

THE SPEAKER'S ADDRESS.

Gentlemen of the House of Delegates,

The termination of our official relations is fast approaching. This admonishes me of the propriety of returning you my acknowledgments for the very flattering terms in which you have thought proper to express your approbation of the manner in which I have discharged the duties of a station, to which I was elevated more by your partiality than my own merit.

I have not been disappointed in the hope, with which I accepted the chair, that my own deficiencies might be supplied by your co-operation, and the advice and instruction of older members. And it is among the most pleasant reflections of the present moment, that your demeanor has been characterised by a degree of respectful deference, courtesy and indulgence, not usually exhibited by age towards comparative youth. It reflects honor upon yourselves, forasmuch as it became the members of this assembly towards their presiding officer; and it commands my warmest gratitude, because I had no claims upon you independently of the place itself.

But there are those among you to whom we are all indebted in a great degree, for whatever of order I have been able to preserve in conducting your deliberations. To them, the elder and more experienced members, I desire to make this public expression of the lasting obligations they have imposed, by the care with which they directed me through cases of difficulty, and their liberality in sharing the toils and fatigues of the chair, at intervals when my own physical infirmity required rest.

The individual attachments that have sprung out of our public relations can never be forgotten. We met, for the most part, as strangers, without any mutuality of sentiment, and having no claim upon each other, further than that consideration to which the circumstances of our assembling entitled us. But our associations have so continued to impress me with the purest esteem towards you all, even those with whom it has not been my good fortune to form very close connexions, that the pain of bidding you adieu is rendered more poignant by every moment's delay. There are some here whom I had met in different scenes; to whom I was before bound by the strongest ties; and between whom and myself I know there existed a mutual regard. That circle is now much extended by the addition of others whose names are indelibly recorded on memory's tablet, and whose kindness, manifested in a hundred ways, shall be a happy reminiscence to my latest breath. Such ties can be severed only by that which binds us to another world.

Gentlemen, I entered upon the duties of this station, under the same holy and solemn sanctions which witnessed the commencement of your labors. And now, in the presence of those best qualified to judge me, I declare that my supreme desire has always been to discharge the pledge I then gave, to act impartially, and to mete out e-