierce accepted; but the one would not interfere with his plan, fully determined upon—to pursue the practice of his profession at home; the other would; and therefore it was declined. It was then that the eloquent and almost unequalled Ichabod Bartlett, for many years the acknowledged head of the bar in New Hampshire, began to withdraw gradually from the harder duties of the profession, and General Pierce, by common consent, took his place at the bar, though Mr. Bartlett still occasionally bursts forth in all the intellectual glory and light and beauty of other days, and no one witnesses with more delight than himself the professional triumphs of General Pierce. If there be one thing more than another redeeming in poor and infirm human nature, it is the mutual regard held towards each other by men like these.

General Pierce, at the bar, is one of those who, though they do not hold with Lord Brougham that "though the world should come to an end my client must be acquitted," yet make the case of a client their own, and enter with the whole energies of their nature into the contest; which the rights of a client are involved. Yet so uniform in his courtesy at the bar that his department might be cited as an instance to show how much is uniformly gained and how little is ever lost, by observing on all occasions a generous, kind, and courteous demeanor to others.

Such is General Franklin Pierce, the candidate of the Democracy—in private life a gentleman—in his legislative career distinguished for ability, possessing the highest characteristics of an efficient and powerful advocate and popular orator crowned with laurels won by fighting the enemy rather than by wrenching them from the brows of other men; and lastly, crowned, at the age of forty-eight years, with a unanimous nomination, which has been hailed by the democracy with one spontaneous outburst of enthusiasm throughout the entire length and breadth of the Union.