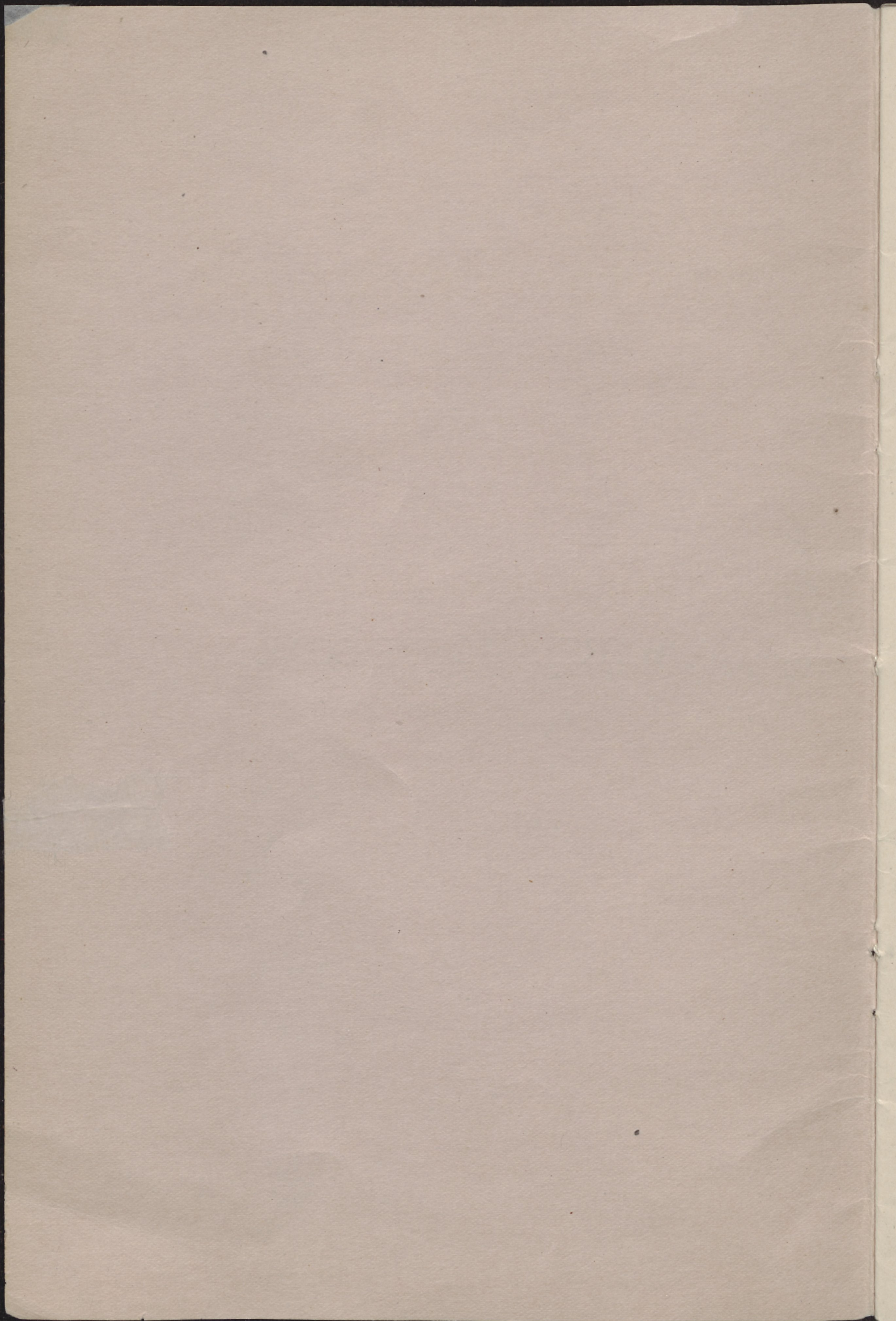


ALFRED MOORE SCALES.



ADDRESS

ON

ALFRED MOORE SCALES,

DELIVERED BY

R. D. W. CONNOR,

(Secretary North Carolina Historical Commission),

BEFORE THE

WAKE COUNTY MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION,

MAY 10, 1907,

IN THE

HALL OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

RALEIGH.

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ALFRED MOORE SCALES.

Four and forty years have gone since the spirit of Stonewall Jackson passed over the river and rested in the shade of the trees. The flight of this heroic soul marked the tenth day of May as an anniversary to be forever hallowed in the grateful heart of the South. The career of Stonewall Jackson better than the career of any other man personifies the Southern Confederacy. As the Confederacy by one bold stroke rose to a place among the powers of the world, so Stonewall Jackson at one bound leaped from obscurity to a place among the immortals of history. The Confederacy in a brief spasm of glory dazzled the eyes of mankind by the brilliancy of its achievements; and Stonewall Jackson like a passing meteor across the dark clouds of war dazzled the eyes of the world by the brilliancy of his genius. And as the English poet declared of the Confederacy,

“No Nation rose so white and fair,
Or fell so pure of crime;”

so Stonewall Jackson, like a stainless knight of chivalry, rose to a foremost place among heroes, and, facing death with inspired heroism, left to fame a name untarnished by a single blot. In him, too, were best epitomized those qualities of fearless courage, dashing enthusiasm, and steadfast loyalty which made the soldiers of the South the wonder and the admiration of the world, and won for them in defeat more splendid laurels than crowned the brows of their foes in victory. What, then, could be more fitting than for the daughters of the South, searching the calendar for a day to consecrate to the memory of the Confederacy, to select the

anniversary of the day on which Stonewall Jackson gave his life in defence of their homes and firesides?

Forty-one years ago the women of this city met for the first time to dedicate the tenth day of May as Memorial Day. Moved "by simple loyalty to the best and purest dictates of the human heart," they met in sadness, yet in gratitude, to render their tributes to the soldiers of the Confederacy, not in stilted phrases and set forms of speech, but in wreaths and garlands of the sweet flowers of spring. With simplicity and dignity they inaugurated this beautiful ceremony which the years have crystallized into a custom. Forty times since that hour, with the annual return of this May day, your association has fulfilled the sweet and gracious duty to which it is dedicated. So many times have you listened while eloquent comrades of the dead rehearsed the story of their achievements. We recall the names of Hampton, the gallant soldier and wise statesman of our sister State; of Ransom, a soldier as brave as the bravest in the field, in the forum an orator as eloquent as the most eloquent; of Avery, whose career among us illustrates the virtues of a long line of distinguished ancestors; of Ashe, who bears with added honors an honored name; of Waddell, whose name recalls the splendid fame of another Waddell who followed the early fortunes of Washington; of Scales, who carried into the halls of legislation and into the executive's chair the same rare courage which had won for him the honors of the battle-field;—these you have heard, and others worthy to stand by them, tell this splendid story with splendid eloquence.

And what a splendid story it is!—a story of duty to country; of courage in the field; of endurance in suffering; of patience in defeat; of fidelity in temptation; and of loyalty at all times. No people could hear the annual rehearsal of such a story without an elevation of character and an increased devotion to country. Thus not only by reason of its original purpose to honor the dead, but also because of its power of

good to the living, the annual observance of Memorial Day has come to be one of the most gracious and most useful of the historic customs of our people. Public anniversaries commanding the attention of the people from their daily pursuits to the contemplation of the great events and characters of their Past, are the guide-posts along the public highways of a self-governing people. They keep us in mind of the continuity of human life and warn us of the danger of any effort to live in the Present without regard to the Past and the Future. "Sometimes we think it is a pity," as Dr. McIver says, "that a good man who has learned to be of service to his fellows should be called out of the world. So sometimes we may think about an enterprising and useful generation; but after all, the generations of men are but relays in civilization's march on its journey from savagery to the millenium. Each generation owes it to the Past and to the Future that no previous worthy attainment or achievement, whether of thought or deed or vision, shall be lost." For all human life, whether organized or unorganized, whether of communities or of individuals, involves all the three elements of time. The Present is born of the Past and is the parent of the Future. As fatal as death will prove any attempt to separate any one of these elements from the others. The Revolutionists tried the experiment in France in 1793 and deluged the world in blood; the Reconstructionists tried it in the South in 1868 and filled our land with woes innumerable. But the English people, filled with the wisdom of the ages and consciously building on a thousand years of history, wrought a revolution in 1783-1784, and again in 1832, as profound as the Reign of Terror, and yet shed no drop of human blood and broke no human heart. No more valuable lesson than this can be impressed upon a free people, and especially upon those into whose hands is committed the guidance of the State. Indeed, no man is fit to be entrusted with control of the Present who is ignorant of the Past; and no people who are

indifferent to their Past need hope to make their Future great.

“Love thou thy land, with love far-brought
From out the storied Past, and used
Within the Present, but transfused
Thro’ future time by power of thought.”

So nobly wrote a noble poet, and I offer you his beautiful thought so beautifully worded as the sentiment for this day and occasion.

This day could come during no year, and this ceremony could be celebrated on no day, without bringing to us numberless sweet and helpful messages. But this year it seems to me Memorial Day comes freighted with messages of especial significance which it is impossible for us not to heed. Following close upon a season of fierce political strife wherein passion too often usurped the seat of judgment, hackneyed oratory wore the disguise of thoughtful debate, and unrestrained indulgence in gross personalities dethroned considerations of public welfare, this Memorial Day, calm and sweet and peaceful, comes upon us like gentle sunshine breaking upon a troubled world through angry storm-clouds. Coming in the full beauty of the springtide, with all its wealth of fragrance and of bloom, it bids us, forgetting the strifes and tumults of selfish ambitions, join in brotherly love and peace to render an unselfish homage to those who unselfishly, though vainly, died that their country might live. Enriching our lives with sweet and noble memories, it brings, if possible, a yet greater wealth in what it commands us to forget. It commands that in remembering men’s virtues, we forget their vices. It commands that in praising their greatness, we forget their weakness. It commands that in honoring their successes we forget their failures. It commands that in eulogizing their patriotism, we forget their selfish ambitions. In the long calendar of the year it is the one day of worldly significance during which men by common consent forget the ugly passions aroused by strifes for polit-

ical spoils; forget the animosities born of struggles for industrial supremacy; forget the enmities engendered by clashing ambitions for professional distinctions; forget the petty jealousies bred by rivalries for social honors;—the one day, in a word, in which men forget themselves in honoring others, who, also forgetful of self, exemplified before all the world the highest ideals of patriotism. On this day, personal accusations and denunciations of the living by the living are hushed in the sweet music of eulogy to the dead. Into such services as these, hallowed by the memories of departed heroes and by loving tributes to their virtues, no man dares intrude his own narrow personality or selfish aspirations. For to-day we breathe a purer and serener air; to-day we refresh our souls with more unselfish joys; to-day we reach upward to nobler visions; to-day we live and move and have our being “less in the spirit of the age and more in the spirit of the ages.”* Poor indeed are a people into whose life comes no such day as this; barren of noble ideals the mind in which its annual return does not light the fires of a patriotic pride; and mean the soul in which it does not arouse emotions of gratitude! Happy, doubly happy, the people who can turn aside from their annual pilgrimage through life to such an oasis of peace and rest and inspiration!

To such an oasis it is my happiness to direct you to-day in the contemplation of the life and character of the gallant soldier and eminent statesman, Alfred Moore Scales. I cannot refrain from quoting here the words of Carlyle: “We cannot look however imperfectly upon a great man, without gaining something by him. He is the living light-fountain, which it is good and pleasant to be near. The light which enlightens, which has enlightened the darkness of the world; and this not as a kindled lamp only, but rather as a natural luminary shining by the gift of Heaven; a flowing light-fountain, as I say, of native original insight, of manhood and heroic nobleness;—in whose radiance all souls feel that it is

*MacVeagh: Oration before Phi Beta Kappa Society at Cambridge, Mass., 1901.

well with them. On any terms whatsoever, you will not grudge to wander in such neighborhood for a while." But, perhaps, we may not apply to Governor Scales the term "great" in the sense in which Carlyle used it: yet it is certain we cannot deny that his career among men was "a living light-fountain * * * of manhood and heroic nobleness." Words that may better be applied to him are those of Charles Francis Adams, who said: "The older I have grown and the more I have studied and seen, the greater in my esteem as an element of strength in a people, has Character become, and the less in the conduct of human affairs have I thought of mere capacity or even genius. With Character a race will become great, even though as stupid and unassimilating as the Romans; without Character, any race will in the long run prove a failure, though it may number in it individuals having all the brilliancy of the Jews, crowned with the genius of Napoleon. * * * Yet it is not easy to put in words exactly what is meant when we agree in attributing character to this man or to that, or withholding it from another:—conceding it, for instance, to Epaminondas, Cato, and Wellington, but withholding it from Themistocles, Cæsar, and Napoleon. Though we can illustrate what we mean by examples which all will accept, we cannot define. * * *

I will content myself with quoting this simile from a disciple of Emerson: 'The virtues of a superior man are like the wind; the virtues of a common man are like the grass; the grass, when the wind passes over it, bends.' " * It is not then so much because Governor Scales was a great man that I choose to speak of him to-day, as because he was first of all a man of character, of real "manhood and heroic nobleness," and as such it is "good and pleasant to be near" him. It is good to turn for a while from the artificial political excitement of the day, when men too often seem to surrender their judgment to passion, to contemplate the career of one whose

*Lee's Centennial: Oration at Centennial Celebration of birth of Robert E. Lee, at Washington and Lee University.

polar-star was judgment, not passion; who stood in the real excitement of a really great struggle for political freedom and racial purity always clear-eyed in vision, calm-minded in judgment, firm-footed in conviction. In a day when men cannot give expression to their views on questions of public policy—questions which have divided mankind since the creation of the world—without denouncing one another as corrupt and perfidious, it is pleasant to look upon the character of a man who was, in public as in private life, “too wholly true to dream untruth” in others. His career was one of gradual advancement from one post of trust and honor to the next higher, characteristic of the career founded less on brilliancy of genius than on force of character.

This force of character we find displayed to a remarkable degree by the founder of the Scales family in America. Like the origin of most American families, the origin of the Scales family in the New World is partially hid midst the clouds of tradition. The story as preserved by tradition is one of those romances of real life which give so much human interest to American history and in which lies its chief glory. The hero was an English lad of twelve, the offspring of an ancient Anglo-Norman family, of honorable rank, whose estates had been sunk in the shifting sands of English politics. To this sturdy English boy the outlook seemed to hold small hope of his ever regaining the family estates and family dignities in Old England, and, thrilled with the wonderful stories he heard daily of the wonderful New England in the far West, he resolved

“To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars,”

to seek what fortune the New World held in trust for the adventurous spirit and the dauntless heart. “There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail;” her prow turns westward; Old England sinks from sight; and all around “gloom the

dark broad seas." Crouching in some dark and secret corner hid the youthful but stout-hearted stowaway, fearful only of discovery while the shore-line could yet be seen. Needless fears: his native land had faded forever from his sight when he was dragged on deck before the angry captain, who threatened to cut short his adventures by tossing him overboard. This dire calamity was averted only by a hard bargain of the lad's own proposing. He well knew that a stout boy could make himself useful on shipboard during a long Atlantic voyage, and young Scales proposed such terms as made his passage a good investment for the captain of the vessel. It was a long term of hard service, but faithfully performed. Landing in Philadelphia, ragged, hungry, penniless, the boy refused the charity of benevolence, determined to build his American career upon energy and independence, or not at all. It was a terrible undertaking, and he learned to "drink life to the lees." But though the test was searching, the metal proved true. Master of himself, the great New World lying before him with all its unknown possibilities, the English lad carved his own pathway to success and earned the rare and proud distinction of becoming the founder of a family. A brief story this, but significant in its lessons of courage, of patience, of fidelity, of honesty, of steadfastness—noble virtues, a fortune in themselves, transmitted by the founder to the latest of those who bear his name.

Threading their way through the forests of Virginia, descendants of the first American Scales found homes on the banks of the river Dan in North Carolina. Here we set foot for the first time on secure historical ground. In the early part of the nineteenth century Nathaniel Scales was a man of some note in the State. During the twenty years from 1803 to 1823 he represented Rockingham County in the General Assembly for ten terms. While he was serving in the House of Commons in 1817 his colleague in the Senate was General William Bethel, whose term of service in the

General Assembly was longer even than that of Scales. The blood of these two united in the veins of the future governor. Robert H. Scales, son of Nathaniel Scales, married Jane W. Bethel, daughter of William Bethel, and by her became the father of ten children.

One of their seven sons was Alfred Moore Scales, born November 26, 1827, at Ingleside, the old family homestead in Rockingham County. He was fortunate in being born into a family in which education was regarded as one of the essentials of life—a view however universally accepted now, that found few advocates then. The “old-field schools” of that day, so much praised by those who know nothing about them, were poor institutions of learning, and the “light of knowledge” was kept burning in North Carolina by a few private high schools, then called “classical schools,” of real merit. Perhaps the most famous of these schools was the Caldwell Institute, through the doors of which many of North Carolina’s eminent men passed into the State University. From Caldwell Institute Alfred M. Scales entered the University in the fall of 1845, where he remained only one year, leaving without graduation. Following the example of many other men distinguished in the public life of the State, he sought his first employment in the schoolroom, where his princely salary of fifteen dollars a month doubtless recalled to his mind the village preacher who was

“* * * passing rich with forty pounds a year.”

But young Scales, though entirely successful with his school work, had no intention of devoting his life to teaching. He used the schoolroom merely as a stepping-stone to the law. Who that is familiar with the history of North Carolina does not recall the long list of strong and vigorous men who have been lured from the schoolroom by the greater inducements of the Counter, the Bar, and the Pulpit? Had the schoolroom been able to hold its own against these rivals, who can

estimate the tremendous power such men would have generated in the youth of this State? But now no man can tell, and none will dare hazard a guess, of the loss of power, and efficiency, and wealth which North Carolina has sustained by adhering to a policy which makes it almost impossible for men to find in her schoolrooms competent livelihoods and opportunities for the gratification of wholesome ambitions.

Such a policy, pursued even to this day with doubtful wisdom, if it has no other virtues, must at least be allowed those which belong to age: more than half a century ago it enriched the political annals of the State at the expense of her educational development, by forcing Alfred M. Scales from the schoolroom to the Bar. Entrance to the Bar was then to an even greater extent than now the necessary first step in the progress of those who sought the honors of a political career. Scales had the good fortune to read his law course under the instruction of Judge William H. Battle, one of the ablest of the justices of our Supreme Court. He was admitted to practice in the county court in 1852, and in the superior court in 1856. His industry, his unfailing application to the demands of his profession, and his sterling integrity, won for him a place of leadership and honor at a Bar which counted among its members such lawyers as Dillard and Gilmer, Dick and Ruffin, the Settles and the Moreheads. In politics Scales was a Democrat. It is not necessary to follow in detail the course by which he attained a place of distinction in the political life of the State. The steps by which he climbed were the usual ones which may be found enumerated in the biographies of any of our public men. County solicitor in 1852; member of the General Assembly in 1852-1853, and again in 1856-1857; clerk and master of the court of equity in Rockingham County in 1858; three times his party's candidate for the Federal Congress, once successfully; presidential elector for the State at large in 1860;* candidate for the convention

*Breckenridge-Lane ticket.

which was defeated in 1861;—so runs the story of the first decade of his political career.

He came upon the political stage at an exciting epoch in the history of the country. The breach between North and South, started in the convention of 1787, had been gradually widened and deepened until the two sections could be held together no longer save by the bayonet. In common with all real patriots, North and South, Scales beheld with deep concern and profound sorrow the onrush of the great crisis. Hoping with all the fervor of his intense soul that the two sections would find some way out of their difficulties and the Union would be saved, he never doubted what position both duty and honor required of North Carolina if the conflict should come. The secession of South Carolina in December, 1860, and the certainty that other States would soon follow her hasty example, brought the question of North Carolina's position in the struggle directly before the people. Unwise men indulged in much wild talk, coupled with criminations and recriminations, charges and counter-charges, most of them, like campaign charges of our own day, as false as all of them were useless. But the great mass of the people wished to move slowly and cautiously and deprecated the needless agitation which made a sane and unimpassioned discussion of the great issues almost impossible. In January, 1861, the General Assembly brought the discussion to a point by passing an act which required the governor to cause an election to be held February 28 to determine whether a convention should assemble, and at the same time to elect delegates to it. The act declared that the purpose of the convention should be "to effect an honorable adjustment of existing difficulties whereby the Federal Union is endangered, or otherwise determine what action will best preserve the honor and promote the interests of North Carolina." The issue presented to the people of the State was not the right of secession, but the expediency of it. On this momentous question

men lost their former political bearings never again to find them; Whigs arrayed themselves by the side of Democrats and Democrats followed the leadership of Whigs; and political parties were torn asunder never again to be reunited.

In every county, convention meetings and anti-convention meetings were held and candidates without regard to former political affiliations were nominated and sent out on a short but most intense campaign. Such a meeting called by the advocates of the convention met in the court-house of Rockingham County at Wentworth, February 13.* Scales was present, and also his future competitor for the convention, Thomas Settle, then solicitor of his district. Securing the floor, Settle spoke earnestly against the convention and for the Union, declaring that he would not sit or act with Disunionists. When asked if he thought it fair for him to speak in the meeting if he did not intend to abide by the result, he acknowledged the force and justice of the question, and immediately withdrew, followed by a large number of Union men. After this withdrawal the following resolutions were adopted:

"Whereas, the present disturbed condition of our country is alarming in its character, and requires, in our opinion, a full and honest expression of public sentiment on the part of the people: therefore,

"Resolved, That we approve of holding a State Convention, believing that the masses, whose interest is at stake, should be allowed an expression of their views on the crisis which now distracts and disturbs the peace and harmony of our common country.

"Resolved, That while we are devotedly attached to the Union, when it exists according to the Constitution, we believe that unless some compromise be made between this and the meeting of the convention, or during the session thereof, by which all the constitutional rights of the South are secured, then it will be the duty, and to the interest of North Carolina, to dissolve her connection with the Union.

"Resolved, That our delegates to the State Convention are instructed to act so as to reflect the above views."

Upon the unanimous adoption of these resolutions Governor David S. Reid and Alfred M. Scales were nominated

**The North Carolina Standard*, February 27 and March 6, 1861.

as candidates for the convention. Governor Reid was absent in Washington serving on the Peace Commission, but Scales was present and accepted the nomination, declaring it to be the duty of every man in such a crisis to obey the call of his countrymen.

In the meantime the Union men who had followed Settle had organized in the street and adopted the following resolution:*

"Resolved, That in the opinion of this meeting, the State Convention, if assembled, should use every effort to reconcile the present unhappy differences between the two sections of the Confederacy, and if possible to re-establish the Union of these States, and to this end the said convention should exhaust every honorable means before entertaining propositions for the withdrawal of North Carolina from the Union."

Dr. E. T. Broadnax and Thomas Settle were then nominated as candidates for the convention. In accepting the nomination Settle declared that he would shrink from no responsibility, though the canvass would cost him a great loss. "The Dis-unionists" he had learned had nominated two gentlemen of high character, and although the canvass would doubtless call forth much feeling, he had no idea that it would be of a personal nature. Governor Reid was bound to him by every tie that binds one man to another,† while Mr. Scales had been through life his friend and companion.

The burden of the canvass fell upon Scales and Settle, and perhaps in no county in the State were the two prevailing views of the political situation better represented. Settle urged forbearance. Vigorously and earnestly opposing secession, he declared that he had even less sympathy with the views of the new Republican party which had arisen in the North. If his voice could be heard in the North he would appeal to the people of that section to renounce their fanaticism and uphold the Constitution and Union of the fathers.

**The Standard*, March 6, 1861.

†Settle had been Governor Reid's private secretary. Reid married Settle's sister.

But he could not be heard in the North, and he was forced to address his plea to his own people, begging them to discard passion, to tear prejudice from their hearts, even to forget their wrongs, and to come forward and save the Union. The "conservatives," he declared, in both sections of the Union must rise in their might and save the country from the hands of those who were trying to destroy it. He did not belong to the "No Hope" party; his heart was full of hope, and he would work with the inspiration of hope to save the Union and, if possible, prevent North Carolina from being "dragooned" into secession. But he wished it to be distinctly understood that his own fortune and fate were inseparably involved in the fortune and fate of his native State, and if North Carolina solemnly declared for secession he would ask no more questions, but, obeying her sovereign voice, would go to her defence with fully as much zeal as any of those who were foremost in plunging her into difficulties.*

At the bottom there was really very little difference between this view and the view taken by Scales. Settle was opposed to calling any convention at all; Scales favored the convention, but not for the purpose of withdrawing the State from the Union. He did not favor immediate secession, or secession at all if it could be avoided with peace and honor. But in his judgment, and his judgment was rarely at fault, the crisis demanded a convention in which the people of the State could be heard, first of all, for the Constitution and the Union, and if the preservation of the Union according to the Constitution proved an impossibility, then for secession; for if war came, as he thought war would come, North Carolina could not with honor even hesitate as to her course. "If I must shed my blood in battle," he declared solemnly, "I will shed it for the South and my people and not against them."†

**The Standard*, March 6, 1861.

†Scales thus stated his position in a speech at Salisbury during his joint canvass with York in 1884. *News and Observer*, Aug. 30, 1884.

So far as the personal bearing of the two men was concerned, it was a model canvass. Each discussed his views with candor and force, like men familiar with their subject, without indulging in personalities; there was no questioning of each other's motives or integrity, no criminations and recriminations which small men, ignorant of their subject, mistake for debate. They knew how to separate the personality of an opponent from the views he advocated. Were all political canvasses conducted in the same spirit and with the same intelligence they would become educational campaigns in reality and the stigma attached to the term "politician" would be exchanged for the respect everywhere accorded to the term "teacher." It was uphill work for Scales. At the beginning of the canvass the sympathies of at least two-thirds of the people were with his opponent, and this opponent was as able a debater, and as fertile in resources, as any who ever took the stump in North Carolina. The debate was a battle royal, and royally waged. Scales was defeated by a small vote, but as the convention was also defeated in the State his successful opponent never took the seat to which he was elected.

But the march of events soon justified the view taken by Scales. Lincoln was inaugurated, and declared that the Union must be preserved. The Confederate Congress met at Montgomery and adopted a permanent Constitution for the Confederate States. Fort Sumter was bombarded and the American flag hauled down. Lincoln called for troops, proclaimed a blockade of the Confederate ports, and denounced the

" * * * sword and fire,
Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws,"

against the seceded States. These events struck from under the Union men their last support, and they rushed forward with enthusiasm to the defence of the South. A striking illustration of the change wrought in the situation by the fall

of Fort Sumter is found in the following narrative from the pen of the late Judge George Howard.* Says he: "On Monday, April 13, 1861, I held court in Danbury, Thomas Settle, solicitor. Messrs. J. M. Leach and Settle asked for the use of the court-room for political speaking;—both were Whigs, seeking the Congressional nomination by appeals to the Union sentiment of the district. I granted their request. After reaching the hotel, A. M. Scales and Robert McLean came over and remarked that if they believed the rumor which they had heard, that Fort Sumter had been fired on, they would reply to Leach and Settle, and asked me what I thought of it. I told them whether true or not, I was sure something of like character would soon occur. They returned to the court-house, and soon I was informed that they and Hon. J. A. Gilmer had concluded to speak. All spoke—Leach, Settle, and Gilmer as Union Whigs; Scales and McLean as State's Rights Democrats. Court adjourned in a few days, and I left Danbury in a buggy with Settle for his home—the road passing near, but not through Madison. As we approached Madison, chatting pleasantly, suddenly Settle sprang up and peering into the distance, exclaimed: 'What's that?' I looked and could just distinguish a flag floating from a building in Madison. Settle in a highly excited tone: 'It is a secession flag—something has happened—Madison has been a strong Union town.' Just then we saw several persons riding toward us. Settle hailed a gentleman on horseback, reading a newspaper, asking, 'What's the matter?' Promptly came the answer: 'Haven't you heard the news? Sumter attacked—Lincoln has called for 75,000 troops—everybody is for war—Governor Reid is speaking at Madison—volunteers are enlisting.' Settle, turning to me: 'I must go to Madison and get right.' I objected, telling him he needn't hurry—there would be both time and

*Written on the fly-leaf of "*The South Since the War.*" Before his death Judge Howard presented the book to his lifelong friend, Judge H. G. Connor, from whom the writer obtained it.

occasion. He insisted. At last we agreed to go, he to speak five minutes and then go on. As we drove up, we could hear Governor Reid in the upper room of a building, while about the door at the ground entrance there was quite a crowd. As soon as we came near, Settle sprang up and waving his hands aloft, cried out: 'I was all wrong! I was all wrong! You are all right! You are all right!' and leaping from the buggy he mounted one of the buttresses to the doorway, and until I called 'time up' poured forth a most passionate appeal for every man to stand by the South. We then went to his home. While en route he said he would resign his office and go into the war. I pressed him not to do so until the end of the circuit; but he would listen to no delay, insisting that he must resign, and soliciting the appointment of Hon. John Kerr.

"The next Monday at Rockingham (court) soon after court met, the sound of fife and drum was heard from several directions, and there marched into Wentworth about 150 volunteers. At recess I noticed both Scales and Settle in the ranks. An amusing incident occurred. A Mexican War veteran, one Hancock, was commanding. As he faced the long line, he called out, 'Right face!' Everybody faced right, save Scales and Settle, and both of them faced about. Thereupon two companies were formed and Scales and Settle were elected captains.

"In a week or two I returned to Greensboro. As I was passing the residence of Hon. J. A. Gilmer he called to me, and, coming out to the buggy, said with deep emotion: "On my return home, I found that at the very hour when I was speaking in Danbury, my son was donning his uniform and hastening away to Fort Macon. We are all one now.'"

War had come, then, and the people of North Carolina did not stay the formal ordinance of secession, but springing to arms hurried to the side of Virginia and South Carolina. The General Assembly was forced to call the convention that Scales had urged the people to call. Differences of opinion

vanished and all patriots rallied to the defence of the State. Reid and Broadnax, but lately rival candidates, forgot their differences and entered the convention together; while Scales and Settle, fresh from their joint canvass, unsheathed their swords and stepped to the heads of their companies. They were all one now.

The companies of Scales and Settle were offered to the governor, accepted, and ordered to a camp of instruction at Garysburg. They were enrolled in the Third, afterwards the Thirteenth Regiment of North Carolina Volunteers, under the command of Colonel William D. Pender. In September, 1861, Colonel Pender was transferred to the command of the Sixth North Carolina, and "after several days' balloting" Captain Scales was elected to succeed him in command of the Thirteenth.*

Though trained to the duties of civil life, Captain Scales possessed many of the qualities of the soldier. Obedient but not servile, he was an efficient subordinate, winning the confidence of his official superiors. Positive but not domineering, he was a capable leader commanding the respect of his followers. Strict but not harsh, he preserved the discipline necessary for efficiency without forfeiting the friendship of his men. Enthusiastic but not reckless, he stimulated and inspired his soldiers without losing their confidence in his judgment. Brave but not foolhardy, he knew when enough had been dared for honor and when common sense required respite from effort. His democratic training and tastes made him popular as a captain of citizen-soldiers. His fine bearing and dashing courage made him an ideal regimental commander. His calmness and coolness of judgment made him a skilful brigade leader. His own ideal of the true soldier he gave years after the war in these words, speaking in the National Congress: "With the true soldier covetousness is contemned, avarice is despised, and illiberality is regarded

*History of North Carolina Regiments, Vol. I, 653-4.

as meanness. Careful of their own honor, they infringe not the rights or honor of others. Quick to resent an insult, when avenged they are equally quick to forget and forgive. Prompt to guard and defend the life and honor of the Nation, when done they are the best conservators of peace.”* This ideal description of the ideal soldier, drawn long after the speaker’s sword had been forever sheathed and with reference to those against whom he had drawn it, was in reality an unconscious reflection of his own bearing both in the battles of war and in the battles of peace.

I have said that Captain Scales’s democratic training and tastes made him popular as a captain of a company. It must be remembered that the soldiers whom he led were drawn from the ranks of a democratic people, citizens in arms for the defence of their country, and not paid soldiers of a regular army. They were the companions of his boyhood, his friends and neighbors, and he enjoyed his superiority of rank only by their suffrages. The war once ended, captain and men would return to their ordinary pursuits, all artificial differences created by temporary rank would sink and vanish away, and they would mingle together in daily intercourse, equals. It was of the first importance, therefore, that captain and men should be on terms of mutual friendship and respect. Scales himself had enlisted as a private in the ranks; his companions made him their captain. His fellow officers approved his bearing among them and, before he had ever seen a battle, made him their colonel.

I have said that Colonel Scales’s fine bearing and dashing courage made him an ideal regimental commander. Witness his conduct at Williamsburg, Gaines’s Mill, or Cold Harbor, Malvern Hill, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville. At Williamsburg his regiment was under fire the first time, and it would have been no matter for surprise had the men hesitated and wavered. But not so: the Thirteenth rushed into a hand-

*From speech on Indian Affairs in Congress March 23, 1876. Congressional Record, Vol. IV, 1919.

to-hand conflict with the steadiness and coolness of veterans, and, though "suddenly and fiercely attacked," as a critical historian says, "under the stimulating example of Colonel Scales and Lieutenant-Colonel Ruffin, held its own until the close of the contest."* General Longstreet felt constrained to mention in his report of the battle both Scales and Ruffin among those who "discharged their difficult duties with marked skill and fearlessness."† At Cold Harbor, too, his gallantry elicited the applause of the commanding general. "Colonel Scales, Thirteenth North Carolina, was conspicuous for his fine bearing," wrote General Garland. What man with red blood in his veins can read without tingling nerves of the conduct which won this high praise! The regiment, advancing in the face of a rain of lead, was suddenly ordered to change front. The movement was critical; enemies pressed on front and flank; success depended on the coolness of the colonel. "Seizing the colors," Colonel Scales "rushed in front of the Thirteenth, as cool as if he had been on drill," and called upon his men to stand to them, "thus," as General Garland says, "restoring confidence and keeping his men in position."‡ "His voice rang clear," says an eye-witness. "He gave the command, 'Battalion, left half wheel!' The old Thirteenth swung around like a door on its hinges," and, incited by the voice and bearing of their leader, the men charged fiercely on the advancing enemy and routed them.§ At Malvern Hill, in face of the severest artillery fire that he ever saw except at Gettysburg, Colonel Scales led his men again and again against the enemy's line, and by his tremendous exertions so overtaxed his strength that after the excitement of the battle was over, he collapsed from sheer exhaustion, and for several weeks lay ill, nigh unto death. At Fredericksburg he held his men in position in the face of "a most destructive fire of shell, solid shot and musketry," "from early morn until

*Hill—Confederate Military History, Vol. IV, 51.

†Official Records of War of Rebellion. Series I, Vol. XI, 567.

‡Ibid., 639-45. §History of North Carolina Regiments, Vol. I, 656.

late in the evening." Chancellorsville brought his career as a regimental commander to a close. He followed Jackson on that famous flank movement which cost the great soldier's life. In this movement he led his regiment to "the most advanced position" of the Confederate troops, "a long distance" after the others had fallen back. Near the close of the charge while urging his men forward he was struck down by a shell, "and thus," says Pender, "I was deprived of as gallant a man as is to be found in the service."* Thirty per cent. of the total loss of Pender's brigade fell to the share of the Thirteenth—unimpeachable testimony of the gallantry of men and leader. After the battle, when the officers of the brigade gathered in the general's tent to hear his criticisms of their conduct during the battle, Pender said to the officers of the Thirteenth: "I have nothing to say to you, but to hold you all up as models in duty, courage, and daring."†

I have said that General Scales's calmness and coolness of judgment made him a skilful brigadier general. Promotion to the command of a brigade was the merited reward of his gallantry and a just tribute to his skill. "His military titles were all won where the sword alone could win them; they were worn where it was danger's self to wear them."‡ Scales fought his way upward under the sharp eye of one of the severest of military critics. Certainly the Confederate Army contained no severer critic, and perhaps no abler one, than General Pender. Penetrating in his criticisms, he was sparing in his praise; the officer who received the praise of Pender, deserved it. Scales won it and Pender gave it. Scales began his military career as a captain in Pender's regiment. He succeeded Pender in command of the Thirteenth. He fought at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville in Pender's brigade and under Pender's eye. At Pender's request he assisted in command of the brigade at Fredericksburg. Pen-

*Official Records. Series I, Vol. XXV, 935-7.

†Confederate Military History, Vol. IV, 349-50.

‡Judge R. M. Douglas.

der fairly eulogized his conduct at Chancellorsville. Twice Pender recommended him to President Davis as worthy to command a brigade. When his own promotion came after the death of Jackson, Pender urged upon the president the appointment of Scales as his successor. Such an endorsement from Pender, trained and critical soldier, was no trifling tribute. A. P. Hill joined in Pender's recommendation and Robert E. Lee endorsed it. The officers of the Thirteenth requested the promotion and the North Carolina delegation in both Houses of Congress joined in the request.* Williamsburg, Cold Harbor, Malvern Hill, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville—all spoke aloud for this merited recognition of valor and skill, and Colonel Scales had not yet recovered from his Chancellorsville wound when he received his commission as brigadier general. Gettysburg followed within less than a month to test his ability to command a brigade. Forming the left of Pender's division on the afternoon of July 1, General Scales led his brigade down the Chambersburg Turnpike, relieved a Confederate regiment overpowered by numbers, overtook the front line of the Confederate Army, passed it, charged up Seminary Ridge, routed the enemy opposing him, dashed down the opposite side of the ridge, drove the enemy from their fortified position, and pursued them into the town of Gettysburg. The official report of the battle tells us that Scales's brigade "encountered a most terrific fire of grape and shell * * * and musketry," but "still pressed forward at double-quick" until the bottom of the ridge was reached.† General Scales declared that every discharge from the enemy's batteries made sad havoc in his line. "Our line had been broken up," he says, "and now only a squad here and there marked the place where regiments had been. Every field officer in the brigade save one was wounded,"‡—a glorious record of valor and gallantry. General Scales him-

*Official Records. Series I, Vol. LI. Part II, pp. 831, 845.

†Official Records. Series I, Vol. XXVII, 657-8.

‡Ibid., 669.

self was everywhere along the whole line, cheering, inciting and directing his men, until, as at Chancellorsville, at the very moment of triumph, a shell struck him down, inflicting a painful and dangerous wound.* Throughout the campaigns of Lee and Grant—in the Wilderness, at Spottsylvania, at Cold Harbor, around Petersburg—General Scales led his brigade with the same dash and skill that marked his leadership at Gettysburg, winning a constantly increasing reputation with constantly decreasing numbers. Sickness prevented his being with his men at the sad close at Appomattox, and when the news reached him at home he sheathed his sword and laid aside his uniform with that calmness and dignity which are founded in a consciousness of duty well and faithfully performed.

With General Scales the war closed April 9, 1865. Four years before he had declared to his people that if he had to shed his blood in fighting he would shed it for the South and his people, and not against them. He had now made good that declaration to the very letter. No apology for his course arose to his lips to belie his conscience; no vain regrets lingered in his heart to embitter his spirit. He sheathed his sword and returned to his civic duties feeling "malice toward none," but "charity for all"; ready to lend his hand to the task of binding up the Nation's wounds; and determined to contribute by voice and conduct toward achieving and cherishing a just and lasting peace between the torn and bleeding sections.

The Nation owes to no class of its citizens a debt greater than it owes to that class of southern soldiers of whom General Scales was a true representative. They fought the war in good faith, they laid down their arms in good faith, and they accepted the result in good faith. Their wisdom and prudence, their saneness and patience, during the terrible decade following the war, entitle them to a warm place in

*Official Records. Series I, Vol. XXVII, 669. See also "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War," Vol. III, pp. 355, 424.

the Nation's heart forever. We all know the conditions in the South after the war. We know also the attitude those conditions forced the southern people to assume toward northern men who came to make their homes among us. We know, too, how almost impossible it was to differentiate between the good and the bad, the genuine and the dross, and we know how seldom any such distinction was drawn. This knowledge makes doubly emphatic the following words spoken of General Scales by one of those who came from the North at the close of the war and cast his lot in with us—one who proved himself to be a courteous gentleman, a pleasant companion, a scholarly jurist, and a capable public servant. Says he, General Scales "was singularly free from bitterness. Of strong political convictions, and open and bold in their expression, he yet could separate political sentiment from the individual, and respect the one while he antagonized the other. * * * Radically differing upon the essentials of government, we were of necessity widely apart upon nearly all political matters: but we have long been friends. He had kindly words for me when kindly words were needed."* What breadth of mind, what catholicity of spirit, these words portray! And what a noble eulogy: "He had kindly words for me when kindly words were needed." The spirit expressed by this epigram, displayed by a few rare leaders, North and South, is the cement which holds together our once divided but now reunited country. May such a spirit so pervade the hearts and minds of all our countrymen, in all sections of our country, that every unpleasant memory left in the wake of sectional strife shall soon be forever eradicated, and everywhere throughout our great country honor shall be accorded to those, whatever banner they may have followed, who unselfishly answered the call of duty as God gave them to see and understand it.

*Judge Robert M. Douglas: Address at memorial meeting of Greensboro Bar.

Such was the spirit which General Scales carried with him into the National Congress, to which he was elected in 1874. The same qualities of character which won for him honors on the battle-field won honors for him on the floor of Congress. He was democratic in his bearing, and "amid the splendor of Washington society lived the simple and decent life befitting a Tribune of the People." He was brave, and always openly and frankly expressed his convictions on public questions. He was "truthful even in politics." "He was honest," and his "political income was absolutely limited to his lawful salary." The extravagance which had sprung up in government circles after the war received his severest condemnation: a government, he declared, which collects from the people more money than it needs for an economical administration of public business is guilty of robbery. He waged relentless warfare against the corruption in high government circles which disgraced the country with the scandals of the *Crédit Mobilier*, the Whiskey Ring, the frauds of Belknap, and of the Indian Bureau. As chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs he did noble service in exposing the frauds of the Indian Bureau and led the campaign for the protection of the Indians from the robberies of thieving agents—a campaign which resulted in the cleansing of that Augean stable. The Internal Revenue System bore hard upon his people struggling under adverse industrial conditions, and he labored strenuously but vainly to have it abolished. In the signs of the times he read the dangers which even then threatened the industrial life of the country by the merging of great transportation companies, and he advocated an Interstate Commerce Commission to control their operations. He made no set speeches "for Buncombe," but engaged frequently and effectively in the debates of Congress, always speaking plainly and to the point without using any of the tinsel ornamentations of the orator.* Though

*Congressional Records from 1875-1884.

thoroughly southern in his political sympathies and convictions, he served his country in the National Congress not as a southerner, but as an American. Through all his speeches in Congress runs the spirit of nationalism. When an unreconstructed Yankee from Vermont opposed the granting of pensions to veterans of the Mexican War because some of them had been southern soldiers, General Scales rebuked the sectionalism of his utterances; declaring his belief that this spirit was not representative of the real spirit of the North, and expressed his joy that the heart from which such sentiments could emanate was not the heart of a native-born American. The people of the South, he declared, came back into the Union in good faith, and should the United States ever again become entangled in war he pledged that his people "would not be found behind that gentleman and his constituents" in rallying to the defence of the flag.* The great war through which the Nation had just passed had taught both sections "to know and appreciate our own people, their valor as well as their devotion to principle. * * * The soldiers who fell on both sides were martyrs to principle; and if it be true that the blood of martyrs is the seed of the church, then surely the blood of those brave men, so freely shed all over our land, will water afresh the tree of liberty planted by our fathers. It shall grow and strengthen and spread until its shadow shall be cast over all Nations, furnishing shelter not only to the unborn millions of our own children * * * but to the oppressed and downtrodden throughout the world."† Prophetic words! the "tree of liberty planted by our fathers" and watered by the blood of the thousands who fell for principle during the great Civil War, has grown strong in its trunk and spread wide its branches because the American people throughout our broad Union have cultivated it not in the chilling and blighting temperature of the sectionalism of the unreconstructed Yankee politician, but in the warm

*Congressional Record, Vol. VII, 1326.

†Ibid., Vol. IX, 792.

and nourishing soil of the nationalism of the reconstructed Confederate soldier.

From the halls of Congress, after a decade of service, the people of North Carolina called General Scales to the governor's chair. They expressed their approval of his splendid record in Congress by giving to him the largest majority ever given until the year 1900 to a candidate for the high office of governor.* That he appreciated the honor and understood the obligations this flattering triumph imposed upon him the opening sentence of his inaugural address attests: "I am deeply and justly sensible of this honor, remembering always, as I trust I shall, that duty and honor go hand in hand, and that as honor fades in neglect of duty, so duty well performed alone perpetuates honor."† His term of office began at an interesting period in the history of the State. Wearied and worn with four years of war and fifteen years of political strife, the people of North Carolina needed more than all things rest and quiet and peace. Fields were to be cultivated, manufactures to be established, commerce to be encouraged, schools to be developed, all great works requiring cessation from strife and agitation. In his inaugural address, in his messages to the General Assembly, and in his public speeches, the new governor took high and advanced grounds on all these problems. Some of his utterances are worth quoting and remembering. No school teacher could express more forcibly or more earnestly than he did the duty of State and parent toward the education of children. "Intelligence is the life of liberty," he declared, "and republican institutions cannot be maintained without it." We should "infuse into our people a spirit of education and so manufacture public sentiment in its behalf as to make it a reproach to every parent who refuses to send his children to school, and to every child ten years of age and over who can-

*Official Records in office of secretary of state.

†Legislative Documents, 1885.

not read. * * * The obligation of every parent to look after the mental training and development of his children is not the less in sight of God and man than the obligation to feed and clothe their bodies. He who does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his own household, has, we are told, denied the faith and is worse than an infidel, and surely it cannot be understood that in making the provision the immortal part of the child is to be neglected.”* During the four years of Governor Scales’s administration one-third more miles of railroads were built than during the fifteen preceding years—a sure indication of public confidence in the government. Congratulating the people of North Carolina upon the development of railroad construction, he said: “We have realized the dreams of our fathers, and have tunneled the mountains, filled up the gorges, and connected by one of the grandest works in the world the extreme western part of the State with the Atlantic Ocean. The mountains and the sea have kissed each other. The people have been brought into closer contact and sectional divisions will disappear. The resources of the West, so rich in minerals and timbers, are being developed; the markets of the East opened up, and we are fast becoming one homogeneous, united, happy, and prosperous people.”* The whole course of Governor Scales’s administration tended to this happy consummation. His distinguished successor declared that the administration of Governor Scales was “so wise and conservative in its character that hardly a ripple disturbed the surface of public opinion during his entire term,” for “the wisdom and justice of her governor established peace and quiet throughout the length and breadth of the State.”† A splendid tribute, and well deserved, recalling the well-known proverb, “Happy the people whose annals are brief.” During Governor Scales’s term of office no great dramatic events interrupted the even course of life to arrest the attention of the historian:

*Legislative Documents, 1885.

†Governor Fowle : Inaugural Address, Legislative Documents of 1889.

his administration was not the tortuous dashing mountain brook, broken in its course by foaming cascades and boiling whirlpools, but rather the quiet meadow stream, straight and even in its course, flowing gently through fields bright with flowers and grass and growing crops.

With genuine pleasure Governor Scales approached the close of his term and the end of his political life. Thirty-seven years of his life he had given to the service of his people in peace and in war. Signally honored by them, he had always rewarded their confidence with signal service. Further political honors had no attraction for him, but he looked forward with great yearning to the quiet joys of friends and family and home. Surrendering without regret the honors of high public station he adopted Greensboro as his home, and in that city spent the remaining years of his life happy in the honor of his people and the love of his friends, but happier still in the quiet circle about his own fireside. Himself, his wife, and an orphan niece—whom he had adopted—composed this happy home circle.* Mrs. Scales was the daughter of a distinguished family—daughter of Colonel Archibald Henderson, granddaughter of Chief Justice Leonard Henderson and great granddaughter of Judge Richard Henderson—famous names all in the history of three great States. Honored and loved by a devoted family, respected and trusted by friends and associates, promoter of the financial, industrial, and educational life of his community, organizer and president of the Piedmont Bank, ruling elder in the Presbyterian Church and moderator of the Synod of North Carolina;† Governor Scales spent the last years of his useful life in further usefulness to his fellow-men. Those closest to him loved him best and those who knew him best trusted him most. Death was knocking at his door when the day came for the regular annual meeting

*Governor Scales had no children of his own, but besides his adopted daughter, he defrayed the expenses of the education of ten others.

†He was the first layman to be elected to this office.

of the directors of the Piedmont Bank. "It was," says one of them, "a pathetic scene at the last election of directors and officers of that bank to see every vote cast for the dying man. No more solemn assurance could have been given by that corporation of its continued confidence in its founder and its head, and its unaltered determination that their relations should be severed by death alone."

Death came to him February 9, 1892, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and he faced it with the same serene courage with which he had met all the other problems of life. "Even in his last days," says a friend, "when his active mind, worn out by honest toil, gave way, there were no scenes of violence or of strife. His mind wandered over to his old home at Wentworth. The house he built, the trees he planted, the friends of early manhood, loved scenes of bygone days, called up by memory's fondest dream, came back to bid him farewell." So died this "model of Christian manhood," leaving to the world the inspiring lesson of his well-spent life, and bearing with him on his last journey the grateful remembrance of his native State, the love and gratitude of his fellow-countrymen.

A people who keep in the forefront of their life men such as he whose career we have followed may face the coming years with hope and confidence. Those whom the people elevate to the highest stations of service and trust are very apt to represent the prevailing thought and dominant character of the State. I like to think that Governor Scales so represented the spirit and character of North Carolina. He loved domestic life, and in North Carolina the home is yet the center about which the life of the people clings. He was pure and clean and true in all the relations of private life, and in North Carolina purity and cleanliness and truthfulness are yet the standards by which men's lives are weighed and judged. He was devout and godly, and in North Carolina men yet turn to Holy Writ as the fountain of truth and

the guide of life. In his public life he was democratic, and in North Carolina the voice of the people is still sovereign. He was sincere, and in North Carolina demagogery still finds an infertile soil. He was honest, and public life in North Carolina has not yet been blackened by the taint of graft. He loved North Carolina, and North Carolinians are still provincial enough to magnify and glorify their State. He was loyal to the flag of his reunited country. Keeping ever in view the "harmony, peace, and happiness" of all sections of his country, joining in the earnest desire of all good men everywhere to hush forever the "passions and prejudices" of the war, disdaining to apologize for his own course, or the course of the South, in that war, but willing to trust for vindication to

"That flight of ages which are God's
Own voice to justify the dead,"

he called upon both sections of his country to "ignore now and forever sectional issues," and to address themselves "to the great work of restoring the Union in heart and soul."* In this liberal and magnanimous spirit, too, may he ever remain a true representative of the spirit of the Old North State. On this Memorial Day, dear to our hearts for the memories it brings, the spirit of this Christian soldier, and the like spirits of his gallant comrades who so freely gave of their best blood in the service of their country as they understood it, call to us to give as freely of ourselves to our great, reunited Nation, and in the service of that Nation to think the highest that is in us to think, to do the best that is in us to do, and to be the noblest that is in us to be.

*Speech in Congress February 25, 1879. Congressional Record, Vol. VIII: Appendix, p. 126.

