CHESTER ALAN ARTHUR.

An Interesting Sketch by General Adam Badeau.

ENTERTAINING REMINISCENCES:

Arthur's Career an Illustration of the Variability of Human Fortune.

NEW YORK, Nov. 25.—[Correspondence of the BEE.]—The death of ex-President Arthur is an event that crowds out every other theme of the day. A resident of New York for so many years, known to so many of its citizens, going from New York to the vice presidency, returning to New York to the presidency—to die—his career and its conclusion are naturally of unusual interest here. Others will tell of his public acts and discuss his public character. I shall attempt only to record a few reminiscences known for the most part to myself alone. Incidents that at any other time might seem trivial will have a painful pertinency now, and if I speak freely of my own experiences and connection with the ex-president, it is because these may throw a side light on his character and history.

When I first knew Chester A. Arthur he was not more than twenty-five years old. He was at that time an uncommonly handsome man; for his corpulency did not set in until later years; graceful and easy in behavior, genial in temper and character. He was already practising law, and went often to the house of my relative, Richard Busteed, of whose family I was at that time a member. His visits, especially on Sunday afternoons, were often prolonged for hours, and were always acceptable, for

HE WAS GOOD COMPANY;

cheery and buoyant in spirit, full of talk and anecdote, though never brilliant and in no way intellectual; a good specimen of youth and health and vivacity and manly beauty. He was not at all a fashionable man, and cared little for what is technically called "society,' though he liked individual women and was liked by them in return. He always had hosts of friends. I was even better acquainted with the lady who afterward became

HIS WIFE.

Miss Ellen Herndon, an uncommonly sweet and attractive woman, of a southern family. Her mother was a Maury, a sister of the famous Lieutenant Maury of the navy, whose scientific reputation was as widespread in Europe as at home. Her father, Commander Herndon, a gallant officer of the navy, had been permitted, as was customary in those days, to take command of a merchant vessel in the interval of duty; he went down with his ship in a disaster at sea, saving the lives of others at the expense of his own. Miss Herndon was known and admired in the most distinguished companies at the north and south. She had a delightful voice which was exquisitely cultivated and few amateurs of her time excelled her. She was extremely intimate in the family of Jas. Brooks, whose wife was a southern woman and a person of great musical taste. Miss Herndon always sang at Mrs. Brooks' parties; and her beauty, her grace of manner and artistic accomplishment made her one of the most charming persons in New York society. These are words often used in describing ladies of distinction, but all who ever met Miss Herndon will acknowledge their appropriateness.

AT THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR

Arthur became Quartermaster-General on the staff of Governor Morgan of New York. Doubtless the influences of his wife's family were opposed to this step. Mrs. Herndon, his mother-in-law, was an avowed sympathizer with the south. Lieutenant Maury took a prominent position in the confederate service, and Mrs. Arthur, though she never did anything to hamper her husband or impair his public importance, was universally supposed to share the political preferences of her family. Arthur therefore deserved more than the ordinary credit for his fidelity and earnestness in the cause of the Union. Since all three have passed away it may not be indelicate to say that the feeling in the household was known to his friends to be such taat his constancy was admirable. But there was never a shade of publicity given to any private differences of opinion. The women of his family were high bred, and loyal to its head, as well as to their native Virginia.

Arthur was in some sort the means of my becoming an officer of the army. In the first months of the war I sought a position on General Dix's staff, at first with some prospect of success, but finally failed in the effort. Then, in the summer of 1861, Arthur, who was in charge of the transportation of New York troops in New York harbor, gave me a letter to General Sherman, at that time planning an expedition against Port Royal. This letter led to my accompanying Sherman, and finally to my appointment as volunteer aid-de-camp on his staff, which was the beginning of my military service. On my last visit to the white house, after

ARTHUR BECAME PRESIDENT,

he reminded me of this circumstance, and jocularly claimed the credit of my subsequent promotions. At the same time he told me of his only sight of the real war. He went, he said, to the army of the Potomac during the Chanellorsville campaign, and spent a few days at headquarters, if I remember rightly, on the staff of Henry J. Hunt, chief of artillery of that army.

I do not remember meeting him after the war for several years. My life took me away from New York where he remained. When I became consul general at London and he collector of the port of New York, we had official relations, but never very intimate. I always saw him when I visited America and he wrote me an occasional letter introducing a friend. After Mr. Hayes became president it was determined to remove Arthur from the collectorship; he was an adherent of Grant, and Secretary Sherman wanted the place for one of his own friends. Hayes had promised Grant that I should not be disturbed: I do not know whether Sherman was informed of this, but I suppose he thought the promise was not binding on him if it was on his chief; so he offered Arthur my place as consul general at London if he would resign the more important political position of collector of New York. But Arthur declined the offer. He told me of the circumstance, when he was vice-president, and said he had refused to disturb me. But

HE LOST THE COLLECTORSHIP,

and I remained at London. I doubt whether Mr. Sherman would have been able to keep his pledge had the proposition been accepted; but Arthur's conduct was no less loyal to me, or at least to General Grant, who was known to desire my retention. Arthur must have offended the man who had appointed himself had he joined in ousting me. But though I can hardly attribute his course entirely to regard for me, his action was friendly and I appreciated it fully.

I did not see him after this until 1880. During the presidential canvass in which he was a candidate for the vice-presidency, I was in America and often saw him. The first of these occasions was soon after the nominations were made at Chicago, and while General Grant was still at the west. Arthur had not seen the general since the adjournment of the convention. Jesse Grant and I entered Delmonico's one evening and seeing Arthur, went up to congratulate him. He said at once and very earnestly to Jesse: "I wish you would say to your father that I went to Chicago to nominate him. I

WAS A GRANT MAN,

and was beaten; and my own nomination for the vice presidency in no way consoled me for my disappointment about him." His manner convinced me at the time that he felt what he said.

General Grant appreciated this very fully. I have no doubt that one cause of the earnestness with which he entered the Garfield campaign was his personal feeling for Arthur. He had indeed never looked upon him as a statesman, and did not pretend to consider the nomination an eminently suitable one; but, as it had been made, he was glad to find the candidate was not personally disagreeable to him. I was constantly with General Grant during this period, and can testify to his admiration of the decorum and dignity of Arthur's behavior in his new situation. I recollect one or two

IMPORTANT DINNERS

at which Arthur was given a higher place than ever before in such company; General Grant and Hamilton Fish, the former secretary of state, were present, and he was treated with as much ceremony as they, but he comported himself with ease and grace and with the manner of a man of the world. At the torch light procession a few nights before the election, I stood on the platform when General Grant and he for hours reviewed the long parade that lasted from midnight till nearly morning. It was a novel position for Arthur to be placed by the side of General Grant, with his former chief fighting for him, speaking for him, working for him; but though his bearing was dignified, there was no undue assumption visible. Judge Stoughton stood there also and watched the voters who, though they knew it not, were to make Chester A. Arthur president of the United States. All three, Grant, Arthur, Stoughton, have since joined a longer procession than any they gazed on in the watches of that November night six years ago. It was 4 o'clock in the morning before we left the stand, and the last banners and torches had passed. Almost immediately after the

INAUGURATION OF GARFIELD

I went to Washington with a letter from General Grant to the new president, requesting my retention in London, Garfield having promised Grant two days before to consult his wishes about his personal friends. I went directly to Arthur's lodgings where he had rooms with Senator Conkling. Conkling was not at home, but Arthur made me stay for breakfast, and took me to the capital in his own carriage. There he introduced me to the vice president's room, gave me the entree to it permanently, and finally made me enter the senate chamber on his arm. That morning the appointment of General Merritt as consul general at London, and my own as minister at Copenhagen were announced. This disposition was disagreeable to General Grant, to the new vice president, and Senator Conkling. They were now the recognized chiefs of the branch of the republican party to which I belonged. They all requested me to decline the appointment to Copenhagen. Mr. Garfield repeatedly urged me to accept it, but I felt bound in political honor to conform to the wishes of those who advised a contrary course. General Grant, indeed, had given me my original appointment, and if he desired me to decline a different one, I had no option.

The story of the controversy that followed is well known. Arthur took a very decided part in opposing the action of the president. The nominations were not confirmed for months, and I returned to my post ie London. Finally my name was withdrawn as minister to Copenhagen, and after a weary struggle Merritt was confirmed as consul-general at London. Then came the

ASSASSINATION OF GARFIELD.

I was in London at the time, but I know from intimate personal friends of the reality of Arthur's grief and the genuineness of the shock which the calamity caused him. Those who were frequently with him have told me how earnestly he hoped for Garfield's recovery, how he suffered under the imputations that some did not scruple to cast upon him; how he shrank from the mighty responsibilities that hovered over him—how he had never contemplated greatness as likely to be his lot. At one time in the crisis he entered the room of an intimate friend in an agony of anxiety, flung himself on a couch and burst into tears.

When the final moment came and he was president of the United States, he instantly sought the advice of General Grant. They traveled together, I think it was in the same train to Washington for the funeral, or else returning from Garfield's tomb, and when it was proper that the new statesman should consider his momentous duties. He had long and repeated conversations with General Grant, who told me of them afterward; and said he should of course not have intruded his advice unless it had been sought, but that Arthur expressly asked it, and represented his inexperience, his anxiety to do right in this untried position; he asked to whom he could apply so fitly as to the man who had borne the same burdens and known the same responsibilities that were now imposed on him. In the early days of his presidency that advice was followed as well as sought.

When the news arrived in England of Garfield's assassination, the demonstration of grief was universal. I can hardly imagine a greater anxiety in a foreign country than prevailed during the long period of suspense, and when intelligence of the fatal termination came, the English nation certainly felt a profound sympathy. On the day of the funeral many of the shops in London were closed, mourning decorations were hung on numerous buildings, cab drivers even wore black ribbons on their whips and hats, and public meetings were crowded with English as well as Americans, anxious to testify to their sympathy. But there was hardly a good word said for Arthur. The knowledge that he had been opposed to Garfield embitted the English feeling against the new president. Misrepresentations of his character and conduct were common and almost uncontradicted. Not even at the meeting over which the American minister presided was one word allowed to be said in sympathy with him who was so suddenly called to difficult duties, or of respect for the new head of the American state. When an American citizen offered a resolution expressing confidence in the new president, the American minister decided that it was intrusive and, irrelevant and refused to have it read.

The same difficulties existed at home the same unjust suspicions, the same uneasiness in regard to the inexperience of the neophyte. I returned to the country shortly after Garfield's death, and in October, when the president was in New York, I paid my respects as an ex-officer of the government to its new head. Arthur received me at once. The room was full of people waiting in his antechamber, as he had been used to waiting for other presidents; but he took my hand and led me into his bedroom, where he sat on one trunk and I on another, while he told me of himself and spoke of his intentions in regard to me. In January I was in Washington and went to see him in the evening, by his own appointment. He talked again with great freedom of his new life, of the improvements he meant to introduce into the white house, of our relations in the ante-army days. Again he spoke, unsolicited, of what he meant to do for me.

Soon he began to go about in society, and I often saw him at the houses that he frequented, especially that of the secretary of state. General and Mrs. Grant were his guests during the winter, and at that time he received me also. In May I was appointed consul-general to Cuba.

CHESTER A. ARTHUR'S CAREER

furnishes a touching and almost a supreme illustration of the variability of human fortune. Raised first by fate or chance into the second place in the nation, without an effort and probably without a desire of his own, he was then elevated still higher under circumstances of horror that must at the time have checked or stifled every sentiment of gratification or vanity or pride. This, however, naturally passed away. He became accustomed to his greatness, and doubtless enjoyed it while it lasted, as acutely as any man who ever possessed the place. Having never striven for such dignity, nor chanced to expect or dream that it could come to him, he tasted the sweets of power and place and the delights and deference from others with all the freshness of unanticipated pleasure. No man in history was ever thrust more suddenly upward to so high a place. The simple citizen for four years bore his part among the potentates of earth, but he was disappointed in his ambition to retain the position, and then sank at once into comparative obscurity.

IN HIS RETIREMENT

he had not the great reputation and popularity of General Grant to soothe and solace him, and although he certainly retained the respect of the country, he passed almost immediately out of the public mind. He was still young, but could hardly enter upon the ordinary duties of business or a profession; he felt the burden of the dignities he had borne, and doubtless the loss of the importance he had enjoyed. To a sensitive man, who retires young from the presidency, the utter insignificance in public matters to which he falls must be an acute mortification. From dispensing power he comes to lack all influence; from being the equal of sovereigns and the first in consequence in his own country, he descends to the position of a private citizen without a future or a present, living only in the past which he has lost and can never regain.

Doubtless all this pressed on the mind and told on the constitution enfeebled by the intense life of occupation and pleasure he had led, and like his predecessors, Polk, and Pierce, and Johnson, Arthur soon succumbed. Even Grant, who had more to sustain him in his retirement than any president since Washington, turned to business as a relief, and encountered the agony of failure and fraud that crushed and killed him. Arthur may have been deterred by this frightful but illustrious example, and simply faded away from the moment he left the presidential chair. His elevation was unprecedented, and his gratification extreme, but the pangs of losing greatness may be more intense than all the pleasure of achieving it, or of receiving it unsought.

ADAM BADEAU.

JUDAH P. BENJAMIN.

His Remarkable Success in London, How he Rebuked Lord Selborne.

London Correspondence Providence Journal: The past publication of an unpretentious little volume affords me the welcome opportunity of referring here and now to the great career of a distinguished countryman of yours, the late Mr. Benjamin. With Benjamin as attorney general, minister of war, and secretary in the confederate government, I take no concern, except to remark that, considering the age at which he came from a foreign country to the English bar, I agree with the writer of "A Generation of Judges" that his success here as a barrister "is without parallel in professional annals." Although the book is about "judges," yet Mr. Benjamin and our native Karslake are included also, seeing that they were peculiarly distinguished lawyers, and escaped being created judges by special accidents. If Benjamin had accepted the judgeship of the supreme court of the United States, which was offered to him by President Pierce, or if he had come by a fatal mishap in the adventures of his escape after the collapse of the southern cause, a unique figure would have been lost to the records of the English bar. The friendly reception of him here, in spite of any difference on the subject of American politics or any possible feeling of repugnance to him as an interloping alien, will also be placed to the credit of the generosity and open-mindedness of the bar of England. His marvelous progress and his fabulous fees excited no jealousy, but rather satisfaction and admiration. It was some judge, if I mistake not, who recommended anyone that desired the highest intellectual treat, to step into court and hear Benjamin argue a case. One good story is told here which I never heard before, and perhaps it will be new on your side. It indicates the marked sense that Benjamin possessed, not merely of his own personal dignity, but of the respect that is due to the bar from the bench. The incident happened toward the end of the session of 1881. Benjamin was arguing a case in the house of lords, with Lord Selborne presiding. Following his accustomed manner, the learned counsel very early in his argument formulated the propositions of law for which he proposed to contend. One of these, when set forth in its bare form, without having been led up to or supported by the substructure of reasoning which Benjamin had the skill to make to look so solid and compact, and without illustration from his capacious repertory, drew from Lord Chancellor Selborne the impatient exclamation, "Nonsense!" Benjamin stopped short, slowly put his papers together, tied the tape round them, made a low bow, and left the bar of the house. His junior had immediately to fill the breach; but before he had proceeded far with his argument the lord chancellor interrupted him in order to give expression to his regret that Mr. Benjamin had left the house, and his fear that he himself was the cause of it in saying what he ought not to have said. It is unnecessary to say to anyone who knows the Christian conscientious and well-bred gentility of Lord Selborne that his lordship must have been suffering severely when such an expression escaped the barrier of his teeth or even framed itself in his mind, and it is to be observed that in a very short time thereafter Lord Selborne found it necessary, through indisposition, to abstain for a time from the labors of his office. The magnificent reception accorded to Benjamin in the Inner Temple hall in June, 1883, when he retired from the profession, is a memory to be cherished by all who were privileged to be present on that interesting occasion. I am not willing to suppose that my personal gratification in recalling these points in the career and character of a great American, who has also proved himself one of the greatest of the able men who adorned the bar of England, has been the means of inflicting boredom on your readers, who will no doubt be generally familiar with the American phases of Benjamin's strange, eventful history.

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BOSTON, Nov. 21.—It may be news to some, and it will do no harm to remind others, that there is such a thing in existence as an American National Opera company. This company is already a year old and has met with unexpected success. Boston, Philadelphia, New York, Washington, St. Louis, Chicago, Louisville and Cleveland have already taken definite steps toward the formation of auxiliary companies for the purpose of founding a national opera on a permanent basis, and for the promoting of a higher musical education through a national conservatory to be established at New York. Among the promoters of the enterprise are many of the literary and social leaders of the land. The work of getting a subscription of $100,000 for the Boston auxiliary has been begun and most of this amount has already been paid in. The object of these funds is to insure the financial success of the national company's performances in this city. In this way the lovers of music in Boston are given an opportunity to make

THE BOSTON SEASON

a credit to the country and to relieve the National company of all financial risk in catering to the wants and tastes of local operatic patrons. All profits of the Boston season, which will be in January, will be paid over to the auxiliary here, and the expenses of the National company itself will be met solely by performances in New York City. The great success of the organization last year seems to dispel all fears in the minds of the subscribers of a failure this year.

The personnel of the opera contains many artists of world-wide reputation, and others who have gained distinction in opera and concerts at home. The following are the names of the principal singers, all of whom will be recognized by musical connoisseurs as artists of rare ability: Mme. Fursch-Madi, Emma Juch, Bertha Pierson, Pauline L'Allemand, Laura Moore, Carlotta Penner, sopranos; Cornelia Van Zanten, Mathilde Phillips, Jesse Bartlett Davis, mezzo-sopranos and contraltos.

Charles Bassett, Charles M. Wood, Henry Bates, William Candidus, tenors. Myron W. Whitney, D. M. Babcock, Victor Dargon, William H. Hamilton, bassos.

These compose a much stronger body of principal singers than that of last year. Mme. Fursch Madi, who heads the list, is undoubtedly one of the greatest prima donne of the day, and her return to the stage will be hailed with delight by opera-goers.

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The second season of the company began on the 15th inst., in Philadelphia.

***

MR. D. L. MOODY,

the revivalist, is in Cambridge, preaching to the students of Harvard. He, like President Cleveland, has made a good impression among them. It is said that no audience is so critical as an audience of students, and the fact that Mr. Moody has passed the ordeal successfully is one more point in his favor. He speaks to crowded houses, as usual. His address in Appleton chapel, last Sunday evening, was to students in particular. He spoke earnestly and with great power, illustrating his ideas with his usual pungent and interesting anecdotes, which captivated his hearers completely. Mr. Moody is doing much good at Harvard. Something is needed to stir up the apparent religious lethargy which exists there, and no one is better fitted to do this than Mr. Moody.

***

THE GOOD PEOPLE

of Boston, and bad ones, too, are considerably worked up about the enforcement of Sunday laws. An attempt was made last Sunday to enforce the laws regarding Sabbath breaking.

All the barber shops were closed and many an unfortunate who depends on his barber for cleanliness and comfort on Sunday either had to shave himself or wear a stubby and uncomfortable beard. Many hotel guests, however, were shaved in their rooms.

About half the newsdealers closed their doors; many of them were driven to subterfuges in order to supply customers with their Sunday papers. Cigar stands were generally closed, but everybody seemed to be smoking. Drug stores were open "for prescriptions only." One apothecary had the following posted on his door: "Closed To-day."

"You must hang your cat Monday,
For killing a rat Sunday."

"PURITAN BLUE LAWS."

The unanimity with which the laws were observed does credit to the city and must be very gratifying to the resurrected ghost of the long buried "Blue Laws."

The Jews of the north end are the only ones who took a decided stand in violating the laws. They say that Saturday is their Sabbath and if they shut up shop on Saturday, they cannot be compelled to close on Sunday.

Some of these Jews are sincere in their observance of Saturday, but others use their religion as a cloak and virtually keep open shop on both days. The affair will be settled in the courts, and will be full of interest. The popular impression is that before very long, Jews, Gentiles and Pagans will all be treated alike.

FRANZ SEPEL.

"Millions In It."

"Sh! but I've got it this time!" he said as he drew up a chair softly up to the desk of a fellow speculator.

"No!"

"Sure's your born! We organize a railroad company."

"We do."

"We get a charter."

"Just so."

"The towns along the line vote enough to build and equip the line."

"They do."

"And all we have to do is to elect me treasurer and you——"

"You treasurer; not much! I take that position!"

"I must have it!"

"You shan't."

"Very well; here we part. You go your way and I'll go mine, good morning, sir!"