COMMODORE VANDERBILT.

(This narrative of the business-life of Commodore Vanderbilt was written immediately after I had heard him tell the story himself. It was written at the request of Robert Bonner, Esq., and published by him in the New York Ledger of April 8, 1865. I should add, that several of the facts given were related to me at various times by members of Mr. Vanderbilt's family.)

The Staten Island ferry, on a fine afternoon in summer, is one of the pleasantest scenes which New York affords. The Island, seven miles distant from the city, forms one of the sides of the Narrows, through which the commerce of the city and the emigrant ships enter the magnificent bay that so worthily announces the grandeur of the New World. The ferry-boat, starting from the extremity of Manhattan Island, first gives its passengers a view of the East River, all alive with every description of craft; then, gliding round past Governor's Island, dotted with camps and crowned with barracks, with the national flag floating above all, it affords a view of the lofty bluffs which rise on one side of the Hudson and the long line of the mast-fringed city on the other; then, rounding Governor's Island, the steamer pushes its way towards the Narrows, disclosing to view Fort Lafayette, so celebrated of late, the giant defensive works opposite to it, the umbrageous and lofty sides of Staten Island, covered with villas, and, beyond all, the Ocean, lighted up by Coney Island's belt of snowy sand, glistening in the sun.

Change the scene to fifty-five years ago: New York was then a town of eighty thousand people, and Staten Island was inhabited only by farmers, gardeners, and fishermen, who lived by supplying the city with provisions. No elegant seats, no picturesque villas adorned the hillsides, and pleasure-seekers found a nearer resort in Hoboken. The ferry then, if ferry it could be called, consisted of a few sail-boats, which left the island in the morning loaded with vegetables and fish, and returned, if wind and tide permitted, at

night. If a pleasure party occasionally visited Staten Island, they considered themselves in the light of bold adventurers, who had gone far beyond the ordinary limits of an excursion. There was only one thing in common between the ferry at that day and this: the boats started from the same spot. Where the ferry-house now stands at Whitehall was then the beach to which the boatmen brought their freight, and where they remained waiting for a return cargo. That was, also, the general boat-stand of the city. Whoever wanted a boat, for business or pleasure, repaired to Whitehall, and it was a matter of indifference to the boatmen from Staten Island, whether they returned home with a load, or shared in the general business of the port.

It is to one of those Whitehall boatmen of 1810, that we have to direct the reader's attention. He was distinguished from his comrades on the stand in several ways. Though master of a Staten Island boat that would carry twenty passengers, he was but sixteen years of age, and he was one of the handsomest, the most agile and athletic, young fellows that either Island could show. Young as he was, there was that in his face and bearing which gave assurance that he was abundantly competent to his work. He was always at his post betimes, and on the alert for a job. He always performed what he undertook. This summer of 1810 was his first season, but he had already an ample share of the best of the business of the harbor.

Cornelius Vanderbilt was the name of this notable youth,—the same Cornelius Vanderbilt who has since built a hundred steamboats, who has since made a present to his country of a steamship of five thousand tons' burden, who has since bought lines of railroad, and who reported his income to the tax commissioners, last year at something near three quarters of a million. The first money the steamboat-king ever earned was by carrying passengers between Staten Island and New York at eighteen cents each.

His father, who was also named Cornelius, was the founder of the Staten Island ferry. He was a thriving farmer on the Island as early as 1794, tilling

his own land near the Quarantine Ground, and conveying his produce to New York in his own boat. Frequently he would carry the produce of some of his neighbors, and, in course of time, he ran his boat regularly, leaving in the morning and returning at night, during the whole of the summer, and thus he established a ferry which has since become one of the most profitable in the world, carrying sometimes more than twelve thousand passengers in a day. He was an industrious, enterprising, liberal man, and early acquired a property which for that time was affluence. His wife was a singularly wise and energetic woman. She was the main stay of the family, since her husband was somewhat too liberal for his means, and not always prudent in his projects. Once, when her husband had fatally involved himself, and their farm was in danger of being sold for a debt of three thousand dollars, she produced, at the last extremity, her private store, and counted out the whole sum in gold pieces. She lived to the great age of eighty-seven, and left an estate of fifty thousand dollars, the fruit of her own industry and prudence. Her son, like many other distinguished men, loves to acknowledge that whatever he has, and whatever he is that is good, he owes to the precepts, the example, and the judicious government of his mother.

Cornelius, the eldest of their family of nine children, was born at the old farm-house on Staten Island, May 27, 1794. A healthy, vigorous boy, fond of out-door sports, excelling his companions in all boyish feats, on land and water, he had an unconquerable aversion to the confinement of the school-room. At that day, the school-room was, indeed, a dull and uninviting place, the lessons a tedious routine of learning by rote, and the teacher a tyrant, enforcing them by the terrors of the stick. The boy went to school a little, now and then, but learned little more than to read, write, and cipher, and these imperfectly. The only books he remembers using at school were the spelling-book and Testament. His real education was gained in working on his father's farm, helping to sail his father's boat, driving his father's horses, swimming, riding, rowing, sporting with his young friends. He was a bold

rider from infancy, and passionately fond of a fine horse. He tells his friends sometimes, that he rode a race-horse at full speed when he was but six years old. That he regrets not having acquired more school knowledge, that he values what is commonly called education, is shown by the care he has taken to have his own children well instructed.

There never was a clearer proof than in his case that the child is father of the man. He showed in boyhood the very quality which has most distinguished him as a man,—the power of accomplishing things in spite of difficulty and opposition. He was a born conqueror.

When he was twelve years old, his father took a contract for getting the cargo out of a vessel stranded near Sandy Hook, and transporting it to New York in lighters. It was necessary to carry the cargo in wagons across a sandy spit. Cornelius, with a little fleet of lighters, three wagons, their horses and drivers, started from home solely charged with the management of this difficult affair. After loading the lighters and starting them for the city, he had to conduct his wagons home by land,—a long distance over Jersey sands. Leaving the beach with only six dollars, he reached South Amboy penniless, with six horses and three men, all hungry, still far from home, and separated from Staten Island by an arm of the sea half a mile wide, that could be crossed only by paying the ferryman six dollars. This was a puzzling predicament for a boy of twelve, and he pondered long how he could get out of it. At length he went boldly to the only innkeeper of the place, and addressed him thus:—

> "I have here three teams that I want to get over to Staten Island. If you will put us across, I'll leave with you one of my horses in pawn, and if I don't send you back the six dollars within forty-eight hours you may keep the horse."

The innkeeper looked into the bright, honest eyes of the boy for a moment and said:—

"I'll do it."

And he did it. The horse in pawn was left with the ferryman on the Island, and he was redeemed in time.

Before he was sixteen he had made up his mind to earn his livelihood by navigation of some kind, and often, when tired of farm work, he had cast wistful glances at the outward-bound ships that passed his home. Occasionally, too, he had alarmed his mother by threatening to run away and go to sea. His preference, however, was to become a boatman of New York harbor. On the first of May, 1810,—an important day in his history,—he made known his wishes to his mother, and asked her to advance him a hundred dollars for the purchase of a boat. She replied:—

"My son, on the twenty-seventh of this month you will be sixteen years old. If, by your birthday, you will plow, harrow, and plant with corn that lot," pointing to a field, "I will advance you the money."

The field was one of eight acres, very rough, tough, and stony. He informed his young companions of his mother's conditional promise, and several of them readily agreed to help him. For the next two weeks the field presented the spectacle of a continuous "bee" of boys, picking up stones, plowing, harrowing, and planting. To say that the work was done in time, and done thoroughly, is only another way of stating that it was undertaken and conducted by Cornelius Vanderbilt. On his birthday he claimed the fulfillment of his mother's promise. Reluctantly she gave him the money, considering his project only less wild than that of running away to sea. He hurried off to a neighboring village, bought his boat, hoisted sail, and started for home one of the happiest youths in the world. His first adventure seemed to justify his mother's fears, for he struck a sunken wreck on his way, and just managed to run his boat ashore before she filled and sunk. Undismayed at this mishap, he began his new career. His success, as we have intimated, was speedy and great. He made a thousand dollars during each of the next three summers. Often he worked all night, but he was never absent

from his post by day, and he soon had the cream of the boating business of the port.

At that day parents claimed the services and the earnings of their children till they were twenty-one. In other words, families made common cause against the common enemy, Want. The arrangement between this young boatman and his parents was that he should give them all his day earnings and half his night earnings. He fulfilled his engagement faithfully until his parents released him from it, and with his own half of his earnings by night he bought all his clothes. He had forty competitors in the business, who, being all grown men, could dispose of their gains as they chose; but of all the forty, he alone has emerged to prosperity and distinction. Why was this? There were several reasons. He soon came to be the best boatman in the port. He attended to his business more regularly and strictly than any other. He had no vices. His comrades spent at night much of what they earned by day, and when the winter suspended their business, instead of living on the last summer's savings, they were obliged to lay up debts for the next summer's gains to discharge. In those three years of willing servitude to his parents, Cornelius Vanderbilt added to the family's common stock of wealth, and gained for himself three things,—a perfect knowledge of his business, habits of industry and self-control, and the best boat in the harbor.

The war of 1812 suspended the commerce of the port, but gave a great impulse to boating. There were men-of-war in the harbor and garrisons in the forts, which gave to the boatmen of Whitehall and Staten Island plenty of business, of which Cornelius Vanderbilt had his usual share. In September, 1813, during a tremendous gale, a British fleet attempted to run past Fort Richmond. After the repulse, the commander of the fort, expecting a renewal of the attempt, was anxious to get the news to the city, so as to secure a reinforcement early the next day. Every one agreed that, if the thing could be done, there was but one man who could do it; and, accordingly, young Vanderbilt was sent for.

"Can you take a party up to the city in this gale?"
"Yes," was the reply; "but I shall have to carry them part of the way under water."
When he made fast to Coffee-House slip, an hour or two after, every man in the boat was drenched to the skin. But there they were, and the fort was reinforced the next morning.
About this time, the young man had another important conversation with his mother, which, perhaps, was more embarrassing than the one recorded above. He was in love. Sophia Johnson was the maiden's name,—a neighbor's lovely and industrious daughter, whose affections he had wooed and won. He asked his mother's consent to the match, and that henceforth he might have the disposal of his own earnings. She approved his choice, and released him from his obligations. During the rest of that season he labored with new energy, saved five hundred dollars, and, in December, 1813, when he laid up his boat for the winter, became the happy husband of the best of wives.
In the following spring, a great alarm pervaded all the sea-board cities of America. Rumors were abroad of that great expedition which, at the close of the year, attacked New Orleans; but, in the spring and summer, no one knew upon which port the blow would fall. The militia of New York were called out for three months, under a penalty of ninety-six dollars to whomsoever should fail to appear at the rendezvous. The boatmen, in the midst of a flourishing business, and especially our young husband, were reluctant to lose the profits of a season's labor, which were equivalent, in their peculiar case, to the income of a whole year. An advertisement appeared one day in the papers which gave them a faint prospect of escaping this disaster. It was issued from the office of the commissary-general, Matthew L. Davis, inviting bids from the boatmen for the contract of conveying provisions to the posts in the vicinity of New York during the three months, the contractor to be exempt from military duty. The boatmen caught at this, as a drowning man

catches at a straw, and put in bids at rates preposterously low,—all except Cornelius Vanderbilt.

"Why don't you send in a bid?" asked his father.

"Of what use would it be?" replied the son. "They are offering to do the work at half-price. It can't be done at such rates."

"Well," added the father, "it can do no harm to try for it."

So, to please his father, but without the slightest expectation of getting the contract, he sent in an application, offering to transport the provisions at a price which would enable him to do it with the requisite certainty and promptitude. His offer was simply fair to both parties.

On the day named for the awarding of the contract, all the boatmen but him assembled in the commissary's office. He remained at the boat-stand, not considering that he had any interest in the matter. One after another, his comrades returned with long faces, sufficiently indicative of their disappointment; until, at length, all of them had come in, but no one bringing the prize. Puzzled at this, he strolled himself to the office, and asked the commissary if the contract had been given.

"O yes," said Davis; "that business is settled. Cornelius Vanderbilt is the man."

He was thunderstruck.

"What!" said the commissary, observing his astonishment, is it you?"

"My name is Cornelius Vanderbilt."

"Well," said Davis, "don't you know why we have given the contract to you?"

"No."

"Why, it is because we want this business *done*, and we know you'll do it."

Matthew L. Davis, as the confidant of Aaron Burr, did a good many foolish things in his life, but on this occasion he did a wise one. The contractor asked him but one favor, which was, that the daily load of stores might be ready for him every evening at six o'clock. There were six posts to be supplied: Harlem, Hurl Gate, Ward's Island, and three others in the harbor or

at the Narrows, each of which required one load a week. Young Vanderbilt did all this work at night; and although, during the whole period of three months, he never once failed to perform his contract, he was never once absent from his stand in the day-time. He slept when he could, and when he could not sleep he did without it. Only on Sunday and Sunday night could he be said to rest. There was a rare harvest for boatmen that summer. Transporting sick and furloughed soldiers, naval and military officers, the friends of the militia men, and pleasure-seekers visiting the forts, kept those of the boatmen who had "escaped the draft," profitably busy. It was not the time for an enterprising man to be absent from his post.

From the gains of that summer he built a superb little schooner, the Dread; and, the year following, the joyful year of peace, he and his brother-in-law. Captain De Forrest, launched the Charlotte, a vessel large enough for coasting service, and the pride of the harbor for model and speed. In this vessel, when the summer's work was over, he voyaged sometimes along the Southern coast, bringing home considerable freights from the Carolinas. Knowing the coast thoroughly, and being one of the boldest and most expert of seamen, he and his vessel were always ready when there was something to be done of difficulty and peril. During the three years succeeding the peace of 1815, he saved three thousand dollars a year; so that, in 1818, he possessed two or three of the nicest little craft in the harbor, and a cash capital of nine thousand dollars.

The next step of Captain Vanderbilt astonished both his rivals and his friends. He deliberately abandoned his flourishing business, to accept the post of captain of a small steamboat, at a salary of a thousand dollars a year. By slow degrees, against the opposition of the boatmen, and the terrors of the public, steamboats had made their way; until, in 1817, ten years after Fulton's experimental trip, the long head of Captain Vanderbilt clearly comprehended that the supremacy of sails was gone forever, and he resolved to ally himself to the new power before being overcome gone

forever, and he resolved to ally himself to the new power before being overcome by it. Besides, he protests, that in no enterprise of his life has his chief object been the gain of money. Being in the business of carrying passengers, he desired to carry them in the best manner, and by the best means. Business has ever been to him a kind of game, and his ruling motive was and is, to play it so as to win. *To carry his point*, that has been the motive of his business career; but then his point has generally been one which, being carried, brought money with it.

At that day, passengers to Philadelphia were conveyed by steamboat from New York to New Brunswick, where they remained all night, and the next morning took the stage for Trenton, whence they were carried to Philadelphia by steamboat. The proprietor of part of this line was the once celebrated Thomas Gibbons, a man of enterprise and capital. It was in his service that Captain Vanderbilt spent the next twelve years of his life, commanding the steamer plying between New York and New Brunswick. The hotel at New Brunswick, where the passengers passed the night, which had never paid expenses, was let to him rent free, and under the efficient management of Mrs. Vanderbilt, it became profitable, and afforded the passengers such excellent entertainment as to enhance the popularity of the line.

In engaging with Mr. Gibbons, Captain Vanderbilt soon found that he had put his head into a hornet's nest. The State of New York had granted to Fulton and Livingston the exclusive right of running steamboats in New York waters. Thomas Gibbons, believing the grant unconstitutional, as it was afterwards declared by the Supreme Court, ran his boats in defiance of it, and thus involved himself in a long and fierce contest with the authorities of New York. The brunt of this battle fell upon his new captain. There was one period when for sixty successive days an attempt was made to arrest him; but the captain baffled every attempt. Leaving his crew in New Jersey (for they also were liable to arrest), he would approach the New York wharf with

a lady at the helm, while he managed the engine; and as soon as the boat was made fast he concealed himself in the depths of the vessel. At the moment of starting, the officer (changed every day to avoid recognition) used to present himself and tap the wary captain on the shoulder.

"Let go the line," was his usual reply to the summons.

The officer, fearing to be carried off to New Jersey, where a retaliatory act threatened him with the State's prison, would jump ashore as for life; or, if carried off, would beg to be put ashore. In this way, and in many others, the captain contrived to evade the law. He fought the State of New York for seven years, until, in 1824, Chief Justice Marshall pronounced New York wrong and New Jersey right. The opposition vainly attempted to buy him off by the offer of a larger boat.

"No," replied the captain, "I shall stick to Mr. Gibbons till he is through his troubles."

That was the reason why he remained so long in the service of Mr. Gibbons.

After this war was over, the genius of Captain Vanderbilt had full play, and he conducted the line with so much energy and good sense, that it yielded an annual profit of forty thousand dollars. Gibbons offered to raise his salary to five thousand dollars a year, but he declined the offer. An acquaintance once asked him why he refused a compensation that was so manifestly just.

"I did it on principle," was his reply. "The other captains had but one thousand, and they were already jealous enough of me. Besides, I never cared for money. All I ever have cared for was to carry my point."

A little incident of these years he has sometimes related to his children. In the cold January of 1820, the ship Elizabeth—the first ship ever sent to Africa by the Colonization Society—lay at the foot of Rector Street, with the Negroes all on board, frozen in. For many days, her crew, aided by the crew of the frigate Siam, her convoy, had been cutting away at the ice; but, as more ice formed at night than could be removed by day, the prospect of

getting to sea was unpromising. One afternoon, Captain Vanderbilt joined the crowd of spectators.

"They are going the wrong way to work," he carelessly remarked, as he turned to go home. "I could get her out in one day."

These words, from a man who was known to mean all he said, made an impression on a bystander, who reported them to the anxious agent of the Society. The agent called upon him.

"What did you mean, Captain, by saying that you could get out the ship in one day?"

"Just what I said."

"What will you get her out for?"

"One hundred dollars."

"I'll give it. When will you do it?"

"Have a steamer to-morrow, at twelve o'clock, ready to tow her out. I'll have her clear in time."

That same evening, at six, he was on the spot with five men, three pine boards, and a small anchor. The difficulty was that beyond the ship there were two hundred yards of ice too thin to bear a man. The captain placed his anchor on one of his boards, and pushed it out as far as he could reach; then placed another board upon the ice, laid down upon it, and gave his anchor another push. Then he put down his third board, and used that as a means of propulsion. In this way he worked forward to near the edge of the thin ice, where the anchor broke through and sunk. With the line attached to it, he hauled a boat to the outer edge, and then began cutting a passage for the ship.

At eleven the next morning she was clear. At twelve she was towed into the stream.

In 1829, after twelve years of service as captain of a steamboat, being then thirty-five years of age, and having saved thirty thousand dollars, he announced to his employer his intention to set up for himself. Mr. Gibbons

was aghast. He declared that he could not carry on the line without his aid, and finding him resolute, said:—
"There, Vanderbilt, take all this property, and pay me for it as you make the money."
This splendid offer he thankfully but firmly declined. He did so chiefly because he knew, the men with whom he would have had to co-operate, and foresaw, that he and they could never work comfortably together. He wanted a free field.
The little Caroline, seventy feet long, that afterward plunged over Niagara Falls, was the first steamboat ever built by him. His progress as a steamboat owner was not rapid for some years. The business was in the hands of powerful companies and wealthy individuals, and he, the new-comer, running a few small boats on short routes, labored under serious disadvantages. Formidable attempts were made to run him off the river; but, prompt to retaliate, he made vigorous inroads into the enemy's domain, and kept up an opposition so keen as to compel a compromise in every instance. There was a time, during his famous contest with the Messrs. Stevens of Hoboken, when he had spent every dollar he possessed, and when a few days more of opposition would have compelled him to give up the strife. Nothing saved him but the belief, on the part of his antagonists, that Gibbons was backing him. It was not the case; he had no backer. But this error, in the very nick of time, induced his opponents to treat for a compromise, and he was saved.
Gradually he made his way to the control of the steamboat interest. He has owned, in whole or in part, a hundred steam vessels. His various opposition lines have permanently reduced fares one half. Superintending himself the construction of every boat, having a perfect practical knowledge of the business in its every detail, selecting his captains well and paying them justly, he has never lost a vessel by fire, explosion, or wreck. He possesses, in a remarkable degree, the talent of selecting the right man for a place, and of

inspiring him with zeal. Every man who serves him *knows* that he will be sustained against all intrigue and all opposition, and that he has nothing to fear so long as he does his duty.

The later events in his career are, in some degree, known to the public. Every one remembers his magnificent cruise in the North Star, and how, on returning to our harbor, his first salute was to the cottage of his venerable mother on the Staten Island shore. To her, also, on landing, he first paid his respects.

Every one knows that he presented to the government the steamer that bears his name, at a time when she was earning him two thousand dollars a day. He has given to the war something more precious than a ship: his youngest son, Captain Vanderbilt, the most athletic youth that ever graduated at West Point, and one of the finest young men in the country. His friends tell us that, on his twenty-second birthday he lifted nine hundred and eight pounds. But his giant strength did not save him. The fatigues and miasmas of the Corinth campaign planted in his magnificent frame the seeds of death. He died a year ago, after a long struggle with disease, to the inexpressible grief of his family.

During the last two or three years, Commodore Vanderbilt has been withdrawing his capital from steamers and investing it in railroads. It is this fact that has given rise to the impression that he has been playing a deep game in stock speculation. No such thing. He has *never* speculated; he disapproves of, and despises speculation; and has invariably warned his sons against it as the pursuit of adventurers and gamblers. "Why, then," Wall Street may ask, "has he bought almost the whole stock of the Harlem railroad, which pays no dividends, running it up to prices that seem ridiculous?" We can answer this question very simply: he bought the Harlem railroad to *keep*. He bought it as an investment. Looking several inches beyond his nose, and several days ahead of to-day, he deliberately concluded that the Harlem road, managed as he could manage it, would be,

in the course of time, what Wall Street itself would call "a good thing." We shall see, by and by, whether he judged correctly. What was the New Jersey railroad worth when he and a few friends went over one day and bought it at auction? Less than nothing. The stock is now held at one hundred and seventy-five.

After taking the cream of the steamboat business for a quarter of a century, Commodore Vanderbilt has now become the largest holder of railroad stock in the country. If tomorrow balloons should supersede railroads, we should doubtless find him "in" balloons.

Nothing is more remarkable than the ease with which great business men conduct the most extensive and complicated affairs. At ten or eleven in the morning, the Commodore rides from his mansion in Washington Place in a light wagon, drawn by one of his favorite horses, to his office in Bowling Green, where, in two hours, aided by a single clerk, he transacts the business of the day, returning early in the afternoon to take his drive on the road. He despises show and ostentation in every form. No lackey attends him; he holds the reins himself, With an estate of forty millions to manage, nearly all actively employed in iron works and railroads, he keeps scarcely any books, but carries all his affairs in his head, and manages them without the least anxiety or apparent effort.

We are informed by one who knows him better almost than any one else, that he owes his excellent health chiefly to his love of horses. He possesses the power of leaving his business in his office, and never thinking of it during his hours of recreation.

Out on the road behind a fast team, or seated at whist at the Club-House, he enters gaily into the humors of the hour. He is rigid on one point only;—not to talk or hear of business out of business hours.

Being asked one day what he considered to be the secret of success in business, he replied:—

"Secret? There is no secret about it. All you have to do is to attend to your business and go ahead."

With all deference to such an eminent authority, we must be allowed to think that that is not the whole of the matter. Three things seem essential to success in business: 1. To *know* your business. 2. To attend to it. 3. To keep down expenses until your fortune is safe from business perils.

On another occasion he replied with more point to a similar question:—

"The secret of my success is this: I never tell what I am going to do till I have done it."

He is, indeed, a man of little speech. Gen. Grant himself is not more averse to oratory than he. Once, in London, at a banquet, his health was given, and he was urged to respond. All that could be extorted from him was the following:—

"Gentlemen, I have never made a fool of myself in my life, and I am not going to begin now. Here is a friend of mine (his lawyer) who can talk all day. He will do my speaking."

Nevertheless, he knows how to express his meaning with singular clearness, force, and brevity, both by the tongue and by the pen. Some of his business letters, dictated by him to a clerk, are models of that kind of composition. He is also master of an art still more difficult,—that of *not* saying what he does not wish to say.

As a business man he is even more prudent than he is bold. He has sometimes remarked, that it has never been in the power of any man or set of men to prevent his keeping an engagement. If, for example, he should bind himself to pay a million of dollars on the first of May, he would at once provide for fulfilling his engagement in such a manner that no failure on the part of others, no contingency, private or public, could prevent his doing it. In other words, he would have the money where he could be sure of finding it on the day.

No one ever sees the name of Cornelius Vanderbilt on a subscription paper, nor ever will. In his charities, which are numerous and liberal, he exhibits the reticence which marks his conduct as a man of business. His object is to render real and permanent service to deserving objects; but to the host of miscellaneous beggars that pervade our places of business he is not accessible. The last years of many a good old soul, whom he knew in his youth, have been made happy by a pension from him. But of all this not a syllable ever escapes *his* lips.

He has now nearly completed his seventy-first year. His frame is still erect and vigorous; and, as a business man, he has not a living superior. Every kind of success has attended him through life. Thirteen children have been born to him,—nine daughters and four sons,—nearly all of whom are living and are parents. One of his grandsons has recently come of age. At the celebration of his golden wedding, three years ago, more than a hundred and forty of his descendants and relations assembled at his house. On that joyful occasion, the Commodore presented to his wife a beautiful little golden steamboat, with musical works instead of an engine,—emblematic at once of his business career and the harmony of his home. If ever he boasts of anything appertaining to him, it is when he is speaking of the manly virtues of his son lost in the war, or when he says that his wife is the finest woman of her age in the city.