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[From the Port Folio.]

ALEXANDER JAMES DALLAS, ESQ.

The following brief sketch of some prominent features in the biography of the late Mr. Dallas, is formed from authentic materials. A more full account of his life is expected at some future day to be given to the world, with a selection from his various literary and professional productions.

ALEXANDER JAMES DALLAS was born on the 21st of June, 1759, in the island of Jamaica. When quite young he was sent by his father to school at Edinburgh. He was afterwards at Westminster school, and was for some time a pupil of Elphinstone, who is known as the translator of Dr. Johnson's mottoes to his periodical essays.

His father, Robert Dallas, was a native of Scotland, and a very eminent physician in the island of Jamaica. He was wealthy, and his son lived in the expectation of inheriting from him an ample estate. In 1780 the latter married a lady of Devonshire, England.

In 1781, after the death of his father, he left England for Jamaica, accompanied by his wife. Instead, however, of his expectations being fulfilled, it was found that the whole of Dr. Dallas's large property was left at the mercy of his widow, who afterwards married again, and no part of the property ever came to the rest of the family.

He left Jamaica in the month of April, 1783, and arrived at New York on the 7th of June, in the same year, and at Philadelphia a week after. This voyage was undertaken simply with a view to a temporary residence of a month or two, for the benefit of the health of Mrs. Dallas, and not from any political feeling or motive, as has been erroneously stated in some of our newspapers. His political opinions were formed here: nor is it to be wondered that strong republican sentiments should take root in a young and ardent mind, just arrived on a soil which had so lately been the scene of so many heroic exploits and splendid efforts in the cause of liberty.

His determination however to remain, and to take a share in the destiny of a young and growing country, seems to have been almost instantaneously formed; and accordingly, on the 17th of June, three days after, he took the oath of allegiance to the state of Pennsylvania, before Plunket Fleeson, Esq. He has ever since resided in Philadelphia, except while acting at Washington as secretary of the treasury.

Besides his talents and his singular industry, he brought with him to Philadelphia (with the exception of two introductory letters, one to Robert Morris, the other to Mr. Bingham) only some commissions, which had been presented to him in his native island, and in England. These were, that of lieutenant in a regiment of militia forces in the county of Cornwall, in August 1778—that of captain in the same in June 1779—and a commission of master in chancery, presented to him in October 1781, by the governor of Jamaica, which latter was considered as complimentary to a young man of talents, and given to induce him to remain in the island, with the prospect of early professional business and emolument.

For some time after his arrival in Philadelphia, he was engaged in preparing himself for admission to the bar, which required, in a case like his, a study of two years in the state. This he accomplished, and in July 1785 was admitted to practice in the supreme court of Pennsylvania; and in the course of four or five years gradually became a practitioner in the courts of the United States.

During this period, his practice not being extensive, he prepared his reports for the press, and occupied himself in various literary undertakings. Many of the productions in the magazines of that day, were from the pen, of Mr. Dallas. Of the Columbian Magazine he was at one period the editor. His productions will bear a com-

parison with those of his contemporaries; and this will be thought no small praise to the pen of a young man, when it is recollected that the labours of Franklin, Rush and Hopkinson, adorned the columns of those fugitive publications.

On the 19th January 1791 he was appointed Secretary of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, by governor Mifflin, a man for whom, till the day of his death, he entertained the kindest affection, and sentiments of the most lively gratitude.

This important and dignified situation brought Mr. Dallas into public notice, and various honorable testimonials were conferred upon him. Having been chosen a member of the St. George's Society in 1789, he was in 1791 elected a member of the American Philosophical Society; in 1793 of the Hibernian Society, and in 1794 a trustee of the University.

In 1795 he was chosen an honorary member of the "Columbianum or American college for the encouragement of painting, sculpture, architecture, perspective, engraving, and such collateral branches of them as are relatively connected therewith." Of this institution we know nothing but the name. It serves however to show, that he was at that early period, what he continued to be in every situation, a friend of the liberal arts, and prompt to aid and promote them.

In December 1793 his commission of Secretary of this Commonwealth was renewed by governor Mifflin. Not long after he was appointed paymaster general of the forces that marched to the westward, and accompanied the expedition to Pittsburg. In the management of the whole of this important office he was eminently active and useful. In December 1794 the trust of secretary was again confided to him. His intimate connexion with the executive of Pennsylvania for so long a period, necessarily gave him an opportunity of attaining a knowledge of the public men and of the public affairs of the state, which occurs to but few. While he held this office he published an edition of the laws of the commonwealth, accompanied with notes.

On the election of governor M'Kean in 1799, Mr. Dallas received the commission of secretary of state for the fourth time.—This he held until the month of March 1801, when, upon the election of Mr. Jefferson, he was appointed attorney of the U. States for the eastern district of Pennsylvania, and resigned his secretaryship. This commission was confirmed by the senate in 1802, and he continued connected in this way with the government of the U. States until his removal to Washington.

On the 26th July, 1801, he was appointed by governor M'Kean recorder of the city of Philadelphia; but resigned shortly after in consequence of the incompatibility of law, as it has been called, which was enacted by the state of Pennsylvania.

In the politics of this country he had taken an early part and he continued to take an active and zealous part till the last period of his life. He was uniformly a republican, and acted with and supported the politics which have predominated in this country since the first election of Mr. Jefferson. With these, however, his profession, to which he intimately devoted himself, went hand in hand, and so early as April 1798, a number of citizens honored his professional exertions in the case of the contested election of Israel Israel, with a piece of plate, bearing the following inscription:

"To citizen Alexander J. Dallas, as a testimony of his able and distinguished defence of the Right of Suffrage in the trial of the contested election before the Committee of the Senate of Pennsylvania, in February, 1798."

Other situations which he held might be mentioned, such as that of commissioner of bankrupts, during part of the period of Mr. Jefferson's presidency. These, however, are too subordinate to mention.

On the 6th October, 1814, he was appointed secretary of the treasury of the U. States. The circumstances of the time when he embarked in this new and difficult situation, the boldness with which he assumed its responsibilities, the energetic traits of character which he displayed, and the general confidence and approbation with which his career was accompanied, are fresh in the recollection of all.

On the 13th of March 1815, he undertook the additional and very delicate trust of secretary of war, and performed with acknowledged success the invidious task of reducing the army of the United States.

In the month of November, 1816, peace

being restored, the finances arranged, the embarrassment of the circulating medium daily diminishing; and soon to disappear under the influence of the Bank which it had so long been his labor to establish, his property insufficient to defray the expenses of his situation, with a family still dependent on him, he resigned his honorable station, and returned to the practice of the law in this city. Here he entered upon professional business with the zeal and ardor of youth. His business was immense, and his talents as an advocate were held in requisition not only at home, but from almost every quarter of the union.

In the midst, however, of prospects more brilliant than he had ever witnessed, and while indulging in the fond belief that a few years exertion would secure to his family a handsome competency in case of his loss, death suddenly closed his career. Exposure to cold, and great professional exertion in a very important cause, brought on an attack of the gout in his stomach, at Trenton, of which he died on the 16th of January, 1817, a few hours after reaching his home.

His property was exceedingly diminished by his residence at Washington. Liberal and hospitable in Philadelphia, where his house was ever the agreeable resort of friends and of strangers, he could not change to a cool calculating parsimony, when placed in one of the highest offices of the government. His generosity and kindness far outran his salary.

Mr. Dallas possessed a mind highly gifted by nature, and richly cultivated with a variety of knowledge. An early and frequent habit of writing had made him prompt in the use of his pen, and uncommonly elegant in his style. His productions are chaste and perspicuous, seldom ornamented with figures, but when introduced they are used with a happy effect.—Easy and simple however as his compositions appear, he was exceedingly curious in the choice of words, and often corrected before he finished. His situations in the government of Pennsylvania and the United States, and his acquaintance with public men, stored his mind with political knowledge, which he was ever ready to communicate, and he was remarkably pleasing in the mode of doing it. He excelled in conversation, which he could adopt to every person, and always fixed attention. His manners were highly polished and agreeable. As an advocate he was learned, ingenious and excursive, at times very eloquent, but he had occasionally the fault of too much diffuseness. He shone as an orator in a public meeting; where in the course of his life he was often called on to speak. In the high office he filled towards the close of his life, he displayed an energy of conduct not generally anticipated, and a versatility of talent that proved his mind to be capable of grasping whatever subject it attempted. His character as a statesman appeared of the highest order—bold, comprehensive and profound, and his loss is justly considered as a national one.

The best known of his numerous productions are the following:

Reports of Cases Decided in the Courts of Pennsylvania, 4 vols.

The edition of the Laws of Pennsylvania, with notes

Features of Jay's Treaty.

Speeches on the trial of Blount, and on the Impeachment of the Judges of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, (taken by other hands.)

Address of the Society of Constitutional Republicans in 1805.

Treasury Reports.

Exposition of the Causes and Character of the Late War.

He left, also, unfinished Sketches of a History of Pennsylvania.

From the Montreal Sun.

We have again to record a scene of horrid murder and carnage. We thought, however, of having exhausted this terrible subject, by the accounts that have already been published relative to the transactions in the North West. New crimes have been committed.

"And do they think Heaven will conceal this murder?"

No! They will be pursu'd with hourly vengeance:

Dreams will disclose it, or, if night wants eyes, Lightning will flash, and point them out to justice."—Savage.

It seems that in the month of August last, there arrived at the Portage au Bonnot, a Mr. Kenevy, belonging to the Hud-

son's bay Company, who was going to the Red River Colony, when the celebrated A. N. McLeod caused him to be arrested by a ci-devant sergeant of the De Meurons, of the name of Reinhart, and by some Brules. After the prisoner had been escorted to one of their posts, commanded by a partner of the North West, named Archibald McLellan, this man (McLellan) made him enter a canoe with six Brules, to have him conducted to Fort William. He was put in irons on the road. Having met Alexander McDonnell, the latter made him get into a hark canoe, with two young Canadians, and an Indian guide, who were to take them to Fort William. The Indian made several attempts to kill the prisoner—the two Canadians having much trouble in preventing him—and when this fact was told McLellan, as likewise that they had great difficulty in preserving his life, McLellan severely reprimanded them and struck them with his paddle. He then put the two Canadians, with part of the effects of Kenevy, into his canoe, and left the prisoner in the little canoe, under the guard of sergeant Reinhart, of Mainville, and of the Indian, who had already attempted to kill him. They now were obliged to return, for he, McLellan, had an express that came from Fort William, from which he learnt that his companions were arrested and made prisoners in the Fort; he therefore thought it improper to send his prisoner there. McLellan explained himself, without the least mystery, to the Brules, and told them that they must not let that man escape, for he was an enemy to the North West. In a little while after, the sergeant embarked with the prisoner, who wished to go ashore for a few minutes. It appears that they found this the most favorable opportunity, for the moment he arrived at the canoe, Mainville fired his gun at him, which wounded him in the neck; he fell on the canoe and when he was about to speak, sergeant Reinhart stabbed him twice in the back with his sword. His body was stripped and thrown at the entrance of a wood, and the spoil divided by the murderers. When they had joined McLellan, who was encamped and waiting their return at some distance, he opened the trunk of the unfortunate Kenevy, took for himself a portion of the effects of the deceased, distributed the rest to those that surrounded him, and spent a part of the night with Cuthbert Grant, in reading and destroying his papers. When he had done he told the Brules that they were very fortunate in having rid themselves of that man, as he might have ruined them all, had he arrived at Fort William.

A VOYAGER.

Five Dollars Reward.

RAN AWAY from the subscriber an Apprenticed Boy named JAMES MULICA—eighteen years old, about five feet high, light complexion, light sandy hair—Had on when he went away, a brown roundabout jacket; wool hat, and a frock and trowsers of linen. It is likely he has gone towards Salem. Whoever will take up said boy and secure him in Bridgetown Gaol, or bring him to the subscriber, shall receive the above reward.

Ezekiel Abrah

am.

N. B. The subscriber lives in the township of Millville, in the county of Cumberland and State of New Jersey.

March 10—3t

ATTACHMENT.

NOTICE is hereby given, that a writ of attachment issued out of the Court of Common Pleas, of the County of Cumberland, State of New Jersey, at the suit of Abraham Sayre, against the rights and credits, monies and effects, goods and chattels, lands and tenements of John S. Soulard, an absconding debtor, in a plea of trespass on the case, for two hundred and fifty dollars, returnable to February Term, 1817—that the same was returned, "duly served, as per inventory annexed," by the Sheriff of said county.

EBEN. SEELEY, CLK.

DANIEL ELMER, Atty.

March 17—2m

ATTACHMENT.

NOTICE is hereby given, that a writ of attachment issued out of the Court of Common Pleas of the County of Cumberland, State of New Jersey, at the suit of Daniel L. Burt and Ephraim Westcott, against the rights and credits, monies and effects, goods and chattels, lands and tenements of John Ireland, an absconding debtor, in a plea of debt, for two hundred dollars, returnable to February Term, 1817—that the same was returned, "duly served, as per inventory annexed," by the Sheriff of said county.

EBEN. SEELEY, CLK.

DANIEL ELMER, Atty.

March 17—2m

