

the army. Before the revolutionary war was over he had risen to be a colonel. At its close he retired to his farm, refusing a professorship in the University of Pennsylvania, because, as he said, it did not look well for one who had been commanding men to come down to flogging boys. This man, you know, was Horace Porter's grandfather. He afterward became a brigadier general and he refused the place of Secretary of War in President Monroe's cabinet. He was a thrifty man, and thrift seems to be one of the attributes of the Porters. This was the case with Gen. Porter's father, whose name was David Rittenhouse Porter, and who was the first man to put up anthracite furnaces at Harrisburg, and the first to engage in the manufacture of steel in this country.

I see that Col. John Hay has already rented his house in London. He has taken one of the most expensive establishments in the most fashionable part of the city, and the dignity of the United States will be upheld without regard to cost. Colonel Hay is also a very rich man. He has made something of a fortune himself by his literary and other work, but he became a millionaire when his father-in-law, Amasa Stone, died. Amasa Stone was a Massachusetts boy. He developed a great capacity for railroad building. He was the superintendent of the New Haven and Hartford railroad before he was thirty, and had shown remarkable talent as a bridge builder by the time he was out of his teens. When he was still young he came out to Ohio and settled at Cleveland. He built the Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati railroad from Cleveland to Columbus. This is now a part of the Big Four system. He built the Chicago and Milwaukee railroad and was for a long time manager of the Lake Shore road. He made a great deal of money and when he died he left behind him a large variety of railroad and other interests. President Lincoln thought a great deal of Amasa Stone. He advised with him often as to railroad matters during the war, and he once offered to make Mr. Stone a brigadier general if he would accept such an appointment. Mr. Stone, however, thought he was better fitted for business than for soldiering, and he preferred to do his work for the Union in a more quiet way. He was often called to the White House and it was probably through his visits there that John Hay became acquainted with him and his daughter. At any rate, Mr. Hay married Miss Stone, and at her father's death he became one of the executors of his great estate. As such he has had to deal with some of the largest business interests of the country. He has had to learn how such things are managed and today he is on this account the more fitted to go abroad as the representative of this business administration.

There is no doubt but that John Hay will make a good ambassador to England. He had the advantage of President Lincoln's tutorship while he was private secretary in the White House, and Lincoln, it is now generally conceded, was one of the greatest diplomats this country has produced. As an illustration of his diplomacy I heard the other day of a lesson which he is said to have given Colonel Hay when he was private secretary at the White House. A public man had acted rather offensively toward the President, and

John Hay, so the story goes, told the President that he expected to write a letter, giving him a piece of his mind. "That's right," said President Lincoln. "Do so, give it to him; write out just what you think." John Hay did so, and he brought in the letter to the President, and read it to him. As he read Mr. Lincoln from time to time said: "Good! good! That fixes him." At its close Mr. Hay said: "Well, he will get the letter tomorrow morning, and we will see what he has to say in reply." "But," returned President Lincoln, "you don't intend to mail that letter! I wanted you to write it out because it helps one to ease his feelings, but you must not think of sending it. You would only make the man mad without doing good to yourself or the administration." The result was the letter was never sent.

This incident, if true, must have occurred more than a generation ago, and John Hay has since shown himself to be one of the shrewdest diplomatists of this country. He began his diplomatic career upon leaving the White House, being first sent to Paris. Here he kept Secretary Seward informed of the schemes of Maximilian and Carlotta, and enabled him to lay the plans which kept Maximilian from succeeding in Mexico. I have heard it said that had it not been for Hay Mexico might have become a monarchy instead of being one of the most thriving republics of Spanish America. Leaving Paris Colonel Hay was sent to Vienna as secretary of legation. Here he was for a long time charge d'affaires, and he served so well that later on he was sent to Spain. He has also been one of the first assistant secretaries of state, and his life since he left the White House, away back in 1865, has been largely made up of diplomatic work.

John Hay will have the advantage of a good literary reputation abroad. Our literary men have been our best diplomats. Washington Irving was an efficient minister to Spain, Bayard Taylor was one of our best ministers to Berlin, and the man who served with perhaps the greatest reputation in England was James Russell Lowell. Colonel Hay during his stay in Spain wrote his book entitled "Castilian Days." This ranks up well with the best books of travel. He brought the manuscript home with him in his valise, and arrived here just at the time when Bret Harte had made himself famous by writing his "Heathen Chinee" and other poems. Colonel Hay wrote and published a number of the same kind of poems, the most of which are far better than Bret Harte's. He entitled them the "Pike County Ballads," and among them were the famous poems of "Little Breeches," "Jim Bludsoe" and others. They took well, and before he knew it he was famous as a dialect poet. As soon as he realized his notoriety in this respect he regretted it, for he told me once he was rather ashamed of having written "Little Breeches." I believe he considers it below him, and that he has always prided himself on doing better work. He can, however, write poems of a high order. At the Christian Endeavor meeting here at Washington not long ago he wrote the Invocation Hymn. He is an earnest Christian, and the reading of this hymn may give you some idea of his character:

INVOCATION.

Lord! from far-severed climes we come,
To meet at last in Thee, our home.

Thou who hast been our guide and guard
Be still our hope, our rich reward.

Defend us, Lord, from every ill,
Strengthen our hearts to do Thy will,
In all we plan and all we do
Still keep us to Thy service true.

O let us hear the inspiring word
Which they of old at Horeb heard.
Breathe to our hearts the high command
"Go onward and possess the land!"

Thou who art light shine on each soul
Thou who art truth each mind control,
Open our eyes and make us see
The path which leads to heaven and Thee.

(Signed) JOHN HAY.

John Hay's literary reputation, however, will rest more upon Lincoln's biography than anything else. He wrote this, you know, in connection with John G. Nicolay, the two spending almost a quarter of a century in the preparation for the work. Col. Hay told me once that he and Mr. Nicolay had read more than twelve hundred volumes before they began the real work of writing, and that they had been making notes upon Lincoln, off and on, for many years. When Col. Hay was writing at this life I had a chat with him about his literary methods. He has, you know, a magnificent home here, the library of which is one of the finest in Washington. This library is a luxurious place. It is walled and ceiled with oak. It has many shelves filled with books. Costly rugs cover the floor, and beautiful paintings look down upon you from over the bookcases. It was not here, however, that Col. Hay wrote. It was away up in the attic, seated on a straight-back chair before a five-dollar desk, that he penned the most of his manuscript. He told me that he could not dictate, and that he considered a thousand words a day's work. He said that he and Nicolay planned the biography when they were in the White House, and that they began to make notes for it during the first administration of President Lincoln. They took down conversations and kept the incidents of White House life from day to day. Col. Hay has a diary of that time which fills three large manuscript volumes. The most interesting parts of this book have never been published. He has a vast amount of other material, comprising much unwritten history. He has been a man whom public men could trust, but he is so conscientious that his private correspondence will probably never be given to the public. When I called upon him not long ago he told me he had no literary work on hand, and his life in London will be devoted, I judge, to other matters than literature.

Frank G. Carpenter

BABYLON, BEER AND BIBLES.

LONDON, England, Feb. 28th, 1897.—Statistics, even during an election campaign, are apt to give one "that tired feeling;" nevertheless there are members of humanity who exhibit an abnormal proclivity in that direction. One of these geniuses a few weeks ago obtained space in a London weekly to the extent of publishing a tabulated statement of the amount in pounds, shillings and pence expended daily in London by its inhabitants, in what the conscientious drummer would include un-