

to communicate, but to the venders of idle gossip he is cold and repulsive. Sympathetic in his nature, he pities distress, and, through his benevolence, relieves it. He is a liberal supporter of all worthy enterprises, and patriotism and love of country is with him a passion.

Happy in his social and domestic relations, happy in the confidence and respect of the entire community, happy in constant communion with himself and his God, long may he live a blessing to the community, a benefaction to mankind; and when, through the fullness of years, Providence shall have accomplished its designs through him, may he rest from his labors in the kingdom of God.

HENRY VAN AERNAM*

was born in the town of Marcellus, Onondaga Co., N. Y., March 11, 1819. He was the sixth child and fifth son of Jacob B. and Hannah (Wallace) Van Aernam. His paternal ancestors emigrated from Holland to the American colonies, and settled near Albany prior to the Revolution, his grandfather taking an active part in the struggle for independence, and his son, Jacob B., imitating the worthy example of his patriotic sire, actively participated in the war of 1812. His maternal ancestors brought with them from amid the Highlands of Scotland that indefeasible inheritance, a love of liberty, stronger than the love of life. Jacob B. Van Aernam, the father of Henry, removed with his family from Marcellus to Little Valley (now Mansfield), in the spring of 1822, when the subject of this sketch was three years of age. Surrounded by an unbroken wilderness, hampered by poverty and the pressing necessities of a large family of dependent children, the parents of young Henry could furnish but limited facilities for an education; nothing, in fine, save the great volume of nature thrown broad open by the Creator's hand. Thus he struggled on, with "here a line and there a precept," until he was ten years of age, before he ever entered even the most primitive of common schools. But nature had planted within him the germs of more than ordinary intellectual powers, and these would vegetate and grow despite the hindrances of cold neglect, and the multitude of adverse circumstances by which he was surrounded.

In the fall of 1829 and the winter of 1830 he attended a common district school for the first time, and continued to attend during the summer and winter terms until the autumn of 1831. Possessed of more than ordinary powers of analytical reasoning, readily deducing results from legitimate causes, and, withal, possessed of a laudable ambition to excel in intellectual attainments, his progress was rapid and his natural and acquired abilities extraordinary for one of his years and limited opportunities. In the winter of 1834, at the age of sixteen years, we find him at what is now West Salamanca, measuring, with dignified strides, the length and breadth of the rough plank floor of a dingy edifice, twirling between his finger and thumb, as a token of authority, the ubiquitous ferule, and rejoicing in the distinctive title of the "schoolmaster."

* By Marvin Older.

Stimulated to extra exertions by the promise of a stinted compensation and "board around" among the families of the primitive lumbermen of that period, the school was a decided success; and he looks back with glowing pride upon the order and decorum, the progress and proficiency, of the two dozen shock-headed pupils in that school upon the confines of the Allegany Reservation. In the spring of 1834 he entered the store of William F. Elliott, in the capacity of clerk, where he remained until August, 1835, and then went to Virginia, in the employ of William L. Perce & Co., contractors upon the James River and Kanawha Canal, where he remained for two years. Securing, by his integrity and correct deportment, the entire confidence of the company, he was soon made their confidential clerk and paymaster,—a position he held and honorably filled until the termination of his engagement. He came home in the fall of 1837, and entered as a student of the Springville Academy, where he remained until 1841, meanwhile teaching school in the winter seasons in order to eke out his means for necessary expenses. While a student his gentlemanly deportment gave him high rank in social circles, his scholarship placed him among the first in his class, and his determination to overcome the impediments by which he was surrounded challenged the admiration of all.

At the close of his academic studies in 1841, he entered, as a medical student, the office of Levi Goldsborough, in the village of Waverly, N. Y. One of the prevailing characteristics of young Van Aernam was that of positiveness; never assuming hypothetical or ambiguous conclusions, discarding as dangerous every theory not fully established by a thorough and searching investigation. As a medical student he was diligent, energetic, and practical. Select almost to exclusiveness in his associations, with a constitution unimpaired by indulgence, with a mind naturally strong, improved by study and strengthened by application, and with moral principles fortified by an intuitive respect for the laws of God and man, he passed through the slippery paths of youth to dawning manhood without one blot to tarnish his reputation or his name. He attended medical lectures at Geneva College during the session of 1842-43, and soon after entered Willoughby College, Ohio, from which institution he graduated in 1845.

In the summer of 1845 he located at Burton (now Allegany), and commenced the practice of medicine; and on the 30th day of November, 1845, he married Miss Amy M. Etheridge, a lady in every particular worthy to share the honors and good fortune which have subsequently fallen to their lot. He continued in the practice of his profession at the latter place until March, 1848, when he removed to Franklinville, where he still resides. During a period of nine years, until the autumn of 1857, he devoted his time and talent to the practice of his profession, and by his fidelity and practical skill he secured an extensive patronage and the unbounded confidence and esteem of all who came within the circle of his acquaintance. At the general election in the fall of 1857, he was elected to represent the First Assembly District of Cattaraugus County in the State Legislature, and the fidelity with which he guarded the rights and interests of his constituents has become a matter of history, and needs no repetition in this connection. At

the close of the Legislative session in the spring of 1858, he returned to his home and again resumed the practice of his profession, with a growing popularity and a more extended field of usefulness. During his whole professional career, Dr. Van Aernam has never known any distinction between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, but wherever disease or physical suffering found a lodgment he cheerfully adopted that as his field of labor, without one thought of personal consequences to himself.

As the crisis approached which was to test with such giant force the strength of American institutions, Dr. Van Aernam threw the whole energies of his mind and might for the Union intact, popular freedom, and popular rights. He labored zealously to encourage enlistments, and contributed liberally to alleviate the necessities of those who had been deprived of their natural supporters by the exigencies of the war. Under the call for troops in the summer of 1862, he was recommended to the Governor as a suitable person for the important position of regimental surgeon, and in August he was ordered to report at Jamestown, where he was examined, approved, commissioned with the rank of major, and assigned to the 154th Regiment of Infantry. On arriving at the front, in the fall, he was soon made surgeon of brigade. In the fall of 1863 he was made medical director of the 2d division, 11th Army Corps. In March, 1864, by a consolidation of the 11th and 12th Army Corps with a large detachment of Rousseau's Kentucky troops, the 20th Army Corps was formed, and placed under the command of Gen. Hooker; this meant "business," and Van Aernam went with the Army Corps. These important trusts were no sinecures, where carpet professionals perform chivalrous deeds on paper, but stern realities in camp and field, amid the din of battle and the clash of resounding arms. As an evidence of his high standing in the army, and his cool deliberation under circumstances of severe trial, he was under constant detail upon the operating staff; and there is no possible form of mutilation which the human system is capable of undergoing, that has not fallen under the personal observation of Henry Van Aernam.

He not only followed the fortunes of the army through its various marches and campaigns, but served upon the operating staff during the battles of Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Wauhatchie, Chattanooga, Ringgold, Rocky-Faced Ridge, Resaca, Dallas, New Hope Church, Kenesaw Mountain, Peach-Tree Creek, and Atlanta. Here, entirely worn out with fatigue, and unable longer to sustain the constant draught upon his physical constitution, he resigned his commission, on surgeon's certificate of disability, after an active service of more than two years, and left Atlanta, Ga., on the last hospital train, Nov. 8, 1864. Late in the fall he reached home, feeble in health, to find himself member-elect to the Thirty-ninth Congress from the Thirty-third District of New York. He was re-elected in 1866, and his official record as the people's representative has already passed into history, and the approbation of an intelligent and appreciative constituency of his Congressional career has recently been so significantly recorded that all errors and mistakes are unnecessary.

Soon after the inauguration of President Grant, in 1869, Dr. Van Aernam was nominated and confirmed as Commis-

sioner of Pensions. His keen perceptions, his intuitive knowledge of human nature, his experience in Congress and in the army, his business capacity, and his conceded professional skill, amply qualified him for the faithful and efficient discharge of the delicate and responsible duties of that position. By his suggestion many important reforms were inaugurated, and among them was the passage of an act making pensions payable quarterly instead of semi-annually, and an order guarding pensioners against numerous frauds perpetrated against them by unprincipled claim-agents.

Again he returned to the home of his adoption, and again he entered upon the practice of his profession, which continues to the present time.

At the recent election, in the fall of 1878, he was again elected to the office of representative in our National Congress. The dazzling glow of most men is enhanced by the altitude they attain, through official station, above the plane of ordinary life. Not so with Henry Van Aernam. Eminent as he has been in his legislative, administrative, military, and professional careers, his sterling qualities appear to best advantage in the social and domestic circles, and in his daily intercourse with his fellow-men. Ever foremost in all enterprises for public good, he is liberal almost to profusion. Cool and collected, he allows no circumstance to take him by surprise. Circumspect in all his deportment, his worthy example exerts a salutary influence upon all by whom he is surrounded. In the incorporation of the village, as well as in the organization and successful progress of the Cemetery Association, his far-reaching perceptions, and the force of his mental energy, have been fully tested and successfully applied. To portray all the sterling qualities of his versatile mind would require volumes; suffice it to say that he is constitutionally a happy man, and by a species of diffusive contagion imparts the disease to all around him. Dr. Van Aernam and his amiable lady are happy in their domestic relations, in their associations, in their surroundings; in the companionship of their two children, the eldest, a daughter, the wife of the Hon. James D. McVey, the younger, a son, Charles D. Van Aernam, a young lawyer of sterling worth and fair practice in his native village, all inmates under the same roof; and, above all, happy in the full confidence of the mercy of God and the fullness of the atonement wrought by a crucified Redeemer, they patiently wait the summons that shall bid them depart in peace.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN WEED*

was born in Darien, Conn., June 3, 1811. He was the tenth child, the fifth and youngest son of Nathan and Mary Weed, the former of whom was born Sept. 28, 1760, and the latter, Oct. 28, 1764, both of Stamford (now Darien), in the State of Connecticut. He remained at home with his parents until his fifteenth year, enjoying such advantages for an education as were afforded by the common schools of the day, but by application to study and an aptitude to acquire knowledge, he became quite proficient for one of his

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