



John H. Gear

JOHN HENRY GEAR.

Speaker of the Iowa House of Representatives, 1874-76; Governor of Iowa, 1878-82;
Member of the U. S. House of Representatives, 1887-91;
U. S. Senator, 1895-1900.

GOV. JOHN HENRY GEAR.

BY WILLIAM H. FLEMING.*

Of the men who have held the office of Governor of this State, five were residents of the territory when it became such. The subject of this sketch was one, entering the territory in the very year of its erection. A native of the State of New York, the boy Gear went with his father from Galena to Fort Snelling in the year 1838. It will be remembered that the Fort named was then in Iowa territory.

The first ancestors of the late Senator to come to America settled in Connecticut on their arrival from England in 1647. There the descendants of the first immigrant resided for more than a century, and doubtless many of them are in the neighborhood yet. After the war of the Revolution was over, Hezekiah Gear, who had married Sarah Gilbert, removed to Pittsfield, Mass., where Ezekiel Gilbert Gear was born. In 1791, when the latter attained to his majority, he determined to enter upon the work of the gospel ministry.

*William Henry Fleming was born of Irish parentage, in New York City, April 14, 1833. He was educated partly in a private school, but mostly in Public School No. 7 of that city. At the age of fourteen he became an apprentice to John A. Gray, one of the most distinguished printers and publishers of the last generation. He also worked for John F. Trow, who for many years published the Directory of New York City. After spending several years with Mr. Trow, he came to Iowa, settling in Scott county. He was one year City Editor of *The Davenport Gazette*. During three of the eleven years he was in Scott county he published a paper at Le Claire. Mr. Fleming superintended the printing of the voluminous Reports of Adjt. Gen. N. B. Baker (1865-67), relating to the Iowa Regiments in the Civil War, and edited most of them. He also planned the General Index of Iowa soldiers now in the Adjutant General's office, much of which was executed under his supervision. In January, 1867, he became Deputy Secretary of State under Gen. Ed Wright. He held this position two and a half years, when Governor Samuel Merrill appointed Mr. Fleming his Private Secretary. In this useful and honorable capacity he served through the administrations of Governors Merrill, Carpenter, Kirkwood, Newbold, Gear, Drake, and Shaw. In 1882-83 he compiled the well-known "Historical and Comparative Census of 1836-80," a publication of permanent interest and great value. He was one of the proprietors of *The Daily Capital* in 1883, and acting Deputy Auditor of State in 1885. He has read the proofs and prepared indexes for a score or more of Iowa official publications. For many years, down to the present time, he has been engaged in journalistic work. He is probably the best informed man in the State in regard to the laws on our statute books, as well as upon the records of political parties. He is often referred to as a "walking encyclopedia" of Iowa history. In December, 1902, he was tendered and accepted a position under Secretary Shaw, in the Treasury Department, at Washington, D. C.

At the age of twenty-four he was ordained to the ministry in the Protestant Episcopal Church. Soon afterwards he became a missionary among the Indians of western New York, the remnant of that powerful confederacy, the rule of which was once acknowledged in perhaps the greater part of what is now the United States east of the Mississippi. In the region inhabited by these tribes, was born on the 7th day of April, 1825, at the village of Ithaca, if it could be called a village then, John Henry Gear. His mother, Harriet Cook Gear, dying in the boy's early childhood, he was taken by his grandmother to Pittsfield. He was returned by his father, in the year 1831, to the home of the latter, who had remarried, and five years afterwards the family removed to Galena, Ill., then the most important town in the west, except St. Louis. After a residence there of a couple of years, the removal to Ft. Snelling, Iowa territory, occurred, the father being a chaplain in the army. The limited schooling the boy got away from the parental roof was largely supplemented by that which his missionary father could impart. In 1843 young Gear left home and started to make for himself a name and fortune. He at once went to Burlington, the home of his aunt, the wife of Hon. Charles Mason, the only chief justice the territory of Iowa had. Burlington was also the home of Governor Chambers, the territorial executive, to whom young Gear brought dispatches from Ft. Snelling. He was wearing his first boots, having up to that time worn moccasins. The Governor's greeting was, "You look like a young fellow for important business like this." Here, after doing some work on a farm, he got employment with Bridgman Brothers, at a compensation of \$50 a year and board. Subsequently he went with one of the brothers to Keosauqua, at a salary of \$100 and board. In 1845 he returned to Burlington, where he entered the establishment of W. F. Coolbaugh & Co., of which house he was destined in a few years to become a partner in the business, and eventually its head; and in 1855 it all became his. During these

years he traveled extensively in southern Iowa, getting to know pretty much every business man and not a few others in all that part of the State. Traveling then, one need not be reminded, meant more of toil than it does now. During at least the earlier part of his days on the road there was not a mile of railway in Iowa, and many years more had to elapse before he could get one hundred miles west of Burlington by rail. The period in which he traveled as representative of the house of which he became the head was one of large activity, for it was then that the great tide of immigration which marked the decade of the '50's was pouring into the State, and new farms were being opened, towns laid out, and railroads projected of a magnitude which our 9,000 miles of constructed road hardly surpasses. The acquaintance which this active and enterprising merchant then made told when in after years he had entered public life.

In 1852 Mr. Gear held his first office, that of alderman. It was eleven years afterwards before he again held civic office. In the spring of 1863 he was chosen mayor of the city of his home. A few years later he was nominated for the office of Representative in the General Assembly, but he declined the nomination. Again, in 1871, he was nominated with his own consent, and was elected. He then entered the Fourteenth General Assembly. The House of Representatives at that time was one of the ablest the State has known. On one side were Kasson, Pratt and Wilson, all of whom left that legislature to enter Congress. On the other were Duncombe, one of the strongest men the Democratic party of Iowa has ever had among its leaders; Ainsworth, soon to enter Congress, the first Democrat to have a seat in that body since before the war; Benton J. Hall, who also some years later became the first Democrat to represent the First District in Congress, Ed Campbell, and John P. Irish, all men of might in their party a quarter of a century; and there were many other men of marked ability. Among such men the new Representative from the county of Des Moines soon

took position as a leader. The most notable legislation of that session was the bill providing a different method of taxing railroads from that formerly in vogue. The railroads had up till that time paid a percentage of their gross earnings into the State treasury, part of which was disbursed to the counties. A bill was brought into the legislature providing a new system, which was substantially that now in vogue. It was fought steadily by a vigorous but powerless minority, one of the leaders of which was the future Governor and Senator. Steadily, at every stage of the measure, he antagonized it, and tried to improve it. In this he was associated with Kasson, Irish, Green of Davenport, and others. The feature which they especially contended against was the one which deprived the cities of the tax on the property within their limits. They tried to get this changed, but unavailingly. Among the amendments offered by Mr. Gear was one to include in certain instructions which the House was giving a committee, the following:

Also, to prepare the necessary additional section to secure the proper limitation upon the rates and charges to be taken and received by railroads, and to prevent the exaction from the people by the railroads of the amount of taxes levied by this act by onerous charges on the transportation of freight.

This, as everything else that was offered to improve the bill, was rejected. When the measure was finally passed, the following protest was entered on the journal of the House:

The undersigned members of the House of Representatives do most respectfully, but earnestly and firmly, protest against the passage of the bill known as "Substitute for H. F. No. 279," entitled "An Act for the taxation of railroads," for the following reasons, to-wit:

First—That it is inequitable in its provisions to the counties having railways within their limits, in that it puts all the property, without the right of way, into the hands of men who cannot from the nature of the case fix proper valuation on the same.

Second—That it is inequitable and unjust to the cities in this State having railways within their limits, from the fact that on the cities is thrown the burden of protecting railway property within their limits, as put forth in the opinion of the Supreme Court of this State.

Third—We protest against the passage of the bill on account of the unjust legislation as put forth in section nine* of the bill.

Fourth—We protest against the whole bill as being unjust and in our judgment unconstitutional.

Fifth—That the bill we believe to be a delusion, and that it is in the interests of the railroad more than the people.

JOHN H. GEAR,
 B. J. HALL,
 J. W. GREEN,
 W. A. STOW,
 EDW. CAMPBELL,
 JOHN P. IRISH,
 F. O'DONNELL,
 ISAAC BLAKELY,
 M. GOODSPEED,
 C. T. PEET,
 SAMUEL WHITTEN.

The next session, which was an adjourned session held for the consideration of the proposed code, was for that reason one of the most important yet held in the State. In that work the Representative from Des Moines county took an active part. Indeed, it may be said, that he well knew what was before the body at any time during his legislative career, and kept fully in touch with the business being transacted. The section in the railroad law that prohibits pooling in this State was his work, he having introduced it and procured its passage. As originally enacted, and on Mr. Gear's motion, it is as follows:

It shall be unlawful for any railroad company to make any contract or enter into any stipulation with any other railroad company running in the same general direction by which either company shall directly or indirectly agree to divide in any manner or in any proportion the joint earnings upon the whole or any part of the freight transported over such road, and any violation of this provision shall render the railroad company violating the same liable to a penalty of \$5,000 for each month for which such earnings are divided, to be recovered for the use of the permanent school fund in the name of the State.

When the House was considering a bill requiring the stewards of hospitals for the insane to make reports of all financial

*This section, it is proper to say, was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

transactions, accompanying the same with vouchers, and to have quarterly settlements with the boards of trustees, Representative Gear offered as an amendment that "such settlement of accounts shall be made by the board of trustees in open session, and shall not be intrusted to a committee." This amendment, showing as it does the member's knowledge of the tendency of boards to turn work over to committees, was adopted.

The House of Representatives in the Fifteenth General Assembly, to which Mr. Gear was chosen, was equally divided in membership between the dominant party and a new one, known as the Anti-Monopoly party. The latter had absorbed the Democratic organization, and with the aid of a secret society had swept the southern half of the State. Had it been as well organized in the northern counties as it was in the remainder of the State, it would certainly have had a majority in the House, and have imperiled the success of the State ticket. When the legislature met thus divided, many days were spent in fruitless balloting for speaker, and it was not until the 137th ballot that a choice was made. That choice fell on the Representative from Des Moines county. As in all other positions, Mr. Gear was called upon to fill, he discharged the duties of the high office with superior ability, and to universal satisfaction. The fact that the House was equally divided made the task of the Speaker exceptionally difficult. Yet no complaint was ever heard against his manner of conducting the business of the House, nor was appeal taken from his rulings. In 1876, having been for a third time elected a member, he was again chosen to the speakership, the only instance in the history of the State of such reelection.

The satisfaction Mr. Gear gave in his successive terms as speaker made the easier his canvass for the governorship, for which office he now became a pronounced candidate. He was nominated in June, 1877. He opened the campaign at West Branch, Cedar county. His reason for doing so was

that there resided in that place a man who had made calumnious accusations against the nominee in respect to his personal habits. He determined to go there and face the community where the farmer lived and where he later had considerable influence; the boldness and frankness of his talk took well with the candid Quakers who came to hear him, and produced an excellent impression. When he had concluded his speech an elderly Friend addressed him, saying, "Friend Gear, I would like to ask thee a question, if thee will answer." "I will certainly, if I can," was the reply of the speaker. Whereupon this brief dialogue ensued. "Does thee drink intoxicating liquors?" "I take a glass of whisky when I feel like it." "I admire thy candor but I wish thee did not do so." The election returns showed how well the candidate's manliness served him. Nevertheless, there was an independent Republican candidate, who drew off enough votes to prevent the nominee of the party getting a majority, something which had not happened before. But when the Governor's first term was about to expire, and the convention was being held to make nominations, a man of marked ability, who had opposed Governor Gear after his first nomination, came to him and asked the privilege of presenting his name to the State Convention. This being conceded him, the gentleman referred to made a thoroughly enthusiastic speech, expressing his gratification at the character of administration the Governor had given the State. This time there was a handsome popular majority, while the plurality was the largest any candidate for Governor ever received in Iowa during the lifetime of Governor Gear.

When Governor Gear entered upon his duties as the chief executive of the State, he found it burdened with the largest volume of floating indebtedness up to that time known in its history. Like a large volume of similar indebtedness more recently incurred, it was by no means injudiciously contracted. The period was that following the severe financial crash of 1873, and prices of material and labor were low. Hence,

most advantageous contracts could be and were made for the erection of public buildings. This is one of the reasons why the State House, much of the work on which was done at that time, was not a more expensive structure to build than it proved to be. But, when the new Governor entered upon the executive office this state of affairs was passing away, and with returning prosperity, which was alike the harbinger and the foredated effect of the return to specie payment, the low prices, the compensating accompaniment of the "hard times," were beginning to disappear. It was therefore now the time to get out of debt and keep out of it, thought the Governor, and to the payment of the debt and accumulating a sufficient surplus the executive directed his efforts. He first turned his attention to the penitentiaries, which were more under the executive control than any of the other institutions. He ordered the newly chosen warden, Capt. McMillan, to take charge of the prison at Ft. Madison some weeks before either he or his predecessor expected that the change would be made; and the first the latter knew that he must immediately retire was when his successor presented his commission and the order to take charge, and demanded immediate possession. This being promptly yielded, a rapid diminution of expenses followed. The legislature, entering into the spirit of the Governor's designs, cut down the allowance for the support of the prison and many of the salaries, and diminished the allowance to the warden. That officer was required to make contracts for furnishing discharged convicts with suitable clothing, superceding the former practice of buying each a separate outfit at retail prices. As a consequence of these and similar economies, the labor of the convicts became for the first time a source of income to our State, as it has continued to be ever since. The Governor caused the methods of keeping books at both prisons to be reformed. Furthermore, he caused monthly statements of the receipts and expenditures of the prisons to be sent to him, which statements he subjected to scrutiny. More than once was the warden

called upon to explain an apparently large price paid for a commodity that was bought for the prison; but it is only just to the prison officers to say that satisfactory explanations always came. He also caused to be sent to him a complete transcript of the convict register of each prison, which transcript he had recorded. This register is kept to this day. The account of receipts and disbursements has not been deemed necessary since the establishment of the board of control; and it has therefore been discontinued.

But the penitentiaries were not the only institutions which felt the hand of the master. All of them came to realize that there was a man at the head of affairs who was looking after the State's business as if it were his own. He often visited them, and his visits were unheralded. Yet I have never heard that any of the officers of an institution felt that they had reason to complain, or did complain, of what was done or said by the Governor. The legislature made many reductions in the allowance for these institutions mostly suggested by the executive. That this vigilance had its effect was seen in the next report of the financial officers of the State, when the expenditures during the biennial period had been smaller in volume than for any similar period during the ten years preceding.

Governor Gear had not been long in office when he came to think it well that there should be some change in the management of the institutions. Two of his predecessors had recommended the creation of a board of charities and corrections that should be charged with the duty of overseeing the charitable and penal institutions, but without other than moral control or such as it might be able to exercise through the representations such a board should make to the General Assembly. Governor Gear had given attention to this suggestion while considering the matter of the government of the institutions. That consideration brought him to quite a different conclusion. He said that what was wanted was not more boards, but fewer. He then announced

his belief that one board should be entrusted with the management of all the State's institutions; the board of control idea. He talked it to members of the General Assembly. Following his suggestion a bill was introduced in the House of Representatives placing all the charitable and penal institutions under the management of a board of three persons. It was not thought advisable by the friends of the measure to do more than this. The House, however, amended it by including in the scope of the bill all the institutions except the university. This was probably done in order to overload the measure, and thus insure its defeat. But it passed the House of Representatives as thus amended, and went to the Senate. It came near passing that body also. It received twenty-five votes in that body on suspending the rules and ordering it to a third reading the same day. This, not being two-thirds of the Senate, the motion was lost. But the Senate ordered the bill to a third reading the next day by a larger majority. But that next day, it happened, was that of the adjournment of the General Assembly, and the third reading of the bill was never reached.

Subsequently the Governor recommended that the insane hospitals be put under one board, the schools for the blind, and the deaf, and the feeble-minded under another, while to the board of regents might be committed the care of the state normal school; and the reform schools, as our industrial schools were then styled, should be left, like the penitentiaries, under the supervision of the Governor. But nothing further was done in this direction until the Twenty-seventh General Assembly, when, after a somewhat similar recommendation from Governor Drake, the General Assembly determined to go further, and adopt the plan which was proposed in the House of Representatives twenty years before, and which, as has been seen, originated with Governor Gear.

The war-loan made by the State in 1861 fell due in the year 1881, the last of the administration of Governor Gear. The matter of making suitable provision for liquidating the



Harriet Footh Gear,

MRS. GOV. JOHN H. GEAR.

bonds was incumbent on the legislature of 1880. As the session wore on, the Governor became anxious lest the matter should not be attended to. There were weak-kneed men in the General Assembly who feared to make the necessary levy in order to pay the debt. Some suggested that the bonds be renewed for a period of ten years, when the State's growth and improved financial condition would permit of the retirement of the bonds without difficulty—as if the State would grow more in the ten years than it had in the twenty since the bonds were negotiated! As the session drew to its close without anything being done, or apparently contemplated, the Governor felt it incumbent on himself to talk to some of the members privately on the subject, letting it be understood that if the legislature should adjourn without attending to the matter he would call that body together immediately in extraordinary session, and would be careful to let the people know why he did so. Whether this intimation had any effect or not, certain it is that the desired action was had, for within a few days of the close of the session a bill was passed providing for the payment of the bonds, and making a special levy for the purpose of furnishing the funds necessary therefor.

In the first session held during his administration, the board of railroad commissioners was created, and the appointment of its members devolved on the Governor. From the somewhat long list of applicants for the place, not a selection was made. The appointees were men for whom no effort to get them on the board had been put forth. It is not recalled that there was a letter received at the executive office recommending the appointment of either of the persons who were selected. These were ex-Governor Cyrus C. Carpenter, Peter A. Dey, and James W. McDill. Similarly, when Gov. Carpenter retired on being nominated for Congress, Marcus C. Woodruff, of Dubuque, was selected to fill the vacancy, without waiting for recommendations for him or anybody else; although there were others who desired the place.

Again, when Senator Kirkwood resigned his seat in the Senate in order to enter the cabinet of President Garfield, the Governor sent for Judge McDill and without any previous intimation tendered him the vacant senatorship.

One of the winters when he was in the executive chair was remarkable for the quantity of snow that fell. The movements of railway trains were impeded perhaps more that season than in any other in the history of the west. The company operating one of the roads was disposed to abandon part of its line, and even did suspend traffic for a time, thus leaving the people along that part of the road comparatively without fuel, and exposing them to great suffering, there being no other road that could supply their needs. The Governor, hearing of the action of the company, communicated with its officers, protesting against their course, and announcing his determination to see what he could do to open the road for traffic if the management failed to have it done. Operations were soon resumed on the line. While he had thus a desirable amount of sternness in his make-up, he had at the same time one of the kindest of dispositions. The hill on which the capitol stands is an admirable coasting-ground when it is covered with snow. Such was the case during the season referred to, and the boys with their big bob-sleds would watch for the time when the Governor would leave the state-house, and invite him to ride with them, an invitation which was always accepted; and lively was the rivalry between the boys for the honor of carrying the Governor down the hill. The jollity of those rides with the "boss," as they would call him, will be always a pleasant memory to the boys of that day.

After his retirement from the executive office, Gov. Gear devoted himself to private enterprises, including some mining operations in Colorado. In 1886, he received the Republican nomination for Congress in the First District, and was selected after a lively contest, his competitor being his first colleague in the General Assembly, Hon. Benton J.

Hall. Two years later he was re-elected. In 1890 he went down in the general overthrow that happened to his party that year. But in 1892 he defeated his successful opponent of two years before. Of Gov. Gear's career in the House of Representatives I can best speak by quoting the language of one who was associated with him in both Houses of Congress, the present senior Senator from Minnesota:

From the very start he became an influential member, whose good sense, sound judgment and keen insight were highly valued and appreciated by his associates. His vast experience in public affairs before he entered the House of Representatives had better equipped him and made him better qualified for the important duties of a legislator than most men who entered that body. This was recognized by all. He had been a member and Speaker of the House of Representatives of his own State, and had been for four years one of the ablest and most efficient Governors of his State. He was known to all his associates as "Governor" Gear, and the term "Governor" was not, in his case, used in a perfunctory or vain sense, but with all the force and value that the term implies. His firmness and rugged honesty and integrity were recognized and felt by all. When he supported a measure, that support gave it credit, and doubts and misgivings disappeared.

He was fair, just, and fearless in the performance of his duties, and charitable and considerate towards those who differed with him. He had the happy faculty of softening and allaying the acrimony that occasionally occurred in the House. He was attentive and watchful throughout the session, and few things escaped his notice; and though not one of the leaders of the House yet he was one of the chief mainstays of those who assumed to lead, and without the assistance of such their leadership would have been a failure. His advice and opinion on all great questions were sought and valued by his associates.

Those who remember the departed statesman as a member of the legislature of Iowa will readily recognize the applicability of much that is here said to his career in that body, except that here almost from the first he was a leader. In the second Congress in which Gov. Gear sat he was instrumental in securing the adoption of the plan of allowing a bounty for sugar-raising. It will be remembered, by those familiar with the writings of Alexander Hamilton, that the bounty system, rather more than that of protective duties, was his favorite plan for encouraging domestic manufactures.

The measure succeeded when presented in the Fifty-first Congress. Of the passage of the bill which contained that provision, it is the opinion of a distinguished Senator who also served in the Senate with Senator Gear, "That no member of the committee, barring its learned head (Mr. McKinley), contributed more to the result obtained than did Mr. Gear." The Senator added, further speaking of the Iowan, "He brought to the consultations of the committee room not the philosophy of the schools or the dreams of the theorist, but rather the practical experience of a business life. He seemed to possess upon almost every subject connected with that legislation an inexhaustible fund of information and knowledge of its infinite details, gathered from practical experiences in life, which served at all times to illumine the subject and light the way to wise and safe conclusions."

In 1894 Governor Gear was elected to the Senate of the United States and took his seat in 1895. In 1900 he was elected for another term, of which he was not destined to see the beginning. In that illustrious body he had an influence such as is rarely the fortune of a Senator in his first term to possess. Here his habits of industry and close attention to business made him strong and appreciated. A Senator of opposite faith said of him, "The thorough business habits of the deceased made him a useful man in the Senate. He did much valuable work in the Senate that escaped public attention, and for which he never received credit. He was not a man who sought notoriety. His valuable services consisted largely in thorough and efficient committee work—just such work as shapes and molds legislation, and which is seldom properly appreciated by the public."

It may be truly said that rarely has a junior Senator had the influence, or commanded the attention of that illustrious legislative body, so much as Senator Gear. His presence and power were felt there, and amounted almost to a leadership.

The useful career of this distinguished statesman came to



HON. JOHN W. GEAR.

Photo Engraving & Printing

an end on the morning of the 14th day of July, 1900. That end came quietly and peacefully; and while rather suddenly it was nevertheless not a surprise to his friends, who had been familiar with the fact that the health of the veteran commoner was steadily failing.

In all the relations of life, the Governor and Senator was a true man. He was a devoted husband and father, an estimable citizen, a public servant of the highest type, a statesman of enlarged and progressive views.

Gov. Gear's memory was phenomenal. While I would not say of him, as is sometimes vainly said of a man, "He never forgot a face," I would say that very few men I have known came so near being thus equipped with an unailing memory. When he did remember a person, he seemed also to recall at once all he had ever known of that person. This happy faculty was of vast service to him in his public career. He was moreover one of the most faithful of friends, as all realized who were ever included in the circle of that friendship.

Few members ever served their individual constituents so faithfully as he did. His correspondence was enormous. Senator Mason said of it, that when Gov. Gear and he were members of the House of Representatives it was the largest that came to any member of that body, and it always had attention.

When he was Governor he attended to the correspondence of the office largely in person. There were no stenographers in the employ of the State then, and it was before the days of the typewriter. Yet it was attended to promptly and fully. The Governor wrote rapidly, and expressed himself clearly.

He has now passed to the realms of the unseen, perhaps rather of the real. The State mourns it. One of the most approachable and lovable of men, few could have gone hence whose departure would be so keenly felt as that of this worthy citizen.

I cannot better close this sketch of the departed Senator than by quoting from what was said of him by one who had known him all his life in Iowa, the venerable Dr. Salter of Burlington, and by one who had known him all his public life and who was much of that time intimately associated with him, the distinguished Congressman from the Seventh District, Hon. John A. T. Hull.

Said Dr. Salter:

His name is written large in the history of this commonwealth, in the records of Congress, and in the hearts of thousands of our people. While he died in the height of his fame with such honors clustering his brow as fall to few; secure so far as human authority and power go in one of the high dignities of the world; he bore honor and fame with the same simplicity that characterized him in every situation.

Said Captain Hull:

His loss will be mourned in Iowa while the generation now living there shall rule. His memory will be borne in the affectionate hearts of the people he loved so well. We will build him an enduring monument in our State, in the affections of our children; and we can say to his friends that they can take pride in the fact that they were related to this splendid specimen of American manhood and American statesmanship.

This paper would be incomplete without mention of the worthy woman who was for well nigh half a century one of the best of helpmeets, friend, adviser, counselor—everything which the best of wives may be, and who with two of their four children survived him. To her, Miss Harriet Foote, he was married in the year 1852. She too has now passed from earth, and rejoined her husband. This lady was born November 11, 1818, and died October 4, 1902. Her birthplace was Middlebury, Addison county, Vermont, at the south point of Lake Champlain. She was the daughter of Justus Foote. Her mother, Harriet Swan Graham, was the daughter of Rev. John Graham, a native of Scotland, of the clan Graeme, who became minister of the parish at Suffield, Connecticut. A colleague of Mr. Graham in that pastorate was Rev. Daniel Waldo, who was chaplain of the House of Representatives in the Thirty-fourth Congress. Miss Foote came

with her mother from Vermont to the home of her brother, John Graham Foote, afterwards senator (1860-1864) and capitol commissioner (1872-1886). Of this excellent woman, one who knew her well thus wrote:

Mrs. Gear did not seek public life for herself. She idealized and idolized her home. To her it was everything it could mean for wife and mother. But, having met its many obligations, Mrs. Gear entered with great spirit and earnestness into the public life of her distinguished husband. In her clear insight into human nature and human motives, her keen discernment and lofty ideals, . . . Mrs. Gear was a strong, sustaining force, which the Senator dearly prized.

During the administration of her husband, Mrs. Gear, seeing that the battle-flags of the regiments were disappearing where they were kept, that every zephyr carried away some of the precious material of which they were made, determined to make an effort to preserve them from further destruction. She accordingly obtained permission from the Executive Council to undertake the task. Securing the help of many of the widows and daughters of soldiers and others, she had the flags covered with a material which, while it exposed the colors to view, yet protected them from being torn to pieces by the winds. In this work, Mrs. Gear prepared nearly if not quite every flag for the quilting process by putting the tattered fragments of the valued emblems in their proper places, and turning them over to those who did the sewing. To this work Mrs. Gear devoted several weeks of constant labor. The fact that the colors of the regiments which did so much for the fame of Iowa can now be distinguished is largely due to the judicious care thus taken of them by this thoughtful woman.

The social life of the capital was much enlivened during the administration of Governor Gear. He and his wife were delightful hosts; and many times during the sessions did they entertain members and others; and gatherings of those days live in local history as among the most charming of like events in the memory of denizens of the capital.

Of this estimable couple, the Rev. Dr. Salter, the vener-

able senior pastor in Iowa, said, in the course of a funeral tribute to Mrs. Gear:

The two lives were mingled and blended in a more perfect union than ordinarily falls to human lot. Her own large intelligence, her acquaintance with the social, moral, and political questions of the age, her public spirit, her devotion to her country's cause and honor and advancement, her simplicity of life, her gracious and dignified manners, her wisdom and discretion and courage of speech, her reserve and silence when patience and the unspoken word were the best, her quiet discernment of artifice and imposture, her instant appreciation of whatsoever things are just and pure and true and good, her generous disposition to help every worthy cause and all worthy persons, and the respect she won for herself alike from the friends and from the competitors of her husband in his public career—all combined to give her consideration and influence among public men and in the public affairs of Iowa and the nation.

The Sioux City Journal, whose editor, Hon. George D. Perkins, was in both the State and National legislatures with Gov. Gear, and knew both husband and wife intimately, paid tribute to her memory thus:

Senator Gear's political life fell in stormy times. His best lieutenant was his wife. She was constantly with him, and she bore her part in every battle. Senator Gear had rare faculty in making friends, and Mrs. Gear was inventful in social pleasures involving politics. Going back to the time of his service as Speaker and Governor, it is safe to say that Mr. Gear knew more Iowa people by name than any one else, with his wife a close second.

Iowa has never had as high a type of woman politician as it had in Mrs. Gear. She was a stately lady. She was hostess at her husband's board. She had keen observation; she knew where the ground was solid, and she knew where it was treacherous. But she had the tact to keep what she knew and what she observed from the knowledge of her happy companies. She never sought credit for herself; everything with her was "Henry Gear's".

The Senator died in the harness as he had hoped to do, with the confidence and warm affection of his State freshly written as his heirloom. With his death, despite all the loving struggle of her heart and hands to ward off the summons, her lifework was ended. She had only to wait.

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