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ART. II.—GARLAND'S LIFE OF RANDOLPH.

The Life of John Randolph of Roanoke. By HUGH A. GARLAND. In two volumes. New-York: D. Appleton & Co. 1850.

WE have been long expecting, and with some impatience, the appearance of this work. In this we have not been alone. No man ever lived who was more an object of interest to the world than John Randolph. And this was no idle curiosity. His appearance among men, like that of a comet in the Heavens, attracted the attention of all. With one consent, he was admitted to stand alone. As a specimen of the *genus homo*, he stood confessed the only one of his species. In the moral and intellectual world, he was regarded as a phenomenon; an eccentric and portentous star, shot from another system, whose orbit none could calculate—whose errand none could understand. The pet child of nature, the pampered child of fortune, he might have been the object of universal admiration and universal envy. The martyr of disease, of body and mind, he was the victim of a destiny, inscrutable to himself and incomprehensible to others. Who would not have been John Randolph? Who would have been? Could they who envied him have exchanged places with him, who does not shudder to think of the yell of despair which might have accompanied the first sense of that agony of body and of mind, which clung to him through all his splendid career? Was there none who could penetrate his mystery? Was there none who knew him well enough to point out the little that he had in common with others; and to mark some, at least, of the innumerable particulars in which he was utterly unlike all other men? Was no one enough in his confidence and familiar society to have an opportunity to read him aright? Or was it, that, among those who approached him, there was none capable of comprehending him?

The first appearance of Mr. Randolph, in the political world, was regarded with more of wonder than of applause. A beardless youth—in appearance a boy—his sagacity looked like presumption—his boldness like impudence. They whose praise would have been fame, were startled at the apparition of one, before the brightness of whose genius their lesser lights might be doomed to pale.

Though not envious, though courteous to equals and enthusiastically deferential to all true greatness, it was impossible not to see that there was an instinct in the man, which would never let him rest below the topmost pinnacle of fame and power. His rise must be the fall of others, and hence it was that, from the unambitious multitude alone, he received the full measure of applause. But even this was grudgingly bestowed. Sensitive and fastidious, haughty and scornful, he took no pains to conciliate these, and seemed even to sicken at their praise. It was only when they had learned to look on him as a being of another order, distinguished from others not less by infirmity and affliction, than by wealth and talent, that they seemed to allow him an exemption from the laws by which common men must be content to regulate their intercourse with their fellows, and indulged and expressed the full extent of their admiration.

It was impossible to see Mr. Randolph without being struck with something about him unlike other men. But what that something was, was a question about which, perhaps, no two men ever agreed. For half a century the papers have abounded with anecdotes concerning him, and descriptions of his person, voice and manner, infinitely various, and marking the degree in which each narrator was qualified to comprehend and relate what he saw or heard. Most men seem pretty much the same to all who see them at the same moment. But, as it is said that no two men see the same rainbow, so no two men could see the same John Randolph. What each man could comprehend of him, that he saw; while to the multitude he continued, to the end of his life, a marvel and a mystery. And this was most emphatically true of some who saw most of him; as, for example, the great body of his constituents. That he was sagacious, intrepid and faithful, that they all knew. That he spoke as no other man spoke, that they all heard with their ears, and felt in their hearts. That, in listening to him, they felt that all his words were true—his sentiments all just, and that they thus caught the contagion of all his feelings—of all this they were conscious. But had they been convinced by argument? There was nothing that logicians call argument. Had they been hurried away by sophistry? There was less, if possible, of that. Had they been hurried away by declamation? He never declaimed. Had they been won by flattery

and beguiled by plausibilities? In his youth he flattered nobody; in age he rarely spoke to his constituents without something of rebuke; and, as to plausibilities, he never dealt in them. On the contrary, he was much in the habit of presenting his ideas with the most startling abruptness. Much, indeed, that he said, to minds deficient in acuteness, looked like paradox. It might be this—it might be that. But whichever it were, men somehow felt that it was true, and doubted not that, whenever they should come to understand it, they would find it to be true. The most intelligent of his constituents will recognize the justness of this, as applied to the great body; and not a few even of that more enlightened class will not hesitate to acknowledge it to be true, even of themselves. Of such, each man understood him according to his own measure. To the rest, he was like the genius of an eastern tale, evoked by the wizard's sorceries, and gradually developed from the smoke of his magic fire, in some semblance of the human form, indistinct to the last, and awing the beholder with a sense of mystery, intelligence and might. Of such an object, not even a definite outline can be traced. Like Milton's Death, presenting to the eye no shape "distinguishable in member, joint or limb," no definite delineation can be made. Being *definite*, it must be unlike. Just so it is impossible to *imitate* ORIGINALITY. Being imitation, the likeness must fail. This is one of Mr. Randolph's sayings. It characterizes the man, and a certain way he had of saying things, new, strange and startling, which all men at once recognized as true, and which the closest investigation would prove to be true. We recommend it especially to all imitators of Mr. Randolph. He certainly imitated no one. On the contrary, we learn from a letter published in this work, (vol. i., p. 23,) that when a boy of fourteen, at school, he resolutely and in defiance of authority and discouragements, framed for himself rules for elocution, to which he adhered to the end of his life. The letter is worth quoting.

"My mother once expressed a wish to me, that I might one day or other be as great a speaker as Jerman Barker or Edmund Randolph! That gave the bent to my disposition. At Princeton College, where I spent a few months (1787), the prize of elocution was borne away by mouthers and ranters. I never would speak if I could possibly avoid it, and when I could not, repeated, without gesture, the shortest piece that I had commit-

ted to memory. I remember some verses from Pope, and the first anonymous letter from Newberg made up the sum and substance of my spoutings, and I can yet repeat much of the first epistle (to Lord Chatham*) of the former, and a good deal of the latter. I was then as conscious of my superiority over my competitors in delivery and elocution, as I am now that they are sunk in oblivion; and I despised the award and the umpires in the bottom of my heart. I believe that there is no where such foul play as among professors and schoolmasters; more especially if they are priests. I have had a contempt for college honours ever since."

But the world does not the less desire such approximation to the delineation, as is possible of a character so amorphous, because of its difficulty, and eagerly catches at every thing that professes to be so. Of the same nature was the demand for a biography of poor Byron, which gave currency to every thing that cupidity, malign folly or vanity could put forth. Men greedily devoured all that the Dallas', Galts and Medwins published, and found their appetites unsatiated as before. *The life of his mind*, the thing that they *really*, though unconsciously wished to know, could only be written by himself; and in his own writings only do we find it. These are fortunately sufficiently voluminous and various, and through these the world will continue to know that wonderful man, at least as well as he was known to his contemporaries.

No such memorial of himself has been left by Mr. Randolph. We have, indeed, many of his speeches reported with more or less accuracy, but what idea can the stenographer convey of the speech itself, *as spoken*. If the biography of Byron be said to be in his poetry, which will live while the language endures, so must we take, as the biography of John Randolph, his speeches, of which the words alone remain. The voice, the eye, the unconscious gesture, simple, unstudied, grand, imposing—the

* We do not undertake to decide whether this mistake is attributable to Mr. G. or to the Printer's Devil. It was as easy for Mr. G. to blunder in copying Mr. Randolph's manuscript, as for the compositor to blunder in copying Mr. Garland's. *Both*, we are *almost certain, had heard* of Lord Chatham; but we are by no means sure that either knew that Pope and Lord Chatham were not contemporaries; that either had ever read a line of Pope's works; or that either ever heard of the existence of such a man as Lord Cobham.

peculiar figure and unique physical structure of the speaker—all these are gone.

Truly the task to which Mr. Garland addressed himself was not a light one: and, supposing him to understand his subject enough to be aware of its difficulties, he would hardly feel it a harsh censure to be told that he has failed. Yet we are afraid that he would be a little restiff even under this mild sentence. There is too much reason to fear that he did not sufficiently understand his subject to feel its justice. Indeed, we should be glad to believe that had Mr. Garland been about ten times as well qualified for his work as he was, he would have been sensible that he was still not half qualified to undertake it. To be half capable of comprehending the character of such a man, he must have been wholly incapable of regarding his remains as matter to be ground up into bone-dust, to be used as manure for worn out lands. We say this, not because Mr. Garland's own account of his means of knowledge shows that they were exceedingly meagre. We say it, because it is true of Mr. Garland, as of others, that a man's writings best show the man. If the book before us gives but an imperfect sketch of John Randolph, it has at least the merit of being a full length likeness of Hugh A. Garland, so that they who knew the former are put in condition to judge whether any possible means of information could make him adequately known to the latter. It carries on its face Mr. Garland's excuse for its deficiencies. He has done what he could. His error was in supposing it possible to sound the depths of ocean with a fishing-line—to paint sun-light with yellow-ochre—or to give a just idea of a grand overture by piping it on a penny-whistle.

Then, while we repeat that Mr. Garland's sources of information were, by his own showing, very scanty, we wish to be understood as laying no great stress on this fact. We will only say, *en passant*, that access to a correspondence with one or two persons, and an acquaintance with one or two friends of a man so little understood by those who knew him best, as Mr. Randolph certainly was, afford very slender materials for a biography. This, which is universally true, is particularly so in the case of Mr. Randolph.

There is a crisis in the lives of many men, (perhaps of all,) which, in a moment, decides their destiny. For that

little moment, man seems constituted master of his own fate, and on the choice he makes in that moment his fate depends. That there was such a moment in the life of Mr. Randolph, has always been the opinion of those who knew most of his history; and all such, with one accord, have referred that crisis to some time during his sojourn in Philadelphia, between 1790 and 1794. But what was the nature of the crisis—what was the choice he made—what act, what event it was that decided the future course of his life, and changed the whole nature of the man—*who knows?* Certainly none of those to whom Mr. Garland had access. The whole of this critical portion of Mr. Randolph's life is disposed of in sixteen pages, (vol. i., pp. 45-61,) seven of which are taken up with a panegyric on Mr. Jefferson, and seven more with a chapter about Tom Paine and Edmund Burke.

The desultory character of Mr. Garland's book must be our excuse for a digression here on the subject of these two celebrated writers. We see, with amazement, that Mr. Garland speaks of Mr. Randolph as having been a disciple of Burke at the early age of eighteen. It can hardly be doubted that he read his letter on the French Revolution on its first appearance, and that he was not insensible to its surpassing eloquence. But the idea that even at that age he adopted the doctrines of that great master of political philosophy, in whole or in part, is indeed new. Indeed, it is at variance with all the early history of the man. How many are yet alive who remember that he discarded the use of the common era, as a badge of the faith which he wholly rejected, and, in all his dates, adopted the French calendar; and continued to use it until near the end of the century. We have good authority for saying, that however much he was disgusted with the brutal coarseness of Paine, he admired his talents and did not much dissent from his opinions, especially on the most important of all subjects. On the same authority, we say that he considered the now forgotten work of Mackintosh on the French Revolution, as a masterly refutation of Burke. We very much doubt if he ever became a convert to the views of Burke, until the events of the last four years of Mr. Jefferson's administration led him to suspect that there may be something in the enjoyment of Liberty, which soon disqualifies a people for that self-government, which is but another

name for freedom. "It is ordained," said Burke, "in the eternal constitution of things, that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters." We very much doubt whether Mr. Randolph ever had his mind awakened to this great truth until the time we speak of.

Returning, then, to Mr. Garland's account of the three years spent by Mr. Randolph in Philadelphia, we find that, after deducting the episodes about Jefferson, Burke, and Paine, there remains one short chapter. As there is little in Mr. Garland's two volumes with which we are disposed to *adorn* our pages, we hope to be excused for inserting this entire.

"We are not to suppose that a youth, in the joyous hours of his dawning faculties, devoted his time, or any great portion of it, to the society of sober statesmen, or to the grave study of political science. Far other were the associates and companions of John Randolph during his residence in the Quaker city, even at that day renowned for its intelligent, polished, gay, and fashionable society.

"With occasional visits to Virginia, and a short residence of a few weeks in Williamsburg during the autumn of 1793, Philadelphia, till the spring of 1794, continued to be his place of abode. His companions were Batte, Carter, Epps, Marshall, and Rose, of Virginia; Bryan of Georgia, and Rutledge of South-Carolina. Most of these were young men of wealth, education, refined manners, high sense of honor, and of noble bearing. John W. Epps afterwards became a leading member of Congress, married the daughter of Mr. Jefferson, and in 1813 was the successful rival of Randolph on the hustings before the people. Joseph Bryan, likewise, in a short time, became a leading character in Georgia, was a member of Congress from that State, and to the day of his untimely death, continued to be the bosom friend of the associate of his youth. Most of the others, though unknown to fame, adorned the social sphere in which they moved, and were noble specimens of the unambitious scholar and the gentleman. Thomas Marshall, the brother of the Chief Justice, and father of Thomas Marshall, the late member of Congress, is still living. He is a man of extraordinary powers, and great learning: his wit and genial humor are not to be surpassed. Those who knew them well agree that his natural talents surpass those of his late illustrious brother, the Chief Justice. Robert Rose was a man of genius; he married the sister of Mr. Madison, and might have risen to any station in his profession (which he merely studied as an ornament), in let-

ters, or in politics, that he aspired to; but, like too many in his sphere and station in society, he lived a life of inglorious ease, and wasted his gifts, like the rose its sweets, on the desert air. With such companions, we may readily suppose there was fun and frolic enough; but nothing low or mean, or vulgar or sordid, in all their intercourse. The correspondence of some of those young men at that period, is now before the writer. It is very clear that Randolph was the centre of attraction in that joyous circle of boon companions. And while there can be no doubt that they indulged in all the license allowed at that time to young men of their rank and fortune, yet he passed through that critical period of life without the contamination of a single vice. Though, many years afterwards, he said, "I know by fatal experience the fascinations of a town life, how they estrange the mind from its old habits and attachments." Bryan, in February, 1794, wishes him all the happiness that is attendant on *virtue and regularity*. Again, in speaking of one of their companions, to whom Randolph had become strongly attached, he expresses a hope that he may prove worthy of the friendship,—'possessing as you do,' says he, 'a considerable knowledge of mankind, your soul would not have knit so firmly to an unworthy object.'

Most of those young men were students of medicine. Randolph also attended with them several courses of lectures in anatomy and physiology—sciences that are indispensable, not only to a professional, but to a liberal and gentlemanly education. We do not learn, as many have supposed, that he studied law at that time in the office of his relation, Edmund Randolph, the Attorney General. Two years after leaving Philadelphia, Bryan writes that he is rejoiced to hear his friend has serious thoughts of *attacking the law*. He tells us himself that he never, after Theodorick broke up his regular habits at New-York, devoted himself to any systematic study, except for the few weeks he was in Williamsburg, in the autumn of 1793. So we conclude that he never made the law a matter of serious study, certainly never with the view of making it a profession.

"In April, 1794, he returned to Virginia. In June he was twenty-one years of age, and then took upon himself the management of his patrimonial estates, which were heavily encumbered with a British debt. Matoax was still in the family, but was sold about this time for *three thousand pounds sterling*, to pay off a part of the above debt. The mansion house has since been burnt, but the same estate now would not bring three hundred dollars, although it is within three miles of Petersburg.

"Richard Randolph, the elder brother, lived at Bizarre, an estate on the Appomatox, about ninety miles above Petersburg. It is near Farmville, but on the opposite side of the river, in

Cumberland county. John made his brother's house his home, while his own estate, called Roanoke, lay about thirty miles south on the Roanoke river, in the county of Charlotte."

And this is Mr. Garland's account of a momentous time in the life of one whose biography he thinks himself qualified to write. It was precisely here that we opened the book—and *this* is what we found. But as soon as our vexation at this disappointment began to subside, we found some amusement in the blunders which Mr. Garland contrived to perpetrate in this short chapter of NOTHINGS. Mr. Thomas Marshall, of Kentucky, it seems, was one of Mr. Randolph's boon companions at Philadelphia, and he was the father of Mr. Marshall, late of the House of Representatives; and he is still living, and a man of extraordinary powers and great learning. Now, all this may have been true, as much of it certainly is, of Dr. Lewis Marshall. Thus explained, the four erroneous statements may be said to resolve themselves into a mere mistake of a name. But, unfortunately, that mistake displays absolute ignorance of one of the most remarkable men that ever lived in the United States. Three of the others are men of whom nobody ever heard, at least from Mr. Randolph. *Of Epps, and to Epps,* he did speak; but when did he ever speak *of him, or to him*, but with scorn and contumely? Mr. Randolph's uniform deportment to Mr. Epps was such as he himself would not have borne from mortal man. In the Rutledge here mentioned, we recognize our own Henry Middleton Rutledge, for whom we know that Mr. Randolph cherished, through life, the tenderest friendship. In Mr. Bryan, too, we recognize one better known in this, and the neighbouring State, than even in Virginia, as the *bosom* friend of Mr. Randolph, and the only *bosom* friend of his whole life. Of them it is well known, that, during certain years, in which they were inseparable companions, each was privy to all that concerned the other, while purse, and thoughts, and feelings, were all in common. The joyous and companionable temper, which characterized Mr. Randolph in his youth, made friends for him, according to the nomenclature of the world, of all who approached him, and whom he did not choose to repel. But the *bosom crony*, from whom nothing was concealed—the friend that sticketh closer than a brother, was Joe Bryan:—He and he only.

With all others, though constitutionally frank, he had *some* reserve, and his reserve, whatever might be its degree, was impenetrable. His sagacity detected, in an instant, the slightest attempt "to recover the wind of him, and pluck out the heart of his mystery," and, in that instant, he who made the attempt, found himself irrecoverably thrown off to a distance, from whence any approach to intimacy was ever after impossible.

With Mr. Bryan, as we have said, he had, notoriously, no reserves—with Mr. Rutledge very few. The next place in his youthful friendship, but *longo post intervallo*, was Governor Tazewell. They were play-fellows at school *before the time* of which we have spoken. They were companions in youth *soon after*. Now we are grievously misinformed if Governor Tazewell has not often spoken of a strange, portentous, and mysterious change, which came over Mr. Randolph, young as he was, in the very interval of which we speak. But the cause of it? Who could speak of that? Who can be named, besides Mr. Bryan, who, during a considerable portion of that interval, had any sort of intercourse with him? Mr. Bryan alone, as the friends of Mr. Randolph believe, was privy to that, whatever it was, which would unlock the mystery of his life and character.

Did Mr. Garland know Mr. Bryan? That gentleman left sons. Did he ever make their acquaintance, and gather from them any hints that might have dropt from their father? In after life Mr. Randolph had friends, to whom he might have unbosomed himself; men to whom he might have spoken freely of the incidents of that time of life in which men "in a moment plunge their years in stains eternity cannot efface." Did Mr. Garland make the acquaintance and win the confidence of such? and did he imagine the precise Dr. Brockenborough, and the sanctimonious Frank Key, to be of the number? Had he known Mr. Randolph, he would have known that his character had as many phases as the facets of a diamond, and the phase in question was not one which men like these ever looked upon. In saying this, we do not mean to impute hypocrisy or duplicity to Mr. Randolph. Just the reverse. In certain moods of his mind, he had no pleasure in the society of some men; in different moods, others were equally distasteful. Each set saw him in the mood which adapted him to their society, and with each

he was open, unreserved, unconscious of acting a part, and "pouring himself out as plain as honest Shippen or downright Montaigne." He had friends in after life, to whom he may have spoken of the events of his youth. Such were Watkins Leigh, Henry S. G. Tucker, William Leigh. Did Mr. Garland seek to them for information? If he did, was he repulsed—or did his own consciousness tell him that from such men, on such a subject, he could expect nothing but a rebuff?

The sum of the whole matter is, that, of that momentous sojourn at Philadelphia, this biographer knows nothing worth telling; but that, while there, Mr. Randolph "attended *several courses in anatomy and physiology!*" If so, with his quickness of perception and apprehension, and the decided interest in the subject which such volunteer attention implies, he must have been one of the first anatomists and physiologists in the Union. Yet we have never heard that he displayed at any time (and he was not a man to conceal his knowledge) any greater acquaintance with these subjects, than may be found in any educated man, who has friends among the faculty. We have little doubt, that, without reading a word, Mr. Randolph could, in one week, have sucked more knowledge of anatomy and physiology from his old friend, Dr. Gilliam, of Petersburg, or from his more recent friend and neighbour, Dr. Robinson, of Farmville, than all he knew when he left Philadelphia. This hasty dismissal of these three momentous years of Mr. Randolph's life, with only a few scraps of unimportant matters, most of which we know to be inaccurate, disposed us to read no farther. But our task was before us, and we performed it. We were encouraged, too, by reflecting, that although, so far, Mr. Garland had obviously written by guess, yet, in the more advanced part of his work, he would have the aid of ampler materials. We read on, therefore, in the hope of seeing a connected and digested narrative of that part of Mr. Randolph's *political* life, during which he was a principal figure in the history of the United States.

This part of his subject Mr. Garland introduces, by referring to the well-known political sentiments of Mr. Randolph's step-father, and his two kinsmen, Dr. Tucker of South-Carolina, and Dr. Bland of Virginia, both members of Congress when he was a youth in Philadelphia. That his mind was much influenced and established in

the principles he maintained through life, by the teachings of these gentlemen, can not be doubted. But, not content with this, Mr. Garland chooses to imagine that Mr. Jefferson, *Secretary of State*, and Mr. Edmund Randolph, *Attorney-General* of the United States, found leisure from the toil of organizing, out and out, a new experiment in government, to lend their aid in forming the mind of a boy of eighteen. This gratuitous and unauthorized conjecture, Mr. Garland founds on a relationship between the parties, which, in one instance, at least, we suspect him to have made much nearer than it really was. This mistake, if it be one, certainly renders his theory more specious, though it does not make it true that Mr. Randolph had more than a casual acquaintance with one of those gentlemen; nor does it change the fact, that, with the other, his relations were rather unfriendly. But Mr. Garland's object was to make a book and sell it, and he thus furnished himself with a pretext for introducing a panegyric of seven pages (vol. 1, p. 46) on Mr. Jefferson, and an episode of ten pages, of the same clap-trap character, (vol. 1, p. 85,) on the connexion of Mr. Edmund Randolph with the famous Fauchet letter. No incident in the history of the Union had less to do with the biography of John Randolph. This last may, indeed, be considered as a disproportionate part of what Mr. Garland calls a "History of the Times," which he professes to regard as a necessary prelude to the political history of one who did not come upon the stage until all the controversies which had grown out of this particular affair had subsided.

The political history of Mr. Randolph commences with some account of his first canvass for a seat in Congress. This, too, is made to furnish occasion for a chapter on Patrick Henry; and then, at length, the drama opens with a sketch of the last appearance of that great orator, and the simultaneous advent of the successor, who was to catch his mantle, at the moment when he was taken away from the eyes of men. The coincidence was remarkable, and it might be supposed that the scene was one to be ever remembered. Of Mr. Garland's account of it we shall speak hereafter. At present we proceed, as, in reading the book, we proceeded impatiently, to that part of the history of the United States and of the political history of John Randolph, of which it may be said that neither can be understood without a right understanding of the

other. If Mr. Garland understood either, he has not enlightened his readers. We, who lived in that day, remember Mr. Randolph on the floor of the House of Representatives, in 1803, when not yet quite thirty years of age, the leader of the republican party, the champion of the Administration in that house, the co-worker of Madison and Gallatin, through whom they carried into effect their plans of statesmanship and finance; we saw him three years afterwards suddenly and mysteriously separated from his old associates, and leading away "one-third of heaven's host." During the ensuing seven years we saw these followers, one by one, fall away—some broken down by the popularity of the Administration, some won by its blandishments, and some, as we would fain hope, yielding to honest convictions, until he stood alone, supported only by conscious integrity, a stout heart, and "such constituents as no man ever had." There he stood, surrounded on every side by deadly foes, denounced by the press and reviled by the many-voiced clamour of the multitude. There he stood, amid "the host of Hatred," dealing blows on every hand, from which the boldest of his assailants shrank. We saw how, to silence him whom none could answer, the freedom of debate was stifled by new rules, before unknown to parliamentary law. Meantime, we saw him undermined at home, and, for a season, deserted by his constituents, fall, but to rise again. But before his re-appearance on the political arena, the scene was changed. The drama in which he had acted so conspicuous a part was played out, and he only came back to witness the fulfilment, in part, of a prophecy, the truth of which, in all its bitterness, the South experiences at this day. "As Randolph foresaw and predicted," says Mr. Garland, "we came out of the war with Great Britain without a constitution." What Southern man can read, without a smile of bitter scorn, what follows:—"Mainly to his exertions, in after years, are we indebted for its restoration." *Its restoration!* When! By the accession of a President under whose triumphant administration the sovereignty of the States was made a "hissing and a byeword?" By the accession of a party which afterwards, to sustain itself in power, trampled on the dignity of the State of New-Jersey, and desecrated and cancelled her great seal by the hands of a menial of the House of Representatives! An act without parallel except in that of

the wretch who, by force, compelled his own wife to endure the foul embrace of his own servant! And how will the reader bear to be told that that abject tool of power is the very man, who takes the name of John Randolph on his polluted lips, and presumes to write what he calls a biography of that great champion of freedom, of the constitution, and the rights of the States? What sort of a history could he be expected to give of the struggles of such a man against principalities and powers? Written for a Southern market, his book must praise both Randolph and Jefferson. But how to write that most important and interesting part of Mr. Randolph's life in which the two were in diametrical opposition and deadly hostility? How to make out the identity of the party which trampled on South-Carolina and insulted N. Jersey, with the States Right party of which Mr. Jefferson was at one time the chief, and Mr. Randolph at all times the champion? How to explain Mr. Randolph's steady support of Mr. Jefferson for four years, and his unwavering opposition ever after—his enthusiastic zeal, at first, for General Jackson, and his fierce denunciations of the proclamation, and his dying wish for but life enough to lose it in the field in defence of the sovereignty of South-Carolina? How to explain all this, and yet find "no variableness nor shadow of turning" in either of the three men, was the task which Mr. Garland proposed to himself. There were four ways of telling the story. It might be told to the prejudice of Mr. Randolph; it might be told to the prejudice of his adversaries; it might be told so as to make a pretty equal distribution of praise and censure among all parties; lastly, it might be told so as that no mortal could tell how or why the separation between them came to pass. Mr. Garland has chosen the latter plan, and has so executed his task, that he represents both as equally true to the last to the principles on which they first united and afterwards disagreed. That Mr. Garland should have thought himself the proper person to give a history of such a matter, is the most remarkable instance of self-delusion and presumption that has ever come under our notice. His only escape from the dilemma was to leave that most important part of the history of Mr. Randolph as he has left it—a blank.

It is not possible for us, within the limits of this article, to supply this defect. Indeed, we are not prepared to do

so. No history of the matter has ever been written, and it remains for some future biographer of Mr. Randolph to perform the task. Until that is done, the history of the war of 1812 will be made up of the non-importation law, the embargo, the orders in council, the declaration of war, and certain battles. Peter Parley would put the whole in a dozen short paragraphs, and his boys would know as much about it, as the men of this generation have the means of knowing without consulting contemporary authorities. The proper place for a connected and intelligible account of the causes which led to that war, and of the *modus operandi* by which it was brought about, is a biography of John Randolph. In such we yet hope to see it. But justice will never be done him by one who can only forgive his abhorrence of centralism, and of the Adams's and Clays of the federal crew, and his devotion to the constitution and the rights of the States, in consideration of his breach with Jefferson and Madison. Still less will he receive it at the hands of one, who, sympathizing with his hostility to federalism, cannot permit himself to see spot or blemish in Jefferson, Madison, or Jackson. The former will condemn him unsparingly. The latter—worse still—will damn him with faint praise.

Before dismissing the political history of John Randolph, we will redeem our promise to take some notice of Mr. Garland's melo-dramatic sketch of his opening scene and the closing scene of Patrick Henry.

This will be found at vol. 1, p. 129, chap. 21, under the fantastic title of the "RISING AND SETTING SUN."

Of this chapter we shall speak in no measured terms. A portion of it is taken from Wirt's life of Patrick Henry; and all the rest is sheer fabrication. We speak on the authority of no less a man than Dr. Archibald Alexander, President of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, and then President of the College of Hampden Sydney, in Prince Edward county. He was present, and a communication from him to a Virginia periodical happened to make its appearance at the same time with Mr. Garland's book. By this authentic testimony almost every word in this account, except that with which the readers of Wirt are already familiar, is proved to be false. Mr. Garland, indeed, at the end of a speech of nearly eight pages, which he puts into the mouth of Mr. Randolph, endeavours to screen himself from this imputation. He says, "we do

not pretend, reader, to give you the language of John Randolph on this occasion: nor are we certain even that the thoughts are his. We have nothing but the faint *tradition* of near fifty years to go upon, and happy are we if our *researches* have enabled us to make even a tolerable approximation to what was said." *Tradition! Researches!* Who, besides Mr. Garland, ever heard from *tradition* one word of what Mr. Randolph said on that occasion? But Mr. Garland does not pretend to have given the *ipsissima verba* of Mr. Randolph; nay, he has some little doubt whether even the thoughts were his. Whose thoughts, then, whose words, are they? Who reported them to Mr. Garland? Or is it, or can it be, that *Hugh A. Garland* has undertaken to make a speech for John Randolph—thoughts, words, and all? What a pity that typography afforded no means of giving, also, the tones, the gestures, the whole manner! No doubt Mr. Garland is as competent to give these as what he has given. What a pity that it is impossible for him to assemble the whole people of Virginia, or at least the people of Mr. Randolph's old district, and give them the benefit of a rehearsal, by Mr. Garland himself, in Mr. Randolph's own peculiar manner! How would their ears tingle at hearing a successful imitation of that voice which haunts the dreams of all who ever heard it! To hear *him* exclaim "Alas! alas!" Yet we are afraid Mr. Garland might be at fault in this. He has put this exclamation in the mouth of Mr. Randolph, but we incline to believe that this is a word which Mr. Randolph never did use, except in derision.* But, to drop the metaphor," says Mr. Randolph, according to Mr. Garland. Mr. Randolph

* We remember to have heard, long ago, an anecdote characteristic of Mr. Randolph's distaste for "oh," and "ah," and "alas," and all that sort of *exclamatory* oratory, which is express to this point. On the motion to commit Aaron Burr on the charge of high treason, the Attorney-General, Mr. Cæsar Augustus Rodney, one of your speech-makers and professed orators, forgetting that the point under consideration was the *probability* of the guilt of the accused, which, in the eye of the law, is always in the inverse ratio of the enormity of the offence imputed, concluded a speech, wordy but not long, with a common-place declamation about the amazing wickedness of treason, and wound up with a poetical quotation, which opened with "Ah me!" As soon as he came to this, Mr. Randolph dropped the paper, and clapping his hands, broke out into one of his fits of uncontrollable, childlike, infectious laughter, exclaiming,

"Ah me! what perils do environ
The man who meddles with cold iron."

was certainly much addicted to speaking "by parable and metaphor," as honest Morgan says, but not only did he himself never betray any consciousness of so doing, but his very auditors were rarely conscious of it. We would not be the man who would acknowledge himself so cold-blooded a pedant, as to own that, while listening to the mingled wit and wisdom which this extraordinary speaker always expressed in words a child might understand, he was aware of the use of any figure of speech known to rhetoricians. Mr. Randolph was a firm believer in Butler's maxim, that

" All a rhetorician's rules
Teach only how to name his tools."

And though he played with them all, as a child with his toys, it may be doubted whether he cared to know one of them by name.

One great point in Mr. Randolph's eloquence, was his perfect ingenuousness, some part of the effect of which might have been lost if he could have been ever detected in practicing the arts of the orator. Indeed, in this respect he stood alone among men known and distinguished chiefly as orators. He never subdued his mind to the uses of his tongue. He enquired after *Truth*, and not after that which might be most easily glossed over, and made to pass for truth, nor that which the multitude might be most ready to accept as truth. How many, endowed by nature with the dangerous faculty of leading captive the minds of those who hear them, think only of their own momentary triumph—their own temporary success—and the applause which is to greet their own ears! Will such men choose to commit themselves to an opinion, however true, however important, which can only be maintained by severe argument, by reasonings incomprehensible by the common mind, and which carries with it corollaries of unpalatable truth—when the opposite opinion abounds with plausibilities, speciosities, clap-traps, and stereotyped declamations? Ask your Clays, and McDowells, and Wises, *et id genus omne*,—the whole family of shallow thinkers with loud voices and long tongues. They are afraid to think, lest they be led to advocate something unpopular. Why Mr. W***, to this day, has never permitted himself to reconsider one of the crude notions he entertained, when, as a boy, he may have been called

on in a spouting club to justify the slaughter of Cæsar by the younger Brutus, the sacrifice of his sons by the elder, or the murder of his sister by Horatius. Every gem of eloquence which then won the plaudits of his school-fellows, is still at his command, ready to be produced, if need be, to justify the ignominious execution of any man who shall dare to stand in defence of the rights and safety of his native State against federal usurpation!* This it is which fills the pulpits and platforms with abolitionists, and unionists, and democrats. John Randolph was not an orator of that sort. His reliance was on the faculty of presenting *truth* in such an aspect that men should know, and love, and reverence it as *truth*. This was the great secret of his eloquence. And, since him "who spake as never man spoke," none has ever carried home to the hearts and minds of men the conviction of so many truths, which, but for him, they would never have received, for which they were wholly unprepared, and in defence of which, after adopting them, they knew not how to reason, though they could not doubt them. The conviction thus imparted was like the "white stone, in which is written a new name which none can read, but he who hath it." "I can put out my hand and touch it," said a plain countryman among his constituents, "and there's the way I know it's true."

But Mr. Garland has infected us with the spirit of digression. We return to his *cartoon* of the scene at Char-

* Mr. W— calls himself a State Rights' man, yet, in the Virginia Convention, he has proposed to limit the power of the Governor over the militia;—for what reason? *Lest* he should make good the words of old John Floyd, who declared that he would leave his bones on the banks of the Potomac before the President should march a hostile force against South-Carolina through Virginia! This proposition *will be* adopted! Virginia *will* deny herself the power to spread the banner of her sovereignty over her people, and to interpose her authority between them and a charge of treason against the United States. Hamilton contended that State sovereignty was in no danger while State *organization* remained. Mr. W— would break up that *organization*. Hamilton said that the State governments stood between the people and federal aggression, ready to be the *voice*, and, if necessary, the *sword*, of their discontent. Virginia is counselled by Mr. W— to *throw away the sword*;—and—*she will do it!* Why, then, should South-Carolina wait!—unless she too means to slide down the inclined plane, at the bottom of which lies abject submission to outrage, wrong, and ruin? The cognizance of Virginia is her own Rattle-snake, with head aloft, fangs erect, tail brandished;—dignified, patient, forbearing;—careful to warn, but sure to strike if the warning be disregarded. The thought was noble—the image grand and characteristic. Mr. W— proposes to pluck out the fangs, but increase the number of rattles to two,—*one* for State Rights, the *other* for *Union!*

lotte Court-house. No doubt it was well worthy to be represented by the pencil of a Raphael, whose picture of the transfiguration is probably as near the truth as Mr. Garland's sketch. He talks of his *researches*. He is convicted, by his own words, of having made none at all. The first step would have been to enquire—"who was there? who might have been there?" He bethought him of the president and professors of the neighbouring college. Did he enquire who they were? Had he done so, he would have been directed to Dr. Alexander, a living witness, an orator of high order, fully qualified to do justice to the scene. Instead of him, he blunders on Dr. Hoge, who was not there until many years after; and even sends away the good old man, who had probably not read or uttered a line of profane poetry for twenty years, snuffing a quotation from the "Deserted Village." How they who knew, and loved, and venerated him, must laugh at this picture!

We are aware that the harshness of this censure may seem to call for some excuse; and we are prepared to offer one. There is a passage in this work, which not only calls for coarser language than we will permit ourselves to use, but forever estops Mr. Garland of a right to complain of the severest treatment which he can ever receive at the hands of a *gentleman*.

It appears that there was a wild, worthless young man, of the name of Thompson, whose elder brother (then dead) had been the intimate friend of Mr. Randolph. This *roué* Mr. R. tried to reclaim; and, while there seemed any hope of success, gave him a home under his roof. When Mr. R. was away they corresponded, and some specimens of the correspondence are given as evidences of the early wisdom, and high and pure morality of the youthful Mentor, then little more than twenty-five years of age. There is, perhaps, no part of the work in which the author so well fulfils that first duty of a biographer—of making the reader *acquainted* with the man whose life he undertakes to write. But to this purpose it was by no means necessary to give any name, and still less to spread before the public a correspondence disclosing a tale of scandal injurious to the memory of the dead and the feelings of their descendants. This Mr. Garland has gratuitously and wantonly done. Under the gauzy veil of an initial, he discloses a tale of a criminal intrigue between

this profligate young man and a lady, whose descendants occupy the very first place in the society in which they live. Now we, at this distance, would not conjecture who the lady was. But we are told that in the place where she then lived, where she spent her whole life, and where her wealthy, honourable and talented sons reside, enough is remembered of such of the facts as no one is disposed to deny, to indicate, with absolute certainty, the person who is the subject of this atrocious calumny. Nor is the calumny confined to her alone, for, in seeking to justify himself to his reproofing friend, this Lothario imputes all manner of baseness to the injured husband. Of all this, Mr. Garland, who long resided there, was aware. None better knew the worth and high standing of the descendants of this vilified pair, who could not walk the streets after the appearance of Mr. Garland's book, without encountering the offensive glances of those who had just been reading and gossiping about the imputed crime of their mother, and the imputed dishonour and baseness of their father.

When Aaron Burr bequeathed to his executor, for publication, a number of documents calculated to bring dishonour on reputable families, that gentleman took on himself the responsibility of suppressing them. For this he received the applause of the public, in all the length and breadth of the continent. What will that same public say to this gratuitous exhumation of a buried scandal, for no better purpose than to promote its sale by suiting it to the depraved taste of men of prurient imaginations and corrupt minds?

By what *honest* means Mr. Garland could have got possession of these papers, we are unable to conjecture. But, whatever the device resorted to, it could not be more dishonourable than the use he has made of them. If done in wantonness, and mere indifference to the peace and honour of families, it shows how illy qualified Mr. Garland was to sketch the life and character of an honourable man. If, as we have heard it surmised, this outrage on decency was perpetrated in order to inflict a wound on an honourable and excellent gentleman, the son of the lady in question, with whom Mr. Garland is supposed to be not on the best terms, then he has committed a crime for which no punishment which insulted honour can inflict will be too severe.

To that punishment we leave him. For ourselves we have dealt with him in mercy. We understand that, since he first conceived the design of this work, he has suffered losses, and sympathy with his family restrained us from aggravating their misfortunes by an earlier denunciation. For their sake we have given him time to sell his wares. We can allow him no more. He has now nothing to say why sentence should not be pronounced; and our sentence is this.

The reader of the book will lay it down with no more knowledge of John Randolph, than he had before, except what is derived from ill-chosen specimens of his letters and speeches. The *outline* of the character is hardly less a caricature than the two miserable engravings prefixed to each volume. The *colouring* is such, as if one should attempt to give the complexion of Hebe with chalk and poke-berry juice. A multitude of minor facts, concerning which Mr. Garland might easily have had correct information, are so inaccurately stated as to take away all faith in his account of more important things; while, of the inner life of the man, of the causes which made him what he was, of the blight that came over his heart and mind, and crushed into shapeless ruin the most beautiful moral and intellectual fabric that ever came from the hands of the Creator—of the stirring incidents which made his life a romance stranger than any fiction, and the innumerable characteristic anecdotes which might afford the materials for some approximation to an estimate and understanding of the extraordinary being who lived and died a mystery to those who knew him best, there is absolutely nothing but what has been, for twenty years, familiar to the public through those veritable chroniclers—the newspapers.