

JAMES G. BLAINE.

He is fallen! We may now contemplate the most conspicuous figure of our day and nation as one whose hour upon the stage is past, whose part in life's drama is played, who has gone behind the scenes and there awaits the verdict of those who sit in judgment upon what he has done and how it was done. No more the "plumed knight" at the head of trained and valiant followers making the arena reverberate again and again with the clangor of forensic strife; no more the "Navarre of the rostrum" blinding as with a spell by the magical force of masterful rhetoric and clarion tones the throngs that gathered far and wide to hear him; no more the Nestor of the administration he did so much to bring into existence; no more the man of magnetism, of influence, of prestige, of learning, of determination, of all but complete success—but just the mortal clay which contained a worn-out, sorrowing, disappointed, ambitious, soaring, aggressive and withal most masterful soul.

Blaine is dead! Those who have been so familiar with his combative exploits, his intellectual achievements, his lofty purposes and his general aptitude in the domain of statecraft—and what American, old or young, that has not?—will have to read that sentence several times to realize its full import. An event expected every hour for months and yet so difficult to conceive of when it does come! This of itself is a tribute, one containing more than could be fashioned out of mere words. It shows that he was foremost of all mortal subjects in the thoughts of the people, that while they knew they must soon how to the inevitable, the hope that the worst might by some providence be deferred remained with them and went out to him even as they recognized that life's candle was burning low and dim. In all hearts was that one touch of human nature that makes us all akin, and even those who opposed, who warred against, who even abused the wonderful man in his lifetime had naught but a feeling of genuine sympathy in their breasts at the spectacle of the one who fought them so stubbornly and effectively being slowly consumed in the grasp of the relentless and remorseless destroyer.

James Gillespie Blaine was born in West Brownsville, Washington county, Pennsylvania, on the 31st day of January, 1830. His ancestry was Scotch-Irish, and he constantly exhibited in public and private the characteristics of both nationalities. His early career was in the line of intellectual pursuits, being often engaged in teaching in the schools than anything else. In 1854 he removed to Augusta, Maine, where he bought an interest in the *Kennebec Journal* and began what proved to be a successful journalistic career. Here he met the woman who subsequently became his wife, Miss Harriet Stanwood. The agitation in the land looking to the formation of a national party opposed to slavery enlisted his early and earnest attention, and in 1858 he was one of the delegates to the

convention which nominated John C. Fremont for President. He kept on as a journalist and in 1858 began his political career by being a candidate for the legislature and a successful one; he was re-elected three consecutive times, the last two terms serving as speaker of the house. In 1862, the prestige gained by the conspicuously able manner in which his legislative duties had been discharged and his devotion to the Union cause was recognized in an election to Congress, and he made the remarkable record of being chosen six consecutive times more; during three of these terms he was speaker. He was then elected to the Senate and served there for four years and then went into President Garfield's cabinet, upon his retirement from which shortly after his chief's assassination, he began work upon his book entitled "Twenty Years in Congress." He received the Republican nomination for President at Chicago in 1884, having been the most conspicuous candidate for the honor at the two previous conventions, but was defeated on each occasion. In the campaign which followed, Mr. Blaine took the stump and made a most remarkable canvass, but he was defeated by Grover Cleveland. The rest of his history is too well known to need mention here. }

In making up the record of James G. Blaine's life the historian will be confronted with some difficulties. Because of the subject's surpassing ability and aggressiveness many there be who, when the look backward is taken, will remember some of the things said and done by the great statesman to which the keenest criticism will be applied. That he made enemies was a natural consequence, and that his friends were in great number and measure distrustful of him at times is well understood. He made the mistake of his life when he raised the ire of Roscoe Conkling in their memorable debate in the House of Representatives; Conkling was an imperious and very able man, sensitive to the point of absurdity when personally attacked. The burning sarcasm which Mr. Blaine poured out upon the New Yorker rankled in the latter's breast forever after, and when the former was within a few votes of the nomination for President at Cincinnati in 1874 Conkling swung his own following, and influenced the combined opposition to do likewise, to Hayes, who was nominated. Victory was thus snatched from the one who seemed to be a veritable man of destiny and that too when it was early within his grasp. He never got up quite so high again; although receiving the nomination eight years later, it was only to be defeated at the polls. It looked as though the blighting force of Conkling's hatred outlived the author of it and followed the man from Maine throughout the rest of his career.

Life's fitful fever is over. All the ambitions and sorrows, the hopes and disappointments that made the heart swell with joy or depressed with unfulfilled promise, count for nothing at last. Beside the hier of the man so great on earth, so much admired even if feared at home and abroad, a stricken wife, some sorrowing children

and a few sympathizing friends blend their tears and let their bruised hearts find expression when at all in soulful sighs. The vanities and vexations of life pass before them like a dream, perhaps, as they look upon that thin, wan and colorless face once so expressive and so vigorous, and perhaps they say to themselves that it is all a fleeting show, a hollow pageant, a mystifying mockery. In the republic of the dead may he find that repose and peace which were seldom his in the one from which he has taken his final departure.

THE DEMOCRATS WILL CONTROL.

A Republican senator being replaced by a Democrat in an unlooked-for place settles the status of the next upper house of Congress beyond all cavil. This occurred in Kansas and the winner bears the rather commonplace cognomen of John Martin. He is a lawyer of Topeka and will be less known when he takes his seat, perhaps, than any other man in the body. He was nominated by the Populists and elected by them with the aid of a few Democratic votes, and is undoubtedly a Democrat himself, one of the "straight-out" variety at that, or Mrs. Lense would not have been so perturbed and insisted so strongly on another organization of the Populist party.

The rather lengthy struggle in Wisconsin terminated yesterday in the choice of John I. Mitchell, Democrat; he will succeed Philletus Sawyer, whose term expires on the 4th of March next. The most prominent, or at least the best known, of the candidates from this state—General Edward S. Bragg—was looked upon as the most likely man to gain the prize, but as is often seen, senatorial elections are apt to be as uncertain as to their outcome as any other. Mr. Mitchell is not, however, unknown by any means; he is quite a prominent man, whose qualities and standing are known throughout his state and in many places outside of it.

The Democrats have now retired four Republicans in favor of an equal number of their own men, thus making a change of eight in the relative voting strength of themselves and the Republicans, and making the necessary forty-four to secure control with the aid of the Vice-President. If Montana and Wyoming shall elect Democrats they would then have forty-six against forty-one Republicans, a plurality of five and a majority of four; but whether they do this or not, as shown the Democrats will have complete control for a while at least in every branch of the government after Mr. Cleveland's inauguration.

An occasional prospector can be seen around Pocatello (says the *Idaho Daily Statesman*) with his pockets full of rock, but owing to the objections made by Indians no active prospecting has ever been carried on in this vicinity, especially on the reservation, but those who are familiar with the country claim that whenever the reservation is thrown open to settlement and privileges granted to work mines and prospect, this will become a mining center of more than ordinary activity.