

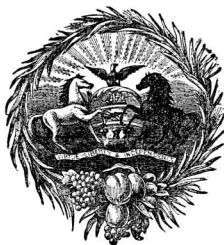
LIVES
OF THE
GOVERNORS
OF
PENNSYLVANIA,

WITH THE
INCIDENTAL HISTORY OF THE STATE,

FROM
1609 TO 1873.

BY
WILLIAM C. ARMOR.

New Edition, Revised and Enlarged.



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JOHN W. GEARY.

GOVERNOR UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF 1838.

January 15, 1867, to January 21, 1873.

JOHN WHITE GEARY, the youngest of four sons, was born near Mount Pleasant, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, on the 30th of December, 1819. The family was English and Scotch-Irish, but for several generations his ancestors had enjoyed the privileges and honors of American birth. Richard Geary, his father, a native of Franklin County, received a liberal education, and was a man of refined tastes, amiable disposition, and superior moral excellence. His mother, Margaret White, was born in Washington County, Maryland, and was in all respects worthy to be the companion and help meet of her husband. They removed to Western Pennsylvania soon after their marriage, where Mr. Geary's attention being directed to the mineral wealth of that section, he was induced to engage in the manufacture of iron. This business, which has always been attended with serious risks, was much more precarious then than now; and, like many of the iron manufacturers of that period, he was unsuccessful; lost the whole of his original investment, and after resigning everything into the hands of his creditors, was left under pecuniary liabilities, which he was unable to discharge. In this trying situation he fell back upon the resources of his early education, and opened a select school in Westmoreland County. The remainder of his life was there devoted to a profession at all times honorable, and imposing the gravest responsibilities, but seldom lucrative; and from his previous failure in business, he died insolvent, leaving his family entirely dependent upon their own exertions for support.

In the midst of their bereavement, they were, however, consoled by the remembrance that he whom they mourned had led a life of integrity and virtue, and had thus bequeathed an inheritance compared with which silver and gold are but as dross.

Mrs. Richard Geary inherited several families of slaves, whom she first educated and then manumitted. The manumission of slaves was not an event of frequent occurrence at that period; and more rarely still was the gift of freedom preceded by an education that would enable its recipients to make the most of its advantages. This incident, though probably not deemed noteworthy at the time, became suggestive, long after the mother had gone down to her grave, of the source whence her distinguished son drew that love of liberty and justice which has ever been one of the most prominent characteristics of his eventful life.

Being himself possessed of liberal culture, it was the earnest desire of the father that his sons should receive a collegiate education. Prompted by parental love, every sacrifice possible was made to compass this end; and, after passing the usual course of preliminary studies, the youngest son was entered a student of Jefferson College, at Canonsburg, Pennsylvania. By the sudden death of the father, the career of the son was for a time interrupted. That he might suitably protect and provide for his mother, he left college, and opened a school on his own account. Favored by the smile of Providence in his self-sacrificing course of filial duty, he was enabled to discharge the sacred trust he had assumed, and subsequently to return to his place in college, where in due course he received the honors of graduation.

For a time his thoughts turned to commercial pursuits; but convinced by a short experience in a wholesale house in Pittsburgh that this would not prove to him a satisfactory sphere of life, he yielded to his natural predilections for mathematics, and applied himself to the study of Civil Engineering. Having mastered the principles of that profession, he commenced the study of the law, in the belief that

it would increase the chances of a successful career, and was admitted to the bar, though intending to adopt engineering as his fixed vocation. With this end in view he went to Kentucky, where he was engaged, partly in the employ of the Commonwealth, and partly in that of the Green River Railroad Company, to make a survey of several important lines of public works. The compensation for these services, with the success of a small land speculation, enabled him to execute a long-cherished, but undisclosed purpose of his heart. When he returned from Kentucky he laid in the lap of his mother a sum of money sufficient to discharge the whole amount of his deceased father's indebtedness; and then for the first time revealed to her what had always been his fixed intention.

His success in the Southwest opened the way to advancement in his native State; and he soon after became Assistant Superintendent and Engineer of the Alleghany Portage Railroad. While occupied with the duties of this position, events were maturing that were soon to thrill the heart of the nation, and to test the character of many of its sons. In the month of May, 1846, President Polk sent a message to Congress, informing that body that "war existed with this country by the act of Mexico," and asking for men and money to enable him to maintain the rights and vindicate the honor of the Government. The burst of enthusiasm was instantaneous and general. Possessing naturally the military instinct, and actuated by the patriotic impulse of the hour, Geary was among the first who responded to the call for volunteers, and in a short time raised a company in Cambria County, to which he gave the name of *American Highlanders*. At Pittsburgh, his command was incorporated with the Second Pennsylvania Regiment, commanded by Colonel Roberts, of which he was immediately elected Lieutenant-Colonel. The regiment joined the army of General Scott at Vera Cruz, and served with conspicuous gallantry in Quitman's division during the memorable advance upon the Mexican capital. Lieutenant-Colonel Geary's first experience of actual war was

in the partial, though spirited, action of the Pass of La Hoya. In the storming of Chapultepec he was wounded; and in the assault upon the immediate defences of the city, at the Garita de Belen, he again led his regiment with so much judgment, coolness, and intrepidity, that, upon the capture, he was assigned to the command of the great citadel as a mark of Quitman's appreciation of his services. From the time when the army entered the valley of Mexico, Colonel Roberts was disqualified for duty by sickness, and the command of the regiment devolved upon the Lieutenant-Colonel. Shortly after the surrender of the capital, Colonel Roberts died, and Lieutenant-Colonel Geary was elected to succeed him. The duties of his command were discharged with entire satisfaction to its officers and men. During the homeward march discipline was strictly preserved; and when the troops and their commander separated at Pittsburgh, the parting was attended with many signs of deep feeling and expressions of mutual esteem and regret.

On the 22d of January, 1849, President Polk, in grateful recognition of his services in the Mexican War, appointed Colonel Geary Postmaster of San Francisco, and Mail Agent for the Pacific coast, with authority to create Post Offices, appoint Postmasters, establish mail routes, and make contracts for carrying the mails throughout California. Having received his commission, with his customary promptness, he returned to his home in Westmoreland, closed up his business, and, on the 1st of February, in company with his wife and child, sailed from New York for the Pacific coast. On the 1st of April, but a little more than two months from the date of his commission, he landed safely at San Francisco, and entered at once upon the discharge of his duties. For a time he was obliged to content himself with the rudest accommodations, and to perform his work under many disadvantages. But here, as in all previous situations, his methodical turn and practical tact soon enabled him to improvise all needful facilities, and brought the labors of the office under an easy and expeditious management. Scarcely, however, had these

arrangements been perfected, when he learned that General Taylor, Mr. Polk's successor in the Presidency, had appointed Jacob B. Moore to the position which he had so briefly but efficiently occupied.

The intelligent and obliging dispatch with which Colonel Geary had discharged his duties as Postmaster and Mail Agent so won the confidence and esteem of the people of San Francisco, that when the time arrived for the election of town officers, he was unanimously chosen First Alcalde, though there were ten different tickets submitted to the choice of the voters. This was only eight days after his removal from the office of Postmaster. Shortly afterwards, this mark of appreciation, on the part of the citizens, was followed by another equally flattering on the part of the Military Governor of the Territory, Brigadier-General Riley, who appointed him Judge of First Instance. These offices were of Mexican origin, and they imposed onerous and important duties. The Alcalde was Sheriff, Probate Judge, Recorder, Notary Public, and Coroner. The Court of First Instance exercised both civil and criminal jurisdiction throughout the city, and besides this, adjudicated all those cases arising under the port regulations which usually fall within the cognizance of Courts of Admiralty. In fact, Judge Geary was, by virtue of his double function, general curator of the public, and did nearly everything that was to be done either in the department of civil or criminal business. For a considerable length of time he was the sole magistrate, and officiated as such until the rapid increase of business obliged him to request the appointment of an assistant, when W. B. Almond was created Judge of First Instance, with civil jurisdiction only. In the discharge of the manifold duties of his judicial office, Judge Geary was eminently successful. Of twenty-five hundred civil and criminal cases tried by him, not more than a dozen appeals were taken from his decision, and none of these were sustained. At the close of his first term he was re-elected, receiving all but four votes of the whole number cast, and continued in office until the Mexican institutions

were superseded by the American forms of municipal government.

In a vote upon the first city charter and for officers to serve thereunder, taken May 1st, 1850, Judge Geary was elected first Mayor of San Francisco by a large majority. As Mayor, he rendered valuable service in perfecting the municipal organization; in restraining the tendency to extravagant expenditure of the public funds; sustaining the city's credit by judicious management of its finances; and by an honest disposal of the public property saved to the corporation many millions of dollars. The result was that, as his official term drew to a close, the Mayor received a communication, numerously signed by business firms and influential citizens of all political parties, requesting that he would consent to be a candidate for re-election. But for urgent personal reasons he felt himself obliged to decline their request. He was prevailed on, however, to accept a place on the Board of Commissioners, which had been created by the Legislature for the management of the public debt of the city, and served as its President. In this position the measures he suggested tended to establish confidence in the city's securities, and assure creditors that it would keep its plighted faith.

On the 1st of September, 1849, a convention of delegates assembled at Monterey to form a State Constitution. The body included the best talent and ripest political experience of the Territory. In the brief period of six weeks its important work was completed. Colonel Geary was not a member of the Convention, but occupied such a position in the eye of the public, and held such relations to the Democratic party, as enabled him to exercise a potent influence upon its deliberations. How he exerted that influence is well known. As Chairman of the Democratic Territorial Committee, he was instrumental in securing the *free State clause* in the Constitution, and the reference of that instrument to the people for their sanction. The triumph thus achieved secured California to the Union as a free State, and warding off the nightmare of slavery, confirmed to that young and prosperous

Commonwealth the boon of perpetual freedom. The failing health of Mrs. Geary induced her husband to return to the Atlantic States sooner than he had anticipated. On the 1st of February, 1852, he sailed from San Francisco, intending to go back and remain permanently in California; but the death of his wife, and other circumstances unforeseen, caused him to change his purpose, and gave a new direction to his whole course of life.

Soon after abandoning his design of making his home on the Pacific coast, he embarked largely in farming and rearing of stock in his native county. These were pursuits in which he had always felt a lively interest, and when the opportunity at last presented itself for the gratification of his tastes, he entered into his new sphere with a purpose never to abandon it. But man's ways are often not of his own choosing. After having spent about three years in retirement, and had in a measure brought the condition of his farm into conformity with his own ideal of what such an estate should be, President Pierce invited him to Washington for the purpose of tendering to him the Governorship of Utah, which, after due acknowledgment of the compliment, he respectfully declined.

Not the government of Utah but of Kansas was the great problem of Mr. Pierce's administration. A bloody civil strife was being waged in that Territory, and the political state of the whole country was convulsed on the subject of its affairs. One Governor had been removed for refusing to conform strictly to the Federal policy in regard to slavery, and another was preparing to flee from the Territory through fear of assassination. In view of the pressing exigency, the thoughts of the President reverted to Colonel Geary; and summoning him by despatch to the Executive Mansion, he, in a long interview, set before him the state of affairs in Kansas; and appealing to him on the grounds of patriotism and of personal friendship, urged him to accept the Governorship of the Territory. The Colonel frankly stated what were his personal wishes and his plans for life, and begged

that he might be excused from accepting a trust involving such grave responsibilities. But the President, answering his personal pleas by considerations of public duty, finally prevailed.

Colonel Geary was commissioned Governor of Kansas in July, and proceeded immediately to his new field of labor, arriving at Fort Leavenworth on the 9th of September, 1856. His administration extended only from that date to March, 1857. He found the Territory in arms. On the one hand was a party utterly reckless and violent, intent upon the triumph of their policy, in defiance alike of the Acts of Congress and the laws of their Territory; on the other, a party not altogether lawless, but equally determined to maintain their rights as citizens of the United States and of the Territory of Kansas. The situation was sufficiently embarrassing and deplorable in itself; but the difficulties which the Governor was required to meet and overcome were greatly increased by the fact, that the sympathies and co-operation of the people of Missouri were fiercely enlisted in behalf of their Kansas pro-slavery brethren, and that the Legislature and the United States Judges of the Territory were committed to the same side. In the conflict between the two parties, voters had committed perjury, houses had been burned, crops destroyed, churches desecrated, women outraged, men murdered, and battles fought. Those scenes of violence foreshadowed fearful days!

The new Governor was not long in ascertaining the true state of affairs, nor in deciding upon his course of action. Upon arriving at Lecompton, he said to the citizens there assembled: "I appear among you as a stranger to most of you, and for the first time have the honor to address you as Governor of the Territory of Kansas. The position was not sought by me, but was voluntarily tendered and pressed upon my acceptance by the Chief Magistrate of the nation. I am here because, as an American citizen, deeply conscious of the blessings which flow from our beloved Union, I did not feel myself at liberty to shrink from any duties, however

delicate and onerous, required of me by my country. With a full knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the Executive office, I have deliberately accepted it; and, as God may give me ability, I will endeavor to faithfully meet its varied requirements. The Constitution of the United States and the Organic Law of the Territory will be the lights by which I shall be guided in my official action." The same just and patriotic sentiments pervaded his first message to the Territorial Legislature. "I will," said he, "administer equal and exact justice to all men of whatever political or religious persuasion."

Acting upon these principles of right, the Governor's policy was quickly productive of the happiest results. The pro-slavery party, expecting his active sympathy, violently denounced his impartiality. The anti-slavery party, smarting under the sense of their wrongs, accused him of excessive leniency toward their enemies. But he firmly refused to incline to either side, and by the exercise of a vigilant and strong authority, managed to restrain both factions, and bring them within the bounds of law and order. The armies which he found facing each other were disbanded and sent to their homes. The courts were regularly convened; the laws were duly enforced; life and property were adequately protected. In less than one month from the day on which he assumed the Executive functions, he was enabled to address the Hon. William L. Marcy, Secretary of State, in the following terms: "Peace now reigns in Kansas. Confidence is being gradually restored. Citizens are resuming their ordinary pursuits. Settlers are returning to their claims, and general gladness pervades the community." Thus was the state of things realized which the Federal authorities at Washington hoped for at the time of his appointment. It was expected, however, that peace would be restored to the Territory in such a manner as would insure the ascendancy of the pro-slavery party, and the admission of the Territory into the Union as a Slave State. But Governor Geary could not comprehend how the Organic Act could be made to bear a construction which

would inevitably produce that result; nor how, in view of his oath, he could be a party to such an issue without first committing perjury. He accordingly followed the line of the law. Under the protection of the law, anti-slavery immigration rapidly increased, and anti-slavery sentiment grew stronger every day. It was soon perceived in the pro-slavery circles, both of Lecompton and Washington, that if he continued in the office of Governor, Kansas would be lost to slavery forever. Applications were therefore poured in upon the President from the Territory for his removal. Had Mr. Pierce remained, he would doubtless have listened and consented. But his term had expired, and James Buchanan had succeeded to the Chief Magistracy. The Governor well knew the character of the new President, and what would be his policy. Accordingly, on the very day of his inauguration, he forwarded to him the following letter of resignation:

“EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, KANSAS TERRITORY,
LECOMPTON, March 4, 1857.

“HIS EXCELLENCY, JAMES BUCHANAN,
President of the United States:

“Dear Sir:—Please accept my resignation as Governor of Kansas Territory, to take effect on the 20th of the present month, by which time you will be enabled to select and appoint a proper successor.

“With high respect, your friend and obedient servant,
JOHN W. GEARY.”

The fatal project of disunion by force of arms was now being carefully matured by leading Southern men. The opportunity was regarded as in every way auspicious. Discerning minds on the opposite side in the great struggle clearly saw that the crisis was approaching, and by a powerful appeal to the country succeeded in carrying the impending Presidential election in the interests of freedom. The South, feeling that the decisive moment had come, declined

to give Mr. Lincoln a trial, or even to wait for his inauguration.

Any one who knew the principles and character, the private and public antecedents of Governor Geary, could not for a moment doubt as to which side he would take in the gigantic conflict thus precipitated upon the country. He was at his farm in Westmoreland when the sound of the rebellion's first gun broke upon the ear of the nation. Early on the morning following the eventful day, he drove his farm-wagon to the neighboring village, and there first heard the news of the assault upon Fort Sumter. In less than an hour after reading the telegram he had opened an office for the enlistment of volunteers. As soon as he could communicate with the President, he tendered his services, and was immediately commissioned Colonel, with authority to raise a regiment for the defence of the Union. In the course of a few weeks he received applications from sixty-six companies, soliciting permission to join his command. On account of the numerous and urgent appeals, he was permitted to increase his regiment to fifteen companies, with one battery of six guns, making the full complement to consist of fifteen hundred and fifty-one officers and men. The artillery company was that which subsequently became so celebrated as *Knap's Battery*.

As soon as the equipment of his command was completed, Colonel Geary received orders to proceed to Harper's Ferry, and report to General Banks, by whom he was assigned to the duty of guarding with his regiment twenty-one miles of the Potomac river. While engaged in securing a quantity of wheat from the enemy's hands near Harper's Ferry, he was attacked, on the 16th of October, 1861, by a force of upwards of five thousand men, with seven guns, under Generals Ashby and Evans, and with a force of only one thousand men and four guns repulsed them. In this battle, known as that of Bolivar, the Colonel was wounded in the right knee. It was the first fight of the regiment, but the men acted with great gallantry and succeeded in capturing one gun from the enemy.

Colonel Geary was given the advance of the corps in a forward movement made in the following spring. On the 8th of March he captured Leesburg, and led the van of the column which subsequently obliged the Confederate forces to evacuate all the towns north of the Rappahannock, and abandon their strongholds at Snicker's, Ashby's, Manassas, and Chester Gaps, in the Blue Mountains. These operations were effected while Stonewall Jackson was within striking distance near Winchester; and for his share in them, Colonel Geary was promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General, his commission bearing date of April 25th, 1862. The greater part of the time that he held the rank of Colonel he had commanded a brigade, and immediately upon his promotion he was assigned to the command of the First Brigade, Second Division, Second Corps, General C. C. Augur being Division commander, and Major-General N. P. Banks commander of the corps.

By appointment of the President, on the 26th of June, 1862, Major-General John Pope assumed command of the army of Virginia, consisting of the corps of Fremont, Banks, and McDowell. On the 9th of August, Banks' troops had a severe engagement with Stonewall Jackson's at Cedar Mountain. The day was oppressively hot, and the Union troops suffered much from exhaustion, but still more from the fierce and well-directed assaults of that great commander. General Geary was wounded slightly in the left foot and severely in the right arm. The battle was gallantly contested, but the results were adverse to the Union arms.

The wound in the arm proved so serious, that, to save the limb from amputation, he was ordered home for treatment. At the close of this campaign, General Banks was transferred to the command of the Department of the South, General Slocum succeeded to the command of the Twelfth Corps, and General Geary was promoted to the command of the Second Division.

The Twelfth Corps did not participate in the battle of Fredericksburg. Shortly after his defeat in that engagement,

General Burnside was relieved of the command of the army of the Potomac, at his own request, and was succeeded by General Hooker.

The balance of the winter and the first weeks of spring were spent in bringing the army to a state of efficiency, and in forming a comprehensive plan of campaign. Having crossed the Rappahannock and Rapidan, on the 1st, 2d, and 3d of May, Hooker gave battle to Lee at Chancellorsville. General Geary was wounded in the breast by a fragment of shell, and the killed, wounded, and missing of his Division, during the three days, amounted to one thousand two hundred and nine men. Five battle-flags were captured, and a loss exceeding its own was inflicted upon the enemy. After the battle the Division went into camp at Acquia, where it remained until Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania summoned its commander to the defence of his native State.

The battle of Gettysburg was fought on the 1st, 2d, and 3d of July. The troops of Geary's division were among the first of the corps to arrive at the scene of action. On the 1st, General Geary, suggesting the importance of possessing Round Top, was directed to occupy it with a portion of his command. Early on the morning of the 2d he was ordered to Culp's Hill, the extreme right of the Union line, with instructions to hold his position at every hazard. During the afternoon of that day he was remanded in the direction of Round Top, with a part of his division, to strengthen the left centre of Meade's line, which, being hard pressed, was in danger of giving way. As soon as the relief he brought could be spared, he hastened back to Culp's Hill, and on his arrival, at about 9 o'clock at night, he found that in his absence the enemy had carried a part of his line, and flanked the position which he had received orders to hold. Suitable dispositions were made during the night to meet the emergency; and at 3 o'clock on the morning of the 3d, placing himself at the head of his Division, he charged the enemy, recovered the ground that had been lost, hastily strengthened his line of breastworks, and awaited the return of Ewell's

veterans. The maintenance of the position was of the utmost moment, for it commanded the Baltimore turnpike, on which the supply and ammunition trains of the army were parked, and had it been lost, these would have been captured, the rear of Meade's centre would have been gained, and general defeat must have inevitably followed. No one comprehended the value of the position better than the rebel commander. Hence the furious assaults that were made upon it with the hope of seizing the last chance of victory. During seven hours the enemy shelled Geary's lines almost incessantly, and, under cover of his batteries, made repeated attempts to carry the Hill at the point of the bayonet. But the charges were as gallantly repulsed as they were made, the batteries were silenced, and the enemy withdrew to join the general retreat which followed the close of the day. As long as the grove of battle-scarred trees that covers Culp's Hill shall be left standing, the gallant sons of New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, comprising Geary's Division, will not lack testimonials of their heroic devotion to the honor of the Union and integrity of their country. Twelve hundred Confederate dead were buried in front of Geary's lines the day after the battle.

After Gettysburg came Chickamauga. The defeat of Rosecranz in that battle made it necessary to reinforce the Army of the Cumberland, and for that purpose the 11th and 12th Corps, under General Hooker, were detached from the Army of the Potomac. Geary's division went with the 12th Corps. Besides these troops, others were hurried forward to the scene of the late disaster; and Grant, having laid Vicksburg in the dust, and re-opened the Mississippi, now, by order of the President, hastened to the mountains of the Tennessee, and assumed command. He immediately initiated a series of movements designed to dislodge Bragg from the formidable position which he had gained. In pursuance of his masterly plan a battle was fought at Wauhatchie on the 28th of October, 1863; another at Lookout Mountain on the 24th of November; one at Mission Ridge on the 25th of November, and a fourth on the 27th of November at Ringgold,

in the State of Georgia. These battles, fought and won in rapid succession, were the principal achievements of Grant's Chattanooga campaign, in the course of which the disasters of Chickamauga were gloriously retrieved, and Bragg, hurled from heights which he had deemed inaccessible, was driven across the Tennessee line.

The historian will ever associate the name of General Geary with the great events of this brilliant campaign. With fifteen hundred men of his Division, he, unaided, fought the battle of Wauhatchie, repulsing a night attack by one of Longstreet's divisions, at least six thousand strong. From his position on Lookout Mountain the enemy had observed the movements of the command during the day, and at midnight dashed down upon it, confidently anticipating a surprise and a capture. But knowing the enemy to be in his vicinity, Geary had pitched his camp in order of battle. The troops slept on their arms, and were on their feet and in line the moment the Rebels had discharged their first volley. The General had not slept at all, and with his horse saddled at the door of his tent, was quickly at the front to direct and animate the troops. The conflict lasted seven hours, and was unusually obstinate and bloody. The artillery horses were all killed or disabled. Every officer of the staff was wounded. Captain Edward R. Geary, a youth of eighteen, the General's oldest son, commanding a section of Knap's Battery, was pierced by a rifle-ball through the forehead, and fell dead in his father's presence. When the day dawned the enemy had retreated, leaving behind him one hundred and fifty-seven killed, about an equal number of prisoners, and five hundred stands of arms. General Slocum, commander of the Corps, was at Murfreesboro, and writing to General Geary a few days subsequent to the battle, said: "I am very happy to hear the good reports which reach me from all sides, relative to the conduct of your command in the recent action. The contest was one of very great importance. The highest credit is awarded to you and your command, not only by General Thomas, but by all officers conversant

with the circumstances. As I was not with you, I can claim no portion of the credit gained, nor can I, with good taste, publish an order expressing thanks to you; but I wish you and your command to know that I have been informed of all the facts in the case, and that I feel deeply grateful for the gallant conduct which has won new laurels for our Corps." General Hooker, also, in an official report to the General-in-Chief, said: "During these operations a heavy musketry fire, with occasional discharges of artillery, continued to reach us from Geary. It was evident that a formidable adversary had gathered around him, and that he was battering him with all his might. For more than three hours, without assistance, he repelled the repeated attacks of vastly superior numbers, and in the end drove them ingloriously from the field. *At one time they had enveloped him on three sides, under circumstances that would have dismayed any officer except one endowed with an iron will and the most exalted courage.*"

As the enemy's position on Lookout Mountain and Mission Ridge threatened the communications of the Federal army, it was decided to drive him from them. On the 24th of November, Geary's Division was selected by General Hooker to make an assault upon Lookout. In an hour after the order was received the troops were in motion. Crossing Lookout Creek, the Rebel pickets were surprised and captured; and moving enthusiastically over boulders and ledges of rocks, they advanced in the face of a murderous fire until they had rounded the rugged peak and stood beneath the lofty palisades. The contest at the top was sharp but decisive. As the mist which enshrouded the mountain cleared away, the troops in the valley were for the first time enabled to discern the position of their comrades, and the stars and stripes, with the well-known white-star flag of the Second Division floating in the morning breeze from the beetling cliff, announced the victory. The trophies of the battle were six flags and two pieces of artillery, with over two thousand prisoners. On the 29th, General Grant, desiring to see the troops that fought the *Battle above the Clouds*, rode over to Geary's camp in Wau

hatchie Valley, and reviewed his Division. The General-in-Chief, as a compliment to these brave men, brought with him the members of his staff and all the Generals of the combined armies of the Cumberland and the Tennessee. In the battles of Mission Ridge and Ringgold, which closed the campaign, the Division took a conspicuous part.

On the 3d of December, General Geary issued a general order to the troops of his division. Referring to the battles of the campaign in which they had participated, he said: "For these services I tender you my heartfelt thanks; for your bravery and endurance my warmest congratulations; for your bereavement in the loss of so many gallant comrades my sincere sympathy. In all the Division death could not have selected braver spirits, nobler hearts, than those who have laid their lives a sacrifice upon their country's altar in the recent engagements. Your gallant conduct has gained for you the highest appreciation and esteem of the commanding Generals of the army. It behooves us to remember prayerfully that the hand of the Almighty is visible in our late victories, and that He who holds in His hands the destinies of nations, has, in His goodness, answered the humble petitions that have ascended to His heavenly throne for the triumph of our arms in the cause of our beloved country."

In the spring of 1864 the Army of the Southwest was re-organized; and Grant, having been invested with the rank of Lieutenant-General, and appointed commander-in-chief, Sherman assumed command of all the forces designed to operate in the Southwestern and Southern States. Among other changes which he ordered, the 11th Corps (Howard's) and the 12th (Slocum's) were consolidated, becoming in this form the 20th Corps, with General Hooker in command. General Geary was continued at the head of his old Division, with the addition of a brigade from the 11th Corps. The two great campaigns of this memorable year were opened on the same day. On the 4th of May Grant moved from the Rapidan to encounter Lee, and Sherman from Chattanooga to encounter Johnston. Sherman's army was complete in all

its appointments, and about seventy thousand strong. The events that followed can but briefly be referred to here. At the head of the division to which he was endeared, and which was endeared to him by so long a companionship in perils, hardships, sacrifices, and sufferings, Geary participated in the battles of Mill Creek, May 8th; Resaca, May 15th; New Hope Church, commencing May 26th, and continuing with but little intermission eight consecutive days; Pine Hill, June 15th; Muddy Creek, June 17th; Noses Creek, June 19th; Kolb's Farm, June 22d; Kenesaw, June 27th; Marietta, July 3d; Peach Tree Creek, July 20th; and the siege of Atlanta, lasting twenty-eight days, and ending in the capture of the city on the 2d of September. To use General Geary's own language: "The campaign from the opening till the fall of Atlanta was really a hundred days' fight, and may be termed a continuous battle, crowned with constant victory."

General Sherman, having by these operations reached the objective point of the skilful plans he had formed at Chattanooga, entered at once upon other plans and dispositions. Hood was left to be confronted by Thomas, and Sherman, with one-half of his grand army, swung around upon his pivot at Atlanta, cut loose from his communications, and commenced his famous march to the sea. On the 25th of July, Hooker being relieved from command of the 20th Corps, at his own request, Williams, being senior General of division, succeeded him, Geary still remaining in charge of the Second Division. Charleston, whose defences had defied the Federal fleets, and Savannah, deemed impregnable, were uncovered, and restored to the dominion of the Federal flag. After the fall of Fort McAllister, Geary led the advance upon Savannah, received the surrender of the city at the head of his Division; and, in recognition of his services in the capture, was appointed by Sherman Military Governor. The duties were delicate, but the General exercised his authority in such a manner as to elicit from a public meeting of the citizens presided over by the Mayor the following expression of sentiment:

“Resolved, That Major-General Sherman, having appointed Brigadier-General Geary commander of this post, who has, by his urbanity as a gentleman and his uniform kindness to our citizens, done all in his power to protect their persons from insult, and their property from injury, it is the unanimous desire of all present that he be allowed to remain in his present position, and that, for the reasons above stated, the thanks of the citizens are hereby tendered to him and the officers of his command.”

It was while he was in command of the city as Military Governor that he was breveted Major-General of Volunteers. His commission was dated January 12th, 1865, and the reasons assigned for his promotion in the document itself were, “*fitness to command and promptness to execute.*”

With this flattering mark of his country’s approval, he preferred that the very kind request of the people of Savannah might not be granted, and was accordingly permitted to take the field for the final conflict. During the subsequent operations in the Carolinas, his division was engaged with the enemy at the Apalachee and Oconee rivers, at Sandsboro, Davidsboro, Salkahatchie, North and South Edisto, Red Bank, Congaree, Black River, and Bentonville.

Here, in the vicinity of Goldsboro and Raleigh, the gigantic struggle that saved the republic and gave hope of freedom to the world was brought to a close. The soldiers of the White Star Division witnessed the surrender of Johnston, participated in the grand review at Washington, after which they were disbanded, took affectionate leave of their old commander, and returned to their homes. The 28th Pennsylvania Regiment, which Geary had recruited at the beginning, continued with him to the end of the war. The regiments of his Division were among the first in the army to re-enlist as veterans. No regiment after being assigned to his brigade or division ever left his command till duly mustered out of service. Such satisfaction was by no means a general characteristic of the feelings of the troops toward their commanders. It is easily accounted for in the case of General Geary. He

required obedience, but he set the example. He courted the post of danger in the field, but he led the way. Ten thousand of the men who served under his command were killed and wounded during the war, but he shed his own blood as freely as he expected the same sacrifice of his subordinates. He cared, too, for the health and comfort of his troops as though they were his own children.

When, in the spring of 1866, the Republican leaders began to consider the important question of selecting a candidate for the Chief Magistracy of the State, it soon became apparent that the name of General Geary was everywhere received with favor. His ripe experience in the conduct of civil affairs, and his distinguished services in the field, commended him alike to the gratitude of the popular heart and the sanction of the popular judgment. After a very spirited canvass, he was elected over his competitor, Heister Clymer, by a majority of over seventeen thousand votes.

He was inaugurated on the 15th of January, 1867. What the personal sentiments were with which the duties of his high trust were assumed may be best learned from his own language: "Profoundly sensible of everything that is implied by this manifestation of the people's confidence, and more deeply impressed with the vast importance and responsibility of the office than elevated by its attendant honors, let it be our first grateful duty to return fervent thanksgivings to Almighty God for his constant Providence and innumerable blessings to us as a people; and especially mine to implore His aid and counsel in the discharge of civil trusts, who has been my shield and buckler amidst scenes of peril and death. That in the administration of government I may err is only what should be expected from the infirmities of the human mind; but as I enter upon the discharge of my responsible duties with a firm resolution to act with honesty and impartiality, I trust my errors will be regarded with charity, and treated with the gentleness of magnanimous forgiveness. I earnestly hope that my intercourse with my fellow-citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives will be so frank and

cordial, that our duties to a common constituency will be pleasantly as well as faithfully discharged. Different branches of the government as we are, with distinctive duties, we are, nevertheless, parts of one organized and well-regulated system, and, as we co-operate or disagree, the interests of the State will probably be promoted or retarded. Elected by the people, and desirous to promote the welfare of every citizen, mere party differences should not be allowed to interfere with the maintenance of a generous, just, and comprehensive public policy."

In his first annual message he alluded to the subject of neglect of duty and irregular practices, charged against the Legislature, in terms not to be mistaken; and in his several messages since he has almost invariably returned to it, evincing thus a paramount desire to guard the rights and interests of the people, and protect the character of the government. The suppression of the great evil of special legislation; the just limitation of the powers and privileges of great corporations; the attempt to appropriate the deposits of the sinking fund for purposes foreign to the object for which the trust was created; the disposition of railroad companies to exceed the privileges of their charters; these, and others of similar import, are the grave questions which he has endeavored to meet and adjust with a due regard to the highest welfare of the Commonwealth.

In his messages to the General Assembly he has recommended a vigorous reduction of the State debt; the investment of surplus funds in the State Treasury for the benefit of the State; the adequate compensation of the State Treasurer, and the increase of his bond to such an extent as would oblige his sureties to make good any possible amount of defalcation; the passage of a free railroad law, with a view to checking the spirit of monopoly, the promoting of healthful competition, and the more rapid development of resources; the establishment of an Insurance Department for the more effectual security of such as seek that mode of protection; the calling of a convention to revise and improve

the Constitution of the Commonwealth; the more liberal support and efficient supervision of common schools; the tender and generous care of the families of deceased Union soldiers; the establishment of a home for such of the survivors of the Union armies as find themselves incapable of self-support with the aid of their government pension; the proper encouragement of volunteer militia organizations; the judicious aid of the State Agricultural College; and the assistance of the various public charities in a spirit befitting a people who owe to that Gospel which was first preached to the poor their freedom and their civilization. Some of the evils against which his admonitions were directed have been restrained, and in a degree diminished, if not entirely removed. Some of his most important recommendations have become laws, after due consideration by the General Assembly. The record of his Executive proceedings abounds with vetoes, mainly directed against bills designed to subserve merely local or personal ends, which were already provided for by, or were in obvious conflict with, existing general enactments.

At the expiration of his first term Governor Geary was re-nominated with a unanimity and a cordiality that bore ample testimony to the success of his previous administration, and, despite numerous circumstances unfavorable to success, was re-elected by a majority of upwards of five thousand votes.

His second term is now drawing to a close, and this is not the time, if the prescribed limits of this sketch would permit, to discuss and determine the merits of his administration. Some of the features are peculiar. For the first time in the history of the office a detailed record has been kept of every act of Executive conduct. This will be left in the archives of the Department. Accompanying each of his annual messages is a full list of pardons granted during the year, with the dates, causes, terms of sentence, the periods served, and the names of petitioners for the exercise of executive clemency. With one exception (Governor Pollock) he has granted fewer pardons, in proportion to the number of convictions, than any

of his predecessors. During the first four years of his administration the reduction of the public debt per annum has been *one million six hundred and forty-eight thousand one hundred and eighty-seven dollars.*

As the reader has observed, the life of Governor Geary has been unusually diversified, and has extended over a field as wide as this great country. In private and subordinate stations, and in public positions of civil and military trust, his career has been marked with unusual, indeed, invariable success. Though still in the prime of life, he has filled a larger measure of service than is the lot of most men who have lived out the full period of human existence.

The intimacy of the author's personal relations to the Governor being known to many, that fact will justify a brief allusion to himself. He enlisted as a private in the 28th Pennsylvania Regiment, when it was first recruited, served in it till its Colonel was promoted, was then appointed as aid-de-camp on General Geary's staff, and continued in that position to the end of the war. Since Governor Geary's first inauguration the author has occupied a confidential position near his person. In the preparation of this sketch, his aim has been to set down nothing in mere friendship; indeed the apprehension that on account of the intimacy of these relations he might be suspected of partiality, has, more than anything else, embarrassed him, and confined his narrative to a statement of facts, which he cannot but regard as bald and unattractive. Deeming himself especially qualified to be a witness, there is one point on which he claims the right to give his testimony, and in doing so he has only to say that, for honesty and fidelity to any trust, whether private or public, committed to him, he has seldom known the equal, and does not expect to find the superior of John W. Geary among the sons of men.

In person, Governor Geary is tall, erect, and well proportioned. He exemplifies the old Roman idea of complete manhood: "A sound mind in a sound body." In manner, he is direct and cordial. There is nothing in his bearing that would embarrass a stranger, however humble; and whether

at the head of an army, or seated in the chair of the Chief Magistrate, he has ever been easily accessible to all classes of applicants for his attention. Power of application, force of will, clearness of perception, and soundness of judgment, are his distinguishing mental characteristics; and his moral nature is so well developed and strong that he has wholly escaped the vices that have destroyed many of the most gifted men. This he has partly inherited from his Puritan ancestors, and partly from the lips of a Christian mother, whose counsels seem never to have been forgotten.

Governor Geary was married on the 12th of February, 1843, to Margaret Ann, daughter of James R. Logan, of Westmoreland County. Three sons were the issue of this marriage, one of whom died in infancy, another, Edward R., was killed, as has been noticed, in the battle of Wauhatchie, and the remaining one is now a cadet at West Point, in the third year of his course. Mrs. Geary died on the 28th of February, 1853, and in November, 1858, Governor Geary was married to Mrs. Mary C. Henderson, daughter of Robert R. Church, of Cumberland County, and has issue of three daughters and one son, the latter the first male child born to a Governor while exercising the executive trust.

Since the first edition of this work was issued, Governor Geary retired from office, his second term having expired January 21, 1873. His last annual message, which was generally regarded as his most able official communication, evinces a thorough comprehension of the varied interests of the Commonwealth; forcibly suggests the means by which they may be most effectually promoted; and, among other gratifying statements, announces a reduction of the public debt amounting to \$10,992,662.54, being a little over twenty-nine per cent. of the State's liabilities in 1866.

The condition of the country and of the State during the period of his administration was such as to frequently render his official duties peculiarly difficult. New and important questions arising from the results of the Civil War were to be considered and adjusted. These responsibilities he assumed

and discharged with his usual firmness and intrepidity, winning for himself the unqualified respect and confidence of the masses of all parties.

Upon his retirement, the ex-Governor fixed his residence in Harrisburg, and instead of allowing himself the relaxation he so much needed, at once began to initiate plans for business upon an extensive scale. But truly, "in the midst of life we are in death." The ceaseless strain of public service, in war and in peace, had done its work upon a constitution that seemed incapable of exhaustion or fatigue. On Saturday morning, February 8th, 1873, as he sat at breakfast with his family, his head dropped suddenly upon his breast, and in that instant "the golden bowl was broken, and the spirit returned to God who gave it." Words are inadequate to express the sensation produced in the Capital, and throughout the Commonwealth and country, by an event so unexpected and mournful. The honors of a public funeral were accorded to the distinguished dead, and now near the scene of his last official honors and responsibilities he sleeps in the bosom of the State he had served so faithfully and loved so well.