

Governor Allen is Dead.

Henry Watkins Allen, late Confederate Governor of Louisiana, died in the city of Mexico, on the 22nd day of April last, after a short illness. The distressing report of his death reached us two or three days ago, in an unauthentic form, and we have refused to admit the sad news as true as long as there was a rational hope that the report was unfounded. It now becomes our duty to record the painful tidings, and to announce to the people of Louisiana the death of their loved and venerated chieftain. Another hero has gone to his rest—a christian hero whose peer will be hard to find. In pain and sorrow we speak of our departed friend—not in eulogy, for that is needless, but merely to express our own deep sorrow that he had not been spared to cheer and aid his loved people. We know of no word which can be uttered to mitigate the heavy grief that will settle upon thousands of breasts when this bereavement is known.

Gov. Allen was born in Prince Edward county, Virginia, and was connected with the Sigons, the Watkins, and other old and highly respectable families of that State. He was partly educated at home, but he finished the work of mental discipline without assistance, and acquired a classical education so thorough as to render him a good teacher, in which vocation he spent some months of his earliest residence in Mississippi. We have often heard him speak of his teaching with mingled pride and pleasure. He was, to a great extent, self-taught, and always expressed an ardent sympathy with all who tried to gain knowledge under adverse circumstances. Allen went to Texas and participated in the struggle which resulted in the independence of the Lone Star State. He there won the esteem and confidence of many of the gallant men who laid there the basis of a new republic. He afterwards practiced law in Mississippi, until, through the gratitude of a wealthy gentleman whom Allen, though an entire stranger, had most carefully attended during a painful and dangerous illness, he became the owner of a fine plantation in West Baton Rouge. From the date of his advent to Louisiana, he steadily rose in public esteem. He was sent to the legislature, and served with distinction through two or more sessions. It was here that his high public spirit, his energy, his eloquence and his great purity of character first began to attract general notice. The elegant and hospitable sugar planter had even then established a reputation for personal chivalry and incorruptible integrity, though few were then conscious of the existence of those gems of mind and heart which he subsequently exhibited.

When the secession of the Southern States occurred, and Louisiana was called on for troops, Allen lent himself to the work of raising volunteers with ardor and enthusiasm, employing largely of his private means for their equipment and subsistence, and in providing for the wants of the families of those who enlisted. Feeling it his duty to share in the labors and dangers of the field, he yielded to the solicitations of the commissioned officers of the Fourth regiment, and was chosen lieutenant colonel.

As an officer, Allen was noted for his devotion to the welfare of his subordinates and the men of his command, for his great kindness to the sick, for his attention to the comfort of his men, for his strict discipline over them, and for his unceasing efforts to add to their efficiency. He never lost sight of the main business of all troops in the time of war, which is to prepare for fight in every possible way. He was never absent from camp, except when called off by imperative duty or when disabled by wounds. His kind but exacting rule was aided by his own constant example, for he yielded the same prompt and implicit obedience to his superiors that he asked of his own command. He loved good soldiers and brave men with an affection that sprung from his own chivalry. No deed of gallantry by an officer or private in his regiment failed to receive his kindly notice and cordial approbation. He infused his own brave and chivalric spirit into his men, and wherever he led they followed with spirit and alacrity. He was always a hard student, and when chosen lieutenant colonel of the afterwards renowned Fourth Louisiana regiment, he went vigorously at work in acquiring such military knowledge as his previous experience in Texas had taught him to be necessary. With what success he studied is abundantly shown by the high esteem he won among the chieftains of the western armies of the Confederacy.

Allen had much of the heroic in his composition. His bravery was of that high order which comes from the soul. His bright and vigorous mind made him almost intuitively aware of any dangerous situation, and his constitution was nervous to the extreme of delicacy. But when honor or duty called for a risk or a sacrifice he became insensible to fear and unconscious of danger. In the din and smoke of battle he was noted for his self-possession no less than for his vigilance and energy. From what is authentically related of his conduct at Shiloh and Baton

Rouge he must have experienced to an intense degree, the battle glow of pleasure, the *gloria certaminis* of the heroic warrior. In charging a battery at the head of his regiment at Baton Rouge, both his legs were shattered by a shell. He fell in the very moment of success, and was carried from the field, as it was thought, mortally wounded. But after many months of intense suffering, the care of his friends and devoted surgeon, aided by his remarkably vigorous constitution, resulted in partial recovery. He was promoted to the rank of brigadier general for his conspicuous gallantry, went to the Trans-Mississippi department to organize a brigade, was elected Confederate Governor in November, 1863, was inaugurated in January, 1864, succeeding Gov. Thomas O. Moore, and continued in office until the 1st of June, 1865.

In the discharge of the functions of his office Governor Allen displayed great administrative capacity, and talents of the highest order. He addressed himself to the work of relieving the general and severe distress suffered by the people of that part of the State within the Confederate lines. Poverty and suffering were universal. The people lacked all the luxuries, very many of the comforts, and not a few of the necessities of civilized life—ragged starvation called for food and clothing. The supplies were exhausted for army use within the Confederate lines, or were destroyed by floods or by invasions. Conscription had taken away most of the able bodied men—impressment had exhausted provisions, cattle, and work animals. White women were ploughing in cornfields in torn homespun, or driving lame horses with rickety carts to some distant place in search of a little bacon or meal. The wealthy were reduced to pauperism—the poor to squalid wretchedness. The accumulated sufferings of the uncomplaining heroic people are beyond all description.

Gov. Allen devoted himself to the relief of this distress. He had nothing to operate with but a depreciated State currency, whereof forty dollars represented one dollar in coin. But he established a laboratory for the preparation of indigenous medicines. He established a dispensary, from which a million of dollars worth of medicines were distributed in twelve months. He imported and distributed forty or fifty thousand pairs of cotton cards. He appointed agents in many places and gave them many steamboat loads of corn to distribute. He contracted with mill owners and secured their services for the distressed people. He raised, armed, and equipped a fine regiment of cavalry. He built a foundry and had a fine furnace in operation. He printed and distributed five thousand spelling books and as many grammars. He imported and sold at a very moderate price twenty thousand calico dresses, and a quantity of general merchandize, almost beyond belief. He made harness, clothing farming implements. He watched the Confederate officials with a hawk-eyed vigilance and had many hundred cases of oppressive or thoughtless action corrected. He fought for the legal rights of his people and stood between the proprietor and the careless commissary. Yet he gave a powerful helping hand to good men in office, and worked with enthusiasm for the cause he thought just. Never was a man more patient. His office was thronged all day with people who had some aid to ask. He listened to each one, however humble, until his or her story was done, and then in his quick off hand prompt way gave an order for assistance or relief. If an Arkansas, Missouri or Texas soldier wanted a shirt or a pair of shoes, the order was issued. If a poor lady's last mule had been impressed, an aide-de-camp was sent instantly to head quarters. If news was wanted of some young private in North Carolina or Virginia, secretaries were ordered to write at once. If the people needed an appeal, the proclamation was written and printed and circulated in ten hours. The Governor's office became the great centre and focus of excitement.—Men and women came from Arkansas and Texas for the aid they could not get at home, and the Missourians claimed Allen as their Governor. Gen. Smith and all his staff loved and trusted him. Every day in the week, including Sundays, and all the year, to the very day of his departure from Shreveport to Mexico, continued this unending labor, and on the very day of the surrender Allen seemed to take as much pleasure in giving a poor woman an order for a bushel of meal as he did in presenting a sword to Gen. Polignac. The amount of relief he gave is beyond estimate—the manner in which it was given is beyond description. This giant's work lasted fifteen months—the last day was the same as the first. "God bless Governor Allen!" said the poor women and sick soldiers. "God bless Governor Allen!" will echo in Louisiana for centuries.

But we have written too much, and must leave the mourning people to their sorrow. The hand of a noble friend of the lamented hero is busy writing his life, and her work will soon be ready for the press.—Out of the materials for volumes we could but give a hasty sketch.