

“M. W. Terrill,” p. 223, and Introduction, pp. 5-7, from *Illustrated Popular Biography of Connecticut*, compiled and published by John A. Spalding, Hartford, Conn., 1891.

M. W. TERRILL, MIDDLEFIELD.

Moses Weld Terrill was born in Morristown, Vt., October 2, 1826, and is son of the late Moses Terrill and Matilda (Weld) Terrill. His paternal great-grandfather was born in East Canaan, Conn., and is believed to have descended from Roger Terrill, who was one of the first settlers of Milford, Conn., in 1630, and who later joined the colony from that town which settled New Milford. His mother was a descendant of Joseph Weld, who came from Wales and settled in Roxbury, Mass., in 1638. Mr. Terrill's education was obtained for the most part in the common schools of his native town. This was supplemented by one term in the academy in Johnson, Vt., and two terms in a private school taught in his own town. He finished his studies just at the completion of his eighteenth year, and taught school the following winter. In the spring of 1845 he entered a country general store as clerk, in which occupation he spent three years. In March, 1848, in company with another, he embarked in mercantile business in Wolcott, Vt. At the end of one year the business was sold, and Mr. Terrill removed to his native town and engaged in the same line. This business was continued until 1861, when he removed to Middlefield, and with the late David Lyman, Esq., joined in establishing under the joint stock law of Connecticut, the Metropolitan Washing Machine Company (now the Metropolitan Manufacturing Company), for the manufacture and sale of washing and wringing machines, and other laundry utensils. Mr. Terrill was president of the company until Mr. Lyman's death, in 1871, when, upon the re-organization of the company, he was elected treasurer, which office he still holds.

Raised on a farm, Mr. Terrill's inclinations toward agricultural pursuits were so strong that he bought land in Middlefield, and erected a full set of buildings thereon. Since 1864 he has continued to conduct this farm on the lines of general agriculture and the breeding of thoroughbred cattle (Short-horn and Jersey breeds). At present he has a large and valuable herd of Jersey cattle. He has also given attention to fruit culture, especially to the culture of the peach, and at this time he has a young orchard of one thousand trees. In his native town he held the office of constable and collector of taxes, and assessor, and twice represented the town in the state legislature. In the home of his adoption he has served several years as selectman, as-



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essor, member of the board of relief, since 1865 as school visitor, and for many years as justice of the peace and notary public. He also occupied a seat in the Connecticut legislature in the years 1866 and 1867, also in 1883. In his legislative experience he has served on committees of claims, state prison, and agriculture, three times as chairman.

In July, 1848, Mr. Terrill was married to Miss Almira O. Ferrin, also of Morristown, Vt., sister of Hon. W. G. Ferrin of Montpelier, Vt. Their children are three sons and two daughters, all of whom are living at the present time. By temperament, mental structure, and inheritance, Mr. Terrill is a republican. His father supported James G. Birney and successive candidates of the liberty party until it grew into the republican party in 1856. Mr. Terrill's first national vote was cast for Van Buren and Adams in 1848; also for J. P. Hale in 1852. In religious conviction and association he is a Methodist. He has occupied various responsible positions in this church, and at present is a trustee. He is also a supporter of the principle of prohibition of the liquor traffic.

ALEXANDER SEMPLE, BROAD BROOK (EAST WINDSOR): Agent Broad Brook Company.

The subject of this sketch is a remarkable illustration of the strength of purpose which is so often found in "self-made men." He was born at Johnstone, Renfrewshire, Scotland, on the 8th day of May, 1835, and is descended from the family of Lord Semple (1560), of the ancient family Semple, Barons of Elliestoun (1214), on the father's side, and from the Buchanans of the family of the distinguished reformer and Latin poet, George Buchanan (1506), on the mother's. His parents were in humble circumstances, and beyond the plain rudiments of an English education Semple had no advantage over the other boys of his native town. Like them he had to contribute to the income of the household, and at an early age went to work learning the business of a weaver. At the age of thirteen years he emigrated to New York state, finding employment in a cotton mill. Seeing an opportunity to better himself, he secured work as a weaver in the woolen mill at Warehouse Point; then was engaged as loom fixer in the mills at Broad Brook. In this place and position he determined to seize every opportunity in which to become a manufacturer, little thinking that years hence he would be called upon to take the manage-



ALEXANDER SEMPLE.

INTRODUCTION.



IN presenting to the public this new contribution to the State literature of Connecticut, the author appreciates the fact that various and differing standards will be adopted by both its casual and its careful readers in forming their opinions of its merits; hence he desires in the outset to offer a few thoughts which appear to him to be essential to a correct understanding of the work, and particularly of its success as an accomplishment of a purpose. The critic who views it solely from a literary and artistic standpoint, and reaches his conclusions from such an observation, will be likely not only to do its author an injustice, but to lose sight altogether of some of the best and it is believed the most praiseworthy features of the book. It may be said, too, that whoever has made up his mind in advance that a biographical work which includes but six or seven hundred subjects must exhaust the field and probably embraces everybody of any note whatever within the borders of the State, is doomed to a large disappointment. And the few—perhaps it may prove the many—who expect here, as in most other biographical works, to find simply a collection of governors, and United States senators, and college professors, and gentlemen distinguished for very rare and profound attainments of one sort or another, will find that this is not the work they have expected it to be. In a word, whatever reader forgets or overlooks the Popular feature of this volume will need to be set right in that respect before he can enjoy or even understand, much less pass intelligent judgment upon, its contents.

The inception of this work is indirectly attributable to the annoyance which its author has experienced in his previous daily newspaper work, through the poverty of biographical information obtainable from public sources concerning most of the fairly prominent citizens of our State. His recent complete release from journalism afforded him an opportunity for undertaking to supply in some degree the deficiency referred to; and with that end in view this work was begun. It is due to the reader, and to all who have been successfully or unsuccessfully solicited to appear as subjects of this biography, to know something of the methods which have governed its preparation.

During the month of December, 1890, one or two leading citizens of every town and city in Connecticut were interviewed by the writer, and an arrangement was made in conformity with which these gentlemen subsequently submitted a list of names of nearly two thousand persons in all portions of the State, prominent in business or professional life, or who were holding public positions and properly entitled to be included in a popular biography of the Commonwealth. The list thus furnished included State, county, town, and municipal officials, representatives of the judiciary, the clergy, the military, the bar, physicians, merchants, manufacturers,

artizans, business men, and whoever else among the inhabitants of the State could be regarded as commendably conspicuous in local or general affairs. To each of the individuals thus designated a personal invitation was extended to appear in the proposed volume, the scope and character of which were fully described and explained. Each recipient of the invitation was requested to furnish data from which an accurate biography of himself might be prepared, and to provide a photograph from which a vignette portrait might be made, for publication in the book. The invitation was a cordial one, but no effort was made to induce anybody to accept it against his wishes. Of the two thousand persons thus invited, about seven hundred accepted unconditionally and furnished the information sought. These seven hundred are included in the present volume. Others desired to appear in the book, but imposed conditions which could not be complied with,—such as that the portrait should be a full-page steel plate; or that the sketch should carry an advertisement of the subject's business; and in one case a gentleman who has a local reputation for writing poetry insisted that sundry specimens of his verse must accompany the sketch. Others declined the invitation for various reasons, principally on the score of "modesty"; and still others would have nothing to do with the matter because they had the impression that somehow they were going to be swindled. Of the entire list fully one-half never responded to the invitation. As will be observed, however, the favorable responses were enough to render the volume sufficiently formidable in size, thoroughly comprehensive in character, and representative of every section of the State. It is a good beginning of an effort the principal object of which has been to familiarize the people of Connecticut with the qualities, the characteristics, the accomplishments, and the features of their fellow-citizens who are or have been leaders and chief burden-bearers in all the active duties of life. To fully accomplish the work thus begun, and similarly present the numerous subjects yet remaining, would require and perhaps may occasion the issue of succeeding volumes.

Reference has already been made incidentally to the Popular feature of this compilation; wherein it differs, as it was intended to differ, essentially, from all other compilations of State biography that have heretofore been made in this country. The term Popular in this connection is intended in its best sense—as opposed to Exclusive. This is not the biography of a class, or a sect, or a party, but of the People. Its subjects are selected from all walks of life; and while the list includes some names of world-wide celebrity, and many of great distinction in the State, it embraces also others unknown to fame beyond perhaps the limits of their own neighborhood, yet among the most honorable and in their sphere the most useful citizens of the Commonwealth. It may be safely stated that there is absolutely no other published collection that includes fifty, even, of the seven hundred sketches which are spread upon these pages; yet for the purposes of a reference book of the citizens of Connecticut, to be consulted for information concerning people who are prominent in their respective spheres of activity, the least of all these could not have been omitted from this volume without abridging its usefulness and impairing its value. The careful reader will doubtless be surprised to discover how many citizens on lower pinnacles of fame, than those whose deeds embellish the

pages of familiar history or biography, are proven by this record to be the peers

of their more celebrated contemporaries. It is believed that this publication will be the means of pleasantly introducing to their fellow-citizens a great many gentlemen of distinguished ability and accomplishments, whose lines of action have been circumscribed by local limits,—whose works are universally recognized, but whose personality has heretofore been comparatively obscure.

Inasmuch as the publication of these sketches was to be made with the authority and approval of their subjects, it has been the intention of the author in every instance to consult individual wishes in their preparation. In some cases only the briefest data were furnished; and the sketches of this class of subjects will be found to be correspondingly brief. Others entered enthusiastically and extensively into the work of supplying information, affording opportunity in many instances for complete and quite elaborate biographies. The results in every case furnish a fair indication of the extent to which facilities have been supplied or withheld by the subjects themselves. The author is under obligation to many gentlemen, whose names and faces appear on the following pages, for their active co-operation with him in his efforts to make this work in the highest possible degree interesting to the reader as well as valuable for reference.

The political entanglements resulting from the State election (or non-election) in November, 1890, have involved many of these biographies, contributing an element of uncertainty as to the political status of some of the subjects which has rendered all reference thereto a matter of considerable delicacy. Wherever allusion has of necessity been made to the political career of members of either the legislative or executive branch of the present State government, or of unsuccessful candidates for such honors, all expression of opinion has been avoided and the record intentionally confined to a statement of facts.

In the production of this volume it has been the aim of the compiler to exhaust every resource for securing absolute accuracy of detail in the matter of biography, and to make its illustrations faithful and creditable. He is conscious of having exerted himself earnestly and honestly to prepare for and place before the public a work of thorough reliability and sterling value. He trusts that the effort will meet popular appreciation and approval.

J. A. SPALDING.

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