

fort and pleasure in your labors of love for such the teachers work largely is, and be rewarded with the thanks of those whom you have been the means of assisting to higher purposes, is my heartfelt wish for each of you individually, and collectively for your honorable society.

Written for this Paper.

OUR VICE PRESIDENT.

WASHINGTON, November, 1, 1893—I spent an evening this week with the Vice President of the United States. My last interview with him was held five years ago. I was about to start on a trip around the world, and he gave me letters to his friend, Gov. Hubbard, our minister to Japan. At that time Mr. Stevenson was assistant postmaster general. Now he is Vice President of the United States. He stands within one of being the chief executive of the nation, and the chances of life and death are such that he may be the most important man in the United States within the next four years. I believe President Cleveland to be well, but the thrill that went over the union a few months ago when it was reported that he was afflicted with a cancer impressed upon the people the fact that Presidents are not immortal, and the question as to the character of Gen. Stevenson was uppermost in every thinking man's mind. What kind of a man is the Vice President of the United States? How does he look, act and talk? What are his ideas upon public questions? These are some of the interesting queries which I hear from time to time in my travels about the country. I cannot answer them better than by giving a running description of my chat with him last night.

THE VICE PRESIDENT AT HOME.

The Vice President lives at the Ebbitt House. He has pleasant rooms in one of the corners of this big hotel, and he is to be found here almost every evening with his family about him. He is domestic in his tastes, and he spends his evenings at home. There is no red tape about getting to him. You send up your card, and a moment later you are told to walk right up.

You knock at the door. It opens, and a giant of a man greets you with a hearty shake of the hand. Vice President Stevenson is one of the big men among our statesmen. He is six feet two in his stockings and he weighs more than two hundred pounds. He stands as straight as a Norwegian pine in his polished boots, and his big blonde head is fastened to his broad shoulders by a strong firm neck. His arms and legs are long. His chest is broad and full, and his shoulders are well thrown back. His complexion is clear, and he looks like a man whose blood is pure and who knows not that he has a stomach. The Vice President has a magnificent head. It made me think of that of Bismarck. It had the same broad full forehead and the same heavy iron jaw. The mustache which flows out from under his big nose is about as heavy as that of the great German statesman, but it is of a golden color, while that of Bismarck by the furnace of many summers had melted from its iron gray into frosted silver. Bismarck has blue eyes Vice President Stevenson's eyes are not blue, but they are smaller than those of

his German counterpart. They are like his eyes, however, and they look straight at you as you talk to their owner, changing in expression as the Vice President's thoughts are serious or the reverse. Now the brow over them is corrugated and the eyes are full of thought. Gen. Stevenson is thinking of the tariff and he is giving you his ideas as to the discussion of silver. Now the corners of them are wrinkled with fun and the eyes fill with laughter—the Vice President is illustrating his point by some good story. He has as many stories as had Abraham Lincoln, and he is full of dry wit. He likes to illustrate his points by stories, and he is one of the best after-dinner speakers of the west. He is a good speaker on the stump, and he is one of the few candidates for the Vice Presidency who have ever gone before the people. He made one hundred speeches last fall and he addressed big audiences in twelve doubtful states. The Vice President is a man of action. His whole life has been filled with romance, and it is itself a good story.

Let me give you something of it which I gathered by numerous questions from the Vice President himself.

HIS ANCESTRY.

I asked as to his ancestry. Gen. Stevenson replied: "The Stevensons come of Scotch-Irish stock. My people came to this country long before the revolution and settled in Maryland and Pennsylvania. They drifted from here south to the Carolinas and thence on into Kentucky. I was, you know, born in Kentucky, and I moved with my father from Kentucky to Illinois. My father was a farmer or planter. He had the natural blood of the pioneer in him, and he came from North Carolina into Kentucky, and as the state filled up he sold out and went on to Illinois. This was in 1852.

FOUR HUNDRED MILES IN A WAGON.

"Do you remember the journey?" I asked.

"Yes I remember all the incidents of it," replied the Vice President. "I was only sixteen years old at the time. We had all our goods packed in canvas covered wagons, and I drove one of the teams. The journey from Lafayette, Ky., to Bloomington, Ill., was only 400 miles, and you can go from one place to the other now in less than a day. It took us three weeks to make it by wagon, and when we got to Bloomington we found there a town of only a few hundred people. The Illinois Central railroad was then being built, but it had not yet reached Bloomington. My father started a lumber mill, and I helped him by hauling the logs."

"Where were you educated, general?"

"My college days were spent in both Illinois and Kentucky," replied the Vice President. "I worked my way through college, and I first went to the Wesleyan University at my home, Bloomington. I then went to Center College at Danville, Ky. This is the same school at which the Breckinridges were educated, and Senator Joe Blackburn was there at the same time. The school has had a number of distinguished men. Senator Vest was among its students, Justice Harlan got his education there, and among other students, who afterward became prominent, were Gov. McCreary, now in the House of Representatives, and

Gov. Brown, who is now the chief executive of Kentucky."

HOW ONE BOY GOT AN EDUCATION.

"You say you worked your way through college, general. How did you make the money?" I asked.

"In different ways," replied the Vice President. "I taught during vacation, and at one time I remember I received twenty-five dollars a month and boarded around, and at other times I left school for the winter and took a turn at teaching. It didn't cost so much to go to college at that time as now. I remember I paid \$2.50 a week for my room and board, and other things were proportionately cheap. After leaving school I went back to Bloomington and studied law, and when I started to practice I had just \$25 worth of books and very little else. My first law case was before a justice of the peace, and my fee was five dollars. This seems very little now, but it paid my board bill for two weeks, and it was two months before I got another case. I managed, however, to make more than my expenses during my first year at the law, and had I continued to practice from that time to this I would be much better off in pocket than I am."

THE LINCOLN-DOUGLAS CAMPAIGN.

"When did you first become interested in politics?"

"I can't remember when I was not interested in politics," replied the Vice President. "I remember the political campaigns of Kentucky, and I may at that time have had an ambition to be a Kentucky legislator. I don't know. My first work in politics was in the campaign of 1858, when Douglas and Lincoln were running against each other for the United States Senate. I was a friend of Douglas during that campaign, and I spoke in his favor. I remember the discussion and arguments of that time as though they had been uttered in the Senate yesterday. The great question was the power of congress over slavery in the territories and the wisdom of the repeal of the Missouri compromise. I was an earnest advocate of the election of Stephen A. Douglas, and I then fully believed his position to be a correct one. Subsequent events have clearly demonstrated that the repeal of the Missouri compromise was far from being a wise measure. The Lincoln-Douglas campaign, however, was one of the greatest of our history. The speeches which Lincoln made during it had no doubt much to do with his being elevated to the presidency."

"What did you think of Abraham Lincoln?"

"I admired him then, and I now consider him one of the greatest men and greatest Presidents we have ever had. I feel proud that I knew him, and the fact that he belonged to a different party from me does not warp my judgment of his character. I venerate his memory as I do that of Washington. Washington belonged to a different party from mine. He was, you know, a Federalist, and the Democratic party was not really born until the days of Jefferson's presidency."

WHAT A VICE PRESIDENT CAN DO.

The conversation then turned to the United States Senate, and I asked the Vice President whether there was not some way in which he could control its debates and prevent such a situation as